

# frogpond

vol. 41:3 fall 2018



*Signature*

# **frogpond**

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fall  
2018

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## Museum of Haiku Literature Award

\$100 for the best previously unpublished work appearing  
in issue 41:2 of Frogpond as selected by vote of the  
HSA Executive Committee.



Haiku & Senryu

vanishing act  
a ptarmigan claims  
a patch of snow  
*Tom Painting*

how small  
it becomes in your hand  
the lifeless bird  
*Jeffrey McMullen*

a paper frog, folded  
from recycled paper—  
reincarnation  
*Rob Snyder*

early morning—  
soft rain drops again  
on the spiderweb  
*China Cancio*

cutting my cholesterol  
I share french fries  
with the sparrows  
*Terri L. French*

listening  
to a moonlit night  
Hank Williams  
*Rick Jackofsky*

at the truck-stop café—  
lyrics you can  
understand  
*Linda McCarthy Schick*

improvising  
fingers find tunes  
beside the tune  
*David Cashman*

throughout its body  
the ripple of movement  
horse sculpture  
*Kathe L. Palka*

wild pony  
twitches with the chill  
ghost town  
*Anna Cates*

midsummer  
in a restaurant sink  
the clatter of plates  
*Tim Murphy*

as she dances  
a string of pearls bounce  
at the girl's throat  
*Patricia Prime*

the young boy  
a lollypop  
in his ammunition belt  
*Daniel Birnbaum*

midsummer night  
from the first floor deck  
second hand smoke  
*s. major-tingey*

rain pools  
on the empty patio...  
long weekend  
*Dan Curtis*

Morning sun—  
My son points  
to my bald spot  
*Mark Hitri*

toupee askew  
if only we could see ourselves  
as others do  
*Sharon Rhutasel-Jones*

Class of 1993  
reunion – only the café's  
chairs came.  
*Vassileios Comporozos*

hometown  
the stranger  
in me  
*Robert B McNeill*

my head  
in the clouds  
gnats  
*Jeff Hoagland*

through a meadow  
a path to the outhouse  
summer breeze

*Victor Ortiz*

lighting the way  
to the outside privy...  
crescent moon

*Elinor Huggett*

old tobacco barn  
each year leaning farther  
to the right

*Robert Forsythe*

cars stranded  
in thick fog  
the bleating of sheep

*Louisa Howerow*

summer's end  
the sea folding  
onto shore

*Joseph Robello*

she says it's a phase  
he's going through  
autumn moon  
*Barbara Tate*

in the middle  
of the argument  
chickadees  
*Denise Fontaine-Pincince*

heat lightning  
another round  
of silent treatment  
*Ross Plovnick*

hollow stemware  
we raise a glass  
to the new year  
*Carolyn Hall*

moonless sky..  
she wants me to believe  
I still love her  
*C. William Hinderliter*

no deep thoughts  
... still ...  
the green of spring grass  
*Wanda Cook*

a ripple  
in the pond  
becomes me  
*Martha Magenta*

lavender fields  
the distance a mind  
can wander  
*Sondra J. Byrnes*

the meadow  
so many wildflowers  
I cannot name  
*Carolyn Coit Dancy*

the interplay  
between light and shadow  
wind in the willow  
*Chen-ou Liu*

biopsy results  
better than expected  
and yet ...

*Sheila Sondik*

ultrasound  
a tad too long  
the probe's pause

*Madhuri Pillai*

doll hospital—  
barbie considered  
a hopeless case

*George Dorsty*

night jasmine  
perfume for the light  
of dead stars

*Jann Wright*

morning fog  
crows at the edge  
of hearing

*Craig Kittner*

disused rail line  
cabbage whites tangle  
in sunlight  
*Sarah Paul*

hoverfly  
the effort  
to stay still  
*Dian Duchin Reed*

white butterflies  
spiraling up a column  
that isn't there  
*James Richardson*

giving a piece of cardboard  
a bit of life  
our cat  
*Tom Clausen*

two dragonflies  
flying intertwined  
fucking amazing  
*Warren Decker*

Rocking the Casbah  
down Highway 71  
on my way to work  
*Erin J. Jones*

the rhythm  
of dashboard drums  
summer night  
*Glenn G. Coats*

car's backfire—  
the neon palm tree  
grows all at once  
*Jonathan Humphrey*

coastal road  
a license plate  
from the heartland  
*Tom Painting*

corporate parking lot  
pollen matte  
on gloss paint  
*Mark A. Forrester*

oolong tea  
sun sweetened  
sheets on the line  
*Marilyn Fleming*

first tea party  
the small talk  
of sparrows  
*Mary Hanrahan*

magnolia buds  
some of us slip out  
of our jackets  
*Michele Root-Bernstein*

evening breeze—  
neighbour's garden  
hops the fence  
*Monica Wang*

the wildflower named  
to make me dizzy—  
whorled polygala  
*Laurie D. Morrissey*

a stream  
wrinkles the rock...  
ray of sunlight  
*David He Zhuanglang*

moonlit tent  
the faint white noise  
of a waterfall  
*Debbie Strange*

slanting light  
licorice ferns high  
on the maple's trunk  
*R. J. Swanson*

close enough to touch  
late summer constellations  
Queen Anne's lace  
*Judson Evans*

her chest  
rising and falling in the moonlight  
the sound of the ocean  
*Loris John Fazio*

prayer flags  
a slight breeze  
off Everest

*Bruce H. Feingold*

fogbound village —  
the old bus leaves a trail  
of fumes

*Barnabas I. Adeleke*

yak crossing  
Himalayan  
traffic jam

*Aron Feingold*

skipping stones  
across the pond  
a temple crumbles

*Louisa Howerow*

waiting patiently  
shrink-wrapped Buddha  
in the garden store

*Mark Teaford*

breaking ice  
in the stock tank . . .  
the first cow's tongue  
*Edward J. Rielly*

thumbing through  
an old rolodex  
winter light  
*Debbi Antebi*

slow February snow ...  
the last of my resolutions  
quietly buried  
*Michael Dudley*

winter sunrise  
a string of rusted rail cars  
pass the salt mine  
*Deb Koen*

another snow  
another poem  
about snow  
*Matthew M. Cariello*

night train  
just another  
brief stop

*Anna Maris*

autumn leaves  
turning a deeper shade  
of melancholy

*Lori Zajkowski*

lonely world  
turning the pages  
of an old newspaper

*Mohammad Azim Khan*

canal path—  
the sun-bleached cover  
of a porn mag

*Paul Chambers*

sperm dying  
in a towel  
a long night

*David G. Lanoue*

stifling heat  
swallow's wingtip  
nicks the river  
*Erica Ison*

old stone barn—  
the to and fro of flycatchers  
in summer rain  
*John Barlow*

through the heat  
not of it  
swallowtail  
*Ann K. Schwader*

storm warning  
the first tremble  
in a blackbird's song  
*Rachel Sutcliffe*

a fine rain falls  
on each reflection—  
coots in failing light  
*Thomas Powell*

freight train  
I listen to the shape  
of the mountain  
*Susan Constable*

wanderlust...  
his license plate collection  
nailed to the barn wall  
*Michele L. Harvey*

deep night sky  
the dashboard lights too bright  
for this loneliness  
*Chad Lee Robinson*

winter night  
wearing a dead man's coat  
*christopher-calvin pollard*

icy grass  
crunches underfoot  
moon in the frost  
*Bob Whitmire*

early frost  
the measured tread  
of backyard chickens  
*Vanessa Proctor*

her backyard  
immersed in shadow  
a horse once lived there  
*Robert A. Oliveira*

autumn sunset  
dusk deepens  
into the old rose  
*Martha Magenta*

the hazy moon  
all I didn't know  
I wanted  
*Karina M. Young*

sunday morning  
kneeling to collect  
still warm eggs  
*Marika Josephson*

old high school yearbook  
I skip over  
several pages  
*Deanna Tiefenthal*

all the guilt  
of losing touch  
old catcher's mitt  
*John Hawk*

among the whole lot  
not a single astronaut—  
high school reunion  
*Aaron Barry*

record shop  
flipping through a stack  
of memories  
*Kevin Valentine*

Family albums  
remember the fifties  
in black and white  
*Bruce England*

corner pub  
my dark stout  
in a Bud Lite glass  
*Tom Clausen*

windy day  
what we know about the neighbours  
from their clothesline  
*Lucy Whitehead*

day moon  
lighting the way  
for no one  
*Agnes Eva Savich*

in this universal tragedy  
so many  
stars  
*Robert Witmer*

*a touch*  
petroglyph of a hand  
*of grace*  
*Roland Packer*

slave ship—  
a beam of sunlight  
on rusty shackles

*Mohammad Azim Khan*

thought we could  
move past this  
confederate general

*Harold C. Cowherd*

Continental Divide  
red states and blue  
...purple passions

*William Scott Galasso*

at the foot  
of the war memorial  
dead sparrow

*Arch Haslett*

migration  
without borders  
monarchs

*Jo Balistreri*

men's room—  
a butterfly  
wanders in  
*Eric A. Lohman*

a crack in the window  
wisteria tendrils  
find their way  
*Jill Lange*

shimmering lake  
I lose sight of  
how deep it is  
*Boruch Merkur*

before Buddha bristlecone pine  
*Matthew Markworth*

grass roots  
how quickly a bamboo  
becomes a forest  
*Yu Chang*

the dark blue sound of a wind-driven rain  
*Rob Dingman*

just a drizzle  
turns into a downpour  
E.R. night shift  
*Neal Whitman*

sudden rain...  
a girl cups her breast  
in flight  
*Adjei Agyei-Baah*

spring thunderstorm—  
coolness blowing in through the screen  
from the spattered porch  
*Wally Swist*

after the storm  
the mud ruts  
of pickup trucks  
*Ben Moeller-Gaa*

i don't remember  
a time before  
i knew about death  
*Jasmin Kirkbride*

home from hospice house  
I give his wedding ring  
to our son  
*Elizabeth Howard*

near the end  
she remembers once dancing  
with Indians  
*Ed Bremson*

winter shadows  
six pallbearers  
shoulder the darkness  
*John Hawkhead*

autumn rain  
tell me again  
how you died  
*J. Zimmerman*

in the attic  
my grandfather's rifle  
turns rusty

*Slobodan Pupovac*

after Mother's death ...  
finding my baby locks  
in her box of jewels

*Charlotte Digregorio*

the widower  
heaving hailstones back  
at the clouds

*Keith Polette*

The wilted rose  
still gives off strong fragrance  
a widow

*Sravani Singampalli*

Misty pine-scented wind  
drifts through the graveyard—  
I've outlived my parents

*Rebecca Lilly*

the tea steeps  
her morning practice  
in patience  
*Beverly Acuff Momoi*

relaxation cd  
the ocean rolls in  
on delta waves  
*Nancy Shires*

mountain fog  
nowhere to gaze  
but within  
*Kelly Sauvage Angel*

wind in the willows  
two monks debating  
the bardo  
*Robert Epstein*

meditating—  
enlightenment smells like  
fresh-baked rolls  
*Robert Epstein*

raindrops on blossoms  
I sweep  
the pagoda  
*Nicholas M. Sola*

to be the most difficult verb  
*David Boyer*

walking among redwoods my small steps  
*Sam Bateman*

Hafiz  
reading

the  
taste  
of  
Infinity

&  
Figs  
*Ellen Compton*

held up to the light  
a portable universe  
the tadpole jam-jar  
*Mark Gilfillan*

cherries jubilee  
what only a fool would  
dare to believe

*Michael Henry Lee*

abandon thought  
all ye  
who'd enter bliss

*Fred Andrie*

wildflowers  
such a world where water  
falls from the sky

*Aron Rothstein*

roadside puddle...  
learning forgiveness  
from a splashing car

*Adjei Agyei-Baah*

chances...  
a mule in the rain  
on a Tuesday

*Adrian Bouter*

getting past a  
wave to get past  
a wave

*Joseph Salvatore Aversano*

reaping  
what I did not sow  
dandelions

*Linda Ahrens*

life stories  
the river flows  
through sunshine and shade

*Katrina Shepherd*

entering the forest enters you

*Ruth Holzer*

just when life seems  
to make sense  
hummingbird eggshell

*Anne Elise Burgevin*

low tide  
an empty beach  
fills with my steps  
*Lori Becherer*

summer vacation  
dividing a school of minnows  
with my legs  
*Rich Schilling*

rope swing  
the back and forth  
of pigtails  
*Louise Hopewell*

late-summer twilight  
I ask for sprinkles  
on my ice cream  
*Hannah Mahoney*

night swim  
we finger paint  
with moonlight  
*Marilyn Ashbaugh*

bases loaded  
the lift of his knee  
before the pitch  
*Hannah Mahoney*

night game  
shadows steal  
from 1<sup>st</sup> to 2<sup>nd</sup>  
*Lesley Anne Swanson*

blown save  
my grandfather cussing  
the Phils in Italian  
*Rick Tarquinio*

one last game  
of street hockey ...  
slapshot into dusk  
*Jacquie Pearce*

Friday night football  
a taste of cherry lipstick  
behind the bleachers  
*Joe McKeon*

September morning  
the school bus closes its door  
on summer

*Karen DiNobile*

she plays Bach on her cello autumn leaves fall

*Marisa Fazio*

deserted road  
the cold wind rolls  
an empty bottle

*Nikolay Grankin.*

rotting woodpile  
the roly-polies tumble out  
with a light kick

*Michael Gallo*

the yellow canoe  
hung upside down—  
autumn stars

*Jennifer Burd*

news of a passing  
the old furnace  
rumbles on  
*Frank Hooven*

her empty chair—  
he eyes himself  
in a coffee spoon  
*M. Kent Travis*

bare foot  
I test the tide  
without you  
*Joanna Ashwell*

pond ripples  
each eventually  
disappears  
*Martin Cossio*

winter shadows  
rabbit tracks in the snow  
between tombstones  
*Joshua Michael Stewart*

another city...  
I linger among pigeons  
in the park

*K. Ramesh*

homeless  
among the skyscrapers  
autumn moon

*Ernest Wit*

the man sleeps  
on a park bench  
broken, as he is

*Theresa Okafor*

gangland  
walking through the crossfire  
of graffiti

*J. Brian Robertson*

padlocked to the gate  
in a bad neighborhood  
Santa's reindeer

*Marita Gargiulo*

adding bookmarks  
along the river  
boats at anchor

*Zdravko Karakehayov*

lingering light—  
out of the river mist  
the sparrow's song

*[to the memory of Fonda Bell Miller]*

*Ellen Compton*

fog-shrouded coast  
we listen  
to the view

*Annette Makino*

ocean depths  
all the sounds  
we do not hear

*Jeannie Martin*

wandering at dusk  
in and out of shadows  
a black dog

*Adelaide B. Shaw*

sheet lightning—  
the canyon wall fills  
with petroglyphs  
*Scott Mason*

shooting stars—  
the dash between  
born and died  
*Colleen M. Farrelly*

the blank page  
I cannot fill...  
father's eulogy  
*Tracy Davidson*

autumn night  
counting the years  
my grandma passed on  
*Precious Oboh*

worry beads  
walking a worn path  
through the woods  
*Susan B. Auld*

tightly pinched eyelids  
hiding warm tears  
caged children

*Wilma McCracken*

newspaper boat  
headlines sink  
into the folds  
*Bryan Rickert*

in the harbour  
morning fog conceals a fleet  
of battle ships  
*Doc Drumheller*

old men arguing  
at the train station ...  
a tree full of crows  
*Sarah Paris*

where there was war  
a sheepdog keeps  
the flock in line  
*LeRoy Gorman*

mom talks  
the endless petals  
of a pink poppy  
*Guliz Mutlu*

frost-covered window—  
she gazes through  
her mother's forgetfulness  
*Gary Evans*

wind chimes  
the notes mum hummed  
on her good days  
*Lew Watts*

mother's illness—  
the night's rain  
held in leaves  
*Salil Chaturvedi*

Lauren Bacall movie  
the way Mom dangled  
her cigarette  
*Bruce H. Feingold*

half moon  
i wash off  
the pill slicer  
*Jennifer Hambrick*

my adult daughter  
refolding  
my folded laundry  
*Mimi Ahern*

open gate  
the way  
my mind wanders  
*Robyn Hood Black*

summer night—  
a passing car shifts  
down a gear  
*Barry George*

firefly in the gloom  
mom tries to recall  
my name  
*Radostina Dragostinova*

open book  
reading from where she  
left off

*Debbie Olson*

spring breeze  
the page turns  
when I let go

*Jeanne Cook*

ask why  
sunlight falls there  
yellow violet

*d w skrivseth*

mindlessness  
summer rain  
evaporates

*Glori J. Berry*

hot air balloon ...  
I un-tether  
myself

*Valentina Ranaldi-Adams*

heat ripples  
above asphalt streets—  
his touch

*Christine Taylor*

old growth forest—  
running her fingers  
through his chest of silver

*Diane Wallihan*

coming home at night  
Venus  
is still above my house

*Mac Greene*

morning rain  
the fading dream of  
my first love

*Dietmar Tauchner*

road's edge  
the color leaving  
the snow

*Gary Hotham*

blueberry pie  
and a call from my sister  
another birthday

*Merrill Gonzales*

blind grandmother  
I cheat at checkers...  
she knows

*Gil Jackofsky*

chicken broth—  
father's hands cup  
an earthen bowl

*Gregory Wright*

frosting on finger  
the two-year-old  
feeds her mother

*Jolin Chan*

weeding with a toddler  
she pulls  
the only flower

*Kathryn Bold*

fishing with dad  
two cast lines  
intertwine  
*Quendryth Young*

Father's Day  
dad ties  
one on  
*Terri L. French*

online donation—  
proving I'm a human  
to the captcha  
*Indra Neil Mekala*

long shoe horn  
no greater invention  
under the circumstances  
*Michael Fessler*

mole cranium  
the rollover  
of unused data  
*Cherie Hunter Day*

kite  
not enough rope  
to reach the clouds  
*Nikolay Grankin*

on the edge  
of the urinal  
a kernel of popcorn  
*John Stevenson*

empty space on the shelf an unreturned book  
*Debbi Antebi*

a slight breeze  
ruffles dust across the floor  
scattering footprints  
*Steve Tabb*

thumbtacks  
in the kiosk's blank corkboard—  
winter rain  
*Mike Spikes*

girl wearing headphones  
her cap says: I don't need you  
I have Wi-Fi

*Doc Drumheller*

punk concert—  
the one girl  
not wearing black

*Stanford Forrester/sekiro*

class clown—  
the teacher  
doesn't laugh

*Stanford Forrester/sekiro*

Bible study  
I discover God's  
darker side

*Gregory Longenecker*

this way and that  
the short fat man chases  
his windblown hat

*Yates Young*

heavy breathing  
my wife and I get off  
our exercise bikes  
*John Dunphy*

we reread the invitation—  
I switch my sneakers  
from white to black  
*John S Green*

antipsychotics  
how a rose never loses  
its thorns  
*Tia Haynes*

briefly covering  
divisions between neighbors  
November leaves  
*Noel Sloboda*

And for all  
you lonely older folks,  
carbon dating!  
*Mark B. Hamilton*

blended whiskey bottle rockets red glare  
*J Hahn Doleman*

Hendrix between chords the whoosh of a pull tab  
*Bill Cooper*

crescent moon  
cradling its  
dark side  
*Richard M. Fye*

summer thunderclap—  
forgetting why we argued  
*Corine Timmer*

After the storm  
keeping the shape of the storm—  
wild pampas grass  
*Edward Zuk*

country vacation  
binge watching stars  
in the nighttime sky  
*Lori Zajkowski*

oars up  
just enjoying  
the drift  
*Jeffrey Ferrara*

painted toes  
even the butterfly  
takes notice  
*Margo Williams*

summer's end  
the sad little carnival  
at the edge of town  
*Stephen Colgan*

vacation over  
pulling out of a driveway  
of broken shells  
*Brad Bennett*

custody battle ...  
the lift trapped  
between the floors

*Aparna Pathak*

domestic disturbance—  
the child tells her dolls  
to be “very quiet”

*Carolyn M. Hinderliter*

shattered glass—  
all that remains from  
the car crash

*Roy Kindelberger*

summer haze  
a guard rail gets hammered  
back into shape

*Tanya McDonald*

lowest limb  
tracing its long trek  
to reach the sun

*Sydney Bougy*

day moon  
half in the pond  
in the sky

*Matthew Caretti*

sand dunes  
the way you keep  
changing your mind

*Olivier Schopfer*

half-eaten sandwich  
at the fire station  
a silent prayer

*Zaid Gamieldeen*

dusk into dark  
slowly lowering  
three fingers of scotch

*Alan S. Bridges*

deep night  
the floating moon retreats  
into the cattails

*Larry Gates*

so many buckeye butterflies  
yet none  
are in the mood  
*Brett Partridge*

porcupines  
our decision  
to sleep apart  
*Mike Stinson*

a promise broken—  
the hollow sound  
of bamboo wind chimes  
*Lorin Ford*

couple's retreat—  
he finally reaches for her hand  
*Frances Greehhut*

white rose  
the silence that comes  
after the last whisper  
*Bona M. Santos*

sanderlings chase  
the edge of breaking surf  
dilapidated castle

*Jane Stewart*

ripple effect  
mallards take off  
one by one

*Barbara Kaufmann*

fishing  
into its own reflection  
the Blue Heron

*George Skane*

sunset—  
the golden bellies  
of migrating geese

*Edward Dewar*

loon  
calling  
the moon

*Dianne Koch*

laundry morning  
dewdrops hanging  
on the clothesline  
*Sandi Pray*

settling into  
my new office chair—  
the dog  
*Kathryn Bold*

the gardener  
has big plans  
for her bonsai trees  
*Paulette Y. Johnston*

coffee table books  
changed out  
for the pastor's visit  
*Marsh Muirhead*

ripped jeans  
the moon poking  
through clouds  
*Colleen M. Farrelly*

'dogs prohibited'—  
that one  
can't read

*Penny O'Hara*

*mandatory evacuation—  
the trees  
disobey*

*Bill Gottlieb*

still the scars  
of jumping barbed wire fences—  
moonshine

*Jessica Malone Latham*

Christmas cactus  
blooms on Easter  
her faith wavers

*Christine Wenk-Harrison*

Spring cleaning the vanity of old trophies

*John Sullivan*

last day of school—  
a paper jam  
left in the copier  
*Julie Warther*

three hands above  
the beach volleyball net  
day moon  
*James Chessing*

back from the beach  
a cow in the tent  
eating cornflakes  
*Lorraine Haig*

summer evening  
on an old Victrola  
a scratchy ragtime tune  
*Patricia J. Machmiller*

last year's pony  
missing from the pasture—  
first day of school  
*Cyndi Lloyd*

the heat ...  
deleting a comma  
placed yesterday  
*Nicholas Klacsanzky*

the pause between  
swings of a bamboo fan  
sweat drops  
*Srinivasa Rao Sambangi*

screen door's rasp and bang—  
no break  
in the heat  
*Jeff Stillman*

heat wave  
an afternoon watching grass  
not grow  
*Matthew Moffett*

summer nap  
finding the groove  
of the oscillating fan  
*Bob Lucky*

roof bathing  
a mosaic of  
beach towels  
*Helen Buckingham*

small talk  
in the community garden ...  
patter of rain  
*Bonnie Stephenoff*

summer evening  
a hand from the apartment window  
pruning marigolds  
*Alex Leavens*

at the end  
of the rainbow a pot  
of gumbo  
*Francine Banwarth*

today's cares  
up in smoke  
evening campfire  
*Ronald K. Craig*

the little girl's toes  
wriggling among the tadpoles—  
spring in the Ozarks

*Bonnie Stepenoff*

the book slips closed ...  
magnolia leaves flicker  
in summer rain

*Aron Rothstein*

unsold crabs  
tossed back dead  
in the winter sea

*Daniel Liebert*

*Corrections from Last Issue*

under our feet  
sand that was once stone  
that was once sand

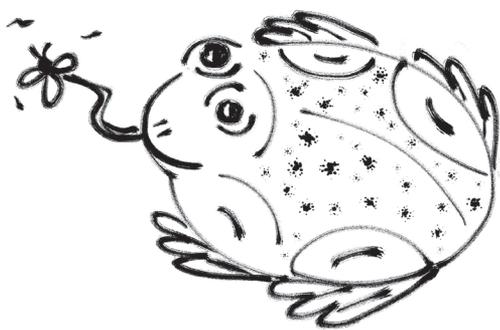
*Brad Bennett (p. 44)*

frosty nights...  
the way he doesn't reach out  
for my hands any more

*Sanjuktaa Asopa (p. 62)*

Apologies for the mis-spelling on p. 88.

It should read: *Yatsuka Ishihara*



# Sequences & Linked Verse

## In The Suburbs

Friday night happy hour—  
some neighbors happier  
than others

after the garage sale  
a baby stroller  
abandoned at the curb

dirty looks  
for the dog walker  
without a plastic bag

squabbling  
over the property line  
the old post fence crumbles

*Catherine Anne Nowaski*

## Passing Trains

talking to myself  
in the rustling leaves of corn . . .  
freight train's horn

in and out  
of the morning's winter fog  
short run train

graffiti letters  
on each passing boxcar  
a language I don't know

through the train window  
the billboard cheerleader  
in autumn rain

a long freight train  
the sparrows on the power line  
pay no attention

so many souls  
crossing the prairie night  
well-lit train cars

spring downpour  
the muted horn of a train  
reaches the cemetery

*Randy Brooks*

## An Added Curve

opening day  
an added curve  
to each pitch

*his bobblehead free  
to the first 100 fans*

open gloves  
the roar of the crowd  
for a foul ball

*strike three –  
the rookie's slow walk  
back to the dugout*

the restroom line longer  
than the seventh-inning stretch

*all star break –  
Hall of Fame odds  
already calculated*

*Julie Warther (Dover, OH)  
Angela Terry  
(Lake Forest Park, WA)*

## Little Things

sea glass...  
the tides giveth  
and taketh away

my fishing rod bends  
to who knows what

a dory on its mooring  
the shallow scoop  
of the new moon

to the blast  
of a ferry horn, my sounds  
disappear

the little things  
that make me happy

beachcombing...  
her fingers intertwine  
with mine

*Alan S. Bridges*

## SEEDS

Sabbath afternoon  
pastor weeding  
on his knees

*he sprinkles carrot seeds  
and a little faith*

how can little ones  
be unwanted  
year of the rabbit

*like wildfire —  
in no time she's surrounded  
by rumors*

she begins to show  
the waxing moon

*a pumpkin vine  
in the flower bed  
blossoming*

*Dan Schwerin (Waukesha, WI)  
Julie Warther (Dover, OH)*

## Last Day of Christmas

last day of Christmas  
a patch of sun  
leaves the cat

*the tree topper back  
snug in its box*

indigo dusk  
a comforter added  
to the bed

*packed in snow  
the burlapped roots  
of a blue spruce*

while we walk  
sparrows shift in the hedge

*scattered at wood's edge  
apples that didn't make  
the cider*

*Dan Schwerin (Waukesha, WI)  
Julie Warther (Dover, OH)*

## Scent of Crayons

gingersnap molasses  
the ice cream shop ends summer  
with a new flavor

*opening my school bag  
to the scent of crayons*

oiled leather  
sliding into penny loafers  
with a shoe horn

*letting down  
my uniform hem  
pins between her lips*

picking an apple  
on the way to the bus stop

*outside the classroom  
the leaves on the maple  
starting to yellow*

*Alan S. Bridges  
Jacquie Pearce*

23

LeBron sweepstakes...  
Johnson performs  
his Magic

free agency ...  
the Lakers acquire  
new fans

fault line ...  
the aftershocks  
in Cleveland

a new frontier...  
the East is left  
behind

Showtime...  
the spotlight on  
L.A.

*Dave Read*

## Slow to Speak

all  
that is not said  
Visiting Day

*at last he speaks  
his service in the Philippines*

still on her dresser  
his uniformed grin  
in sepia

*swatting my butt  
as I climb the stairs  
he yells "ouch"*

he brings the endangered rabbit home  
in his shirt

*solemn news  
father's furrowed brow  
crosses my son's face*

*Valorie Broadhurst Woerdehoff  
Connie R Meester*

## Navajo Land

morning birdsong  
the old woman weaves it  
into her blanket

search for arrowheads  
beside an ant hill  
a shark's tooth

Monument Valley  
a hawk's slow circle  
a sonic boom

lazy buzzard  
waiting for the sun  
to do its job

a dozen iphones  
snap photos of petroglyphs  
signed by a handprint

planting corn  
the old man sings  
to each seed

*Frank Higgins*

## WalkingMeditation

walking meditation  
the newcomer  
with mismatched socks

losing my balance  
in the footsteps  
in front of me

unfocused gaze  
getting in the groove  
of the wooden floor

same creak  
in the same corner  
different

last lap..  
someone sitting  
on my cushion

*Sidney Bending*

## Second Hand

returning home  
so many clouds  
between us

missing her  
the slow arc  
of a full moon

recalling  
the shape of her lips  
sunrise floods the pines

*Mark Alan Osterhaus*

**(Re)Thinking Things**

slow snowfall  
our walk to the woods  
disappears

*Lenten examen  
so much accumulation*

(re)thinking things  
cephalopods  
in the old church wall

*ashes  
the four directions  
mapped on our foreheads*

cardinals in the church yard  
taking off our Mardi Gras masks

*white crocuses  
walking our mothers  
home*

*Kari Davidson  
Holli Rainwater*

## Neighbor's Crèche

billowing laughter  
a family reunion  
at my neighbor's

*once I'm wide awake  
the car alarm stops*

stolen jewelry  
I tell my neighbor  
about each piece

*bees busy  
building a new home  
in our attic*

in our cul-de-sac  
we have the pink flamingoes

*neighbor's crèche –  
one of the wise men  
stands in for Joseph*

*Victor Ortiz  
William Hart*



Haibun

## Resistance

We've gathered once again at the local courthouse. This time we protest the separation of children from their families at our country's southern border. For a few hours we feel empowered by our shared commitment. We hold on to hope. It's a hot late June day. We share shade and sunblock, pass out water bottles and listen to speeches. We sing, we chant, hold up our signs and swap our own immigrant histories. We cheer when passing vehicles honk in solidarity with our cause. But not everyone waves and honks. Some of us pray.

summer heat  
through a truck's open windows  
strains of Dixie

*Kathe L. Palka*

## A Long Day of Play

After a long day of play, the toddler  
snuggles up against my breast, and falls asleep.  
Carefully, I carry him to the bed on which he  
sleeps. I lower him down, he stirs, turns on his side,  
and is still.

Grey afternoon  
I return to the living room  
to watch cartoons

*Melissa Patterson*

### Attention!

Scrawled across the wall of the toilet stall:

“I am 10” long and 3” in diameter.”  
And just below it, in a daintier hand,  
“How nice. And how big is your penis?”

spring in the air  
a wild turkey  
fans his tail

*Carolyn Hall*

### In The Forest Clearing

Sunday morning. The small lake sits quietly at the centre of the clearing, flanked by eucalyptus trees and untamed ferns. At it's mouth are a series of park benches covered in dirt; long neglected. To the sides of the lake the forest thickens. Dark undergrowth can be seen in the distance on the left where the canopy thickens, and to the right, a stairway signals the path ahead. The body of the lake opens to the sun. Birds can be heard chirping intermittently in the skies above. Creatures of the earth rustle about in the grasses below. A gentle Autumn breeze flows through the clearing, cooling the sweat on my back.

Flies dance gracefully  
above the sunlit water  
—far from the office

*Ben Taylor*

## A Different World

To our delight, summer vacation is here once again. These are the days without computers and video games when my brother and I spend as much time as we can outside. Mom needs to reel us back in as the sun goes down. On rainy days, we're restless like caged animals. The kitchen table metamorphoses into a ping-pong tournament under Mom's watchful eye. Once we get bored with that, cards are in order, as is the inevitable wrestling match. Eventually, we settle down with our comic books, restoring peace in the process.

music lesson  
a blade of grass  
now a child's whistle

*Martin Duguay*

## From Autumn to Spring

What do you do when you come across a one-month-old puppy abandoned in a parking lot on a cold November evening? You put her inside your jacket and take her home regardless of the fact that you already have two more dogs to look after. Before you know it, you've fallen in love with her and she becomes part of the family. Wendy, rescued on a Wednesday, passed away on this first Saturday in April after more than a fourteen-year stay.

rainy morning  
yellow daffodils shine  
in the flower bed

*Martin Duguay*

## Trying to Find the Right Key

I wanted to think that after my father died I'd find a stash of old records that would reveal that we shared a love of Nancy Sinatra. I remember a cheap record player, and those boots that were made for walking keep on walking all over my memories. I've forced myself to pretend that we when we meet up in heaven, which is unlikely, we'll sing along in the choir. I know some of the words.

winter fog a half-remembered hymn

*Bob Lucky*

## American Independence Day in Lesotho

The TV room is new. The one hundred channels of satellite connectivity strictly supervised. Screen time limited. Only the older ones allowed in. And yet the children are happy here. The NGO decided they need to know the world. Current events. News. So we shiver together in the antipodal winter. Watch a segment on the separation of immigrant families at America's southern border. They know this is my homeland. Turn to me. A sudden sorrow in their eyes. In my own.

fourth of july  
orphans unravel  
a stars & stripes scarf

*Matthew Caretti*

## Northern Spring – April 22, 2018

Spring teases and taunts us here in the cold north. She comes slowly, flashing glimpses of sunlight on swollen maple buds and then retreats as another storm comes rolling in. People in warmer climates don't know spring the way we do. We wait as the equinox passes and the frustration mounts. We curse the snow and ice that cover the tips of the daffodils. We grudgingly put on our winter coats and boots to go out and scrape the car one more time.

And then, suddenly, she's here for real. We stand outside in a daze, letting the sun warm our pale faces, giddy with the release and opening of that long-awaited first spring day when the blood rises like the sap and races like water rushing downhill to the overflowing creek.

I am no exception. In late April, I enter the forest where my cabin waits in chilly solitude for the first spring fire. I light the match and then sit outside on the step, smelling the birch wood smoke that drifts from the stove pipe, listening to the drip of melting ice, feeling the gentle tug of war between the cool breeze and the warm sun, gazing at the tender sky. Every sense is sharpened, every thought diffused by the awakening.

sun on the hill  
last patches of snow  
surrender

*Munira Judith Avinger*

## Pilgrimage

Together they chart their course. Their aim—to collect 100 countries. Too soon he continues their journey alone.

shrines around the world  
beneath small stones  
some ashes

*Diane Wallihan*

## Paradise Regained

Living in the Garden of Eden and lolling about stark naked in the balmy air was truly wonderful. But then came that fall, a real bummer. Some say it was the fall from primal innocence. Others say perhaps the fall from grace. But I say it was the fall from timelessness into time, rather like an apple falling through space. And then, splat, an unwelcomed encounter with the density of matter. So the question is, how do we rise from the fall? How do we regain the spaciousness of space and not lose touch with pizza, roses, Chopin or the magic of falling in love?

tiny blossoms  
on the baby's bonnet  
your hand in mine

*Michael Sheffield*

## Brandied Peaches

The house came with a dead woman's canning, harvest of her last summer. A dim cellar and deep in chiaroscuro Rembrandt colors of plum jam, yellow squash, green tomato pickles. A stoneware crock of brandied peaches kept alive for years, never depleted, each summer's peaches added and more brandy, sugar, spices.. One sees such crocks in antique shops, scrubbed and empty, or made into clever lamps.

old cobwebs  
husks of tiny lives  
hang and sway

*Daniel Liebert*

## Price for Telling the Truth

She looks like Vivien Leigh in a Streetcar Named Desire. The way her red hair clings to the back of her neck as she pulls from the trunk of her car a photo of herself when she was a young ballet student.

Tiger-lilies in bloom, a bull-nosed snake appears in the swamp water under the bridge where we stand. She tells me she still blames the doctor who didn't save her father's life. I ask how long can you hold a grudge?

When she pressures me to share my opinion about the guy she's crazy over, I say he's not love worthy. He'll fool around and when she's sick, he won't even open a can of soup. She marries him anyway and right when leaves start to fall, he splits. As my consolation prize, she sends a card picturing a coconut cream pie smashed into a woman's face which I assume can only be mine.

A pot  
of winter jasmine  
withered

*Alexis Rotella*

## Hardison Grocery

Beyond the "Sunbeam Bread" screen door were rows of wooden shelves filled with once-common brands, barrels of dried beans, and bins of fresh local produce. There was a rack of country hams and a refrigerated meat case filled with everything from steaks, pork chops, and whole chickens to pig's feet, ox tails, and chitlins.

Just inside, glass bottles of Nehi Grape, Orange Crush, and RC Cola could be found suspended in a metal drink box of ice-cold water. The checkout counter, there was only one, had no moving belts or scanners just a mechanical cash register and a front filled with bins of candy.

Before shopping malls, supermarkets, or fast food, this was where

groceries were bought accompanied by an exchange of gossip. Once every neighborhood had its own grocery and I grew up with such a store owned by my grandparent's.

catching a moment  
and holding it forever...  
an old photograph

*Dan Hardison*

### Door to the Temple

Surrounding the in-home hospital bed, her two cats and favorite hospice worker, hired on the side for cooking, bathing and kissing my dying mother's hand. The family and a few friends enter the door to her room. They nestle between the oxygen machine and stacks of pill bottles, the walker, potty chair and paraphernalia of the sick. And I, across the country, almost another planet. Tending to the old wounds in my own way. With unsettling dreams & guilt-laden phone calls. It's too far to come, she gasps. Of course there's love. But after decades lost to drink, it's no known fact.

red camellias  
she asks where she'll go  
when she stops breathing

*Renée Owen*

### Passage

He was heading home when it happened. The car struck the highway divider and rolled off the embankment. His last words haunt me the most. "I am an organ donor," he told the paramedic. In that moment, he was selfless. And he knew.

west wind  
the horizon blocked  
by a wall of fog

*Shelly Chang*

### Artifice

The trip was her idea. A foreign country, a fresh perspective. At our first hotel, I wondered why she was gloomy. She confessed in tears. She had run out of money and could not borrow more. Of course, it would fall to me to pay for our food and lodging.

smugglers' exhibit  
an ordinary looking shoe  
hides a hollow heel

*Shelly Chang*

### reaching water

Haiku, inevitably, must concern themselves with place. A bird flies-off. Lands somewhere. Yet we recall the exact place from which it flew. A rock

sinks into the lake and one is curious about the bottom. At the end and at the beginning of a poem, it is place that reaches out, embraces, captivates, Enthralls the spirit.

Haiku is a Way of better understanding *place*. Experiencing it to the extent that we would recognize it anywhere. Call it home.

Place, too, refers to what's inside. The place revealed as we open up to beauty, truth, and love, et cetera. Who we are and where we are, by necessity, commingle in the haiku moment. A moment which has more to do with place than it does with time.

When we leave this place, it's only to return...to keep the flow of water. Place gives poem. Poem gives place. And there is room enough for everybody.

rain river stream creek brook rivulet empty canteen

*vincent tripi*  
*June ending 2018*

## Useful

His caseworker told me he was a hoarder, which is a form of mental illness. He saved all kinds of useless junk, even old newspapers and rags. I rent a dumpster and clean out the house. In the basement, I retrieve a set of 1964 encyclopedias. I find scraps of material that I can use when I take up quilting. There are valuable heirlooms, a kerosene lantern, my mother's dishes, and a cradle that may have belonged to my grandmother. The broken golf cart can be repaired and some of the furniture will fit in my garage.

estate sale  
his war medals  
useless

*John Budan*

## Deserted

They'd always had eggs from the chickens. Milk from the cows. A big garden. And twice-a-year pig butchering provided some meat. When they died, neither of their kids wanted the little farm.

empty chicken coop apple blossom float through the open door

*Steve Andrews*

Essays & Articles



# Labor Day

from *A Field Guide to North American Haiku*<sup>1</sup>

Charles Trumbull

This installment of the Field Guide looks at an example of an Observance, which is one of the eight topics of the Japanese *saijiki*, or haiku almanac. In Japanese haiku, Observances include all manner of dates and times of the year that human beings celebrate: public and national holidays and memorials, Buddhist and Shintō festivals (as well as some Christian holy days), traditions, and death dates of famous persons. Because our Field Guide series focuses on English-language haiku, this go-around I have chosen an American holiday, Labor Day. Reference will be made to Canada's Labor Day, which originated independently but is also observed on the first Monday in September as well as to labor holidays elsewhere in the world.

Wikipedia informs us:

Beginning in the late 19th century, as the trade union and labor movements grew, trade unionists proposed that a day be set aside to celebrate labor. "Labor Day" was promoted by the Central Labor Union and the Knights of Labor, which organized the first parade in New York City. In 1887, Oregon was the first state of the United States to make it an official public holiday. By the time it became an official federal holiday in 1894, thirty states in the United States officially celebrated Labor Day.

Over the years, however, the linkage of Labor Day to the workers' movement has all but disappeared. In *haikai* "Labor Day" can be found more often in ironic senryu than in serious haiku:

<sup>1</sup> 'A Field Guide to North American Haiku' is a long-term project along the lines of a haiku encyclopedia-cum-*saijiki*, a selection of the best English-language haiku arranged by topic and illustrating what it is about a given topic that attracts poets to write. When complete, the Field Guide project will comprise multiple thick volumes keyed to the several topics in traditional Japanese *saijiki* (haiku almanac) and Western counterparts, notably William J. Higginson's *Haiku World: An International Poetry Almanac* (1996). These topics are: Season, Sky & Elements, Landscape, Plants, Animals, Human Affairs, and Observances. The current compilation presents 'Observances: holiday: Labor Day plus, in part, May Day.' The haiku are selected from my Haiku Database, currently containing almost 380,000 haiku. Publishing these miniature topical haiku anthologies is an experiment to test the feasibility of the larger Field Guide project. Critique and suggestions, supportive or critical, are warmly invited; please comment by e-mail to [trumbulle@comcast.net](mailto:trumbulle@comcast.net).

Labor Day  
the indolence  
of flags

Michele L. Harvey, *The Heron's Nest* 20:2 (June 2018)

Labor Day  
no strikers  
at the factory gate

Larry Rungren, *Boston Haiku Society News*, October 1997

Labor Day  
the silence of the bulldozer  
sitting in the rain

James Chessing, *Bottle Rockets* 32 (16:2, 2015), 22

Labor Day  
in the acequia madre  
water runs clear

Elizabeth Searle Lamb, *hokku* from "Water Runs Clear,"  
a Solo Kocho Renku, Lamb, *Across the Windharp* (1999)

Labor Day  
filing for  
unemployment compensation

Caroline Giles Banks, *The Clay Jar* (2013), 52

my PC  
unwilling to start up  
Labor Day

Suzuki Teiichi, *Mainichi Daily News*  
*Haiku in English*, Sept. 1, 2014

For most people now, Labor Day marks the end of the summer season—  
one last blast before the weather changes—much as Memorial Day is  
welcomed as the beginning of summer. This is thus a time of wistfulness  
and reflection:

Labor Day weekend —  
half-an-hour left to watch  
the outgoing tide

Paul Watsky, *Modern Haiku* 29.1 (winter–spring 1998), 16

Labor Day  
—locking summer into  
the empty cabin

Carol Purington, *Haiku Headlines*, September 1999

Labor Day  
the roller coaster  
sighs to a stop

Dian Duchin Reed, *Acorn* 40 (spring 2018)

Labor Day weekend  
I dump the McDonald's bag  
for the last few fries

Charles Trumbull, *Bottle Rockets* 6:2 (#12, 2005), 10

Labor Day  
a spot of barbecue sauce  
on the face of my watch

Carlos Colón, *The Heron's Nest* 10:4 (December 2008)

wearing white  
after Labor Day  
spinster's diary

Edith Muesing-Ellwood, *Modern Haiku* 42:2 (summer 2011), 104

If Labor Day marks the end of summer, it equally signals the beginning of autumn. The mood is a return to serious pursuits. Beachgoers and campers have to go back to the office rat race. In my day, too, school started a day or two after Labor Day, both of which emphasized the swing of the pendulum from the joyful and frivolous to the serious and even lonely. Higginson mentions Labor Day in passing in his discussion of the start and end of school and says it is an early autumn topic for haiku.<sup>2</sup>

Labor Day evening:  
crescendo of crickets and  
returning traffic

Joyce W. Webb, *Dragonfly* 3:1 (January 1975)

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<sup>2</sup> 'End of School,' in William J. Higginson, *The Haiku Seasons: Poetry of the Natural World* (Tokyo, New York, and London: Kodansha International, 1996), 132.

Labor Day traffic  
the whole field full of  
drying onions

Jack Barry, *All Nite Rain* (2008), 35

ELEGY: E.E.

cummings left )a leaf)  
no lonelier than our (fresh(  
fall of labor day

Raymond Roseliep, "A Scale of Haiku" [sequence],  
in *Love Makes the Air Light* (1965)

back to school  
unlearning  
the whole summer

Sanjukta Asopa, *The Heron's Nest* 13:4 (December 2011)

Taking the longer view, autumn is the season when we begin thinking about what comes next: winter, the end of things. Preparations must be made.

chilly ...  
the last Labor Day float  
out of view

Tyrone McDonald, *Modern Haiku* 39:2 (summer 2008), 57

deserted beach  
alone with the waves  
of Septemberness

Jane Reichhold, in *A Dictionary of Haiku* (1st ed., 1992)

Labor Day  
the fall cheeks  
of a chipmunk

Michele Root-Bernstein, *South by Southeast* 14:3 (2007)

labor day—  
I dust off  
my resumé

Tim Singleton, *Temps Libres/Free Times Favorites*

Labor Day  
finally  
I join AARP

Marsh Muirhead, *Modern Haiku* 42:1 (winter–spring 2011)

Coming two months before election day in the U.S., the long weekend used to be the beginning of the political season, and in the last century political speeches an integral part of town Labor Day picnics and parades. No longer, I think—at least I find no haiku capturing that bit of vanishing Americana. Still, occasionally one can find a bit of sociopolitical commentary in a haiku:

no illegals  
at the festival —  
Labor Day

Ruth Holzer, *Bottle Rockets* 18 (9:2, 2008), 27

Canadians also celebrate Labour Day in pretty much the same way as is done in the United States, enjoying a long weekend in the country or at the beach and reflecting on the ending summer or anticipating the fall:

Labor Day frost  
great to have a job to have  
a day off

LeRoy Gorman, *Modern Haiku* 26:2 (summer 1995), 32

Labour Day —  
house flies soak up the last rays  
on the fence screw heads

Richard Stevenson, in Amarjit Sathi Tiwari et al., eds.,  
*Painting Sunlight: A Trilingual Canadian Haiku Anthology* (2015)

*Fête du Travail*  
*découverte au retour du chalet*  
*le calendrier indique juin*

Labour Day  
back home from the cottage  
June on the calendar

Jocelyne Villeneuve, trans. William J. Higginson,  
in *Wind in the Long Grass* (1991)

at the beach  
back to school  
sale

Marco Fraticelli, *Between Each Wave* (Haiku Canada Sheet 1998–99)

In Europe and many other places May 1 is the workers' holiday. The origins of the May Day holiday lie deep in Gaelic and Wiccan (the Beltane holiday), Roman (Floralia), and Germanic (Walpurgisnacht) traditions as spring festivals typically featuring flowers, bonfires, dancing, and sweets. Such celebrations of May Day are still common worldwide. Most haiku poets writing about May Day focus on traditions such as flowers, fertility, and rebirth.

May Day —  
bees collecting nectar  
from wilted azaleas

Kuniharu Shimizu, *The Heron's Nest* 4:8 (August 2002)

May Day  
the jingling shins  
of Morris dancers

André Surridge, *Kernels* [Web] 2 (summer 2013)

May Day  
a balloon escapes  
the subway car

Jeanne Emrich, *Moonset* 1 (2005)

May Day carries the sense of the beginning of summer. The modern appropriation of May Day, often renamed International Worker's Day or some such, as a celebration of labor and workers' rights seems to be almost accidental. Wikipedia notes:

The date was chosen by a pan-national organization of socialist and communist political parties to commemorate the Haymarket affair, which occurred in Chicago on 4 May 1886. The 1904 Sixth Conference of the Second International, called on "all Social Democratic Party organisations and trade unions of all countries to demonstrate energetically on the First of May for the legal establishment of the 8-hour day, for the class demands of the proletariat, and for universal peace."

Especially in these countries, May Day has gone beyond a celebration of labor into an occasion for patriotic parades and for state demonstrations of industrial and military prowess:

May Day rally  
political pamphlets  
folded into airplanes

Michael Fessler, *Blithe Spirit* 22:1 (March 2012)

*Maiprozession —  
im Asphalt der Abdruck  
eines Panzers*

Mayday procession —  
the impression in the asphalt  
of a tank

Martina Heinisch, translated probably by the poet,  
in Dimitar Anakiev, comp., *Kamesan's World Haiku  
Anthology on War, Violence and Human  
Rights Violation* (2013)<sup>3</sup>

Poets writing about this holiday must exercise caution. The term “Mayday” can also signify the international distress call, the voice equivalent of “SOS” in Morse code. Danger may be what the late Johnny Baranski had in mind in his haiku

May Day!  
cornfield furrows all around  
a missile silo

*Modern Haiku* 18.2 (summer 1987)

The Japanese celebrate Labor Thanksgiving Day (勤労感謝の日, *Kinrō kansha no hi*) on November 23. Like the Western May Day, it lays a modern proletarian holiday over an ancient harvest festival, *Niinamesai* (新嘗祭). The emperor still performs the traditional harvest ceremonies privately in the palace by presenting the year's newly cut grain to the Shintō gods. After World War II, Labor Thanksgiving Day was established as a secular holiday to mark the enshrinement of human rights and workers' rights in the postwar Japanese constitution. May Day is also observed by some in Japan.

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<sup>3</sup> Curiously, this haiku was entered in the 42nd A-Bomb Day Memorial Contest (2008) in Japan with the first line 'Way of the Cross.'

Labor Thanksgiving Day is a *kigo* for early winter, but both it and May Day (an early spring *kigo*) are used relatively rarely in Japanese haiku:

職移り 職移り 勤労感謝の日

*shoku utsuri shoku utsuri kinrō kansha no hi*

*moving from  
a job to a job  
Labor Thanksgiving Day*

Usaki Fuyuo, Kaneko Tōta, Kuroda Momoko,  
and Natsuishi Ban'ya, eds., *Gendai saijiki*  
("Modern Saijiki") (1997), translated by  
Fay Aoyagi, *Blue Willow Haiku World*, Nov. 23, 2009

メーデーのない日本のストライキ

*Mēdē no nai Nihon no sutoraikī*

*In a Japan  
that has no May Day:  
strike.*

Tsuru Akira, *Tsuru, Sutoraikū* ("Strike"), 1937, translated  
by Richard H. Minear, 'The Proletarian Senryū of Tsuru  
Akira,' *Modern Haiku* 44.1 (winter–spring 2013)

ガスタンクが夜の目標メーデー来る

*gasu tanku ga yoru no mokuhyō Mēdē kuru*

*a gas tank is  
a destination for the night  
May Day comes*

Tōta Kaneko, in Kaneko Tōta, Kuroda Momoko,  
and Natsuishi Ban'ya, eds., *Gendai saijiki*  
("Modern Saijiki") (1997), translated by Fay Aoyagi,  
*Blue Willow Haiku World*, May 1, 2009

'Labor Day' in its various manifestations is a popular *kigo* or season word. As effectively as 'cicada' or 'autumn wind'—and rather focusing on human nature—Labor Day marks the end of the summer season and the coming of autumn

## Loading a Gun: Imagery in Haiku

David Grayson

Several years ago, coming home from work, I was robbed at gunpoint. I was walking to my car from a subway station and three young men approached me. One lifted a handgun from his jacket pocket and pointed it directly at me.

Although many years have passed, the details of this episode remain clear and vivid: an overcast sky pregnant with moisture; the odor of alcohol on the breath of one assailant; the thin handgun barrel, which looked almost like a toy. In that moment, I truly had no idea if I was going to make it out alive.

gunshot—  
a rush of crows  
peppers the sky

*Isabelle Prondzynski<sup>1</sup>*

Fortunately, I was not hurt. The following day, I was relating the details to a friend. He asked what went through my mind as the situation unfolded. I remembered that a feeling of dread enveloped me but I didn't recall "thinking" anything. Rather, I saw images of my children. Facing the prospect of death, my reflexive response was without words.

A recent Harvard study confirmed the primacy of thinking in images or pictures, also known as "visual thinking." It found that "visual thinking is deeply ingrained in the brain" and that "even when people consciously attempt to think verbally, visual thinking nearly always intrudes." One of the lead researchers, Elinor Amit, hypothesizes that this behavior is evolutionary: "For a long time, we understood our world visually, so maybe language is an add-on."<sup>2</sup> Lynell Burmark, a well-known educator in the field of visual literacy, notes that "we process images 60,000 times faster than words."<sup>3</sup> These findings underscore why the haiku form can be so effective at transmitting or sharing a moment, and also what makes a particular poem successful.

Of course, strong imagery has long been understood to be a key part of poetry. It's important to keep in mind that it is close attention to detail

that is crucial. Amy Lowell wrote that in order to “present an image,” the poem “should render particulars exactly and not deal in vague generalities, however magnificent and sonorous.”<sup>4</sup> In her poetry primer, Mary Oliver observes: “It is the detailed, sensory language incorporating images that gives the poem dash and tenderness.”<sup>5</sup> Even a single concrete detail can make the difference between an image that is effective and one that is not.

late call for dinner  
the click of a toy gun  
in the twilight<sup>6</sup>

Ron Moss’ poem conjures a familiar scene: a child playing outside in the thinning light, maybe reluctant to leave the world of his or her imagination. Moss invokes a second sense (hearing) to help paint the scene. The word “click” is onomatopoeic and it brings the reader directly into the presence of the child outside. Deploying more than one sense can reinforce and fill in a picture. Robert Spiess noted, “I find that the better haiku poets use multiple sense-imagery...”<sup>7</sup>

birthday cake  
the cowboys and cowgirls  
drop their guns<sup>8</sup>

In a snapshot, Nick Hoffman exposes the ubiquity of guns in American society, even as toys. The “birthday cake” instantly sets the scene of a childhood milestone. “Cowboys and cowgirls” reference a national archetype. While humorous, Hoffman’s poem prompted an intellectual response for me—a result of my first-hand experience. Whatever one’s position in the gun control debate, it’s undeniable that firearms occupy a symbolic seat in American culture—relating to conceptions of independence, safety, and power, as well as connection to nature (hunting). Hoffman’s haiku led me to ask if I was a victim not only of three individuals but also of a violent dimension of this ethos.

Machine gun: between his eyebrows a red flower blooms<sup>9</sup>

Ezra Pound admonished poets to “use no superfluous word, no adjective, which does not reveal something.”<sup>10</sup> Saito Sanki does not waste a single word in his haiku. In this English translation, each of the three units is essential. “Machine gun” and “between his eyebrows” represent the subject (indirectly) and direct object, respectively. The third element, “a red

flower blooms,” is both literal and figurative. A blooming flower conveys the sudden onrush of red blood from the gunshot, forcefully describing the denouement. What some might consider to be an inherent handicap when compared to other forms of writing (less words) is an advantage for Sanki. Brevity compels the elimination of each extraneous word.

inside the apple core  
a pocket full of sorry  
kills the gun<sup>11</sup>

Non literal work, from LANGUAGE poetry to some gendai haiku, forces the reader to see words afresh, outside of their normal sequence and context. In Alan Summers’ haiku, the phrase “apple core” conjures something essential and constitutive. The line “a pocket full of sorry” evokes considerable (“full”) pain and regret. “Gun” is the final word and it closes with a hard consonant. It seems that something vital has been extinguished. Three disparate images combine to convey a sentiment of pain and death. While semantically non-linear, it’s important to recognize that Summers’ words are sharp and concrete.

The categories “verbal” and “visual” are not wholly separate, however. A neuroscientist and literary scholar, Laura Otis points out that the two “coexist in every mind” and reflects that creativity “often emerges when they interact.”<sup>12</sup> Burmark says that “there is a natural progression in the way we process information: first the image, then the words.”<sup>13</sup>

more automatic words about weapons<sup>14</sup>

It is the interplay between our interior images and words that is the difficult work of composition. This may entail juxtaposition, a key practice of the haiku poet. More fundamental, it involves choosing the appropriate words and removing those that do not contribute (or those that distract or dilute the picture). As John Stevenson reminds us, such discipline is not always evident in public discourse.

Removed in time from my experience, I nevertheless still remember it visually. I’ve retained the indelible image of the revolver, as if I am still standing on the wet pavement. But paired with it is another image that I treasure: my family.

## Notes

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# H is for Haiku:

## A Treasury of Haiku from A to Z

by Sydell Rosenberg

*Amy Losak Interviewed by Robert Epstein*

You recently published a children's haiku book, *H is for Haiku: A Treasury of Haiku from A to Z* (Penny Candy Books), which your late mother, Sydell Rosenberg, wrote some years ago. Could you start by providing readers with some biographical information about your mother and her beginnings as a haiku poet?

Sydell Rosenberg (1929-1996) was a New York City teacher and writer. Syd wrote poetry, short stories, literary and word puzzles; and more. In the early 1950s, I believe shortly after graduating from Brooklyn College, she published a racy novel entitled, *Strange Circle*. From what I can remember or was told, Syd wrote this book (she had a different title, *Sham Bottom*) on a dare from her boss at a NYC publishing company where she worked as a copyeditor, after she had "complained" about the quality of the manuscripts she worked on. It was published under a male pseudonym, Gale Sydney, the reversal of her maiden name initials, Sydell Gasnick. I believe this potboiler sold a respectable number of copies for its time. The number that sticks in my head is 270,000. Interestingly, there are copies available online. Mom could be a gentle rebel at times. I love that she wrote this "dirty book!"

Sometime in the 1960s, she "found" haiku. And it found her. How, I don't know. But this form and the haiku community became an important part of her creative and intellectual life until she died.

According to the 1974 *Haiku Anthology*, mom published her first haiku in 1967, in *American Haiku*. But I think she published haiku before then, in 1966, in the poetry column of a long-defunct newspaper. In 1968, she became a charter member of the Haiku Society of America. She attended the founding meeting that October. In 1975, she served as HSA's secretary. Mom also served on two Merit Book Awards.

What themes typically appeared in your mother's haiku, and did she venture into any of the related forms like senryu, haiga, or haibun?

Syd wrote the occasional tanka. I know that one about a squirrel was published in a 1980s issue of *Wind Chimes* (publisher/editor, Hal Roth). She may also have ventured into haibun, but I don't know if any were published. Mom collaborated on an enjoyable renga with haijin Doris Heitmeyer and L.A. Davidson. "Violin Case Renga" was published in *Frogpond* in 1987 and was composed from August 15, 1984 through July 9, 1985. The first four links of the sequence were published in *The Christian Science Monitor* on October 8, 1986. Also, mom's well-known, "In the laundermat" was included in the 1994 public art project, "Haiku On 42nd Street." What a fantastic and novel endeavor! (Before 1994, "In the laundermat had been published several times: *Modern Haiku*, *The Haiku Anthology*, and *The Haiku Handbook*.)

What prompted your mother's interest in writing a haiku book for children?

Mom was a teacher—English, literacy, and also adult ESL. Her desire to publish a children's poetry book (preferably an alphabet book) took root such a long time ago. She may have been submitting at least one of her manuscripts back in the 1970s, as well as the 1980s. As a teacher, I think she probably thought her short poems would be ideal for children, due to their visually striking, miniature "story-like" appeal. She was right.

Can you describe the format and content of *H is for Haiku* and how children will benefit from reading it with their parents and/or teachers?

*H Is For Haiku: A Treasury of Haiku from A to Z*, is an A-B-C reader. This approach provides a fine conceptual framework for mom's 'word-picture' poems which highlight a number of simple 'moments' we might tend to overlook. While this compilation is intended for young readers, I think older readers will enjoy these poems, as well.

Could you give us some examples of your mother's haiku that appear in the book?

I love this one:

So pale—it hardly sat  
on the outstretched branch  
of the winter night.

“So pale” was published three times, twice in *Haiku West* and on her memorial page in the December, 1996 issue of *Frogpond*. It won a 1968 *Haiku West* ‘best-of-issue’ award. I ‘discovered’ “So pale” a few years ago and I have warmed to it.

I also love:

Adventures over  
the cat sits in the fur ring  
of his tail, and dreams.

“Adventures over” was published in *SCTH* (“*Sonnet Cinquain Tanka Haiku*”) in 1967. Mom never had cats living in NYC apartments, but she loved cats – their grace and play. I think she found their personalities endlessly fascinating to observe. I have loved this one for decades. (This haiku is inscribed on her half of my parents’ double headstone.)

I enjoy these two because of their simplicity. And they are evocative. In the first, mom doesn’t specify what “it” is, which adds to its serene and gentle mystery. In the second, I like the subtle cleverness of ‘fur ring,’ which rhymes with ‘purring.’

How do the illustrations by Sawsan Chalabi complement and enrich the haiku in the book?

Sawsan’s illustrations and lettering, which are wittily integrated with the poems, brim with vitality! Her vivid, active style underscores the poems’ sweetness and humor.

How do you think that aspiring young haiku poets will benefit from reading your mother’s book?

The most important takeaway or ‘lesson’ from this book, I think, is to pay attention to so-called “small moments.” Allow yourself to slow down and linger. Observe. Let random bits of life sink in. You

might find poetry in them. But even if you don't, your life will likely become a little richer, as a result.

What did you learn about your mother in the process of working with the manuscript?

I came to better appreciate her free spirit and sometimes restless mind – her unique way of engaging with the world. We always knew she was “different” – unconventional. Writing validated her expansive and sometimes intense approach to life. Haiku's demands gave her latitude – they “freed” her creatively. I understand this better now.

Did you modify your mother's work in any way prior to publication?

Yes, I edited some of the poems, including the book's title. I also left much of her work intact.

What meaning did it have for you to bring your late mother's manuscript to print?

It's difficult to express what this endeavor has meant to me. It's been a joy, a labor of love I hope brings value and happiness to readers. This has brought me closer to mom, in some ways. But it also was very difficult, and it was not a linear path. I could not have even started this project, let alone completed it, without the support of a legion of people – poets and children's authors; my husband, Cliff; my brother, Nathan; sister-in-law, Debbie; other family members; friends and coworkers. I cannot adequately convey how thankful and grateful I am to everyone for their encouragement.

Did your mother teach you to write haiku when you were growing up? If so, can you provide readers with any examples of your early haiku?

As I mentioned, mom tried to engage me. Sadly, I wasn't very receptive. But, as a child, I vaguely remember a haiku I wrote about a “frightened chipmunk” which she sent off to that same long-defunct newspaper I mentioned earlier. I think it was published and I may have the old clipping around somewhere.

But mom did have an influence on me. I realized this the day she died in 1996. I made a contribution to the HSA in her memory not

long after. I joined myself a few years ago. I write my own haiku, and I'm trying to learn about this rich poetic form.

Could you provide readers with some examples of more recent haiku that you have written?

Here are a few that were published. I hope to continue learning and growing:

midtown fountain  
the dancer pirouettes  
with a pigeon

*(The Heron's Nest, September, 2017)*

darkened house  
I walk through the front door  
dripping stars

*(Blithe Spirit, February, 2018)*

dead of night  
a cat and his owner yawn  
in unison

*(Akitsu Quarterly, Summer 2017)*

peeling tree bark  
she hides her spotted hands  
in the interview

*(Jennifer Hambrick/International Women's Haiku Festival, March 23, 2017;  
Wild Voices, Volume 2, 2018, edited by Caroline Skanne)*

planting herself in the window box calico cat

*(Haiku Foundation/Haiku Windows:  
window box, March 28, 2018)*

What else would you like to share about your mother's contribution and legacy with respect to English-language haiku literature?

Mom was a devoted haiku adherent. She was there at the beginning of HSA, and her involvement made a difference. I'm proud of her and her overall accomplishments as a writer.

<https://www.pennycandybooks.com/shop/haiku>

<https://www.amazon.com/H-Haiku-Treasury-Z/dp/0998799971>

# Translations of haiku

written by Japanese comfort women

Tadao Okazaki

By now you must be  
near the Ferry of Komagata—  
calls of a summer bird

*Takao Tayuh the Comfort Woman\**  
*the second (-1660)*

To cheer myself  
I pluck a string of the harp—  
spring rain

*Kasen (ca. 1716–1776)*  
*Anthology of a Hundred Haiku Poets*  
*(“Comfort Woman\* Kasen” by*  
*Michiko Nakajima 1985 Keisei Shuppan)*

Floaty sheet of ice  
forming in the nook of stream  
where the flow rests a night

*Kasen the Comfort Woman\* (ca. 1716–1776)*

Parting early in the morning  
we gaze at each other  
on a snow-lit path

*Kasen the Comfort Woman\* (ca. 1716–1776)*  
*(“Almanac of Love” by Osamu Takahashi 1998*  
*Kadokawa)*

Being a comfort woman\*  
is my bread and butter—  
golden daffodil

*Shizuko Suzuki (1919–date unknown)*  
*(“Shizuko—a Haiku poet called prostitute”*  
*R.Kawabata 2011 Shinchosha)*

*\*Entertaining female artist who, depending on circumstances, provided customers with physical services.*

# The HSA Merit Book Awards for books published in 2017

Gary Hotham, HSA 1<sup>st</sup> Vice-President

Judges: Melissa Allen and Brad Bennett

HAIKU —

**First:** Peter Newton, *The Searchable World*

**Second:** Elmedin Kadric, *buying time*

**Third:** Carolyn Hall, *Calculus of Daylilies*

## Honorable Mentions

(unranked, listed alphabetically by author's last name):

Chuck Brickley, *earthshine*

Cherie Hunter Day, *for Want*

Kristen Deming, *plum afternoon*

Jim Kacian, *after image*

— Judges' Comments —

## First Place

Peter Newton, *The Searchable World*

(adapted from the Modern Haiku review by judge Brad Bennett)

In *The Searchable World*, Newton shares what he has discovered during his life-long study of the world we live in. We are the lucky recipients of his tide pool of treasures. Newton's poems are simple yet enduring, personal yet universal, observational yet philosophical. He writes humbly, honestly, and refreshingly. Newton uncovers moments that are familiar, but he examines them in new ways that resonate. He is adept at using less

when less will do. We learn about ourselves as Newton measures himself up against what he is observing.

### Second Place

Elmedin Kadric, *Buying Time*

*Buying Time*, by one of the most interesting new haiku poets to emerge in the last few years, is full of fresh, startling perceptions and razor-sharp language. Several of these haiku seem destined to become new classics (rock paper scissors war; in my voice / briefly / the cave mouth). This collection, which will appeal to readers of many tastes, rewards many rereadings.

### Third Place

Carolyn Hall, *Calculus of Daylilies*

This collection by one of our most esteemed haiku poets is lush with expertly crafted haiku. How does she continue to delight and amaze? As the title suggests, Hall expertly juxtaposes natural garden images with human technology and artifacts. Her language is welcoming and fresh, and her poems are authentic and vulnerable. A handful of political poems are deftly achieved by focusing on the concrete. Hall deliberates over each word, and because of it, we are enriched.

**Honorable Mentions** (unranked, listed alphabetically by author's last name)

Chuck Brickley, *earthshine*

*Earthshine* is the subtle sunlight reflected from the Earth that rounds out a crescent moon, and Brickley's haiku are equally subtle and significant. This quiet but resonant collection is his first and includes his best haiku from over forty years of writing. Each poem is expertly crafted as to appear effortless. Every time we read this book we discover something new. These are pure haiku moments purely illuminated. They heal, they nourish, they leave us feeling hopeful.

Cherie Hunter, *Day, for Want*

(from the Frogpond review by judge Melissa Allen)

The poems in this chapbook are full of small things, common things, things that are generally overlooked, but through Day's eyes expand to take on outsize human importance (thistledown / a fugitive / at flight's

end). Day skillfully connects the human condition to the condition of all the other life forms on the planet, giving a sense of cosmic meaning to our suffering. There's a sly humor to many of the pieces, too, a combination that encourages rereading.

Kristen Deming, *plum afternoon*

This is Deming's first full-length collection of haiku gathered from thirty years of writing. As her title suggests, this book is padded with soft, lush haiku. Deming follows the lead from one of her haiku (after the diagnosis— / looking deeper / into blossoms) by diving deeply into traditional, well-loved haiku moments (e.g. flying geese, falling leaves, cicadas) in fresh ways. Each moment is a perfect moment, and each poem is expertly crafted—there are many gems.

Jim Kacian, *after image*

*after image* is a substantial, rewarding collection of thought-provoking haiku, with a complex structure underlying it that increases the satisfaction of the reader. The way many of the haiku are connected is, as Kacian points out in his introduction, puzzle-like. Artwork and concrete haiku make this an even richer collection. These haiku are pleasing both individually and as part of a collective work of art.

HAIBUN —

Glenn G. Coats, *waking and dream*

Honorable Mention:

Stella Pierides, *Of This World*

— Judges' Comments —

Glenn Coats, *waking and dream*

Coats, long one of our finest haibun poets, writes prose that is steady and unassuming, but satisfying. He recounts episodes that are deceptively simple but often reveal themselves, the more you think about them, to be dark and deep. He's especially adept at pairing his prose with a haiku that helps reveal the currents running underneath. From The Rock Valley

Session, a piece about a wayward, musical son: a new year / the wind picks up / where it left off.

### Honorable Mention

Stella Pierides, *Of This World*

In this fine haibun collection, Pierides addresses a wide variety of subject matter as she moves fluidly between tones—philosophical, heart-wrenching, ironic, humorous. Some of the prose is conventional and some highly experimental; likewise the haiku (a frog jumps in / intertextuality / for beginners). No matter how short or light-hearted, none of the pieces feel slight, and the variety is delightful.

### PROSE —

Scott Mason, *The Wonder Code*

### Honorable Mention:

Michele Root-Bernstein and Francine Banwarth, *The Haiku Life: What We Learned as Editors of Frogpond*

### — Judges' Comments —

Scott Mason, *The Wonder Code*

We had a hard time classifying this innovative and significant addition to our haiku libraries. Is it prose? Is it an anthology? Is it a personal collection? In this paean to the joy and wonder of haiku, Mason actually gives us all three. This is a welcome read for the novice and the experienced practitioner alike. The book is carefully organized into sections of five haiku “imperatives” (e.g. “think small”). The prose is fresh, friendly, and engaging, and Mason also illustrates his imperatives with five “galleries” of haiku from two decades of *The Heron’s Nest* that often include intriguing and insightful pairings with delightful connections. And to top it off, Mason includes a “Solo Exhibition” of his own masterful haiku and witty senryu that we’ve been savoring in journals and contests for years.

## Honorable Mention

Francine Banwarth and Michele Root-Bernstein, *The Haiku Life*

In this appealingly compact volume, two past editors of Frogpond analyze their editorial choices to develop a highly convincing working haiku aesthetic. This book seems likely to become an indispensable read for anyone working seriously to advance as a haiku poet or editor of haiku. It also works as a fine anthology of many of the best poems published in Frogpond during the years Banwarth and Root-Bernstein were editing.

## ANTHOLOGY —

Lenard D. Moore, editor, *One Window's Light*

### Honorable Mention:

Jim Kacian and Dee Evetts, editors, *A New Resonance 10*

## — Judges' Comments —

Lenard D. Moore, Editor, *One Window's Light*

This fine collection of haiku by five members of the Carolina African American Writers' Collective breaks new ground. This first multi-contributors' collection of African American haiku is uniquely organized into topics such as Families, Language, Teachings, History, and Folklore. The haiku in these sections gift us with glimpses of various aspects of black southern culture, and we are the better for it. Authentic, earthy, heartfelt, and powerful, these poems are at the same time a cultural primer and a jazz composition. Through their words, these poets are facing history, facing the present, and facing the future.

## Honorable Mention

Jim Kacian and Dee Evetts, Editors, *A New Resonance 10: Emerging Voices in English-Language Haiku*

Another wonderful collection of blossoming haiku poets, the tenth in two decades. Seventeen poets, fifteen poems each, high quality throughout.

The editors, Kacian and Evetts, provide intriguing paragraphs of commentary about each poet. Each well-chosen selection of poems gives the reader a solid glimpse into that poet's style. We are encouraged by the fact that more than half of these poets were born outside of the U.S., a testament to the range of English-language haiku.

### *Judges*

Melissa Allen and Brad Bennett were the judges this year. Almost 100 books were submitted and they each received a full set to read. I thank them for the time and effort they took in evaluating the entries for each category.

### Entries by category —

haiku - 52

haibun 14

prose 5

anthologies 10

For those of you new to the world of English language haiku, the excellent work in these selections will help you understand and write your own. Here is the information for each book that will help you obtain a copy:

*The Searchable World*—contact Peter Newton by e-mail: [thepeternewton@gmail.com](mailto:thepeternewton@gmail.com) or mail a check for \$15 (includes shipping) to: Peter Newton, 12 High Street, Winchendon, MA 01475

*buying time*—sold out at Red Moon Press, but the author has copies. Contact him at [elmedinkadric@hotmail.com](mailto:elmedinkadric@hotmail.com) or his website: [www.elmedinkadric.com](http://www.elmedinkadric.com)

*Calculus of Daylilies*—available from [redmoonpress.com](http://redmoonpress.com)

*earthshine*—copies available from the author's website: [chuckbrickley.com](http://chuckbrickley.com) or the publisher: [snapshotpress.co.uk](http://snapshotpress.co.uk)

*for Want*—[ornithopterpress.com](http://ornithopterpress.com)

*plum afternoon*—available from [redmoonpress.com](http://redmoonpress.com)

*Of This World*—available from [redmoonpress.com](http://redmoonpress.com)

*waking and dream*—available from [redmoonpress.com](http://redmoonpress.com)

*after/image*—available from [redmoonpress.com](http://redmoonpress.com)

*The Wonder Code*—[www.thewondercode.com](http://www.thewondercode.com)

*The Haiku Life*—\$15 (includes shipping) to U.S. addresses. Canadian addresses, \$22 (includes shipping) Outside the U.S. & Canada, \$27

(includes shipping) Available online from [www.modernhaiku.org](http://www.modernhaiku.org). Or order by sending cash or check to: Modern Haiku Press, Box 68, Lincoln, IL 62656 USA.

*One Window's Light*—email: [LMoore@umo.edu](mailto:LMoore@umo.edu)

*A New Resonance*—available from [redmoonpress.com](http://redmoonpress.com)

One full set of the Merit Book Award entries goes to the official archives of the Haiku Society of America: the American Haiku Archives (AHA) at the California State Library in Sacramento, California. The other set is divided up among the two judges as a small token of appreciation for their work.

# 2018 Harold G. Henderson Haiku Contest

Judged by Lorin Ford and Lee Gurga

As judges of the Henderson contest, we had the privilege to read what poets in 2018 see as their best haiku. We looked for haiku that were an invitation rather than merely a picture, that must take us beyond the scene itself; that were not just cause and effect; that had an effect that would move the heart or mind in some way not sentimental to nudge, hint, inspire the reader to feel or see some new connection; that in haiku with more than one image, the second or third image must add something material to the first, rather than being merely “tacked on”; that in haiku with humor, the humor should be incidental to the overall effect. In other words, we didn’t want to see “just irony” as the point of the haiku. In addition, we preferred haiku with a seasonal or nature image and were particularly interested in haiku that offered an invitation rather than instruction.

There were many fine haiku in the group that we were privileged to consider. Not all were equally good, though. We found it is interesting, and a little disheartening, that 50 years into the history of the HSA a substantial number of the entries showed an understanding of haiku merely as a 17 syllable verse, often in the form of a complete sentence or two complete sentences or even three, or of haiku as merely a container to display wit or tell a story, an exposition rather than in invitation.

We are delighted to recognize the following haiku for their excellence:

## *First Place*

sun-bleached billboard  
the gravel road ends  
at peaches

*Joe McKeon, Strongsville, Ohio, U.S.A.*

We both immediately recognized this as an exceptional haiku. The billboard is a sign of welcome that somehow has become more relaxed or casual with time: sort of, “You are welcome to visit or drive on as you

please, we'll get by either way." If we do accept the invitation and take a spin down the gravel road, it leads us to a world where the human and natural elements are living and working in harmony. The haiku moves from the two dimensions of the billboard down a one-dimensional road to a single point of contact between pilgrim and poet, a movement that is reflected in form through the decreasing length of the lines. The billboard, gravel and peaches provide delicious tactile and visual contrasts, with a juicy treat at the end. Here we have a casual invitation, an offer a fellowship, and delight without sentimentality.

### *Second Place*

flute notes  
fluttering  
petals

*Brett Brady, Haiku, Hawaii, U.S.A.*

A delicate and enchanting haiku with an interesting pivot that crosses from sound to sight. Sound also subtly plays its part in the structure of this poem: alliteration and "slant" assonance (flute/fluttering) support the content, as does the layout of the poem. There is a mysterious presence, too. Air, in the forms of breath and breeze, is the spirit, unseen and unheard, that moves both petals and flute notes. Might Ariel be passing by?

### *Third Place*

the rill's trick  
a greenfinch moves  
its green around

*Alan Summers, Chippenham,  
Wiltshire, England U.K.*

The sound of this haiku is a delight. The rill (in a village Green or a field, we imagine, of spring-green grass) reflects its surroundings as it trickles along. The little green bird, busy catching small insects along the rill to take back to its nest, is detectable only by its movements. The repeated assonance of the small i sound and the two instances of "green" add to the rhythm and make this haiku sing like a birdsong. One could whistle it!

This is a fresh haiku which illustrates Basho's "karumi/ lightness" aesthetic very well indeed. A puzzle is presented to the reader: what is the "rill's trick?" Perhaps the rill reflects the bird and this tricks it into perceiving there's another greenfinch, a competitor: the greenfinch may very well be trying to chase its own reflection away!

*Honorable Mentions (unranked)*

the first stroke  
of the ink brush ...  
ravens in snow

*Ron C. Moss, Tasmania, Australia*

Simple, evocative, seasonal. Lightly sketched, as the best haiku are. With a single stroke, art and nature become one. What more could one ask in a haiku?

evening prayer  
the sediment  
begins to settle

*Jayne Miller, Hazel Green, Wisconsin, U.S.A.*

The first image puts us alongside the poet, then leads us to a second image which can be interpreted both on literal and figurative levels, offering an opportunity for us to take a sip of wine (not mentioned!) and ponder what is in our own hearts and minds. Here is a haiku that nicely ties together the sacred and the personal.

a turnstile  
going around by itself—  
winter rain

*Barry George, Philadelphia,  
Pennsylvania, U.S.A.*

"Winter rain" sets the mood through which we interpret the strong image of a turnstile doing what a turnstile usually does, but without the usual human interaction. The image captivates the poet and it captivates us, too. Almost animate, the turnstile might evoke a sense of pathos. The poet

has left significant space for reader interpretation. Could this turnstile be a symbol of the way that we, too, may sometimes follow habitual routines just to feel we have a purpose, to fill in time, keep going, keep warm or ward off loneliness? Strangely, this haiku about a turnstile, a thing, evokes much of the less acknowledged aspects of human life.

winter solitude  
lost in the hum  
of my computer

*Sam Bateman, Everett, Washington, U.S.A.*

Here, the poet is “lost “in the busy hum and the humdrum of the computer and, unlike the old Japanese hermit poets, this recluse has the computer to connect with the outside world: the downside of “winter solitude” is somewhat eased. In this way, the haiku nicely alludes to the “heart meaning” of the Japanese kigo, “winter solitude.” A multivalent haiku that leads us to the interesting question: is it the solitude or the poet that is lost?

— About the Judges —

Lorin Ford has written haiku since 2004. Her work has been published in many haiku journals and anthologies, worldwide. She served as haiku editor for *Notes from the Gean* issues 1 – 9 and as publisher, haiku editor, features editor, etc. for *A Hundred Gourds*. Her book, *a wattle seedpod*, won first place in the 2009 HSA Merit Book Awards. Her e-chapbooks, *what light there is* (3Lights Press) and *A Few Quick Brushstrokes* (Snapshot Press) are also available freely online. Lorin founded and convenes Melbourne’s Red Kelpie Haiku Group, which has met quarterly since May 2014.

Lee Gurga is a past president of the Haiku Society of America and former editor of the journal *Modern Haiku*. He is currently editor of *Modern Haiku* Press. His awards include an Illinois Arts Council Poetry Fellowship, the Japan-America Society of Chicago’s Cultural Achievement Award, and, in his professional work as a dentist, an American Red Cross Healthcare Heroes Award. He lives on the Sangamon River in Piatt County, Illinois.

# 2018 Gerald Brady Senryu Contest

Judged by Deborah P Kolodji and Tom Painting

## *First Place*

play date  
the awkwardness  
of naked Barbies

*Joshua Gage, Cleveland, Ohio, U.S.A.*

This is the senryu we kept coming back to after reading and re-reading the entries. The word “awkwardness” seems key to appreciation of this poem, capturing feelings of feared inadequacies of new parents, who want to make a good impression on other parents bringing their children to the play date, and yet, there are all those naked Barbies in the playroom! We also tend to think as adults when we observe the play of children, so if a child is playing with a Barbie who isn’t wearing any clothes, there is a sort of natural fear that maybe the child is mimicking adult behavior we’d like to think they don’t know about, and since it is a play date, again we’re back to what are the other parents going to think? There is also a potential darker side to this poem—what if the child was a victim of sexual abuse? The fact that the poem can be read on different levels from the innocence of a child simply preparing Barbie to take a bath to darker themes invoked by the doll’s nudity.

## *Second Place*

graffiti  
I choose a bench that supports  
my views

*Ann Magyar, Brighton, Massachusetts, U.S.A.*

We live in a world of public opinion and while these days much of what is said is of the “in your face” variety, there are occasions where subtle truths and affirmations can be found. The graffitist who scribes anonymously

understands that the best persuasions are a matter of choice. In this senryu a park bench in full view presents the poet an opportunity to make a statement by simply sitting down.

*Third Place*

family reunion  
proof we are alone  
in the universe

*Jay Friedenberg, New York,  
New York, U.S.A.*

Reunions may bring us together, but also reveal our historical differences and the disparate trajectories our lives have taken. Kindred spirits are not preordained through blood, but through common experience and convictions, so often lacking among family members. While difficult to admit, the poet does so by revealing the feeling of isolation in this particular crowd.

*Honorable Mentions (unranked)*

forest walk  
the chirp  
of each text

*Jacquie Pearce, Vancouver, BC, Canada*

Much has been written about forest bathing and our need to escape the demands of constantly being on social media. Yet, even in the forest, instead of hearing birds chirp, we hear the sound of incoming texts. This senryu captures this dilemma of our current age.

bird watching  
from the dentist's chair  
hum of the buffer

*Marcyn Del Clements, Claremont,  
California, U.S.A.*

Bird watching seems a welcome distraction from the buffing taking place in the mouth of the person sitting in the chair. The word “hum” often seems to have an emotional calming effect, but “hum of the buffer” sounds ominous, and yet the word “hum” seems to transfer the calming effect it would ordinarily have back to the birds, making this visit to the dentist more tolerable for the patient.

— About the Judges —

Deborah P Kolodji is the moderator of the Southern California Haiku Study Group, the California Regional Coordinator for the HSA, a member of the Haiku North America Board of Directors, and the former president of the Science Fiction & Fantasy Poetry Association. Her first full-length book of haiku and senryu, *highway of sleeping towns*, won a Touchstone Distinguished Book Award from the Haiku Foundation and an Honorable Mention in the HSA Merit Awards.

Before moving to Atlanta, Tom Painting taught literature and creative writing at School of the Arts in Rochester, NY. He now teaches Junior High Humanities at The Paideia School in Atlanta, GA.

Tom has been an active member of the HSA for over 20 years.

In addition to haiku, his interests include hiking, and bird watching. He is married to Laura Brachman and has three children, Edith, Sarah and Philip.

# 2018 HSA Haibun Awards

Judged by John Stevenson

## *First Place*

by Jennifer Hambrick, Worthington, Ohio, U.S.A.

### **That Summer**

everything was wheelie-o, bling-bloop, water in the frying pan, skittereedoo. everything purple and pink, crackly crunch, salty sweet, lemon-lime. everything high-heeled, lip glossed, hair moussed, thonged, pixie cut. everything school's out, girlish pout, without a doubt, push and shout. everything untied, wide-eyed, jute-chinned, hemmed-in, taken-bake, glass bead, knock-kneed. everything tilt-a-whirl, carousel, gyro tower, brown cow, show them how, nope, no going back now.

walking around  
in a new place  
first kiss

---

This seems to me to be the complete package. Haibun lend themselves to performance and this one is a delight to recite. The title seems like a mere setting indicator at first, but then we realize that it means that summer. The prose is loop after loop of everything, everything, everything – very age appropriate. And the poem puts it all into place. The balance of the piece is almost invisible because of the sweet delirium of the subject and its constituent images, but it is there all the same, holding the thing together.

## *Second Place*

by Joan Prefontaine, Cottonwood, Arizona, U.S.A.

### **This is Your Last Chance**

to save the whales, the rivers, the ocean, the endangered species, the planet,  
your last day to donate, to purchase a T-shirt on behalf of everything you

love, to make a contribution to show you care, to submit your comments, to express your opinion, to march with others who agree with you, to sign our petition, to contact your congress members, to communicate your outrage, to respond, to react, to stand up and be counted, this is your final notice, your last day to give, time's almost up, only hours left, the bar is closing, this is your last call, your final notice, your last email from us, our funds are dangerously short and everything is urgent, so please send what you can, cash, Paypal or credit card, we don't care, whatever you can spare will help to save us, surely, since time, our oh-so-precious time is running out.

tossing a coin  
in the fountain  
New Year's Day

—

Like the first-place selection, this haibun is flawlessly crafted, every part of it doing its job, building toward an understanding of not so much what time is as what time feels like. In a sense, every moment of our lives is a last chance. And the urge to make good use of our time creates the pressure that is so well expressed here

### *Third Place*

by Michele Root-Bernstein, East Lansing, Michigan, U.S.A.

### **Stump**

This friend of mine, a woman who spent her working life as an orthopedic surgeon, she's telling me she has trouble following the conversation in a crowded room.

early au  
the un sets  
in a low tree

—

I'm especially fond of very brief haibun. If a poet can do the job with a minimum of words, I am impressed. And this one even truncates some of the individual words – to great effect. One might think that this piece would be hard to perform effectively. I tried it out with a friend, a non-haiku poet and I can report that it works very well, indeed.

*Honorable Mentions (unranked)*

Joan Prefontaine, Cottonwood, Arizona, U.S.A.

**On the Level**

An old friend of mine has decided the earth is flat, that the moon landing was a hoax created by trick photography, and that the planets don't revolve around the sun. He explains to me, the daughter of a mathematician and a reference librarian, that the earth is a disc surrounded by an ice wall, and that our day and night, as well as our seasonal shifts, are caused by the moon and sun chasing each other around like siblings, 3000 miles above us. His grown children attempt to contradict him on Facebook, where he posts links to Flat Earth Society news. "What about Pythagoras?" "What about gravity?" "You've got to be kidding, Dad!" they comment beneath his postings, to no avail. Lately, it feels as if we are moving backward in time, to an anti-scientific age, or perhaps there has never been such a thing as a time-line, or linear progress, as we have been taught. Perhaps, instead, our beliefs, like our discoveries, follow a more circuitous path, the way ships sail hull-first over the horizon, shrinking out of sight for some, looming menacingly for others.

a curve-ball  
far beyond the catcher's reach  
spring training

Billie Wilson, Juneau, Alaska, U.S.A.

**A Chicken Coop Chronicle**

My little brother is 75. He doesn't recall that decades ago we buried a time capsule under the clothesline strung between the barn and the chicken coop. I describe our debate about what to put in Grampa's old tobacco tin. I recall a little boy's reluctance to part with a favorite aggie marble; and a young girl's lingering over a movie star's photo on a Dixie Cup lid. I tell how we sorted through these and other treasures we were sure some future kid or visiting Martian would marvel over when they found our secret cache. He grins when I mention we dug up the tin, opened it, and reburied it several times that summer, just to be sure everything was still there.

tangled bittersweet  
a rusted mailbox  
with no name

C.E. Gallagher, Collegeville, Pennsylvania, U.S.A.

**Untitled**

I report for my 3-11 shift at the nursing home. From the last room on the right, I hear frantic calls for help and respond without thinking. I race her wheelchair down the long, narrow hall, back through the years. Alice's long grey braids trail behind her desperation. We reach safety at the nurse's station before the barn fire reaches the farmhouse.

Mind's eye  
on fire  
helpless again

John Hawk, Hilliard, Ohio, U.S.A.

**Unfinished**

We worked when we wanted, just enough to cover baseball cards and beer when the county fair rolled around. The heat and bugs had their way with us, but when break time hit we'd collapse in the grass talking cars or girls or whatever made us laugh the loudest. The wind raced back and forth over what remained, howling but never dying, drowning out the farmer's call to begin again.

cold well water  
half the hayfield  
left to bale

Jacque Pearce, Vancouver, BC, Canada

**The Third Wolf**

There are two wolves inside each of us. One good, one bad. (You've probably heard the story.) The wolves are in a fight to the death. The one you feed is the one that wins (or so the story goes). But what about the

third wolf? Who is she? And what if I share the food equally? One for you, one for me, one for you, and so on —the way we were taught to share candy as children. And what if I don't look directly at the wolves, but glance sideways out of the corner of my eye, pretending not to look at all? And instead of wolves, what if they are crows?

There was a girl who fed the crows every day in her back yard. One day, they began leaving her gifts. First, a paper clip, then a shiny silver screw, buttons, a bent piece of metal, a set of car keys, two earrings that did not match . . .

at the playground's edge  
turning and turning  
the stone in my pocket

— About the Judge —

John Stevenson is the current honorary curator of the America Haiku Archives at the California State Library. He is a former president of H.S.A., former editor of *Frogpond* and currently the managing editor of *The Heron's Nest*.

# Book Reviews

*A Thousand Sparks* by Diarmuid Fitzgerald (2018, Alba Publishing, Uxbridge, UK), 76 pages, 5¾ x 8¼”, perfect bound. ISBN: 978-1-910185-44-5. \$14 from [info@albapublishing.com](mailto:info@albapublishing.com)

*Reviewed by Catherine Anne Nowaski*

Diarmuid Fitzgerald is a poet of place. In the Author’s Preface to his second book, *A Thousand Sparks*, Fitzgerald says that he practices “going to a place to see if it will inspire.” The haiku and senryu in the first three parts of his collection trace Fitzgerald’s odyssey from his homeland in Ireland to Japan and back again.

Fitzgerald’s poems do not tend to jump out at the reader with particularly striking images or unexpected word choices. Instead, they have a quiet simplicity very much in keeping with the Zen philosophy he studied while living in Japan.

Each of the first three sections of the book begins with an image of light and contains three, two, or one line poems. Unusual for an individual collection, all poems are printed two to a page. This allows for an interesting interplay between the haiku. Consider for example the opening page in part one, Ireland:

reflecting —  
the sun shattered into  
a thousand sparks

grandad’s lantern —  
snowflakes fall  
into the light

From the magnificence of sunburst to the intimate glow of lantern light in the darkness, the contrast and resonance deepen both poems.

The following deceptively simple haiku, which was runner up for the BHS Museum of Literature Award in February 2017, consists of just ten mostly monosyllabic words, a skillfully placed comma, and a dash. Excluding articles and prepositions, there are only four unique words in this haiku. And, yet, somehow the repetition is musical, pleasing the ear as well as the mind’s eye:

trees, more trees —  
the bend of the road  
bending on

In part two of the book, the poet opens himself to new experiences (“temple gate I open my palm to the rain”). The culture and landscape of Japan are depicted in whispering susuki (pampas grass), abandoned huts, street people and the like. A particular lovely juxtaposition:

twig mushroom —  
the old flute’s  
silent buttons

If the poems in Ireland seem somewhat solitary, many of the images in Japan are communal. Here in Japan the poet finds love, whether that of others:

wind stirred night —  
the moaning from  
a young couple next door

or his own:

my Japanese boyfriend  
we hold hands  
until the train comes

In part three, Ireland Again, the poet is home once more with perhaps a keener perception of the beauty and humor in his everyday surroundings. There are more haiku with the lyricism that one associates with traditional Irish poetry:

summer stillness ash leaves deepen the green

Fitzgerald has found a way to express a Zen spirit with an Irish lilt.

The fourth and final part of the book is a sequence written while traveling by rapid transit around Dublin Bay. Two favorites from this section are the lighthearted:

rushing crowds the green balloon’s bouncing boy

and the collection’s concluding poem:

estuary sunset  
the orange glow  
of traffic cones

In short, *A Thousand Sparks* is the type of book that may go unnoticed initially, but a closer reading rewards. Expect more to come from this fine poet.

*moon on water* by Brendon Kent (2018, Alba Publishing, Uxbridge, UK) 76 pages, 5¾ by 8¼, Perfectbound ISBN 978-1-910185-43-8, £12 / €14 or order from [info@albapublishing.com](mailto:info@albapublishing.com)

*Reviewed by Jay Friedenber*

*moon on water* is a collection of 57 poems, all previously published by Brendon Kent. The book includes a mix of haiku, senryu, and tanka. Kent hails from Southampton in the UK where he has been a long time student and writer of poetry in all its forms. The poems in this work are divided into six chapters capturing different moments and experiences across a long stretch of Kent's life. Jan Benson helped in the selection and organization of this work. Alan Summers also served in an advisory capacity.

the wind where the empty swing swung

This one liner has a great sense of alliteration and empty space. The linear formatting and the last two words carry a feel of downward momentum.

train delays  
the station cat's eyes  
open and close

Wonderfully captures the expected arrival and departure of trains with the opening and closing of the cat's eyes as well as the boredom of waiting. There is a three-way resonance here between animals, people, and technology.

cherry blossoms  
falling  
in love again

One of the best uses of a pivot line I've seen. This single word in the second line effortlessly links the first and third. Nice color allusion as well.

slow afternoon...  
the gentle hum of a worker bee

Beautifully shows the calm and speed of this part of the day in the steady labors of nature. There is acoustic and visual representation here that blend seamlessly.

Brendon is adept at conveying concrete situations and internal psychological states. He is additionally a master at linking appearance and semantics, and pays attention to both the surface and deep structure of his poems. Many of the haiku are arranged visually on the page in a way that reflects and amplifies their deeper meaning. Unlike many haikai, Brendon is not afraid to work in one line, two line, five line and other formats. He has lots of experience, having published widely, taught, and garnered awards. His depth and careful crafting make this book well worth the read and a must have addition to your personal collection.

*Of This World*: 48 Haibun, by Stella Pierides (2016 Red Moon Press) 122 pages, 6" x 9", ISBN-10: 1936848805, ISBN-13: 978-1936848805, \$15.00, <https://www.amazon.com/This-World-48-Haibun/dp/1936848805>

*Reviewed by Vanessa Proctor*

What is immediately noticeable about Stella Pierides' collection of haibun 'Of This World' is the strength of the authorial voice. The poet is not afraid to address the reader and this direct approach lends an authoritative tone to her work. That is not to say that there is condescension here, but rather a sense of playful confidence. Pierides is not only a poet but also an accomplished writer. She engages and continues to engage the reader from her first haibun 'Cave World' until the 48th haibun 'Before Words'. In 'Cave World' we become part of 'the half-lit world between the realm if the real and the story we are going to be told.'

In this well-structured collection Pierides explores her interest in psychology while exploring the poet's place in the world. The haibun clearly are 'Of This World' taking us through the gamut of human experience. There are haibun about science, literature, philosophical matters and pressing political issues and embedded within these pieces we find myth, metaphor and memories. Some of the pieces are personal, but never cloyingly sentimental. Some haibun are about others, such as

Amar in 'The Handle' who must cope with living in a war-torn world, yet still clings to dreams of a brighter future. Occasionally Pierides' turn of phrase is startlingly original such as in 'Shoes' which so concisely explores the tragedy of the sinking of migrant boats from Africa and the Middle East. She tellingly writes, 'We poets, who put our hearts in the shoes of the hummingbird and the beggar poet, the little frog and the mighty spring thunder, the cat and the star-studded sky, are confronted with a reality hard to fathom.' There is a great deal of humanity in her work.

However, not all the haibun are serious. Pierides writes about googling herself in 'Phishing', the irony of adult relationships in 'In the Shade' and gains our attention using rhetorical questions, for example in 'Shut-Eye' where we are asked, 'Have you ever tried to fall asleep in Athens?' The author has and tells us rather humorously that it is 'no mean feat' due to the fact that 'Athenians never stop' making noise in this colourful city.

So, Pierides not only writes well about diverse and interesting subjects and gives her haibun short and catchy titles, she also skillfully uses the art of juxtaposition in her haibun. So many poets when writing haibun carry on the thought or main theme in the haiku, but not so Pierides. She adds new dimensions to her writing through the additional element of the haiku, for example in 'Biting' where she ponders on the meaning of life in just a few lines, she ends with the haiku:

midnight hours  
the sound of his electric  
toothbrush

leaving a welcome space for the reader to make their own connections.

Pierides extends her work far beyond purely personal experience to incorporate the universal and she does it seamlessly. 'Of This World' is a collection of fine haibun which is most definitely worth reading and rereading.

*Keepers*, by Terri L. French Illustrations by Paresch Tiwari (2018, CreateSpace) 46 pages, 6" x 9", ISBN-10: 1979771049, ISBN-13: 978-1979771047, \$10.00, <https://www.amazon.com/Keepers-haibun-Terri-L-French/dp/1979771049>

*Review by Dave Read*

*Keepers*, a book of haibun by Terri L. French, contains the adventures of JT Blankenship, a young southern boy growing up in the 1960s. As we

learn in the Preface, the fictional JT “came” to French with his desire to tell her a story. Fortunately, for French’s readers, one story became many and resulted in this collection. Brilliantly illustrated by Paresh Tiwari, *Keepers* is powered by JT’s voice and French’s thoughtful storytelling.

With JT as her narrator, French has created a strong and authentic voice that is consistent and provides unity across her haibun. She captures the nuances of the young boy’s speech in two ways. First, French imbues JT with credible childhood perspectives and imagination. Take, for example, the haibun about Old Man Harold, “Spooked”. JT speaks of Harold’s house as haunted, overgrown with weeds, and home to a plethora of cats. Reminiscent of Jem and Scout’s fascination with Boo Radley, JT admits that “Even though he scared the living daylights out of us we couldn’t seem to stay away from his house.” The compelling nature of strange and scary things tugs at a child. A boy will pursue what an adult lets be. The richness of his perspective continues when JT discovers that Harold has died. He becomes sentimental, and hopes that Harold has “plenty of old cat ghosts to keep him company.” However, as shown in the concluding haiku, JT does not abandon his fear of the old man completely:

garage sale —  
nobody touches  
the Ouija board

Likewise, French adds believability to JT through her presentation of his imagination. In “Kudzu”, he confesses to having tasted the leaves of a kudzu vine. Spitting them out immediately, he “got to thinkin’ that monstrous vine has a life of its own and might take root in my belly and wrap itself around my innards and in no time trail out my nose and ears”. Again, the manner in which JT imagines his subject augments his childhood voice. Without knowing anything about the narrator, the readers would easily discern that they are being spoken to by a young boy. His imagination follows him right to bedtime:

summer night  
a tendril through  
the bedroom screen

The second manner in which French gives strength to JT’s voice is in her use of Southern phrases, slang, and dialect. In the reader’s ear, JT sounds much like the children in the movies *To Kill A Mockingbird* and *Where the Red Fern Grows*. Sentences like “The creek was brimming with bream and crappie just hankering to get caught” and “But, I reckon, what

I thought was purty and what Mama thought was purty was not one and the same” are richly embedded with that unmistakable southern drawl. Other characters also add to the sense of place through voice. In “Rite of Passage”, JT’s Daddy says “that boy’s been climbin’ trees since he was knee-high to a grasshopper and he ain’t fell yet, so quit yer frettin’”. French even manages to work a drawl into some of her haiku:

skimming stones ...  
a Skoal ring  
on his Wrangler’s

in the fruit cellar  
unsealed peaches  
growing fuzz

*Keepers* is also strengthened through French’s thoughtful storytelling. Her skill as a writer can be seen both within the space of a haibun and across the scope of her book. French is patient. In “Proverbs 16:18”, she takes care to detail JT’s vanity about his hair and the time he spends “Brylcreeming it to perfection.” She also, through JT’s Mama, makes reference to his Daddy’s jealousy from being “half bald”. Without these details, the end of the haibun would not be as effective. After JT is discovered to have head lice, all of his beautiful hair needs to be shorn. It turns out his Daddy is the one with the clippers. Having JT’s “jealous” Daddy cutting off his hair provides a strong irony at the end of the poem while turning the narrative back to its beginning.

French’s excellent storytelling is also at play across her haibun as she weaves various characters into the narrative of her book. The best example comes through her use of JT’s dog Mudd. While Mudd has two haibun directly about him (the second and the last of the book) he also makes appearances in many other places. The frequent use of a sub-character like Mudd unifies the book and creates verisimilitude across its pages. As readers, our growing familiarity with JT’s family, friends, and pets makes *Keepers* increasingly more believable and real. The reappearances of characters help us feel our way deeper into JT’s world and know him better in the process.

*Keepers* is a strong and endearing book of haibun which invites rereading. French’s creation of an authentic, southern child’s voice along with her superb storytelling provides resonance and truth in these entertaining tales. Beyond the typical reader of haibun, *Keepers* is a book to be recommended to all lovers of literature.

*Torii Haiku* by David H. Rosen: Profane to a Sacred Life. Eugene, OR(2018, Resource Publications) 88 pages; paperback, 6" x 9", ISBN-10: 1532657099, ISBN-13: 978-1532657092, <https://www.amazon.com/Torii-Haiku-Profane-Sacred-Life/dp/1532657099>

*Reviewed by Robert Epstein*

David H. Rosen's latest collection of haiku, which spans forty years, is a gentle book. But please note: gentle does not mean placid, plaintive or bland. *Torii Haiku*, whose title refers to the Japanese gate delineating the mundane and the sacred, is gentle because it was written by a gentle soul, with a heart both passionate and innocent. A psychiatrist by training and a Jungian analyst by trade, Rosen shaped the global haiku included in the book as a poetic memoir, which means his innocence guided the self-disclosure and vulnerability apparent in these pages. Early on we encounter a young man "burned by love" who wanders alone...yet not quite:

Alone—  
me  
and the sea

Spiritually speaking, Rosen discovered how Nature was big enough to hold his isolation and heartbreak. He learned on his own what other spiritual guides like the Zen Buddhist master, Thich Nhat Hanh, and the secular teacher, J. Krishnamurti, have long-observed: our individual lives are inextricably connected with Nature, which includes human and non-human beings alike. In this light, Rosen echoes the incomparable Japanese haikupoet, Issa, in seeking both inspiration and wisdom from a slug—a "lowly" mollusk often considered a nuisance:

Slug...  
mentor for moving  
through the world

Again, Issa may be heard in another haiku by Rosen overflowing with gratitude:

Gnat...  
thanks for reminding me of  
our short lives

Whether he is writing about the passing of his beloved rescue dog, Willow, or other changes over the course of a full life, Rosen is acutely conscious of impermanence, the Buddha's core teaching: everything arises and passes away. While this holy truth may plunge the feint of heart into despair, sensitive and innocent souls like Rosen discover new heights of awareness that enrich the wholeness which is our original nature. With hints of Thoreau, author of *Walden*, throughout, the mundane becomes sacred as benevolence, compassion and joy quietly suffuse one's consciousness. It is for this reason that Rosen is able to emphatically assert in the Prelude to the book that "all haiku are healing moments."

Insofar as we are able to face our hardships and adversities with courage and fortitude, we will be rewarded and renewed. Not even death can deprive us of what matters most, as Rosen poignantly suggests in the following poem about an activist who lives on in the hearts of those similarly dedicated to preserving humanity:

Heather Heyer  
holding a deep red blossom...  
died for peace

Rosen includes a series of haiku that center around the planet we inhabit. The repetition of the first line adds weight and a sense of urgency to the need for altering our relationship to the natural world in light of climate change and continued exploitation of resources.

On mother earth—  
every step  
gentle and measured

We come from the Earth and we return to the Earth. Knowing this, we are called to treat our planet with thoughtfulness and reverence. This is the vital message of an attuned poet like Rosen, who has treated countless patients over a long career and has taught many students to listen with great care and kindness. The universal reflects the personal and vice versa. This reciprocal mirroring may be heard in the beautiful haiku Rosen penned on the death of his dear mother:

Mother dying...  
full moon over  
Kansas City, the world

Co-author of *The Healing Spirit of Haiku* as well as *The Tao of Elvis*, Rosen's view is wide, very wide. Indeed, his vision is nearly as wide as the world because he has allowed his own heart to grow that big. He experiences healing as well as new and lasting love, prompting him to beckon the reader to join him in that most precious of journeys, too. His haiku are not only haiku; they are a sacred offering, a homeopathic remedy for one and all.

Beads  
of dewy friendship,  
flowing forever

### Briefly Reviewed by Randy Brooks

*Haiku Poems and Short-short Stories* by Yasuomi Koganei (2015, Tokyo, Japan) 108 pages, 5¾" by 6¼". Black and white card covers, perfectbound. ISBN 978-4903944180. From Yix04102@nifty.com

Yasuomi Koganei is a member of the Meguro International Haiku Circle workshop where he has shared and revised this collection of 47 short-short stories and English haiku. In the introduction he states that he has been writing haiku in English for more than 20 years, and in this collection, he includes "stories" in a bilingual format. Yasuomi does not discuss his conception of a short-short story nor does he refer to these as haibun. The short prose sections vary from interesting facts, points of history and personal memories to a few that appear to take a fictional narrative perspective. The haiku nicely pop out of the larger context for moments of crystalized perception. One story is about the haiku circle's workshop on "Four Dimensional Haiku (4-D Haiku)" which the author explains are "haiku poems that tell a long story or large space as Masaoka Shiki said they were like novels" (16). He cites an example by Buson: *couple sentenced / to capital punishment / changing into spring clothes* (16). The author shared some of his attempts to write 4-D haiku including, *shadow of a plum tree / on the newborn's robe / — daughter in the old album* (16). In some ways, the short prose sections of this collection function as a means to add more dimensions to each haiku through time, space, literature or politics. Here is an example of one with three haiku: 44. Noh Actress. "There was a Noh actress among my friends. She was one of the top two Noh actresses in Japan. In other words, she was a pioneer of the Noh actresses (92)." That's it for the story, and here are the three haiku: (1) *the greeting card — /*

watermarked with / "cancer of the breast." (2) *Noh actress / one beautiful step at a time / back to the cancer ward* and (3) *one the white wall / the coffin's shadow is / creeping* (92).

*Night Ferry* by Kim Richardson (2018, Alba Publishing, Uxbridge, UK) 90 pages, 5¾" by 8¾". Four-color card covers, perfectbound. ISBN 978-1-910185-96-4.

Kim Richardson is a member of the Red Thread Haiku Sangha. He has been writing haiku for over 13 years as a type of meditation or "inner pilgrimage". *Night Ferry* collects many of his haiku previously published in journals. One of the best is the title poem: *carrying the city's lights / into the darkness / night ferry* (13). The ferry is well-lit and busy with people from the city, but it is going into the quiet and darkness of homes. Many of the haiku feature common seasonal haiku phrases such as autumn sunlight and summer solstice. Richardson's best haiku display fresh images and phrases such as: *carefully unfolding a scrap of paper / nothing / between the lines* (52). I also liked several of his meditation haiku: *sunrise meditation / our shadow / also leaving* (41) and *meditation hall / on the tree outside / ripe peaches* (57).

*Sour Pickle: One-line Haiku* by Stuart Quine (2018, Alba Publishing, Uxbridge, UK) 108 pages, 8¾" by 5¾". Four-color card covers, perfectbound. ISBN 978-1-910185-95-7.

This is the first collection of haiku by Stuart Quine, the former co-editor of *Presence* magazine. As noted on the back cover, he is a practitioner of Soto Zen Buddhism and considers haiku as a dao within the Zen tradition. All of the haiku are presented in one-line without indicated pauses or visual breaks. However, when we read the haiku each contains a haiku cut... evident through the usual syntax of conversational English phrasing. Here is the opening poem: *a morning for meandering foam flecked the running brook* (no page numbers). This haiku serves as the author's invitation to join the poet on his wanderings. I enjoyed this fresh collection of observations and the author's intuited connections with the living earth and its creatures as evident in this example: *defiant in thin rain the toad on the garden path*. Quine is likewise comfortable exploring his inner self and more urbane environment as in: *dull morning at the launderette watching my thoughts tumble over*. In one haiku Quine empathizes with a last noodle: *an udon noodle at*

*the bottom of the bowl cold and forlorn.* This is an excellent collection of haiku vibrant with perception and awareness. One last favorite: *distant thunder the old mouser raises an ear.*

***Tales from the Leaking Boot*** by Matt Black (2018, Iron Press, North Shields, Northumberland, UK) 68 pages, 4" by 5¾". Four-color card covers, saddle stitched. ISBN 978-0-9954579-2-8.

*Tales from the Leaking Boot* is a playful book of travel poems. Matt Black is new to haiku and he brings along a playful spirit as a poet while touring new locations. In his introduction he explains that "I also soon discovered that the principle of a meditative or reflective purpose with a haiku could be delightfully (in my view) subverted as part of a transient travel process. 'We're going too fast to make these more reflective' is, I think, part of what I am trying to achieve. And other subversive elements sneaked in quickly — ordinary, colloquial and slang dialogue and how that affects haiku, and the potential for the third line to occasionally be more like a joke's punch-line than the change of angle in the third line that haiku conventionally ask us to work at in order to unlock meaning" (4-5). So essentially, Matt Black is writing jokey "subverted haiku" poems about being a tourist in Texas, Germany, Turkey and finally the beach of Cleethorpes in England. Here's one from day 6 in Texas: *Dairy Queen, Burger King / Minute Maid, Jack in the Box — / your royal family* (19).

***Free to Dance Forever: Mourning Haiku for My Mother*** by Robert Epstein (2018, Middle Island Press, West Union, WV) 180 pages, 6" by 9". Four-color card covers, saddle stitched. ISBN 978-0-9994939-8-4. \$18 from Amazon.com.

As the title indicates, this is an extended sequence of haiku written as a eulogy for Robert Epstein's mother, Evelyn Deutsch. The book is organized featuring haiku based on memories and stories of his mother from her early childhood, later experiences as a mother, and finally her dementia, cancer, and death. The book also includes a section called "beyond" and an appendix including several family member eulogies from the memorial service. The poems about his mother's life are personal and meant to help others remember or see her character. For example, an early one, "*42nd Street*" — */ her favorite musical then / and always* (10), shows her love of musicals and movies. One from the later section portrays her with

friends: *ah, gal's night / the laughter keeps me up / Mom's mahjong game* (15). I especially liked *New Year's Day / my mother refreshes / her old complaints* (44). In the sections dealing with her illness and death, Epstein's haiku express a significance beyond the personal. He understands the importance of recognizing the universal within our individual perceptions and sharing that through haiku. Here are some examples: *dock of the bay / I hope Mom / remembers me* (48). *November afternoon— / Mom tells me her brain / has floated downriver* (53). *Mom's cancer / red roses won't / cover it up* (59), and *Mom's last breath / now: nothing / nothing nothing* (78). There are several haiku of mourning which extends over several months: *mourning / how soft the ground / above her coffin* (86) and much later: *Independence Day / mourning my mother / doesn't end* (122). And a couple of haiku from beyond: *June gardening — / my mother can't be / too far off* (131) and *blue jean patches / the sky will always belong / to my mother* (133). Robert Epstein's haiku in *Free to Dance Forever: Mourning Haiku for My Mother* help us all to reflect and understand our own losses, our own essential processes of mourning necessary to fully remember AND to heal.

*A Thousand Years: The Haiku and Love Letters of Chiyo-ni* by Marco Fraticelli (2018, Catkin Press, Carleton Place, Ontario, Canada) 90 pages, 5" by 7". Four-color card covers, saddle stitched. ISBN 978-1-928163-27-5.

At Haiku North America 2015, I was intrigued by a remarkable presentation of the “lost letters” and haiku of Chiyo-ni, a well-known haiku poet from old Japan (1703-1775). This HNA collaboration combined Marco Fraticelli's music and reading of fictive letters of Chiyo-ni with mime interpretations by Terry Ann Carter. In the preface to *A Thousand Years*, Fraticelli explains his creative project: “Imagine for a moment that in Japan, an ancient Buddhist monastery was being renovated and that during these restorations, some documents were uncovered. The documents were haiku and fragments of letters written by the 18th century poet Chiyo-ni. In her fifties, she entered the monastery to become a Buddhist nun. While there, she wrote a series of letters, and produced a small chapbook of her haiku for a former lover. If these documents had actually existed and a copy had been sent to me, this book might have been the result. To be clear, all the haiku in this book were actually written in the 18th century by Chiyo-ni. The letters were not.” Working from each haiku, Fraticelli imagines the back story and significant feelings expressed by Chiyo-ni. Then he tells the story in a letter, giving voice to Chiyo-ni's perspective. This is a very creative approach to re-visioning haiku and bringing them to life for contemporary readers—it is a form of intuitive interpretation through the creative act of telling stories. Here is a favorite example from page 36:

Everything is darker at night.

Somehow, in the night shadows, even the worst things that we do  
seem much less wrong.

I have reached that place in my life where it appears to others that I  
am afraid of nothing, and yet, I know this is not so. Too many things  
still frighten me.

My life is filled with ghosts, and you, you are one of them. Everyone  
knows that ghosts show themselves most often at night. Like the  
moon, they are rarely seen in the daylight.

moonflower  
a woman's skin  
as she disrobes

Fratlicelli acknowledges that he does not read Japanese and that: “The haiku contained in this book are not so much literal translations of the original Japanese haiku as they are my interpretations of them. They are my attempts to capture the spirit of Chiyo-ni’s haiku as I feel she might have written them today” (84). He includes a bibliography sources and notes that he “avoided using their translations verbatim” (85). As someone who has always loved Chiyo-ni’s haiku, I appreciate Fraticelli’s creative approach to reading, imagining, and sharing his envisioning of her work and life.

*Auschwitz: and the Like* by Toni Piccini (2018, Red Moon Press, Winchester, VA) 110 pages, 5” by 7½”. Original haiku in Italian with versions in English by Jim Kacian, Hebrew by Zinovy Vayman, and German by Dietmar Tachner. Four-color card covers, perfectbound. ISBN 978-1-947271-21-0. \$20.00 from [redmoonpress.com](http://redmoonpress.com).

Toni Piccini has written haiku about the Nazi stalags and arranged them in chronological order for *Auschwitz: and the Like*. This four-language edition includes the Italian originals translated into English, Hebrew and German. Some of the haiku are historical, such as *Kristallnacht— / in glass fragments / deportation seeds* (13), but most are imagined experiences, such as *freight train — / a mouse in the corner / the only survivor* (14). There are haiku about the reduction of humans to numbers: *beneath the skin — / a tattoo of nothing / but numbers* (18). And images of starvation: *grass stains / on their*

*teeth — / unrelenting hunger* (28), as well as hopelessness for the future: *eight months pregnant — / neither will / burn alone* (41). Here is one about privilege given to kapos (internees who policed the other internees): *a second bowl / full of soup — / the kapo's supper* (53). The book closes with a few postwar haiku: *"I was only / following orders" / the last refuge* (89) and *a holocaust denier / burns the history books / in his kitchen oven* (91).

***Old Song: The Red Moon Anthology of English-Language Haiku*** 2017 ed. by Jim Kacian and the editorial board (2018, Red Moon Press, Winchester, VA) 170 pages, 5½" by 8¼". Four-color card covers, perfectbound. ISBN 978-1-947271-13-5. \$17.00 from [redmoonpress.com](http://redmoonpress.com).

*Old Songs* is the 2017 anthology in the Red Moon Anthology series. This collection includes 151 haiku & senryu, 17 linked forms (haibun, renku, sequences), and 5 essays. Red Moon Anthologies are intended to be a "reader's digest" of selected examples of the best English haiku-related work published in journals for the year. Ten editorial board members nominate works that are reviewed and selected for the anthology. Three featured essays include "The Haiku Poetics of Paul O. Williams" by Randy Brooks, "Characteristics of American Haiku" by Jim Kacian, and "Copying to Create: The Role of Imitation and Emulation in Developing Haiku Craft" by Michele Root-Bernstein. A favorite haibun in this collection is "Strike a Pose" by Francine Banwarth in which the narrator shares a mammogram experience, followed by: *hold your breath now and lean back like Cleopatra* (85). Here are some favorite haiku and senryu: *novelty pepper shaker president* (14) by David Boyer and the title poem from Alan S. Bridges: *an old song pours / from a Navajo toehold / canyon wren* (15). And one more favorite: *refugee child — / folding and unfolding / his paper boat* (54) by Stella Perides.

***Shades of Absence*** by Harriot West (2018, Red Moon Press, Winchester, VA) 78 pages, 6" by 9". Four-color card covers, perfectbound. ISBN 978-1-947271-22-7. \$15.00 from [redmoonpress.com](http://redmoonpress.com).

*Shades of Absence* is Harriot West's second collection of haibun and haiku. The mix of haibun and haiku works well, held together by a cautious story-teller's voice. These are tales of wishes and dreams that end with an angsty acceptance of inevitable reality of things missing or unfulfilled. The title haibun explains: "A friend of mine was camping in the Montana

wilderness. Over the course of a morning, he noticed how empty the sky was. Not a single contrail. Not a single plane. That's the story he tells, his memory of 9/11." Followed by this haiku: *summer's end / all the color bleached / from the yarrow* (13). The prose leads us to believe this is going to be a sentimental memory, then the haiku delivers absence...something expected is missing...in this case the color of the yarrow. The book is organized into three somewhat chronological explorations of absence: "Wishing-Coins", "Planes and Shadows", and "Shrouded Boughs". The first section, "Wishing-Coins" features memories of her mother and childhood. I especially like the playful chant in this haiku: *olly olly oxen free / wanting, not wanting / to go home* (18). In another, West writes: *tarnish / I can't rub out / heirloom silver* (24). "Planes and Shadows" features haibun and haiku about being out of place, an outlander, a traveler, never at home. In one haiku she asserts *flurries / if only I fit in / the snow globe* (41). The narrator is restless, unsettled, in a new relationship with uncertainties: *negative space / he sharpens / my edges* (45). The haibun and haiku in "Shrouded Boughs" are darker yet, haunted by memory losses, disease, death. In the haibun "Good Form" she starts with a haiku: *another year / walking by the flowers / he said were pretty* (60). The prose is about the struggle to respond when "Someone she hasn't seen in ages asks about her husband" (60). One of the haiku near the end of the book is: *memorial service / for a moment I wonder / what to wear* (66). Harriot West is an excellent writer and this book deserves to be read and reread for her honest exploration of Shades of Absence.

*Adveniat* by John Martone (2018, Red Moon Press, Winchester, VA) 88 pages, 4¼" by 6½". Four-color card covers, perfectbound. ISBN 978-1-947271-21-0. \$15.00 from [redmoonpress.com](http://redmoonpress.com).

This interesting collection of haiku by John Martone is dedicated to his deceased mother, Mildred C. Martone, and his aunt, Sister Ellenita Loehr SCC (Sisters of Christian Charity). His aunt died on Christmas day in 2011 and this book is titled *Adveniat*, which I take as a Latin reference to Advent. Advent is the liturgical calendar season leading up to the coming of Christ at Christmas. Although several of the haiku in this collection explore his family's Christian traditions, most are from a broader range of experiences and memories. Here is a haiku that connects the ordinary with an Advent tradition: *Fine leather gloves / picking out his / Christmas greens* (8). Other haiku, such as this one, *The honeycomb jar — / that ancient city / in his brain* (20), provide a more mysterious leap between the immediate image and memory. Here is one about holding onto traditions despite loss: *Living alone / Dad's Christmas tree / takes the whole table* (35). And this

one perhaps comes out of the author's memory: *A childhood statue / of Our Lady — the warmest / room in their house* (43). Another favorite suggests a statue of Saint Francis: *Bird tracks / in snow — / Dear Francis* (58). The last two words "Dear Francis" are italicized suggesting an image of calligraphy or handwriting. There are several haiku related to death near the end of the book and other kinds of losses: *Tell me how mom's / sketchbook from her twenties / just disappeared* (74). As a literary artist, I can understand Martone's frustration at the loss of a mother's creative works. Near the end of the collection we find: *New Year — / bare wall where / the calendar hung* (77), which expands into an image of an empty house. Returning to the Christian spiritual tradition, the second to the last haiku is: *The book keeps opening / there — on the road / to Emmaus* (85). This refers to scripture about disciples walking with the risen Christ, a fitting tribute for a book dedicated to the author's religious mother and aunt.

*Evergreen Moon* by Rebecca Lilly (2018, Red Moon Press, Winchester, VA) 126 pages, 4¼" by 6½". Four-color card covers, perfectbound. ISBN 978-1-947271-20-3. \$20.00 from [redmoonpress.com](http://redmoonpress.com).

*Evergreen Moon* is Rebecca Lilly's sixth book of haiku written over the last 25 years. She dedicates the book to her parents and explains that it was "written in memory of Evergreen, the property where I grew up in Albemarle County, Virginia." About half of the haiku in this collection are published as a full-justified block of italicized text, creating more gaps and spaces between words and short phrases than usual in haiku. The effect is kind of like a visual stutter, with unexpected emphasis on the selection and placement of words. Each haiku also is double-spaced between lines. Here is an example of one on page 11:

once a cloud's breeze            it must  
 be                                    at Evergreen the fields'  
 memory

This approach breaks up the reading experience and significantly slows the reader down, allowing more time to consider and reunify the parts. I don't know of other haiku poets breaking up the presentation of haiku in this way. I find it interesting. Some of her justified haiku are more esoteric thought-poems or linguistic puzzles, but most are simply very good haiku, like this one on page 119:

me    and the frog    there's enough  
water            for us both            and  
the Doberman

If you tried to arrange these into a more traditionally presented haiku, it might appear like this:

me and the frog  
there's enough water for us both  
and the Doberman

However, it is clear that Lilly does NOT want to break the haiku in that way, preferring the intuitive justified layout which separates and gives existential space for each semantic piece. The book also includes many haiku presented in the traditional three lines. One of my favorites is the whimsical voice in: *Funny how it all / comes back to you .../ wind in the alfalfa* (71) which vividly conveys the overarching theme of the book, her memories and experiences at Evergreen.

*Simple Gifts* by Natalia L. Rudychev (2018, Red Moon Press, Winchester, VA) 80 pages, 4¼" by 6½". Four-color card covers, perfectbound. ISBN 978-1-947271-24-1. \$15.00 from [redmoonpress.com](http://redmoonpress.com).

*Simple Gifts*, Natalia Rudychev's first collection of haiku, gathers previously published work with impressive awards and a wide range of acknowledgements from most contemporary haiku journals. In the preface, Hiroaki Sato explains that the title comes from a hymn written by Joseph Brackett in 1848 for the Shaker community. This song "became widely known after Aaron Copland incorporated its melody into the ballet music for Martha Graham. Graham, the mother of modern dance, named it Appalachian Spring before staging it in October 1944 at the Library of Congress, choreographing it and dancing the lead role. Natalia says Brackett's song embodies all of her artistic endeavors, in dance, photography, and poetry" (6). In keeping with this goal, the haiku in this collection are simple, observant, playful, moving and light. Rudychev starts with spring: *first date / steppingstones / over moonlight* (13), a haiku that shimmers with giddiness as a couple getting to know each other balances across first steps. Consider the slow movement evident in this haiku about something delicate being hurt yet demonstrating the resilience necessary to survive: *nameless / a stepped-on flower / slowly reshapes itself* (16). And one

more of spring romance: *your pulse / through my hand / falling petals* (25). For summer, we find this haiku that contrasts the lightness of a feather to the height of Colorado plateaus: *Monument Valley / a feather / takes its time to land* (31). For autumn here is a haiku of enduring slow time passing: *a long drive / the silence between us / passes from shade to light* (47). And another favorite haiku of romance: *curve of a swan's neck / your question / still haunts me* (48). In winter, Rudychev discovers her own path: *first snow / the gift / of finding my way* (63), but there is also a hint of the dreamer: *valentine / a pair of tracks / is crossed by one* (71). This book is an excellent collection of simple gifts, written with an eye for movement and conveying the inner lightness of playful appreciation, *winter sunset / half finished Bordeaux / on the window sill* (67), and hope, *stone Buddha / a snowflake lands / in time for my wish* (76).

**Buzz** by David Jacobs (2018, Red Moon Press, Winchester, VA) 72 pages, 4¼" by 6½". Four-color card covers, perfectbound. ISBN 978-1-947271-25-8. \$15.00 from [redmoonpress.com](http://redmoonpress.com).

*Buzz* is David Jacobs' third collection of haiku. The cover of this collection of 118 haiku features a row of mud-dauber nests. Although I would prefer empty nests near my front door, I would enjoy the comings and goings and the buzzing if they were full of life. David Jacobs' haiku focus on the quiet nests—the silent inner life of people. Here is the title haiku: *therapist's door / I need to work / on my buzz* (12). Our haiku narrator appears to be a quiet, contemplative person who is curious about people: *spring morning / what is the beggar / reading* (10), and *first coffee / the barista's overnight / mascara* (11). You would think children playing “cowboys and Indians” would be rowdy, but instead he observes silent play: *the long evening / two kids mime / the OK Corral* (8). Consider this literary allusion: *half-way / through Hardy's Tess / waning moon* (29), which suggests the quiet darkness yet to come in the night and the novel. In this one our narrator notices *blue summer shorts / the new post girl / delivering* (40). Several of the haiku return to the noisy therapist: *therapist / her wonky / doorbell* (45), and *therapy room / the patient chair / killing me softly* (50). Yes, I believe there is a popular song reference in that last haiku. This is an excellent collection of haiku about the silence inside our heads as we interact with the people around us. The ultimate escape for busy-head silence is a good read: *shortening days / I skip the intro / to War and Peace* (64). I hope you enjoy the quiet buzz and silence of these excellent haiku.

**Frozen Earth** by Anne Elise Burgevin (2018, Red Moon Press, Winchester,

VA) 68 pages, 4¼" by 6½". Four-color card covers, perfectbound. ISBN 978-1-947271-16-6. \$15.00 from redmoonpress.com.

Anne Burgevin's *Frozen Earth* is a collection of haiku that celebrate connections to the outdoors. As a teacher and environmentalist, it is not surprising that her haiku demonstrate her commitment to celebrating the nurturing gifts of the environment. In the first half of the book, titled "Earth", we find: *low clusters / of black raspberries / her hidden talent* (13) which celebrates both the fruit and the finder. I liked this nostalgic one: *shallow eddies / we came of age / on this river* (15), which shows how specific and local our connections to our past remain. Some of the haiku take an omniscient perspective written in third person: *winter apples / she thinks / he's a keeper* (21). Even political conundrums are expressed through our connections to the earth: *March mud / our slippery race / relations* (26). I like the way "race" shifts from verb in the second line to a noun when paired with "relations". In the second half of the book, "Air", Burgevin turns to birds, the sky, and the wind as in these haiku: *hummingbird nest / I was once / so small* (42) and *first frost / I give everything / to the night sky* (44). This is an outstanding collection of celebratory outdoors haiku. I'll close with this favorite: *laughing gulls / my hair loosens / in the breeze* (48).

*Park & Alley* by Guy Nesom (2018, Red Moon Press, Winchester, VA) 72 pages, 4¼" by 6½". Four-color card covers, perfectbound. ISBN 978-1-947271-09-8. \$15.00 from redmoonpress.com.

Most of the poems in *Park & Alley* are haiku, but Nesom often employs a twist or impish turn of phrase more common in senryu. The book is organized into six sections: the park, sidewalk & side trips, light through the day, daydreams, the alley, and my old Stetson. "The park" features haiku about nature being constrained by urban development: *the city park's old creek / reborn again... / nowhere else to turn* (11). Sidewalks are, of course, a domesticated form of the outdoors, yet they provide opportunities to interact with others: *a smile from the stroller / touching the mother . . . / speed of light* (19). I especially liked *B&W photo... / my mother with red camellias / when she was happy* (24) in the section "sidewalk & side trips". In "light through the day", Nesom writes haiku about shadows and sunlight: *Orion cloaked in light... / the city afraid / of the dark* (38). In the "daydreams" section he has a wonderful haiku: *stepping stones... / someone else / years ago* (43). "The alley" appears to be a harsh environment: *butterfly / at the basketball rim... wrong place wrong time* (54). The last section, "my old Stetson", features senryu and haiku about growing old. The book ends with: December evening

... / my old Stetson / keeps dust off the shelf (71). As a relatively new writer, I believe Nesom included a few too many beginner's haiku (haiku that say too much or provide unnecessary commentary). Some attempts are too minimal, ending up as a half a haiku like: *never / the sun's shadow* (35). However, Nesom often gives us a real gem from that big Texas sky: *windmills / in a windless night... / still the turning stars* (70).

*A Peep Within* by Bill Cooper (2018, Red Moon Press, Winchester, VA) 104 pages, 4¼" by 6½". Four-color card covers, perfectbound. ISBN 978-1-947271-25-8. \$15.00 from [redmoonpress.com](http://redmoonpress.com).

*A Peep Within* is Bill Cooper's sixth collection of haiku. Cooper is a well-known, experienced writer, and the haiku in this collection have been previously published by contemporary haiku journals. There are no page numbers in this edition so the haiku in this review do not cite page numbers. The title haiku is: *preschool / a peep within / the uncracked shell*. I love the excitement of the preschool children watching the chick hatch. Like the soon to be released hatchling, they too will soon be out of the shell of their parents' homes. The haiku in the first section of the book, "Wild Lupine", focus on the spring time of new life. Here is the title poem for this section: *wild lupine / a baby lamb / kicking air*. I like the surprise ending in: *tumbling / from the nest / a fish eye*. The second section is called "The Ceiling Dance" from this haiku: *the ceiling dance / of water-reflected sunwaves / the long journey*. In this haiku I imagine being on an ocean-liner enjoying the reflections in my cabin. This section includes haiku "on the road" and at the beach. I liked this subtle political haiku: *a sip of water / from the plastic bottle / climate talk*. Bill Cooper allows the reader to bring his or her own opinion to this, providing simply the images of recycling, plastic pollution, oil-based packaging and talk about climate change. The third section is "The Owl Unblinking" which comes from the haiku: *flash of orange the owl unblinking*. This section features autumn haiku such as *the bald eagle / gnawing a stick / election night*. The bald eagle, a symbol of America, is not the only being gnawing during our last election night. Okay, here's another political one-line image: *Confederate general surrounded by bubble wrap*. The last section is "Wide Bore Clarinet" which comes from this one-liner: *mellow sunset notes of the wide bore clarinet*. One of the last haiku returns to the preschooler: *Christmas / her wish for a trampoline / bed*. This is another outstanding collection of haiku by Bill Cooper.

*Poems from the Front: A Haiku History of the Second World War* by Jay Friedenberg (2018, New York NY) 48 pages, 8½" by 11". Four-color card covers, perfectbound. ISBN 978-1-718788756. Available from jay.friedenberg@manhattan.edu.

*Poems from the Front* is a short history of the second world war, punctuated with haiku that capture a single moment within each major event described. The book includes an appendix of public domain photographs from the war, but the haiku serve as emotional interludes. He invites the reader to "think of these as 'snapshots' or 'freeze frames' that help to convey the significance of a pivotal moment in history" (5). In the introduction Friedenberg also explains: "This book is not for the faint of heart. It describes both the horrors of war and the atrocities humans inflict upon one another" (5). The book starts with accounts of the Atlantic and European events, then shifts to the Pacific theater events. Some of the haiku, such as this one from the evacuation of Dunkirk, position the reader in the middle of an experience: *crowded destroyer / a bonhomme / lights the Tommy's cigarette* (7). Others are short summaries of the campaign, as in this one from the "Siege of Malta": *1,000 Axis raids / the sharp thorn / in Mussolini's side* (10). I prefer the haiku that are given as immediate perception: *moonless night / a periscope rises / from Atlantic swells* (14) and *Paris liberated / girls run to kiss / the marching G.I.s* (17). There are several horrific images of battle and atrocities, such as this one from the Nanking massacre: *a girl's body / lying in the street / bayonet in her vagina* (21). Once in a while a haiku conveys the shared experience of soldiers on both sides of the conflict: *elephant grass / they both reach / for their revolvers* (23). Overall, this is an interesting way to share a synoptic history of World War II.

### Books reviewed by Michael Ketchek

*The Penguin Book of haiku* translated and edited by Adam L. Kern (2018 Penguin Random House UK) 453 pages, 5¼" by 7¾", perfectbound. ISBN 978-0-14042476-8

The Penguin Book of Haiku is an amazing collection of haiku and senryu and related verse. This collection spans the entire range of poetry from the bawdy to the sublime, giving this book more diversity than any other book of haiku I have read. Commentary is included for most of the approximately one thousand haiku in this collection which further enhances one's understanding of these poems. I especially found interesting how many of the poems have a word or words that a have

double meaning in Japanese which can lead to an entirely different meaning to the haiku.

Besides the haiku, this book also offers a chronology of important dates in Japanese poetry and history, an excellent glossary of terms and short bios of all the poets in this collection. There is also a forty-page introduction chronicling the history of haiku, reasons for its international appeal and attempts to correct misconceptions about haiku. When addressing misconceptions about haiku Kern makes persuasive arguments, but sometimes overstates his point of view. For example, while explaining that haiku is not Zen poetry he says that Bashō shaving his head was basically a fashion statement, never mentioning that Bashō, while not a monk, did study with Butcho a Zen master. Still the introduction is very informative and if at times Kern is overly critical of accepted haiku wisdom he does give a comprehensive argument for his ideas.

Also included in this book are twenty-five illustrations ranging from portraits of poets to more than mildly pornographic depictions of some verses. The drawing for the following poem, by an unnamed author, is an uncensored depiction of the verse including an aroused man not mentioned in the poem.

soft douching  
with her own fingers  
tenderly diddling

I will end with some more examples that display the diversity of poems in this very fine collection:

a butterfly  
chasing the sprig of flowers...  
on a casket  
*Meisetu*

smiled upon  
by the baby about to be ditched,  
he breaks into tears!  
*Shōro*

red plum  
its fallen petals ablaze  
on horse dung  
*Buson*

here and there  
upon scorched fields  
wild violets  
*Shokyū*

heaven knows! earth knows!  
the whole neighborhood knows!  
except the parents  
*Shishōshi*

*Dad's Accordion* by Marcus Larsson (2018, Red Moon Press, Winchester VA) 64 pages, 4½" by 6½", perfectbound ISBN 978-1-947271-17-3

This collection of haiku is presented one to a page. The poems illuminate what makes us human, mostly the small moments but also some of the big ones. An example of one of those small moments that captures the different emotions of different people in only ten words.

in the park  
two lovers  
and the rest of us

In the following haiku a powerful life changing moment is plainly experienced.

autumn sun  
she says no  
to further \chemo

*heads or tails* by Jörgen Johansson (2018, Red Moon Press, Winchester VA) unnumbered pages, 4 ½" by 6 ½", perfectbound ISBN 978-1-947271-23-4

This is a collection of about 50 haiku, one to a page, all in English some also in Swedish. A fine collection of poems, often gently humorous, these haiku and senryu will leave you smiling. A few examples:

expired  
the unopened package  
of viagra

cranky...  
showing a tourist  
the wrong direction

*Personal Myths 1: Born in Mystery* by Thomas Chockley (2018, Red Moon Press, Winchester VA) 72 pages, 4½" by 6½", perfectbound ISBN 978-1-947271-18-7

These haiku, printed one to a page, are, according to author, "...organized under the three qualities that Campbell describes: Haiku recognizing the wonder the universe is, reflecting the wonder that humans are, and touching human awe in everyday life."

Several examples:

born in mystery  
a hummingbird pauses  
at the fuchsia

Lascaux  
a boy measures his hand  
against the prints

*Okinawa* by Hasegawa Kai translated by David Burleigh and Tanaka Kimiyu (2018, Red Moon Press, Winchester VA) 104 pages, 5" by 7½", perfectbound ISBN 978-1-947271-22-7

In his preface Kai explains what him why he wrote a series of haiku about Okinawa, a place he had been visiting for about ten years, "I found myself drawn to the people of Okinawa, to the dead, to the ancient banyan trees, the island lilies and the enormous rocks, and lastly towards the gods of Okinawa..."

The following haiku clearly refer to the war-torn history of the island:

summer grasses—  
soil that once was  
human beings

a water soaked corpse  
turning into water—  
the coolness

There are also haiku that reflect on the traditions of the island such as:

the Star Festival night—  
from island to island  
a path on the sea

To help in the understanding of this and other haiku there are 8 pages of notes. The note for the previous haiku gives the reader information on the Star Festival which adds to one's understanding of this haiku.

There is also an afterward by David Burleigh, one of the translators, which highlights the geography and history of the islands as well as giving us biographical information about the poet. All of these aspects of the book, from preface to afterward, enhance one's enjoyment of the fine haiku about this one specific place, Okinawa.

*“From the Cottage of Visions” Genjuan Haibun Contest Decorated Works 2015 – 2017* Compiled by Stephen Henry Gill (2018, Hailstone Haiku Circle Publications, Osaka, Japan) 112 pages, 5<sup>7</sup>/<sub>8</sub> by 8<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> “ perfectbound, ISBN 978-4-9900822-9-1

This book includes the winners and honorable mentions of three years of the Genjuan Haibun Contest. It is a truly international collection with haibun from over a dozen countries including Slovenia, Mexico and Bhutan as well as the United States, Canada and Japan. The haibun, presented along with the Judges' comments, move from the Australian outback to the Himalayas to a paleontological conference and every place in between. As the locations vary so does the mood in these fine haibun. For those interested in haibun this is a highly recommended book.

*echoes 2* compiled by Jim Kacian and Julie Warther (2018, Red Moon Press, Winchester VA) unnumbered pages, 6" by 9", perfectbound ISBN 978-1-1718615854

The well-known Red Moon series *New Resonance* is twenty years old, with ten volumes featuring 170 poets. *Echoes 2* is a reunion of these poets. The poets are presented alphabetically one to a page with a photo of the poet, the volume number of *New Resonance* in which they appeared, where they live, their profession as well as a paragraph in which they can tell something about themselves. While many list their publications and awards others give more personal information. My favorite of these personal notes is Chris Gordon telling us, "I met Robert Bly once. He was very kind."

Of course, the best part is the haiku. Almost every poet has six of their haiku on their page which is just enough to give you a feel for what they write. With so many poets and so many great haiku I am loath to try and pick out any favorites so I will end by saying get this book or if strapped for cash or space on your bookshelf view it online for free on the Haiku Foundation website

*One Window's Light* Lenard D. Moore editor (2017 Unicorn Press, Greensboro NC) 72 pages, 5" x 8", perfectbound, ISBN 978-0-97775-006-3

This is the Merit Book Award winner in the Anthology category with haiku by the five members of the Carolina African American Writers' Collective and instead of repeating the praises given by the judges (please read those in the Merit Book Award's Judges' comments, in this issue) I will just give one example by each of the five poets represented in this anthology,

evening sun  
in his wrinkled hand  
a ripe fig  
*Lenard D. Moore*

another mass shooting  
my son practices  
his trumpet solo  
*Crystal Simone Smith*

we sprinkle shirts  
while the flatirons heat  
morning mist  
*L. Teresa Church*

Entebbe airport  
small cat rubs against my leg  
near the exit doors  
*Sheila Smith McKoy*

abandoned farm house  
bare oak trees  
thick with vultures  
*Gideon Young*

*my pinhole view* by Stacy M. Pedergrast (2017 Wood Nickle Press, Windsor Ct) 12 unnumbered pages 3<sup>1</sup>/<sub>8</sub>" by 3<sup>1</sup>/<sub>8</sub>" letterpress, No ISBN

A little gem of a book with a clever cover that reflects the title. Only thirty-five copies were printed so if you have one hang on to it, you have a rare treasure. One haiku:

meteor shower—  
with every falling star  
my same wish

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