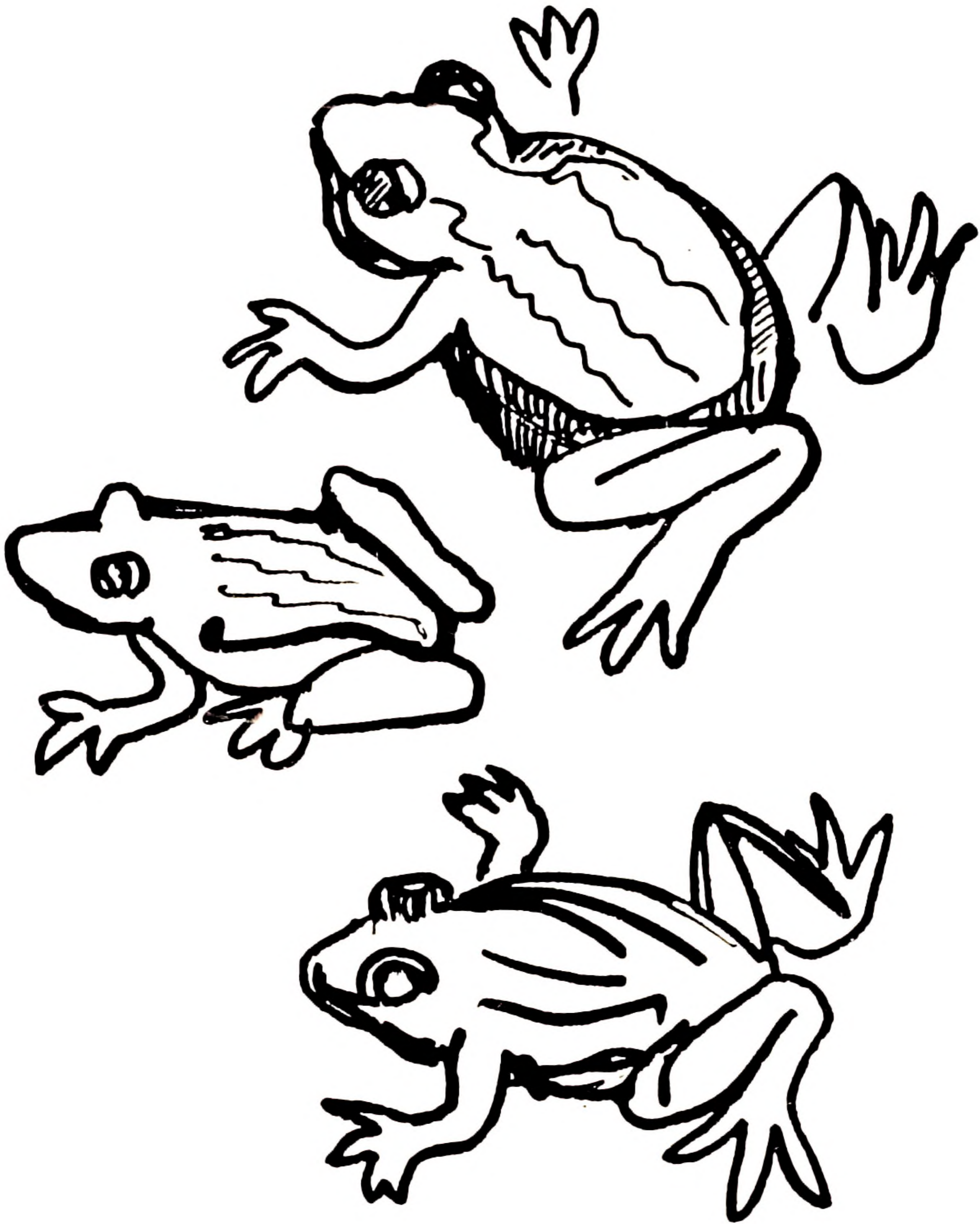


frogpond



Volume VIII

Number 3

Published by the Haiku Society of America

AUGUST 1985

GARY HOTHAM

GERSTHOFEN, GERMANY

12 SEPT 1985

FROGPOND
 Quarterly Haiku Journal
 Vol. VIII No. 3 August 1985

CONTENTS

HAIKU & SENRYU

Bodner, Richard 28	McLaughlin, Dorothy 6
Borsenik, Dianne 18	Merrick, T.R. 28
Burns, Paul 28	Moore, Lenard D. 26
Clark, Judith 17	Nethaway, Charles D. Jr. 24
Cooperstein, Claire 16	Pauly, Bill 18
Davidson, L.A. 12	Polozzolo, John 17
Dickson, Charles B. 5	Pupello, Anthony J. 17
Eulberg, Sister M. T. 6	Roberts, John 27
Gasser, Frederick 6	Rust, Rebecca 26
Gorman, LeRoy 24	Shoemaker, John-Bruce 27
Haas, Rosamond 17	Stewart, Roberta 18
Harrell, Brent 26	Swede, George 24
Heinrich, Peggy 5	Thorndike, Nick 26
Johnson, Helen V. 11	Trotman, Frank 10
Kilbride, Jerry 17	Vaughn, Gary L. 28
Klinge, Gunther 29	Virgilio, Nick 3
Koetzner, J. Michael 16	Wainright, Carol 16
Lamphear, Lynn 5	Webster, Diane 27
Little, Geraldine C. 11	Wills, John 19
Mainone, Robert F. 18	Yarrow, Ruth 10
Mayhew, Lenore 27	

SEQUENCES & RENGA

Eclipse of the Moon (Stephen Gould)	25
Deserted Beach (Ross Kremer)	7
Shipyard Landing (Jane Lambert)	12
Destitute Since (Marlene Mountain & Hal Roth)	8
Signs of the Season (Tao-Li)	30

AND MORE

Museum of Haiku Literature Award	4
Experimenting with Content (R. W. Grandinetti Rader)	13
About Time (William J. Higginson)	20
Worth Repeating: Hai Kais de Basho	38
Book Reviews (G. C. Little, F. K. Robinson, E. S. Lamb)	31
Bits & Pieces	39

HAIKU SOCIETY OF AMERICA
333 East 47th St., New York, NY 10017

OFFICERS

President: Virginia Brady Young, 184 Centerbrook Road, Hamden, CT 06518.

Vice-President: Penny Harter, Box 219, Fanwood, NJ 07023.

Secretary-Treasurer: Ross Kremer, RD 2, Box 609, Ringoes, NJ 08551.

Frogpond Editor: Elizabeth Searle Lamb, 970 Acequia Madre, Santa Fe, NM 87501.

SUBSCRIPTION/MEMBERSHIP

\$16. USA and Canada; \$24. overseas, by airmail only. Please remit in US dollars. Canadian members may use postal money orders or US bank drafts—both must be marked “in US dollars.” All subscription/memberships are annual, expire on December 31, and include 4 issues of *Frogpond*. Half-year subscription/memberships available after July 1 for \$8. and include 2 *Frogponds*. Single copies are \$4.50. (If xeroxed copies of out-of-print issues would NOT be acceptable, PLEASE SPECIFY when ordering.) Make checks payable to Haiku Society of America, Inc., and send to secretary/treasurer at home address.

PLEASE NOTE

1. All funds for subscription/memberships, renewals, or donations must be sent to secretary/treasurer at home address, checks made out as above. In addition, all changes of address are to go to the sec./treas.
2. Send all editorial material to editor at home address, with SASE.
3. Send all other correspondence to pertinent officers at home addresses.
4. Where answer is required—and for return of manuscripts—SASE *must* be enclosed.

FROGPOND EDITORIAL POLICY

All prior copyrights are retained by contributors. Full rights revert to contributors upon publication of *Frogpond*. HSA does not assume responsibility for views of contributors (including those of its own officers) whose work is printed in *Frogpond*, research errors, infringements of copyrights, or failure to make proper acknowledgments.

Cover design copyright © 1985 by Barbara Gurwitz
Copyright © 1985 by Haiku Society of America, Inc.

empty farmhouse
filled with sunlight and shadow:
the rain barrel, too

squirrels in the park
quarrel over peanut shells:
the bells of St. Mark's

fashioning a fan
out of the church bulletin:
the heat

the grove by the creek:
a cross of crumbling marble
marks the mossy grave

the bag lady's song
fades in the heat and haze:
cicada

alternate juror
sneaking out for a six pack:
the heat

the far mushroom cloud:
a fading century plant
sheds its only bloom

Nick Virgilio

MUSEUM OF HAIKU LITERATURE (TOKYO) AWARD

\$25 for best previously unpublished haiku
from *Frogpond* VIII: 2

The family gathered—
a tear of embalming fluid runs
from my brother's eye

George Swede

Old man and a mule
plowing corn in the valley;
mist on the summit

July drizzle;
grackle with a broken wing
flutters against the fence

Bright August morning
dew and a small gray feather
on a spider's web

A frog gigger's light
on and off at the pond's edge;
cloud-dimmed summer moon

Charles B. Dickson

mosquitoes swarming:
my sudden shadow
startles a trout

Lynn Lamphear

Come on, wasp
climb onto this paper
you belong outdoors

Working, working—
when did this berry bush
turn so red?

Peggy Heinrich

Late summer planting:
a beetle's empty shell
marking the row

Dorothy McLaughlin

my ear
searching for the notes
of the meadowlark

the loose string
of the harp
 frog song

flea market:
a thread of wind sewing
the prints together

Sister Mary Thomas Eulberg

graveside:
my father's shadow
bowed in the grass

summer twilight—
an old mushroom picker
leans on his cane

wishing upon
a falling star
the phone rings

Frederick Gasser

DESERTED BEACH

Deserted beach . . .
then a sandpiper
and us

Hand in hand
a wave touches
our feet

Your back
molding
the sand

Tasting the sea
on you . . .
in you

Our cries
lost
in the gulls'

As we
ebb
rising tide

Leaving . . .
this ocean
within

Our footprints
and the sandpiper's
wash to sea

Ross Kremer

DESTITUTE SINCE

A linked poem between Marlene Mountain and Hal Roth
April 1983 to September 1984

destitute since not offering incense to the queen of heaven* m
pain in the hollow of my back morning star h
the right hand's name is fuzzy the left hand wuzzy m
sipping white wine imagined love affair h
thought blood would never come passion or m
self-destructiveness
waking with the thought to quit h
half moon walking me home again not telling her h
screwing in the great goddess art gallery m
sunrise another yellow bus spilling kids this heat h
without a melody the blues pass through m
peering into fog knowing now it will never work out h
leaves turning i remain holed up m
building another set of shelves the years i've spent on one h
even fewer dreams now m
indian summer two nights in a row i think of running away h
stone sober into my forty-fourth year m
slowly conscious cold floor tile against my cheek h

over and over knowing i don't fit in m
could kick myself all those treading water days and nights m
rainy night dream of a baby drowning h
one last lie on the unemployment form one last check m
bitter cold i find a quarter h
will i ever know why that dawn i busted my paint brushes m
rising to her touch fog horn h
first iris tips for a while at odds with nothing m
even the full moon brings no call h
slowly skin folds and folds again another wait m
out of the john a kid with a gun h
newsstand how have men screwed up my world today m
packing unpacking again h
thinking about retirement i overdust the cabbage worms h
my son the age sons get killed m
now that i have a choice the fear that i don't want either h
in the dark loving two bodies m
"you're very fond of her aren't you" three peas left on the plate h
women and minorities m

*jeremiah 44:15-19

Summer sunrise
haloing mountain pines—
a trail horse whinnies

On his rocky ledge
a lizard licks the air—
August heat wave

Summer night
a blue haze around the moon—
the snail's silver trail

Frank Trotman

totem pole:
in the hawk's eye
a dark knot

deeper into the forest
slapping blackflies
more gently

alone
glacier-edged lake brimming
with sky

roaring valley—
the empty freight trails one light
downriver

Ruth Yarrow

summer afternoon
even the sparrows
still

summer afternoon
sipping lemonade, but childhood
was so sweet . . .

summer afternoon
Bach's "Air for the G String" —
dangling inchworm

summer afternoon
a violin string
breaks

summer afternoon
a beach umbrella
no one comes to

summer afternoon
on the beach, someone's sweater
slips to sea

Geraldine C. Little

Pink roses;
Pine shadows lengthen
Across the lawn

Helen V. Johnson

SHIPYARD LANDING
Bertie County, NC

Pickerel-weed spike:
its afternoon shadow cast
on a lower leaf

Lily pads
filling a curve of water—
the splash of a fish

A single boat
moored under the pier's shelter
this quiet day

White wings fluttering:
a circle of butterflies
above the water

Jane K. Lambert

leaving harbor
downwind from a lobster boat
on a languid breeze

yelping at the cold
diving off an anchored boat,
skinny dippers

a cormorant
spreading its wings to dry . . .
the old clothesline

L. A. Davidson

HAIKU: EXPERIMENTING WITH CONTENT

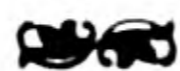
Expanded written version of a
talk given before the Haiku
Society of America on December 8, 1984.

R. W. Grandinetti Rader

No longer in its infancy but still quite young, western haiku abounds with various impressions on the nature of haiku. Along with the various impressions have come different experiments. They have included changes in or experiments with syllabic number, line position, word pictures (eye-ku), computer disc haiku, and sound haiku (a form associated closely with sound sculpture).

Some of the experiments have succeeded and have become influential elements in the haiku world. Others remain on the perimeter. Yet all of the experiments have had one characteristic in common, and that is the need to give new character to western haiku. We've been in search of identity.

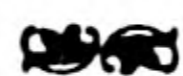
Whether or not there will ever be a basic, unified set of principles that guides haiku poets in their quest to more fully express the moment is a topic for another essay. I doubt it, though. As long as artists and poets see the world from different perspectives, there will be different expressions of their observations. However, an article co-authored by George Swede and Eric Amann in the Volume 4, Number 4 issue of *Cicada* is a major progression in outlining the perimeters of what constitutes a haiku. Even more recently, George Swede, in a reprinted article in the Volume 7, Number 3 issue of *Frogpond*, broadens the perimeters considerably more and in so doing confirms the possibility of what I believe to be the real experiment going on in haiku today: the experiment of using a wide range of subject matter.



Within the last five years a wave of excellent haiku that broaden considerably the subject matter of haiku has been written. This corporate experiment by poets such as Alexis Rotella, the late Raymond Roseliep, Penny Harter, Marlene Mountain (Wills), and others has the most far-reaching potential for the growth and continued maturing of western haiku. These poets, intensely aware of addressing new content in their haiku, are writing about subjects long considered out of reach for haiku enthusiasts. And they are making a difference.

In light of their successes, why have we been so slow to experiment with a wide range of subject matter? I believe there are two reasons for the slow response to experiment with content. The first is the over emphasis that haiku poets have given to the search for the proper form of haiku. A majority of articles in haiku journals and magazines for the past fifteen years has dealt with one or another aspect of haiku form. We've asked questions regarding syllable number, line placement, line number, and other form oriented concerns. The time has not been wasted. A young art form deserves much attention and nurture. But the child must be weaned from the mother or the child will stay a child. It should be quite clear by now that different forms have succeeded in relating the "ahness" of the haiku moment. Additionally, traditionalists and haiku experimenters can find a common ground with experimentation in content that they could never find in discussions on form. If we can assume (as poets such as Robert Creeley have) that content informs form or, at the most, content creates the form, haiku poets have the freedom to choose, from a number of haiku forms, the form that relates best to a particular haiku moment.

The second reason is an inferiority complex western haiku poets seem to have regarding the very attempt of writing haiku in any other language than Japanese. We have spent too much time trying to emulate the Japanese masters and not enough time trying to be masters of our own art form. Breaking new ground in our experimentation with content in haiku gives us the opportunity to do so.

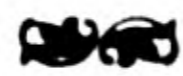


The experimentation with content in haiku has opened a door through which some outstanding examples of haiku have entered.

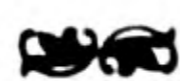
A sequence called *After An Affair* (Merging Media, 1984) by Alexis Rotella offers us a glimpse of the emotional depth and impact of the life of an affair from beginning to end. Two examples are: "Just friends: / he watches my gauze dress / blowing on the line" and "During my grief / the sound of a neighbor / sweeping her walk." These haiku and the others in the sequence possess an intensity that achieves the "ahness" of the moment far exceeding what some haiku traditionalists would have us write. The reader experiences the momentary grief—the rush of the writer's pain. It becomes our pain and our sense of loss. We experience the moment. It's risky but it works.

Penny Harter's short sequence on the holocaust after a nuclear war (*Frogpond* Vol. 7, No. 2)—a sequence she wrote after watching the television drama "The Day After"—is as much a powerful statement on the politics before a nuclear war as it is a statement on its effects. I would even suggest her sequence is more powerful than the movie. "Ash settles / on the lips / of the dead child" and "tonight's wind / without / the barking dog" are two haiku from the sequence that are not only good haiku but powerful expressions of the moment of awareness regarding our future destruction—an awareness that has existed in the human consciousness for the past forty years.

The above sequences are two outstanding examples of experimentation with content. Note also that both poets are women—a phenomenon that is very evident in the work with new content. The reasons vary, but I find it interesting that women poets are at the forefront of the work being done with new and deeper levels of content.



By offering the examples above, I do not necessarily conclude that all haiku written before the recent surge in experimentation with content are contentless nature poems. However, the intensity and subjects of these examples reveal a major shift in an attempt on the part of the haiku poet to relate the "ahness" of the haiku moment. This shift relates directly to the object of perception in haiku. In the past the objects of perception have been limited to things concrete. The examples offered in this essay refer to subjects not so easily seen as we would see a flower or cloud. There is an awareness, and in some cases an acute self-awareness, of the subject that exemplifies what Rod Willmot has called the relationship between the "I" and the "not-I," that major component of haiku that doesn't limit the relationship between human beings and Nature (cf. his article on psychological haiku, *Frogpond*, Vol. 6, No. 3). In fact, experimenting with the subject matter of haiku only unfolds our relationship with the Cosmos. It doesn't limit it. We now write of prostitutes and their relationship with their nature, not just the pretty flowers in the city park. We write about intensely joyous and sad situations rich in association. We are writing erotic haiku, psychological haiku, and urban haiku. The list can go on. What limits us now is the very fact that we even have to name the kind of haiku we write. I believe this is only because we have just begun to realize the expansive content open to the haiku experience. Our sign of maturing will be when we don't have to name what kind of haiku we write.



The experiment with content has paved a new way for haiku poets. Although haiku journals and magazines are still full of haiku about frogs, flowers, and crickets, there are poets who are willing to perceive areas of experience that have been avoided in the past. We are ready to move on.

running at dawn—
long grass tangles
long legs

after the summer storm
the new moon . . .
rising in each raindrop

polluted lake
still reflecting
the first star

Carol Wainright

Koi circle the water lily
swimming in their shadows

Raindrops hit the water
feeding koi

Koi moored to algae:
mustard flower on a fence

Silver snail trails:
first morning frost

J. Michael Koetzner

No bath tonight—
in the fresh-scrubbed tub
a jumping spider

Claire Cooperstein

“Buddha’s garden!”
the immigrant monk exclaims
into mounds of bok-choy

old Go master
deftly shifting the pebbles
his hands, still

Anthony J. Pupello

facing the whole
blooming garden, the master speaks
to himself

John Polozzolo

for shusaku endo

the surgeon’s finger
circling my chest x-ray. . .
father’s shadow pictures

Jerry Kilbride

before dawn the soft sound
an oar parts the lotuses
the bulbul’s song

*Rosamond Haas
(Kashmir, India)*

Forbidden City:
dragons on the roof’s edge
not a sound!

Judith Clark

for Foster Jewell

the August sun goes down:
shadows fill the footprints
across the sand dunes

Roberta Stewart

a moth flies
through my breath
in moonlight

moon
thin
after the blossoms

watersound
deepens us
under two moons

Bill Pauly

branches hanging over
where the rocks
stop

Dianne Borsenik

Hay rolls drying . . .
clouds billowing
over the hills

Having invented
summer night . . .
the firefly

Robert F. Mainone

the buzzard soars
and suddenly catches
the wind

summer wheat
now and then the tall hats
of the horsemen

an old field
throbbing with insects
the summer moon

the beauty
of the summer flowers
first day of autumn

the copperhead
suns on a rock
the cold

here too
on its withered bough
a crow

John Wills

(some of these are
from a new col-
lection, *Ah Coolness*,
coming soon from
Burnt Lake Press)

ABOUT TIME
—An Essay Review—

William J. Higginson

Nicholas A. Virgilio. *Selected Haiku*. Burnt Lake Press, 535 rue Duvernay, Sherbrooke, P.Q., Canada J1L 1Y8. 1985; 80 pp.; \$7.95 plus \$1.00 shipping.

"A book of Nick Virgilio's haiku is long overdue." So begins Cor van den Heuvel's introduction to this selection of haiku from more than twenty years' work by one of the earliest members of the American haiku community that came into being after World War II. From the first issue of *American Haiku (AH)* to the most recent issue of *Frogpond*, Nick Virgilio has been one of the more important contributors to the haiku magazines of North America.

Lily:
out of the water. . .
out of itself.

opens *Selected Haiku*. Given first prize in *AH*'s second issue, this poem helped many haiku poets break out of the confines of five-seven-five, and opened the English-language haiku to the extreme brevity and sharpness of focus that characterizes many of the best haiku today, twenty-two years after its first publication. John Wills ascribes his own first interest in haiku to encountering another brief poem by Virgilio, also from that second issue of *AH*:

bass
picking bugs
off the moon

A number of Virgilio's early haiku exhibit the sharp image and language of the lily poem. Here are two other Virgilio brevities from 1963 which I wish could have been included in *Selected Haiku*:

Pulling
the boat ashore—
leaving the moon afloat.

The deranged boy
stops babbling:
cicada.

All four poems above appeared in the second issue of *AH*, after a first issue that contained a broad range of work with great diversity of form and content. It may be useful to record here Virgilio's sole contribution to that first issue, also absent from *Selected Haiku*:

Spring wind frees
the full moon tangled
in leafless tress.

We may consider this an homage to Harold G. Henderson, whose book *An Introduction to Haiku* contains translations from the work of the Japanese masters, almost exclusively in three lines with riming at the ends of the first and third lines.

Moving to the third issue of *AH* we find this poem by Virgilio, given here in its slightly modified *Selected Haiku* reincarnation:

the town clock's face
adds another shade of yellow
to the afterglow.

When we compare this with the following poem by J. W. Hackett, which appeared in the second issue of *AH*, we see again the workings of influence as Virgilio, like so many of us when we begin to write in a genre new to us, unconsciously adopts the processes of his masters:

A distant dog
is adding another shade of gray
to the morning.

Almost ten years later another echo of this poem by Hackett shows up in one of Virgilio's contributions to *Haiku West* (also revised slightly for *Selected Haiku*):

a distant balloon
drifting over the country fair,
eclipses the moon.

Such subtleties as imitating oneself, by falling into the same grammatical and rhythmical patterns, also dogged Virgilio, as they must any poet who produces a good volume of work in a single genre. The following from *Selected Haiku* also appeared first in *Haiku West*, about five years before "a distant balloon":

the sack of kittens
sinking in the icy creek,
increases the cold.

This poem has been praised by some critics; I think its last line utterly superfluous. But in "a distant balloon" the last line is perfect, both in image and rhythm, capturing that highest form of onomatopoeia which R. H. Blyth called "The representation of soul states."

I quote these to illustrate some of the forces that helped to shape Virgilio's haiku. The borrowed technique or phrase, the whims of fashion or a critic, unconscious self-parody, are each minor occurrences in the years of keeping at it that produce a body of work from which such a selection as this can be made.

Encouraged by the formal variety of the first issue of *AH*, many contributors, like Virgilio, experimented greatly with the possibilities of haiku, as reflected in the even greater variety in the second issue. In its next few issues *American Haiku*, the only regular outlet for haiku in English then, took a decidedly conservative turn under the editorship of Clement Hoyt. Hoyt referred to any haiku not in five-seven-five syllables as a "variant", and pushed many early haiku poets toward what he felt to be the correct haiku form. Virgilio also moved toward seventeen syllables, and has not yet regained the brevity and sharpness of image that distinguished some of his earliest haiku.

But he did continue to express the human, often in poems that at first seem like senryu, but reveal a darker side upon re-reading. Religious themes began to enter his haiku, as in these from *AH* in 1964:

Into the blinding sun . . .
the funeral procession's
glaring headlights.

In the empty church—
a quiet child watching
flickering candles.

(The first in its *Selected Haiku* form; the second not in the book. All poems in the rest of this review are quoted from *Selected Haiku*.)

By the time *American Haiku* passed from the scene in 1968, its work taken up by *Haiku* magazine in Toronto and *Haiku West* in Forest Hills, Virgilio's young brother Larry had been killed in Vietnam. The darker tinge in Virgilio's haiku deepened, and from one of the first poems written in his brother's memory,

Deep in rank grass,
through a bullet-riddled helmet:
an unknown flower.

to the closing poems in *Selected Haiku*, an elegiac note dominates Virgilio's haiku during the past fifteen years.

Some of the poems here are new to me, and I am grateful to have them. Mizuhara Shuoshi might have enjoyed such a piece as this:

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

And Hashimoto Takako would have appreciated:

the graduation ring
slips from my finger:
the midnight river.

Finally, Virgilio is again experimenting occasionally with brevity, and working into new subject matter—or at least subject matter which I have not seen in the haiku magazines over his name. The first of the following may be a little topical to want inclusion in this beautifully hand-made book, but the second is as timeless as any senryu can be:

raising their voices
discussing Reaganomics:
hookers on the bus

and:

between tricks knitting booties

Like the rest of us, Virgilio writes out of his own needs and develops his own strengths in response to them and to the activity going on around him, both in the "world" and in the "haiku community". Unlike most of us, he has written haiku, many of them excellent, for over twenty years with no book of his work published. This selection, brought together with the help of Cor van den Heuvel and the encouragement of Randy Brooks, is indeed "long overdue". The fine work in Virgilio's *Selected Haiku*, the substantial quantity of that work represented, and the very fine letterpress presentation of it in this volume from Rod Willmot's Burnt Lake Press, have made it well worth waiting for. The number of praiseworthy haiku by Nick Virgilio that could not be included in this book suggests that we do not want to wait so long for another selection.



at the stage door:
old man with gold
fingernails

stripper
leaves
her pale scar

Charles D. Nethaway, Jr.

On the steps
a hooker tans her thighs
full moon

Streetwalker
with a black eye halo
around the moon

Empty circus tent
from the high wire a spider
swings on its thread

George Swede

the stripper plucks another feather
at home my wife
is watering chrysanthemums

LeRoy Gorman

ECLIPSE OF THE MOON

Though many are out to watch the eclipse, alone or in small groups, we seek our isolation, walking apart from one another, talking little.

Tonight's eclipse
a dampness
gathers in my clothes

The ivory disc
out of the day has grown
this odorous night

I walk apart and look at no one, shadow on the moon

Darkness covering
still through the chilly air
a ghost of the moon

The nearer night:
up and down the parkway
dandelion globes

Stillness—
an upper window
shines

I wake the moon riding clear

Stephen Gould

In the stall,
old straw
shaded by sunlight.

The moon
over the sea,
the dove's eye.

Nick Thorndike

The moonlit sand
a child too weak to cry
is thrown away

Brent Harrell

Sundown,
two crows exchange caws
on the catwalk

Hurricane sky,
two ruffled gulls hunker down
behind a small dune

Rebecca Rust

lighthouse lightning dark sky darkening winds

by the lightning the pine tree splits

Lenard D. Moore

Yellow wildgrape
riots
through the empty oak.

Scrub-grass country
the road runs level with the eye
of the hawk.

Lenore Mayhew

Flash of lightning
a hawk on the post watches
the haycutting

John-Bruce Shoemaker

Meadowlark singing—
on the smoldering gatepost
raindrops sizzle

Frost on the pumpkins
two geese flying side by side
away from the sun

Diane Webster

Fog lives downcanyon
Its light can take you under
Coyote hunts here

John Roberts

Rusted bones picked clean,
the old car lies abandoned
beside the highway.

T. R. Merrick

Weightlifters have left;
Now it's barbells' turn
To grunt . . .

Paul Burns

before the toss
the javelin-thrower
wipes off his point

in the stadium
the marathon runner
takes an extra lap

deep in the outfield
the long high fly disappears
against the full moon

Richard Bodner

tasting
just like it sounds
sushi

a second glance . . .
the thunderhead billowing
above Los Alamos*

Gary L. Vaughn

**the first atomic bomb
was designed and built
in Los Alamos, New Mexico*

Each one separate
seen in the warm morning sun.
Millions of grassblades.

Everyday stillness.
It, too, becomes a habit.
The bench by the lake.

The weeping willow
its faced mirrored in the pond—
always the same face.

Only a few guests
in the small inn by the lake.
The end of summer.

In the green beech leaf
a delicate evening light
adding its yellow.

Lake water lapping.
In the still summer evening
a nun's secret smile.

Gunther Klinge

(adapted from the German
by Ann Atwood)

SIGNS OF THE SEASON

last
day
of
summer

raking
maple
leaves
my
hair

the
color
of
smoke

from
the
clover
field

deer
crossing

to
the
apple
trees

a
black
feather

in
the
scarecrow's
hat

the
autumn
wind

Tao-Li

BOOK REVIEWS

THE HAIKU HANDBOOK: How to Write, Share, and Teach Haiku, William J. Higginson with Penny Harter, McGraw-Hill Paperbacks, 331 pages, 1985, \$8.95.

Reviewed by Geraldine C. Little

Books which can function as textbooks as well as clearly inform the general public about a given subject are rare. *The Haiku Handbook* is such a book. Teachers will embrace it with cries of delight. It is for people who know little about haiku, and for poets well versed in the nuances and specifics of haiku. They will read this book for confirmation, enlightenment, and revelation.

William J. Higginson, whose essays in journals have always been written in lively style, begins his fine book (whose sub-title aptly is, "How to Write, Share, and Teach Haiku") with a section called *Haiku Old and New*. Six chapters comprise this section. They deal with: "Why Haiku?"—why it is worth trying to catch the moments that make up our lives—"The Four Great Masters of Japanese Haiku," Basho, Buson, Issa, and Shiki, "Modern Japanese Haiku," offering names and poems which will be new to many readers. This one, by Takeda Chie, catches a feeling that occasionally assaults us all:

porcelain dog—
all day long autumn loneliness
watches over me

"Early Haiku in the West," the fourth chapter of this section, is one of the book's most interesting, informing us of the diversity of poets and cultures who began to experiment with the brief Japanese form. Chapter five, "The Haiku Movement in English," is a meticulous tracing of beginnings, and Chapter Six, "Haiku Around the World," alerts us to the well-traveled life of haiku. This well-traveled life of haiku is evidenced by the inclusion of the work of one-hundred-fifty twentieth-century poets around the world.

Part Two deals with *The Art of Haiku* in four chapters addressing "Nature and Haiku," "The Form of Haiku," "The Craft of Haiku," and "Sharing Haiku." This section is a careful study, with clear examples from a great variety of poets, a thoughtful consideration of the areas covered. Particularly, this reviewer likes the section on "Sharing Haiku," for that is one of haiku's most endearing qualities. I know of no other form of poetry which has this happy bonus; no other form simply catches *this* moment.

The next section, *Teaching Haiku*, has been needed by teachers for a long time. As a teacher, I can state that Penny Harter's Lesson Plan is splendid; it is lucid, comprehensive, specific, and entirely workable—and fun! (I've used it with college freshmen and sophomores with success, so it is not just for young children.) Penny's non-rigid roadmap is very fine indeed.

The book then moves to *Before and Beyond Haiku*, in section four. Here are addressed such concerns as "Haiku Prose" and "The Uses of Haiku," as well as "Before Haiku" and "Beyond Haiku". Tanka, renga, haibun and senryu are competently discussed, with examples. Higginson often gives the Japanese beside the English translation, for the edification of those who read Japanese. Just one of the poets mentioned in this section is the famous Yosano Akiko, one of whose tanka offered is

hear the poems:
who would deny the red
of a field's flowers?
how delicate this is—
a girl with spring desire

"Characteristics of Haibun" as practiced by Basho will be particularly valuable to those interested in that "form." In "For the Writer," Higginson's discussion of how one of his own haiku came into being and into final form is useful. Since the haiku is one of my favorites, one I find most evocative, I cite it:

WINTER SOLSTICE

wooden wind chimes
in the wind in the
wood smoke dusk¹

It is good to have the "Season-Word List and Index." As Higginson reminds us, "for many Japanese the seasonal feeling holds the key to haiku art." There is a Reference Section at the end of the book with a comprehensive Glossary, a listing of General Works on Japanese Literature and Culture, an extensive listing of Resources, plus Index. Higginson's scholarship is impressive.

This rich book is an important addition to literature on haiku. It is comprehensive and most attractively produced. Even its cover, depicting a cherry tree bough in blossom, is an invitation. "Intelligently lucid" is the phrase that first came to mind when I had finished the book, for it is at once scholarly and wonderfully readable. Higginson and Harter are to be congratulated. And *read*. This is a book to *own*, for reference again and again.

1. first appeared in *Wind Chimes*, #11

TOUCHING THE STONE AX, Hal Roth. Wind Chimes Book V, 32 pages, 1984, \$3.00 ppd.

DOWN MARBLE CANYON, Ruth Yarrow. Wind Chimes Minibook VII, 20 unnumbered pages, 1984, \$1.25 ppd.

Both from Wind Chimes Press, P.O. Box 601, Glen Burnie, MD 21061-0601.

Reviewed by Frank K. Robinson

It should be made clear from the outset that I normally am no admirer of “placeku” — haiku written (self-)consciously and methodically about a certain area or location. But this personal aversion is largely overcome by Hal Roth and Ruth Yarrow in these collections of theme-poems, each about a journey of exploration in a Western canyon.

For one thing, these sequences are more than a mere description of geographical phenomena. The actual canyons become metaphors for something much deeper: broadly speaking, Roth explores the human being in history (“There are still nameless canyons,” he says in his opening passage, “where alcoves of the past lie preserved . . . , where one can touch the earliest heritage of a continent”); Yarrow examines, without preface, the history in a human being. Yet ultimately these are two sides of the same coin. Indeed, there are many remarkable similarities between these accounts (and inevitably, perhaps, with Foster Jewell’s earlier haiku of the region), though each poet maintains his own distinctive voice.

Roth’s haibunlike sequence, interspersed with prose passages from various sources “To establish settings for the haiku,” opens with a richly multimeaning statement, “Our day began with the lizard,” and goes on to underline the sweep of history with

recalling dinosaur tracks
throb
of the lizard’s throat

(Would this poem be more immediate if “recalling” were replaced by “in”?)

Yarrow, too, commences with an image of early day and early origins:

canyon dawn
a bat folding dark
into a crevice

And importantly, this and the following three verses establish immediately the inward nature of her journey with their key images: “cleft,” “canyon,” and “cavern.” Interior space is further probed along the way, not least in one of the most moving poems:

in kiva ruins
a sacred datura bud
unfolds shadows

And finally, the journey ends within the depths of internal as well as external—and cosmic—geography, perhaps the core of the self:

inner canyon—
a jagged slice
of constellations

(When this poem first appeared in a journal, incidentally, “slice” was misprinted as “silence”—a singularly happy typographical error which I, for one, would have preferred to retain.)

Not unexpectedly, these parallel journeys produce several parallel though emphatically not duplicated poems. Yarrow’s “kiva” matches Roth’s

from pueblo gloom
a chalk-drawn stick man
smiles

And his breathtaking

wind in a high arch
the kachina’s foot
is raised

is transmuted in Yarrow’s

high in the red cliff
Anasazi footbridge
to the sky

But essentially Roth seems more interested in the web of history, man’s history (in a phrase from one of his sources) “surrounded with ceremony”:

in a circle of stone
charred corn cobs
two inches long

This verse carries the theme well, though it is perhaps one of the less successful in the collection, as is Yarrow’s not-quite-fresh near miss:

river silence
magnified by cliffs
and one cricket

For the most part, however, Roth's theme is furthered by such striking examples as

thunder clap
my hands cover
the other hand prints

So, too, with Yarrow's theme in a similar but subtly different poem:

my thumbprint
on this thousand-year-old pot
fits hers

Roth's journey ends not in the canyon, but in a state of reflection within the familiar, palpable walls of his study: "On my desk . . . lies a stone ax . . . to remind me of that day . . ." The last words of prose, "I wonder about the man whose hands shaped it," strongly anticipate the powerful final poem, which itself unifies the sequence by rejoining the concentric circles of history with the introductory image of "touch/ing/ the earliest heritage":

touching the stone ax
my pale fingers

Roth's collection includes thirteen poems and is illustrated on the cover with a kachina dancer by Edwin Tunis; Yarrow's contains twenty poems and a cover illustration of her own. Both present the paradoxically same yet quite different responses of two sensitive and gifted haiku poets to similar experiences—explorations of light and shadow, height and depth, sound and silence, movement and stasis, time and timelessness, linearity and circularity, being and meaning, and, ultimately, self and Other.

These journeys must be experienced by each reader for himself, through the integrated text of each work. Thoroughly recommended.

ENDLESS WAVES, Geraldine C. Little, Merging Media; 1984, 48 pages, \$4.95.

HAKUGAI: Poem from a Concentration Camp, Geraldine C. Little, Curbstone Publishing Company; 1983, 126 pages, \$9.95 cloth—\$4.95 paperback. Both books available from the author, 519 Jacksonville Road, Mt. Holly, NJ 08060.

Reviewed by Elizabeth Searle Lamb

These two books, seemingly so different, address similar concerns in different ways. Reading them at the same time somehow adds to the richness of each one. And they show Geraldine Little's increasing mastery of both haiku and the longer poems.

Endless Waves, dedicated to Hiroaki Sato and containing over 60 haiku and 7 sequences, is a collection which shows uniformly high quality. It opens with "A Mass for Autumn," five haiku which foreshadow many of the elements found in the poems which follow. I like especially the 'Agnus Dei' which closes the sequence:

Opening doors
the one of outer, inner—
a passing moth

Several haiku of nuns and a sequence for the late Father Raymond Rose-liep are followed by poems of a more general kind—poems of music, of art, of the inner and outer worlds in which this poet lives. There is a variety of form as well as content here, as shown in these examples:

stacking firewood shreds of old webs cast shadows

Monarch off to Mexico
my deepened faith

While this is not a somber book, many of the poems are concerned with death; therefore the poems in a lighter mood scattered through the pages are very welcome. This one, for instance:

eating bayou shrimp
I hear
all that jazz

The cover illustration and three full page drawings by C. Schlosser are attractive, especially the bold-line 'crane on one leg.' And this chapbook is one which will repay repeated reading with a deepening of tone and nuance, meanings beneath the surface, and the awareness of a most skillful use of language. What a lovely simplicity is found in the book's closing haiku

autumn moon
bronzing white chrysanthemums
on my mother's grave

Hakugai is a powerful epic poem, far removed it would seem from the artlessness and simplicity of haiku. And yet surely Geraldine Little's understanding and ability to write haiku and her interest in the historical background as well as current trends, developed over a period of more than a dozen years, have enabled her to write this poem.

This is the story of the 110,000 Japanese-Americans interned in concentration camps during World War II, told by Little through poetic sketches depicting the trauma of the uprooting and incarceration of one fictional family. Her sensitive awareness of the 'felt knowledge of her characters' inner realities' shines through the poems. By the end of the book one knows the members of the family well; one feels the degradation and the shame of the situation. Each of the three parts of the book is introduced by a Japanese haiku (two by Issa, one by Basho) and there are haiku echoes in some of these lyrics. The language is often as spare and honed as in Little's haiku; some stanzas indeed seem at first glance to be haiku though they are not.

The truth of a sad history is embedded in this 'poetry of persecution' — *hakugai* is the word for persecution. Closing his discussion of these poems (*American Book Review* Mar.-Apr. 1985) Edward Butscher writes, ". . .their author's artistic career appears assured." I agree, and await her next works in whatever form they may take with anticipation.

WORTH REPEATING

HAI KAIS DE BASHŌ

Traducción de Francisco F. Villalba

En la cascada clara
las agujas verdes de los pinos
se desparraman

Al oscurecerse el mar
la voz del pato salvaje
apenas es blanca

El rayo
desgarrando la noche negra
el grito de la garza

¡De qué árbol en flor
no sé
pero qué perfume!

Nada dice
en el canto de la cigarra
que su fin está cerca

from POESIA LIBRE: REVISTA DE POESIA, MINISTERIO DE CULTURA
(Vol. 4, No. 12; October 1984) Managua, Nicaragua.

Translations below made from the original Japanese by William J. Higginson:

a clear waterfall . . . falling into ripples green pine needles // dark sea
the cries of wild geese in the distance white/lightning . . . into the dark-
ness goes a heron's cry // what tree's blossom can't say but the scent!
soon to die no hint shows in the cicada's cry

BITS & PIECES

NOTES

Material may be submitted at any time for future 'Haiku Workshops,' which will be conducted from time to time.

Again, my thanks to Barbara Gurwitz for the cover art work.

COAST TO COAST BROADCAST

On the occasion of the publication of his *Selected Haiku* (see review elsewhere in this issue), Nick Virgilio was interviewed by Scott Simon for the National Public Radio program "Morning Edition." The interview was aired on May 9, 1985, on more than three hundred radio stations, coast to coast. It is the first time a haiku poet has reached such a wide audience. It would be interesting to know how many *Frogpond* readers heard this broadcast.

TRANSCRIPT OF HSA TALK AVAILABLE

Alexis Rotella spoke on "Oneness and Haiku" at the June 22 meeting of the Haiku Society of America in New York City. In response to requests for copies of the talk, a transcript has been made available for \$4.00 to cover costs including postage. Write to Alexis Rotella, P.O. Box 72, Mt. Lakes, NJ 07046.

NINTH HEA CONTEST

The Hawaii Education Association announces a Nov. 15, 1985 deadline for its Ninth Annual Adult Haiku Writing Contest. Send SASE for rules to: HEA Haiku Contest, 1649 Kalakaua Ave., Honolulu, HI 96826.

POEMS ON HOUSEFLIES WANTED

Vincent De Thier, author of *To Know a Fly* and *The Ecology of a Summer House*, professor of zoology at University of Massachusetts, Amherst, is looking for poems about houseflies for possible use in an anthology. While Prof. De Thier is traveling, submissions are being collected by

Arlene Teck

4½ Wynding Way

Rockaway, NJ 07866

Previously published poems are welcomed, but must be accompanied by permission to reprint them in the anthology. S.A.S.E., of course.

HAIKU BOOKS AND CHAPBOOKS RECEIVED

Listing of new books received is for information only and does not imply endorsement by the magazine nor the Haiku Society of America. Future issues will carry reviews of some of these titles.

Haiku: Anthologie Canadienne/Canadian Anthology, Dorothy Howard and André Duhaime, editors, Asticou Editions, c.p. 210, succ. A, Hull, Quebec, Canada J8Y 6M8; 1985, 246 pages, \$17.95 Can. Also available from the editors, 67 Court St., Aylmer, Quebec, Canada J9H 4M1.

Half Sunshine: 49 Haiku by Robert N. Johnson, Cy Johnson & Son, P.O. Box 288, Susanville, CA 96130; 1985, 10 pages, \$2.00 ppd.

Casting into a Cloud: Southwest Haiku by Elizabeth Searle Lamb, From Here Press, P.O. Box 219, Fanwood, NJ 07023; 1985, 72 pages, \$3.95.

Cat's Paws and Morning Glories: Haiku by Wilma J. Lusk, Ben-Sen Press, West Anglia Publications, P.O. Box 2683, La Jolla, CA 92038-2683; 1984, 64 pages, \$4.95.

Two Sides of a Life: Nakimaro's Haiku Poems by Hirose Nakimaro, trans. into English & French by Sakuzo Takada, Japan League of Poets; 96 pages, ¥1,000. or \$5.00. From Mr. Ichiro Hirose, 1-2488-13, Ogawa-cho, Kodaira-shi, Tokyo, Japan 187 or from Mr. Sakuzo Takada, 1-8-13, Koenji-Kita, Sugunami-ku, Tokyo, Japan 166.

Neon Shapes: Haiku by R. W. Grandinetti Rader, Jade Mountain Press, P.O. Box 72, Mountain Lakes, NJ 07046; 1985, 45 pages, \$6.00 hardbound.

Shadows on the Empty Road by Lewis Sanders, Advance Press, 25553 Flanders Drive, Carmel, CA 93923; 36 unnumbered pages, \$4.00 ppd.

Cool Season: Haiku Poems (in Japanese, in English and in French) by Sakuzo Takada, Yoake Sha; 72 pages, ¥1,000. or \$5.00. From Mr. Takada, 1-8-13, Koenji-Kita, Sugunami-ku, Tokyo, Japan 166.

Haiku-West: A Collection of Poems by Joan E. Youngblood, Wyndham Hall Press, P.O. Box 877, Bristol, IN 46507; 1985, 112 pages, \$4.50.





