

FROGPOND XXVI:2

FF

HAIKU SOCIETY OF AMERICA
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President's Message

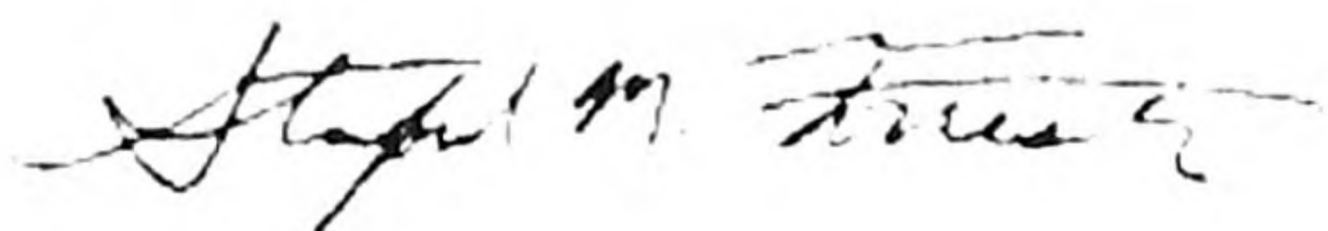
Dear HSA Members and Friends:

Welcome to another issue of *Frogpond*. At this time, many of us are revising our winter haiku and anticipating the wonders spring has to offer. Spring, of course, is an optimistic time, a time of birth, a time of renewal.

I think we would agree that spring and all that it symbolizes couldn't come soon enough this year, with the world in such a turbulent state. Perhaps you are asking "How might we make a difference?" Some choose the sword, but I expect most of us poets choose the pen. I think we forget sometimes how powerful the pen can be, but recently we have been reminded when First Lady Laura Bush cancelled the "Poetry and the American Voice" discussion at the White House on February 12, because poets rallied against the Administration's stance on Iraq. This, I believe, should make clear the power we poets have to persuade and influence others.

Political themes are not common in haiku, but a poem needn't be "political" to change the world. We should all be aware of what words can do, and writing haiku is as important as we think it is. It is part of a creative process that is much needed today. As poets, we should offer more beauty to the world. I can't think of a group more qualified to do that than us. And to top it off, who else could do it in 17 syllables or less?

In peace and haiku friendship,



Stanford M. Forrester, President

haiku

**1: An unrhymed
Japanese poem recording
the essence of a moment
keenly perceived, in which
Nature is linked to human
nature. It usually consists
of seventeen *onji*.**

**2: A foreign adaptation of
1, usually written in three
lines totalling
fewer than seventeen
syllables.**

(from A Haiku Path page 82 with corrections from page 80)

nearly spring
the house comes out of
the hill's shadow

Dietmar Tauchner

spring breeze . . .
a whiff of new lumber
and old cusswords

Joan Morse Vistain

5

planting moon
the garden gate
ajar

James Fowler

early spring
yielding the road
to the harrow

Joann Klontz

sunlit hay
the peeps of a chick
starting to hatch

Ferris Gilli

early spring
a border of rabbits
in the nursery

Merle Hinchee

surely it's in love with itself the pansy

Marlene Mountain

twisted onto the lilac
a yellow bag
that caught the snowstorm

G. A. Huth

6

spring dusk
the sounds of a mole
breaking grass roots

Ferris Gilli

ashen twilight—
why does a man dream
of flatfish

Max Verhart

Cool spring dawn—
my first skipping stone
almost makes it across

Rebecca Lilly

fishing stream
a young boy's rapture
over rainbow trout

kirsty karkow

7

mist across the docks
the darker shapes become boats,
become bridges

Martin Lucas

having got past them
the paddling comes easier—
droopy willows

H. F. Noyes

March wind—
more garbage
in the trees

Hilary Tann

bird song—
morning round
of medicine

piper

first spring day
the chatter
of the Starbucks staff

Pamela Miller Ness

funny papers
getting lots of play—
spring wind

Tom Tico

The cool dampness—
dandelion greens
gathered for a salad

Rebecca Lilly

harp concert
the spiraling
of wisteria

G. J. Longenecker

this vine
trumpeting its presence
flower by flower

Emily Romano

scented blossoms—
a tailor sewing in
the rain tree's shade

K. Ramesh

9

tossed treetops
the stillness shifts
its weight

Ed Duesterberg

thunderhead
a mass of starlings
splits in two

Kay Grimnes

did only their songs
alight in this field?
meadow larks

D. Claire Gallagher

the blast
of the noon siren
summer heat

Tom Tico

summer heat
down the length
of the cat's back

Rob Scott

fireflies at dusk
a train whistle
fades

Robert McNeill

10

twilight
pine scent rises
from the circular saw

Gary Steinberg

moonless night
a pair of circling nightjars
feed on stars

Rajiv Lather

wet toes—
mudpies made fresh
by the lakeshore

Carmen Sterba

bone dry . . .
an aquarium net
full of flies

Joyce Sandeen Johnson

11

a wished wind . . .
her ashes
cross the lake

Joyce Sandeen Johnson

deep in the cave
the earth returns
my breath

Jeanne Emrich

a quiet stretch of river
the gull's little kick
into flight

Martin Lucas

beach fog—
the plunk
of a clammer's pail

Dan McCullough

beach piling
a gust of wind
stirs the gull's feathers

Peggy Heinrich

entering the port
sail boats and sea gulls
in a big flock

Vid Vukasovic

12

Crescent moon—
the white claw of a crab
washes ashore

Edward Zuk

late summer wind—
covering one bare foot
with the other

Jack Barry

daybreak
a fast-moving cloud
joins another

Bruce Ross

full of agreement the sun and the green

Marlene Mountain

13

azure sky—
a distant episode
of birds in flight

Giovanni Malito

ruins at dawn—
a black cat drinking from
a patch of dew

Kristen Deming

white primrose
where rusty drops drip
from the air conditioner

Linda Jeannette Ward

The Conscious Eye

Dee Evetts

IN THE PREVIOUS ISSUE I had occasion to comment on a poem by Lee Gurga that has the second line, “my son & I side by side”. Timothy Mize wrote to me in response: “I don’t think the use of the ampersand has to do with the avoidance of sententiousness. The “and” would connote equality, but just as ampersands in signage connote “another”, as in “Bob Jones & Son”, I believe the author used it to mean that he and his son were now on an equal footing, but not necessarily equal. Perhaps the father wasn’t ready to concede equality.”

I bring this up mainly to illustrate how variously a given haiku can be interpreted. And before I embark on another round of (it must be said, enjoyable) speculations, let me acknowledge once again that many readers will disagree with them, favoring their own. This is as it should be. Today I want to look at some poems that treat the subject of ageing or deceased parents. As usual I am most interested in work that manages to convey more than the writer’s feelings: if possible, some hint of a particular relationship.

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Taking the material in the broadest sense chronologically, we could start with Gloria Jaguden’s telling glimpse:

his Father’s Day brunch
from among the lemonades
he picks up the check¹

Here is a man accustomed to directing events, willing to sit back and enjoy being feted as a grandfather (the lemonades suggest) as well as a father, but—sharp as ever—quietly picking up the tab. Useless to argue with him, no doubt. The poet seems to observe all this with a loving acceptance.

A more complex poem is Alyson Pou's

sunlight shines red
through my father's thumb
on the steering wheel²

This also depicts someone still in control—if not controlling, for that thumb is possibly a domineering one. On another level it suggests vulnerability, and mortality, and (the redness is blood, after all) an apprehension of almost visceral connection between generations.

This haiku by paul m. shifts the scene at first glance not so very far:

sudden swell—
taking the tiller
from my father³

15

But there is a very different feel to this relationship. It is fair to assume that the father once taught the son, that they sailed together as equals for many years, that the older man now has physical limitations. I don't know how the poet achieves this (could it be the word "sudden"?) but somehow we are made to understand that for neither one is this a problem.

Retirement comes as difficult transition for many, and time seems to hang heavy for the subject of Lee Gurga's poem:

august heat—
dad calls after lunch
with news of a murder⁴

There is no suggestion of impatience here: rather, amusement and understanding mingled.

Things are much edgier in this situation so convincingly depicted by Alexis Rotella:

300 miles away
my father makes sure
I hear him sigh⁵

Rare the family that is entirely free of subtle reproaches,

conveyed more often by a tone of voice than by the words themselves; or by a set of the mouth, a silence, an exhalation.

Another realm is entered when physical or mental incapacity are the case. There is a straightforwardness and innocence about Joanna Preston's

washing
my mother's breasts
we both giggle⁶

What for some could only be embarrassment, in this relationship is transformed by a shared sense of humor into a new and privileged kind of intimacy.

John Stevenson has a finely etched poem:

neatly made bed
a slight depression
where dad sat waiting⁷

For all its clarity, much is unspecified here. We might be in a hospital, or alternatively a nursing home; we do not know who made the bed so neatly; it is not revealed for whom or for what the father was waiting. The exact circumstances are not important. What comes through so strongly and compassionately is the sense of a life reduced to very limited dimensions. But more than this: a recognition of (and a salute to) something steadfast, even stoic.

16

Dementia is surely one of the most taxing conditions for all involved, and to take it on poetically is a further act of courage—not least artistically. How to make the commonplace symptoms—forgotten names and faces, repetitive actions and questions—anything other than banal, without becoming maudlin? This approach by Pamela Miller Ness stands out:

Alzheimer's ward
again father counting
the afghan squares⁸

For me what renders this tenderly personal is the colored blanket—something familiar brought from home, we might conjecture. It serves to link present and past, thus widening the context and deepening the humanity of this poem.

Relationships belong to life, certainly, but are by no means ended by death. This is abundantly clear in Annie Bachini's

news item—
knowing exactly what my mother's
response would have been⁹

In many African cultures a person's physical dissolution is regarded as less significant than the final oblivion which comes when no-one who knew us remains alive. In the meantime we continue to play a significant role, however indefinable. As in this enigmatic piece by ai li:

the man who loved her
his son sends
a wreath¹⁰

17

where the reader can discover a chain of repercussions. Viewed in this way, an individual's life and death come to look more like an ever-widening ripple that interlaces with countless others.

* * *

1. *Geppo* XXIII:5
2. *Frogpond* XXIV:3
3. *Agnieszka's Dowry* 12
4. *Frogpond* XXII:3
5. *Looking for a Prince* (White Peony Press: Cairnbrook PA 1991))
6. *winterSPIN* #40
7. *Raw NerVZ* VI:3
8. *bottle rockets* #3
9. *Blithe Spirit* 7:3
10. *Global Haiku* (Mosaic Press: Niagara Falls, NY 2000)

(Submissions for this column may be sent to Dee Evetts, 131 Roszel Road, Winchester, VA 22601. Please indicate whether the work has been previously published, supplying details.)

blooming
in the late August garden
Easter lilies

Merrill Ann Gonzales

late summer
black men spreading tar
on the side road

Lenard D. Moore

summer departing—
the worn path
through the park

Brian Gierat

18

lingering heat—
the dirt road ahead of me

Martin Gottlieb Cohen

a cicada husk
clings to the weed stalk
drifting seeds

Lori Laliberte-Carey

autumn dusk
the neighbors' new car
with the top down

Barry George

autumn bonfire
smoke from the driftwood
floats out to sea

William Cullen Jr.

19

revolving door
the smell of burning leaves
each time

Gary Warner

last rays of sun—
in the alley doorway
the bus boy smokes

Michael Ketchek

cool city night
asking the cabby
to turn up the jazz

Nathaniel Orion Tico

autumn equinox
under her fingers
another lump

Kay Grimnes

a walk in the woods—
my presence
stirs and quiets

J. D. Heskin

an old song
going way back
in the crow

Robert Henry Poulin

20

solitary walk—
kicking up the scent
of wet pine needles

Adelaide B. Shaw

silver moon
scouring the cook pot
with creek gravel

Darrell Byrd

frost warning—
my flowers brighten
the garage

Flori Ignoffo

finches leaving
and with them
daylight savings time

Kimiyo Arai

21

school letting out
a muskrat scurries
back to the water

Tom Clausen

A flick of the switch—
dark clouds drifting
across the harvest moon

Marilyn Siers

haloed moon—
the dark space between
my neighbors' houses

Lenard D. Moore

the tea bag is cold
outside the moon
shines on the road

Francis Duvall

hardened squeeze dents
in the hand lotion
cold, blustery day

Burnell Lippy

first winter rain
combing my old vinyls
for *The Delta Blues*

Robert Gilliland

22

Three geese are calling
resting by the frozen lake.
Branches wrapped in ice.

Mark Krusec

winter rain—
the bright colors
of the playground benches

A. C. Missias

all day the darkness
in the kindling box
first snow

Burnell Lippy

winter sun warms my face
the sermon
on listening

Randy M. Brooks

23

the sun glares
off ice-coated trees
we ride in silence

Allen McGill

taking the garlands of light
from their cartons—
the longest night

Kristen Deming

holiday rush—
draped over a porch rail
the deflated Santa

Connie Donleycott

Christmas Eve
the small snow patch
by the back porch

Bruce Ross

a shaving kit
in our teen's bathroom—
the year begins

Joann Klontz

New Year . . .
my focus shifts
beyond the rain

Michael Evans

24

New Year's Day
trunks of river birch
emerge from fog

Mark Smith

January
her halo
(just breath)

Mike Taylor

Year of the Dragon
smoke from firecrackers
floats through the alley

Nathaniel Orion Tico

crossing
between the bridge towers
north wind

Ruth Holzer

25

short icicles on the new homes

Hilary Tann

winter sun
the patina of small scratches
on a dinner plate

Peggy Willis Lyles

no ears
on my shadow—
winter quiet

Mark Cunningham

unemployment line
this winter will end
they say

Gary Steinberg

another short day—
not sure who owes whom
a letter

Tom Clausen

snowy lake—
walking on the light
of a hazy moon

Robert Mainone

26

moon
under
ice
where the divers have stopped
searching

Judson Evans

snow wind—
wringing the tea bag
until it tears

Robert Gilliland

storm warning—
a run on milk
and daffodils

Barbara Cardamon

winter rain
a flowered umbrella
at the funeral

Carol Raisfeld

27

harrowed field
around family gravestones
the scent of spring

Linda Jeannette Ward

the man bends
and whispers a greeting
her name in stone

Greg Piko

stray hairs
from my new haircut
almost spring

Cherie Hunter Day

sennryu

1: A Japanese poem structurally similar to the Japanese haiku but primarily concerned with human nature; often humorous or satiric.

2: A foreign adaptation of 1.

before dawn
the Quaker Oats man
a little too cheerful

Dean Summers

friendly hug
we kiss the small space
between us

Dorothy McLaughlin

29

reunion
my wife approaching
her mother

Tom Painting

cell phones on Mt. Fuji
telling people
what it's like on top

Kathryn Davies

in the sand
he oversees the building
of her castle

Shawn Davis

bleak cave walls
a red ocher I-was-here
handprint

Francine Porad

daily walk
changes
with the tide

Tim Bravenboer

their parrot
swearing at
our parakeet

Emily Romano

30

recycling bin
so many smiles piled up
on election day

Deb Baker

shyness is genetic
depression is genetic
wind in my face

Larry Hussey

Irish folk songs
in the rustic cafe
aroma of mint

Elizabeth Howard

53rd Street station
a trumpet muted
by the F train

Bob Boni

31

she smiles at him and
swings a tea bag back and forth
distant church bell

Ross Figgins

gazing upward
for another love song
club pianist

Marian Olson

Easter Sunday:
the astonished look on all
the bowling balls

Patrick Sweeney

estate sale one picture frame nobody looks out of

Ernest J. Berry

health food store—
a gaunt sales clerk's
recommendation

F. Matthew Blaine

campfire
just enough stoking
for a fish story

R. A. Stefanac

32

cancer ward
too hot too cold too bright
what else is there to do

David Gershator

men's shop
trying to find
something she likes

Tim Bravenboer

open wide
the blue sky fills
my dentist's window

James Paulson

crowded mall
water magnifies a goldfish
in a plastic bag

Peggy Willis Lyles

33

standing beside
Giacometti's *Standing Man*—
a cell phone rings

Anita Beverly Wintz

musing over haiku
the stewardess asks
do I want a pillow

Yu Chang

Sunday arts fair
the clouds in the sky
in the painting

Robert Epstein

through my stethoscope
the rumble
of the 8:15

Jon Iddon

tilt of the cowboy hat—
his wheelchair crosses
against traffic

D. Claire Gallagher

hot day
the monkey throws the peanut
back at us

William Cullen Jr.

34

mourning
an alcoholic brother's death—
the whole bottle

George Dorsty

Knossos a snake in each of Her hands and still defiant

Karma Tenzing Wangchuk (for Marlene Mountain)

after picketing
at the Gallo Winery
a cup of coffee

Alvaro Cardona-Hine

writing a haiku
in seventeen syllables
for the feel of it

R. A. Stefanac

35

watching my son's
first Little League game,
from a distance

Mike Dillon

between your room
and mine
two doors

Nancy Prasad

mortuary parking lot—
a token required
to get out

Carolyn Hall

cleaning house
I pick up
old daydreams
Margarite Engle

cracked glass
over the photo
her lips parting to speak
Randy M. Brooks

rush hour
sweet pipe tobacco
from the car ahead
Gary Warner

36

grandparents' day—
school desks and chairs
fit better this year
Richmond D. Williams

walking home
the little leaguer
swings for the fences
Michael Fessler

Entrance test
roll call name the same
first syllable

David McMurray

first appointment—
the young dentist winces
along with me

Pamela Connor

37

lightning strike
the soloist starts
where she left off

Miriam Olson

snowblower
a sharp edge
at the property line

Yu Chang

getting it
after 50 books
zen is not in books

Robert Epstein

with bowed head
I ascend the church stairs—
first bifocals

John J. Dunphy

yoga class
unable to move
from child's position

John O'Connor

running barefoot
through tall grasses—
deciding on blonde

Marilyn Appl Walker

38

on our way
to march for peace,
who's driving?

Susan Antolin

I wade in the brook
that he loved to paint—
pull of the current

Merrill Ann Gonzales

therapist's office
whispering secrets
to her teddy bear

John J. Dunphy

old photos
faces obscured
by smoke

Alan McGill

39

first lipstick
it changes her
forever

Stanley Pelter

library queue
discussing fiction
with a stranger

Vanessa Proctor

laugh lines
deepen—
the comedian's wife

Dorothy McLaughlin

surrounded by
these terrible people
he wants to be

Carly Edelstein

at the vanity—
unable to think
of one good thing

Arlie Parker

fading twilight
in the hospital bed her face
disassembles

Hillary Shurtleff

40

waiting room silence . . .
the surgeon's approach
on green paper feet

Anne LB Davidson \

watercolor class
in the crumpled paper towel
the freshest colors

Ruth Yarrow

at the fair
two didgeridoo players
swap email addresses

Catherine Bullock

I hear myself
thinking I have a black dress
if she dies

Bonnie Stepenoff

41

super market thunder
the fly finds
another cabbage

Marilyn Appl Walker

my life story
to a stranger . . . bags shift
in the overhead bin

Carolyn Hall

cassette tape
sound of the tonearm reaching
the last groove

Carlos Colón

linked

forms

tan renga

march tree buds
talking about the size
of her tumor

a sweat bee cuts through
a leftover piece of ham

43

watching CNN
camouflaged soldiers
in the mess hall

in the box of doll house furniture
a little green army man

Only

autumn
the path along the river
grows narrow

home from my travels
my dark house
greet me

for the last time
looking at the mountain
that is only a hill

by her sick bed
sprig of pussywillow
in a stone vase

autumn grass
waving
with one shadow

Countdown

alone with wind and mud and whatever that means if anything

broken wheelbarrow against the brick wall

daffodil and iris tips already are they certain my spirit's ready

45

bits and pieces of blue warmth fall through the cracks

where i want to be with little to stay on

a new countdown to life as we don't know it or want to know it

owned now by the media lives of the dead astronauts

Marlene Mountain

Once in a Blue Moon

first frost—
she adds more cinnamon sticks
to the hot cider

he peppers the conversation
with off-color jokes

red sky—
the old salt
mends old nets

once in a blue moon
smoked whitefish on sale
at the deli

your minty kiss—
total eclipse of the sun

attempting to curry favor
with his English teacher—
purple prose

singles

all the weight she's lost since divorcing him
his pickup lines and toupee
spring chill her yes sounds like no
another date with *Amelie*
glancing back at her glancing at me
says she needs to spend time with her cats
the daughter's crayon drawing of us
in over my head and a head shorter than she is
I can't find a date for the wedding
the young widow requests "Rock of Ages"
reunited through the classifieds
four left feet two-step
reading a love letter on the elevator
all the weight she's gained since he left her

47

Christopher Patchel

Climb to the Churdhar Peak

THE TRAIL CURVES LEFT AND RIGHT through dense forest, always climbing. Not used to such high altitude, we are all short of breath. Heavy rucksacks don't make the job any easier. As the air gets more fragrant, it also gets chillier. On the way, a pack train loaded with supplies overtakes us. We are now above the tree line, and even though it is early summer, patches of snow can be seen. By evening, we reach the temple on the peak, just as the rain begins.

The weather, and the fact that the journey back to the village will take more than six hours, forces us to spend the night here.

Priests and their help cook us a dinner of hot tea and parathas (unleavened flat bread fried on a griddle). As no one is allowed to sleep inside, the visitors huddle together in the verandah. Wet and shivering, our team gets inside their sleeping bags.

icy dawn
the stink from our shoes
covered with mule dung

Rajiv Lather

These Frozen Woods

48 THE TRANSLUCENCY OF MIND in these frozen woods. My steps follow the long-hardened footprints of others down this path. Not here just a few days ago, a tiny, desiccated snake curled into itself, almost a circle, flattened to the frozen snow. A step past it like a bonsai island set piece a foot high evergreen in the center of a small mound of pebbly earth surrounded by a perfect ring of black ice. With the wind circling from this point above me one hemlock creek after another fills the silence.

cold blue sky
almost seeing through
the full day moon

Bruce Ross

Safe House

2:00 A.M. SATURDAY. A call from the sheriff's office beckons me to a holding cell for juveniles: the same bare cement floor with an open bolted-down toilet as used for adults but solitary. A 14-year-old paces the disinfected stench of the place, nowhere to go when he ran into the storm-drenched street of this small town . . . he barely looks up as he's led from the cell to accompany me to a safe house where he'll have time to recover from the blackened eyes inflicted by his father...a broken bug light dotted with bugs casts a yellow glow at the end of the walkway where a doorbell responds to my press with silence . . .

rain pelts the awning—
a fist-size indentation
in the group home door

Linda Jeannette Ward

49

High Tide

IT'S THE SEA OF COURSE that has the voice. You know it, but still come deliberately to the beach to shout. All the way in the car you've held the sound in the box with the lid clasped.

bird shit
precisely
in the middle of the windscreen

You drive into an angle park, wishing you had a dog - a reason to throw driftwood endlessly. Walk anyway, watch your feet follow someone else's track, streamers of wind scarfing over your shoulder. Gulls screech.

deserted beach—
high tide
flips the carapace

Helen Bascand

Tassels

LAST YEAR WE BEGAN TO SEE BABIES wearing double-peaked caps with two tassels, one bobbing over each ear. These caps came in soft jellybean colors: cinnamon, raspberry, tangerine, lemon, peppermint, grape. They were one of those simple, inexpensive inventions like beanie babies, that spring from nowhere and are seen everywhere, and then go on to make a lot of money for someone. In a further burst of exuberance, they evolved into three-tasselled caps, four-tasselled caps, and more. Never had babies looked more adorable.

Everyone smiles
at the baby in the hat
the baby smiles back

Of course such an original item can't remain exclusively for infants. Today I saw an older boy in a yellow cap with three tassels over one ear and a long, droopy tail over the other. It won't be long before tassel hats become a fashion statement. I could be a pioneer! I toy with the idea of going into a children's shop and trying one

After a lifetime
of wearing many hats
why not a child's?

Doris Heitmeyer

50

Adult Condor No. 8

matriarch of a captive breeding program yielding 250 chicks, was shot and killed by a poacher in the grassy foothills of southern California.

clear skies
watching the salmon spawn
with my adopted son

w. f. owen

Venice after the Carnival

old easel—
how many recollections
of that studio

I “HAD SEEN” VENICE before visiting it. At that time, in 1973, I was preparing a paper on *veduta* and was attentively searching for reproductions of Canaletto’s and Guardi’s paintings. Writing that paper I found out that a *veduta* was, for the wealthy foreigners who used to visit Venice during the 17th and 18th centuries, in some way the equivalent of our postcards. Coming back to their countries they brought famous views of Venice to remind themselves of what they had visited and to be able to talk about them. In Italian *veduta* means an urban view or what can be seen. But how could I see Venice through those reproductions? Why did that city suspended between sky and waters attract me so much? Both Canaletto and Guardi captured the unique beauty of Venice, with green waters reflecting the light on its walls, its canals, its surrounding islands, and its people passing through small squares or under arcades. Yet each of the two painters showed me his own Venice.

cumulus clouds—
on the wooden platform
sound of steps

I arrive in Venice on a cold winter morning. From the station I take a *vaporetto*. I am so impatient to see the city. After a few minutes I am on Canale de la Giudecca. We sail fast and I have the impression that both sides of the canal have large vessels that go in opposite directions. I get off the boat at Piazza San Marco. The city seems sleepy after the last night of the Carnival. It is so quiet near me that I can hear the ceaseless murmur of the water against the stone bank. Empty gondolas are swinging and waiting for the tourists. Each gondola has its own cadence. I walk toward San Marco Basilica and notice the remaining confetti among the paving stones. In a corner, under an arcade, I can see a forgotten golden mask. It is said that a mask makes everyone equal. During the Carnival masks allow people to dare

many things... Now the mask has no power. It is laying on the ground in shadow and dampness. One of the dilemmas of the people participating in the Carnival is whether to be or not to be seen... It seems to me that Venice was faced during its history by the same dilemma, like a woman who wishes to be seen sometimes and prefers not to be observed other times. Century after century Venice knew brilliance. Now she is old and wishes to show her "jewelry" to visitors and would like not to be disturbed by the waters of the lagoon.

in an atrium
the story of Noah
told in Japanese

Near the door of a house, on the steps, as in a still life, there is an empty champagne bottle, three glasses and a paper plate. Traces of the last night of Carnival. On the roof of a palace a banner is flying in the wind. I guess it was for the Carnival too. The city seems to be slowly awakening, as after a wedding party. I am glad that there are no visitors in the Piazza San Marco at this time. I can go everywhere without being disturbed by tourists. Only a flock of pigeons follows me on the paving stones. I take a seat at a sidewalk café to drink a cappuccino. I exchange some sentences with the waiter. Hearing that it is my first day in Venice he regrets my missing the Carnival. I tell him that I do not like the crowded events and prefer a quiet visit. He looks astonished and wishes me a nice stay. Another flock of pigeons makes a great ellipse in the sky and lands on the roof of the belfry.

52

changing light—
an embroidered table cloth
keeps a wet smell

I close the guidebook and my map of the city. I intend to wander through that part of the city unfamiliar to foreigners. I want to discover the Venice which you can't see in Canaletto's and Guardi's paintings, full of famous views, great ceremonial occasions, festivals and regattas. But how to see that Venice which hides when I try to find it? I take a walk with no aim through the private city. Here is no place for magnificence. I am in the web of small streets and canals. Any corner or any house is completely different

from anything you expect to see. Here is the ideal place to meander in solitude. From time to time, near the door of the houses I meet a tiny boat or a modest gondola which still bears signs of the Carnival. The walls of the houses which are built so close together reveal layers of colours. It is worth examining the perfect harmony of their dark and bright nuances. Any painter would envy the anonymous master of these "hidden galleries". You have the impression that these houses have been built for the sake of beauty and not to live in. Only the clotheslines from one side to another of the narrow street remind you that people live here.

Giorgione's *Tempest*—
so much stillness
in the museum

53

Is what I see indeed Venice? Or does she know how to hide under a veil, under a mask of time? My grandfather used to say: "If you want to see a beautiful woman you have to look at her when she is not prepared for a fancy-dress ball." Venice is a place in which every house, every street or canal is unique unto itself, like a beautiful woman who puts out of sight her mystery. Moreover the patina of the stone, brick and marble walls has a melancholy and nostalgia of old times. Each loggia, balcony, and door pulsates with its own hidden splendour. You are tempted to touch it silently.

stone angel—
a row of dolls
on the windowsill

My steps echo along a small dead-end street. In a sunny corner a cat is resting. We each look at the other without disturbing his solitude. The calm of the bright winter day makes me linger on this lane. After a few minutes I pass by a canal whose moving waters reflect the playing light onto my body. I stop walking and let the light stroke my face. I enjoy this moment and think I am a small part of this silent and hidden *veduta*.

hung by a string
an empty basket
swings in the breeze

Without any plan my path passes by the fruit and vegetable market near Ponte di Rialto. I can hear the shopkeepers' guttural voices calling customers in the Venetian dialect. When they observe a foreign customer, Italian words are mingled with English expressions. I always enjoy seeing a market-place. When I am abroad this pleasure is even greater. The fresh colours of fruit and vegetables are a delight to look at. I can't stop admiring their form, structure, texture, and the way they are displayed. It is a real show. Suddenly I feel the cold smell of fish. I am on the bank of the fish market. A Neo-Gothic hall provides enough room for the fishermen. Of course, due to their abundant catch, these fishermen missed the last night of the Carnival.

decaying fresco—
I leave the stillness
to the spiders

Going aimlessly all the way through the labyrinth of streets and canals in front of me, I can see Campo dei Mori, a small square in the middle of which there is a well covered by an iron lid. I go round the well to admire the skillful bas-relief ornamentation carved in marble. A church bell from the neighbourhood suddenly rings and makes me look up at the sky. I would like to ask somebody if this well has potable water but there are no passers-by. I try to move the lid. It is in vain. The lid doesn't move at all. I scan with my eyes all the tile-roofed houses that surround the square. Noticing that I am looking in her direction, an old woman at a window disappears immediately behind the curtain.

54

Renaissance patio—
I try to decipher
something written in Latin

San Giorgio Maggiore Island is not far from me. I can see the island at a glance. This hour has a soft light. That afternoon light you meet in Leonardo's and Titian's paintings. Between the island and me are the waters of Canal San Marco. The distance doesn't allow me to observe the architectural details. The horizontal and vertical lines of the buildings are balanced by the round forms of the roofs and the arrow of the bell tower. In front of me a gondolier

passes with no passenger. He doesn't roar. No song is heard. The gondola seems pushed only by his silence.

chill wind—
the loneliness
of that tide marker

It is evening. The sky turns gray. The colours of the buildings, pavement and water receive dark tones. From the lagoon the fog is approaching more and more like a phantom. The contour of the forms disappears. Silhouettes of the gondolas and boats are only moving spots along the Canal Grande. Layers of mist come and go, cover and uncover palaces, towers, houses, boats, and people.

Murano chandeliers—
golden light slips out
from a balcony

From a bar, faint music is heard. A young couple hesitates to go in. I think they are foreign tourists too. The man asks me in English the way to Vivaldi's church, where a concert is going to start in a few minutes. The woman lifts the collar of her winter coat to cover her cheek. She looks a bit tired. I wonder if she participated in the last night of Carnival. Did she wear a mask?

I am again in Piazza San Marco. This time no pigeon follows me. People talk in small groups about the last night of the Carnival. A mime changes his masks but nobody notices him.

into the night
the water strokes a palazzo
whose glory is lost

frame

Columbia the only cloud in the sky

... this Zapruder film called LIFE jerks its celluloid past the light provided by God in a continuous loop hanging on frames of imploded buildings, shiny black walls growing out of the ground, powered-up rockets red glare to the tune of Jimi Hendrix on a farmland stage . . . i have seen this movie before . . . but God, the merciful God of your choice, has included subliminal clips between the ugliness, concession breaks of soft blue skies and flowers and children's smiles and homemade ice cream on a hot day and hope . . .

winter stars we walk into the theatre for a double-feature

w. f. owen

Flash Photography

A PROFESSIONAL SINGER, I was booked into an exclusive dinner house in London called "The Society Restaurant". My résumé included making movies, television appearances, a Broadway show, a Verve record, and assorted guest spots. This was the first time I had been abroad and I was looking forward to going to England.

56 After a long flight from New York, the plane finally landed at Heathrow Airport. Outside the window were a half-dozen or so photographers milling about with their cameras. Oh boy, I thought, there must be someone famous on this flight. Wonder who it could be.

As I was deplaning, an airport representative approached me and asked,

"Are you Peggy Sands?" (The name I used for singing)

"Yes, I am," I said, bewildered.

"Would you mind joining us in the VIP lounge?"

Well, the famous person—or should I say infamous—person they were meeting, was me!

After I sat down and sipped some cool soda, the representative showed me a newspaper. He asked if the photograph of a woman with her face half-hidden could be mine. It was a picture of a famous prostitute involved with a noto-

rious mobster. There had been an arrest and a big trial in London. To top it all off—her name was “Peggy Sands”!

I didn't know whether to laugh or cry. After I convinced them I was not that particular person, the photographers left. They seemed very disappointed.

foggy day
alone
in a London airport

Margaret Hehman-Smith

Haibun

57

THE SPARKLE OF GLASS, which lured me from the path, was just silver foil, an outer wrapping for newly planted tulips. Red tulips in the forest! Curious, I let myself be drawn into the shade of an old scrub oak that seemed to watch over the strange flowers.

At the foot of the tree I discovered a makeshift shrine. The flowers were but an offering. Carved in white on the crosspiece of a black arabesque crucifix were the numbers “8-3-70” and “12-14-00.” Probably a horse, I thought. On the vertical axis, reading down, white letters spelled out “Oliver.” A beaded, black leather strap—a bridle?—hung loosely where the arms of the cross conjoined.

Suddenly the ground shook with the pounding of hooves and standing beside me was a fine chestnut mare ridden by a young girl in English habit. The horse paused, noticing me, but the disciplined rider did not divert her eyes from the steep path ahead. She did not see me kneeling at the grave. Leather stretched and squeaked, a tail swished, as they settled in for a moment. The mare then discharged a quick breath, as if on cue, and the girl clicked the horse into a gallop. The clop of hooves resounded against the dirt, diminishing as they topped the hill. Dust fell back in their wake and the woods grew still again.

quiet stables—
the moonlight
in a stallion's eye

Rich Krieger

Off-White Supremacists

THE KU KLUX KLAN has held several cross-burnings in my community. I observed one from a safe distance. About 150 figures in pointed hoods and long robes were gathered around a huge wooden cross that had been set aflame. A speaker harangued the crowd. A wind came up, and the brilliant robes rippled and shined at first, but grew duller as the rally went on, sullied by the oily smoke.

sunrise
a cardinal perches on
the charred cross

John J. Dunphy

Living Statues I: Liberty

Battery Park, July 2002. Almost a year after the fall of the World Trade Center, security is unobtrusive. Few barriers remain. The park is swarming with vendors and sightseers, many wearing spiky green styrofoam crowns as they line up for the Statue of Liberty. What's new are the Living Statues.

on the way to the ferry
five Statues of Liberty
of varying heights.

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They wear copper-green draperies, have green arms and the same styrofoam crowns as the tourists. The best turned out and most professional of these young ladies does a convincing imitation, though her sharp features make her look a bit too shrewd. She scarcely blinks until a tourist drops a coin in the box at her feet. Then she breaks the pose to bend fluidly in a slow, graceful obeisance.

late afternoon sun
gleaming through harbor smog
her gold-plated torch.

Doris Heitmeyer

Looking Back on an Old Journey

IN THE AUTUMN OF 1988 I set out on a journey to Eastern Europe—Poland, the Ukraine, East Germany. Ostensibly it was to do background research for a book of stories I was writing about the Fools of Chelm, the legendary numskulls of the Jewish oral tradition. Though I had known these stories since childhood, I needed a landscape to place them in. I needed to learn about the trees and flowers, to experience sunrises and sunsets, to feel the rain, to walk in the mud.

Recently, while looking through my notebooks, I was surprised to discover that even though I filled scores of pages, I had written only a few poems during my month's sojourn there. Why so few is evident from those that did get recorded.

59

Road Kill

these seven geese
never whiter than now
soaked in their own blood

Sunday at Auschwitz

high school students hurrying
to finish their ice cream
before entering the crematorium

Dawn at Majdanek

all these crows
on the white gravel
betray the official silence

Pines at Sobibor

this memorial grove
still twisted and stunted
forty years later

Flashback at Belzec

twilight
a distant train whistle
true terror

Steve Sanfield

essays

Presenting Haiku

Considerations for the Oral Interpretation of Haiku

HAIKU CAN BE SUNG, CHANTED, DANCED and presented in sign language but most often are just read aloud. Haiku enthusiasts often find themselves in the situation of having to present some poems orally for various kinds of audiences. According to Dr. Randy Brooks, in Japan the presentation of haiku was more visual than oral with a part of the art being the calligraphy on the *shikishi*, the narrow scrolls that sometimes included a painting vertically displayed on a wall.¹ During the sixteen hundreds in Japan at the *renga* parties the poetry was recited or shared orally as well as written down.

In the West, oral presentation of haiku is common. Sometimes these performance experiences can be uncomfortable and frustrating. The purpose of this discussion is to offer some ideas, methods and techniques that can improve the performances for both the presenters and the audiences. This discussion will focus on the presenter of haiku as a performer seen and heard by an audience, either live or on video. The occasion can be a meeting, an interview, a bookstore reading, or a lecture at a conference. The following information can be utilized in any of these situations.

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Homework

Prepare the Material

First, the poem or poems, which are to be presented, need to be analyzed and understood. After carefully studying the haiku one technique is to say to oneself, “in other words—” and then reword the poem in complete sentences with adjectives and adverbs. This will create a full mental picture that can be recalled when the presentation occurs. Always try to stay faithful to the intentions of the original author. If the presenter has written the haiku, then this part of the preparation may be easier.

For each poem decide on the relationship between the presenter and the audience. Giving the poem directly to the audience with direct eye contact is called the presentational style. Another way, is when the performer experiences the haiku in his or her own “world” with the audience seeing it

through an invisible fourth wall which can be called the dramatic style. A third method is sharing the experience of the haiku as though the audience is another character in the presenter's "world".²

Who is experiencing the events of the haiku? Is there a different personality or character or is it being experienced by the presenter? Assuming a different character or a role will require some acting skills but it can be an effective technique. The presenter's choice of perspective will depend on what seems most effective for each poem and what the presenter feels most comfortable doing.

If time allows, fully memorize the haiku but having a script in view can help build confidence. Using large print with notations in different colors makes for easy reference if a word or idea slips the mind. Remember, whether presenting one haiku or several haiku as part of a longer lecture, these techniques can still be utilized.

Prepare for the Performance

The presenter's main tools for communication are the voice, body, arms, hands, and face. Appropriate use of all of these will make the presentation of the poems more fulfilling for both the presenter and the audience.

Vocal Techniques

62 The voice is the vehicle. Clear and appropriate pronunciation, articulation, phonation and resonance are important. Know the meanings of all the words in the poem and how to say them correctly. Say each part of every word clearly. Allow each sound to fully develop in the chest, head and mouth. Be clear and precise but avoid sounding phony. A general rule is to clip the consonants and prolong the vowel sounds. A presentation is not like a "one-to-one" conversation, so think of projecting the voice out to the audience.

The meaning and emotion of the haiku comes from the appropriate variety of the pitch, pace, power and pause. The variation of pitch is the intonation and inflection in the voice. It is the song or highness and lowness of the tone. Monotone is boring. A sing-song pattern is also boring. Variation of pitch is important to maintain the audience's interest, understanding and emotional involvement. The

Japanese haiku generally contain cutting words or *kireji*. These joining, separating or exclamation words tell the reader to stop and take notice. However, in English if there is no punctuation and these cue words are missing then the reader needs to express this emotion or cut with the interpretation techniques.

The pace is the speed at which the words are spoken and joined together into images. The presenter already has the ideas clearly in his or her mind. The audience needs the time to go through four steps for the full, effective communication of the poem. Each member of the audience needs to be able to 1) hear, 2) think, 3) react or feel, and 4) understand. If a presenter keeps this four-step process in mind then the audience will have time to appreciate the poem. Again, variety of tempo adds interest

Vary the intensity and volume. Both of these help put the emphasis on the important words and create the subordination of the less important words, which the earlier analysis has determined. Allowing for proper pauses helps the phrasing and timing. Because haiku are short, take time to orally present each image appropriately. Remember to project to the back wall of the space in which the event occurs. There is a heightened realism when presenting poetry but don't overact.

Develop a Script

As the vocal interpretation develops, mark the script by underlining with two lines the words to be strongly emphasized. Moderate emphasis with one line. Perpendicular lines between words denote pauses. Two for a longer pause one for shorter. With wavy lines the presenter can show upward or downward inflection. Each person can develop his or her own method of notation. Using the word processing program on the computer can provide interesting possibilities. Adding an additional space between the letters in a word or placing words on different lines can denote specific interpretations. Using different colors of ink or pencils for the notations can help show emotional content. Have several copies of the script for practicing and developing. Once there is a satisfactory performance script, make a second copy of it in case one is misplaced or lost.

For example, let's look at this poem.

across the window
of an abandoned house
a wisteria bloom

The following are some markings using word processing on the computer for suggesting the emphasis, tempo, pauses and inflection.

a c r o s s the *w i n*—dow
of an *a b a n d o n e d* *h o u s e*—//
a wis—*ter i a* b l o o m—

Each performer will find the system of notation that works best for him or her.

Animation

Body language, gestures and facial expressions are included in the concept of animation. The amount and kind of animation depends on the specific haiku, the personality of the performer, and the audience. For most poetry “subtlety” is the best policy.

As the poem is being analyzed think of how the voice and body can work together to best express the images. In the above poem, just before voicing the first image, a subtle gesture of the dominant hand could precede “across the ...”. Generally, animation precedes the voicing of an idea. Action precedes words. The reverse is often funny. Subtlety is important for a haiku like this one. There would be positive feeling in the voice and on the face during the last line “a wisteria bloom”.

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The facial expressions will also depend on which perspective the performer takes. If the poem is presented for the audience then more facial expression is used but if the audience is looking through the fourth wall, then there will be less.

Gestures are used to suggest meaning, to emphasize an idea, or to demonstrate an action. For most poetry, “less is more”. As Shakespeare says “fit the actions to the words”. Avoid excess movement and “hamminess”. For an exercise during a rehearsal, try putting a gesture, action or facial expression with every word. Then cut it back or edit it and go for the appropriateness, fitting the animation to the meaning. This experiment can help free up those who

consider themselves “stiff” performers.

Practice or rehearse the presentation several times. Practice does make perfect. Use a mirror, a tape recorder and/or a video recorder. No one looks and sounds the way he or she imagines so don't be too self-critical. Rehearse the entire presentation several times for the tape or video recorder until the performance feels secure. Try it on a friend or family member. Keep in mind that criticism is only as good as the critic.

The Environment

Try to learn about the setting and the audience for the presentation. Where is the performance to take place and for whom? Get a clear idea of the stage area for the presentation and of the available lighting. Will there be a lectern or speaker's stand? Will there be a microphone? Is it a stand, hand held or a lavalier microphone? Will there be an opportunity for a sound check? Can there be a rehearsal or at least a “walk through” in the performance space?

65

The Audience

Who is the intended audience? How many people will there be? How much do they know about haiku? What is the age range? Why are they there? Clear answers to all the above questions are the ideal, but most often there will be only partial information so always be prepared to improvise.

Because haiku are so short, they are often recited and then repeated so that the audience can get the full impact. To duplicate the exact reading is nearly impossible. Just try to have the same mind set and take the time to glance at the marked script again. Take a deep breath and repeat the poem.

Dress Appropriately

The audience sees the presenter and gets a first impression; therefore, the presenter will want to exhibit the appropriate image for the specific event. Know how formal or informal the clothing should be. Make sure the clothing and shoes are comfortable and appropriate for the planned movements and gestures.

The center of communication is the eyes. They are referred to as the “window to the soul”. Don't obstruct the

view of the eyes with hair, a hat, or dark glasses. Keep the chin up. If eye contact with the audience bothers the presenter, then look just above the heads of the audience. Avoid looking down at the floor. If the poem requires looking down, then look at a spot on the floor about ten feet ahead so the audience doesn't feel cut off.

Self Preparation and Relaxation Techniques

Before "taking the stage" a forced yawn can relax the face and jaw muscles, which helps allow for natural facial expression and speech. A few deep breaths will also help. If the script has to be held, press the palms of the hands together in an isometric way for five to eight seconds. This helps to prevent shaking hands. Keep the knees "soft" and the pelvis gently rolled under to prevent vibrating legs. Quietly hum a favorite song or hymn to loosen the vocal mechanism. Lick the lips and swallow. Smile with the teeth slightly apart. Enter! Break a leg!

Jerome Cushman

66

[In his 40-year career Jerome Cushman has been a successful theatre director of over 100 plays. He has been a choreographer of dance and stage combat; an acting, voice and movement coach; an actor and dancer; but most importantly an educator of both hearing and deaf college students. Recently he originated and operated the Robert F. Panara Haiku Contest for the National Technical Institute for the Deaf at the Rochester Institute of Technology and The Tsukuba College of Technology in Tsukuba, Japan. The 2001 and 2002 contests were under the sponsorship of Pen-International and funded by The Nippon Foundation.

Over the past 28 years he has used haiku at NTID/RIT as a teaching tool and as part of various performances. The deaf actors signed the haiku while hearing actors spoke the poems. Through this activity, and his many years of studying and teaching acting and directing, he has developed his techniques for oral interpretation of poetry.]

¹ This information was discussed in an e-mail to the author from Dr. Randy Brooks, 13 December 2001.

² This information was developed from an e-mail to the author from poet and performer, John Stevenson, 13 December 2001.

Masahide and the Moon

kura yakete
sawaru mono naki
tsukimi kana (1)

Storehouse burned—
now nothing hides
the moon!

It seems that Basho's endorsement of this haiku, written by a samurai named Mizuta Masahide (1657-1723), (2) wasn't enough to commend it to literary attention. Thus, it's not very often that we find it in an anthology of the genre. Some commentators, without ignoring it, overtly dismiss it. Thus does Makoto Ueda, in his otherwise splendid book *Literary and Art Theories in Japan*, where he condemns it, even without mentioning the author, as being "ludicrously pretentious" (165). His statement echoes Blyth's: "Masahide is famous for a very pretentious verse approved by Basho" (200).

The haiku, quite concrete, refers to an episode in Masahide's life, happened sometime around 1688: a fire destroys his storehouse. The fact must have been one mishap in a long series, because in 1703, a friend of his, by the name of Jozen, bares witness that Masahide became so poor that he couldn't afford even a blanket for his children. It is difficult to imagine a samurai living in such misery unless he abandoned a more comfortable life for something else, maybe for the intransigencies of literature or Buddhist spirituality. But let's read the poem again, trying to elucidate what lies behind the words:

Storehouse burned—
now nothing hides
the moon!

The haiku states simply: my storehouse caught fire, it all burned down and now I can see, unconcealed, the moon.

The haiku reminds me of the encounter between Diogenes and Alexander the Great, as recounted by Plutarch: "While he stayed here, many public ministers and philosophers

came from all parts to visit him, and congratulated him on his election, but contrary to his expectation, Diogenes of Sinope, who then was living at Corinth, thought so little of him, that instead of coming to compliment him, he never so much as stirred out of the suburb called the Cranium, where Alexander ran across him lying at full length in the sun. When he saw so much company near him, he raised himself a little, and vouchsafed to look upon Alexander; and when he kindly asked him whether he wanted any thing, 'Yes,' said he, 'I would have you stand from between me and the sun.'" (428).

68 Returning to our haiku, we could ask ourselves, somehow simplistically: all right, but with or without a storehouse, what's the difference? Couldn't he just go around and see the moon? Here the parallel to Diogenes is illuminating: both Masahide and Diogenes have a certain stubbornness to see something from their chosen place. A stubbornness, a radicalism which states that if I'm not able to see from anywhere I choose, then I will see from nowhere. That's what Diogenes' quirkiness implies. After all, we shouldn't forget that he resists the temptation to have a wish fulfilled. But his refusal to have a wish satisfied, any wish, has the significance of refusing the wish pure-and-simple, the wish anytime-and-anywhere. It's not a moment of ennui or of placid nonconformance, but a question of principle, of ethics. Diogenes' subtext is that one cannot be sage (the metaphor is to see) with intermittence or conditionally and that in order to attain wisdom one has to abolish desire altogether. The same with Masahide, whom we can imagine having abandoned a more secure social position exactly for being able to "see". Indirectly, he affirms that his own storehouse was bothering him, staying in his way to the moon. The haiku assumes that, before the accident, Masahide was suffering spiritual cataracts. Otherwise he wouldn't exclaim that it's (only) now that he can see (the moon). In spite of the sacrifices he must have endured all his life, he feels he was still far from the condition of seer. It's only now that his eyes open, when a last obstacle disappears, when a last connection with the downward, with the mundane, is lost. The proximal materiality is exchanged for the remote moon. Only now, that he doesn't have anything left, not even the wish of possessing, he has everything,

he has the moon.

The haiku is not pretentious because it doesn't pretend anything. It simply describes an actual fact of Masahide's life, transfigured into a spiritual experience. As for the other sense of the word pretentious—intended to attract notice and impress others—we have no evidence whatsoever that this was his intention. On the contrary, the haiku is stern, somehow unadorned, and, more importantly, strikes a common vital chord. This explains why in the same period, Tachibana Hokushi (d. 1718) writes a comparable poem:

Onto the ashes where my cottage burned,
The cherry-blossoms scatter, unconcerned. (Stewart 35)

69

and that, more than a century later, Issa Kobayashi (1763-1828) composes, in similar circumstances, a similar haiku. When his house is destroyed in Kashiwabara's great fire in 1827, he writes on a playful tone:

House burnt down—
fleas
dance in embers. (Stryk 12)

and, in 1809 (he was then 46), after he loses his lodging, he writes:

Now without house—
I see spring
blossoming

These all are texts that transform a material loss into a spiritual rebirth.

Finally, we could ask ourselves: what was the moon to Masahide? The answer comes by itself: it's what the sun was to Diogenes. Masahide would bond the rest of his life to it and, beyond, all his death, as one can see from his *jisei* (3):

yuku toki wa
tsuki ni narabite
mizu no tomo

It's time to go—
with the moon by my side
friend in the water. (4)

Stephen Broyard

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Notes:

(1) Translated word by word, the poem goes:

kura (storehouse) *yakate* (to burn)
sawaru (to hide) *mono* (thing) *naki* (no)
tsukimi (moon's view) *kana* (particle used as exclamation)

To a Western mind, the word storehouse can be misleading, in the sense that it gives an erroneous idea about Masahide's well being. To own a storehouse was not by itself a proof of wealth.

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(2) Some commentators mention that, by training, Masahide was a doctor. We have records that Basho, who at some point was his teacher, appreciated Masahide's haiku (Hoffman 240)

(3) *Jisei* or death poem is a farewell poem to life, a last impression in which the author wraps his whole existence.

(4) As the English to go, the Japanese *yuku* has a double significance: to leave and to die. Inevitably, the last line (*mizu no tomo*) reminds us Basho's line, the one from the "frog-haiku":

furuike ya
kawazu tobikomu
mizu no oto

the old pond!
a frog jumps in—
the sound of water

Taking Time With a Favorite Haiku

summer afternoon
the long fly ball to center field
takes its time

A central aspect of Cor van den Heuvel's "summer afternoon" is its movement from the particular to universal. At first reading, it may seem a simple depiction of a game of baseball being played on a summer afternoon. There is a nostalgic, almost sentimental, emotional tone to it. The words are about a very American experience—of a time when baseball was the quintessential American game.

After this initial impression, another facet becomes apparent. The poem slows down time in a number of ways. Take the second line "the long fly ball to center field." This is the longest line of the poem, with as many syllables as the other two lines together. It takes longer to read, drawing out the moment. Additionally, by putting five monosyllabic words one after the other the sense of measured, unhurried time is heightened. This language mirrors the feeling of a long, leisurely summer afternoon.

This drawing-out device also resonates with the image of the ball reaching the top of its arc. A batted ball moves with greatest speed at the beginning of its flight, and actually slows down as it reaches the apex of its trajectory. In this poem, the ball not only slows down, it "takes its time."

This is the central image—a moment of motion caught and portrayed as endless and eternal.

This poem may also be about youth—boys playing a game on a long, lazy afternoon. No boys are actually mentioned, but these are archetypal baseball players, the boys of summer. A particular experience, personal to the narrator, is shown to be common to humanity—the culturally limited image of American boys playing baseball becomes an example of a universal experience, youth celebrating youth.

There is also an element of sadness, of personal loss. And there is loss on a universal level—the glimpse of eternity will pass, eventually the ball will fall to earth. The fragility of the moment is keenly felt. This tension between the beauty of the moment glimpsed and the simultaneous

understanding of its ephemeral nature is part of the allure of the poem. A boy could not write such a poem—only someone who sees the moment at a distance in time.

A final consideration: although the youth of any one person doesn't last, being young as a shared experience of humanity does. The games of childhood go on. By expressing the experience, the poem allows the moment to attain a life beyond the boundaries of any single life. The moment remains available as long as there are people to read the poem.

Efren Estevez

Favorite Haiku

sprouting growing blossoming happiness¹

Santoka

72 The unrestrained joy in the budding and blossoming is most appealing. A similar awe was expressed by Tolstoy, but without the ebullience: “The buds cram-full, the little plant leafs out, and simply grows.”² Santoka, an early twentieth century poet, was unable to give up the life of a mendicant wanderer because of the profound experience of “happiness” nature’s bounties bestow, and the peace of mind of a life of choiceless awareness. There’s a Taoist saying, “To the mind that is still, the world surrenders.” In the unforgettable lines of Keats, Poetry “tears us out of thought / As doth eternity.”³

H. F. Noyes

1. *Grass and Tree Cairn*, translated by Hiroaki Sato, Red Moon Press, Winchester VA, 2002.

2. *Letters*.

3. “Ode on a Grecian Urn”.

Re:Readings

You are gradually insuring that this column will achieve its potential. The first column was written entirely by *Frogpond* staff. The second was about one third your material and this one is over one half. The goal is that it will consist entirely of your readings. So, get out your pencils and start rereading this issue. In the meantime, here are some poems from XXVI:1 that have been singled out for comment.

Merrill Ann Gonzales tells us: “. . . the haiku that seem to move me, make me more aware, (are)...those with a tactile sensation that transcends the physical, moving on to some wisdom of the race.” She refers specifically to Yasuhiko Shigemoto’s “Plowing—/the actual feeling/of my living”, Dorothy Howard’s charming miniature “rain/drops” and Michael Ketchek’s “summer brook/which ones/are the stepping stones”. She adds this idea, which we have all pondered, “I’m not sure whether this more reflects the state of my life at the present, or the quality of the haiku . . . but then, perhaps that’s what makes any haiku resonate?”

Carolyn Hall writes to say how she keeps coming back to Tom Clausen’s “our turn/to stand here—/falls overlook” for its many levels of interpretation: the obvious (reaching the front of the line to take a turn); the humorous:(standing in line to view a wonder of nature); the universal (the falls is always there to be seen, but often we need the right opportunity or perspective to “see” it).

Klaus-Dieter Wirth responded to Hilary Tann’s “night journey—/entering town/I lose the stars”: “Here the poet lost the stars but left us a twinkling diamond of perfect cutting, well balanced in every respect, a high-class haiku demonstrating . . . unobtrusive conciseness . . . ”

Two poems in particular prompted Karen Klein’s response. In Gary Steinberg’s “heat lightning/a thousand words/locked inside me” she finds “a perfect blend of nature and human nature. The desire for release from the weather so beautifully expresses the speaker’s sense of not being able to release all he wants to say.”

Michael Fessler’s “withered grass/a baseball/coming apart” is a triumph of “juxtaposition: the end of a season in nature and culture; also, the ambiguity of return. The poet

conjures up the Basho “withered grasses” haiku as well, and perhaps we can append that association here as well: the end of dreams of glory on the field.”

Billie Wilson tells us that Lori Laliberte-Carey’s “gold summer grasses” was one of her favorites for its “lightest touch of magic, sweeping me back to my own childhood *and* allowing me to enjoy her daughter shining amidst those grasses. How do we know she was singing a “make-believe language”? How, indeed! Maybe children really do speak with fairies and angels—and we simply have forgotten how.

Dave Russo places four favorite poems in the larger context of the philosophy of aesthetics, commenting “Haiku may be the shortest “whole poems”—the briefest literary form that can consistently convey a constellation of thought and feeling. In [chris] gordon’s one-line haiku, “her hand covered in orange pulp she slips into her accent”, a woman is juicing an orange: a messy, sensual process, as described in the opening image. The clause “she slips into her accent” suggests an unguarded moment. Normally, she hides her accent, but now, perhaps because she is relaxed and pleasurably occupied, she reveals part of her true self, the person underneath social subterfuge. The resulting lines are like a vivid fragment of memory that consists of two images: two stars that imply a constellation.”

Of Tom Tico’s “after a haircut/light-headed/with spring wind” Dave finds much of the charm located in the pivotal phrase “light-headed”. “It is both an accurate description of the physical sensation of a new haircut and a common expression for “giddiness”, a sensation often associated with spring. This unstrained double meaning lends the poem a feeling of lucky correspondence, like the touch of spring wind against a newly shorn head.”

He also was taken with the Steinberg poem mentioned above, finding that it “presents a vivid, fleeting encounter between inner and outer worlds”, and is reminded of the philosopher Suzanne Langer’s remark, “Art is the objectification of feeling, and the subjectification of nature.”

Of Joann Klontz’s “dim light/the night nurse/describes the rain”, he says “This poem begins with a vague image: ‘dim light’. But vagueness—or the struggle against it—seems to be the underlying subject. Serious illness can make us withdraw from the world and sink into our own misery,

but the nurse brings the simplest news from the world: the weather. The word ‘describes’ suggests that the nurse goes to some trouble to convey details about the rain. These details might be innocuous: a way to pass the time, or they might be an act of kindness, an attempt to restore a little bit of the world to someone who has lost touch with it.”

We would feel remiss if we did not add to these excellent exegeses some of our own personal favorites. Peggy Willis Lyles’s “I awaken/saying “mama”—/autumn wind” carries within itself the palpable feel of dream and loss, couched in the language of innocence. It invites the reader to wonder after the connection between this moment of naked vulnerability and that which grounds us, be it parent or memory of parent or merely the autumn wind.

We as peripatetic poets recognize ourselves in Burnell Lippy’s “one suitcase/darkens the next/autumn journey”. We are old enough now, too, to feel the weight of journeys in autumn, and the greater darkness which eclipses not only those things we carry with us, but the journey itself. His other poem in this issue, “curl/of the corn worm/lingering heat”, captures a certain aspect of summer—a moment of indolence with a faint sense of uneasiness—through great choices of word and image.

There’s something deeply satisfying about the juxtaposition of images in w. f. owen’s “dwindling light/ducks on the pond/coast to a stop”. A strong feeling of “everything in place.”

Certain images get a lot of play in haiku journals and it takes something special to refresh them. Yu Chang succeeds in bringing us such a “reheated” image with “Xerox center/60 copies of lecture notes/warm my hand”.

Carolyn Hall has written a powerful September 11 poem through an entirely indirect route. Her “Antietam—/facing into/the autumn wind” focuses on another September day of terrible loss for Americans. And if the answer is blowing in the wind, what is it that we must face, then and now?

A detail which means nothing in particular, but seems to say it all: “last rites spoken/the preacher/zips up his bible” by John Quinnett.

books

&

reviews

Hands On

Forges-Ryan, Sylvia and Edward Ryan *Take a Deep Breath: The Haiku Way to Inner Peace* (Kodansha International, New York 2003). Illustrations by Noriko Murotani. ISBN 4-7700-2885-7. 130 pp., 5.25" x 7.5", hardbound. \$16. Available in bookstores.

BOTH THE TITLE AND THE COVER OF THIS BOOK (which features two hands cupped around a tulip) initially put me off from reading it; I expected some sort of introduction to haiku as the expression of a spiritual practice, a book to be the “Seeds from a Birch Tree” for New Age writers. But what I found was quite different in both intent and execution. The authors, a past *Frogpond* editor and a psychologist, are students of the Insight Meditation Center in Barre, Massachusetts, and this book appears to be a tool for use in thoughtful meditative practice. It does contain haiku, yes, but it is not *about* haiku; rather, it uses a small selection of haiku as the jumping-off points for reflection and meditation, and I found it both well-written and engaging.

The book is structured around the four seasons, with ten haiku given in each season, plus one for each transition between seasons. Each poem appears by itself on the left-hand page (in a white box against a grey background), and the right-hand page is given over to a combination of rumination inspired by the poem and directions for meditative exercises. The book is also designed to gradually take the reader through a building series of reflections, in whatever timescale the book is read—the early exercises are about focusing on breathing, becoming aware of your surroundings, and then they gradually turn outward to thinking about nature, visualizing positive outcomes and relationships, and keeping a sense of connection even in difficult times, even with difficult people. Awareness, compassion—certainly these goals derive from Buddhist practice, but this book makes reference to Christian scripture and parables of indeterminate source, giving it a more approachable and nondogmatic feel. In fact, the authors make the explicit statement that their conception of meditation is not about learning rules, but about seeing things anew, as they are, and this makes haiku a natural fit for their approach.

As for the haiku included in the book (which I presume are by Forges-Ryan), I found them of a very high quality

and pleasing variety. We get all seasons, of course, and also a range of moods, but there were few if any that I would consider to be flawed examples, a refreshing switch from most books aimed at more than the narrowest specialist audience. It is also probably true that the thoughtful pace and subject matter of the prose prepares the reader to receive the poems with maximal perception. In sum, I recommend this nicely produced book as thoroughly enjoyable for appreciators of haiku and for anyone looking to develop more mindfulness and compassion in everyday life.

How free they are—
cherry blossoms falling
here and there

* * *

Reichhold, Jane *Writing and Enjoying Haiku, A Hands-On Guide* (Kodansha International, New York 2003). ISBN 4-7700-2886-5. 165 pp., perfect softback. \$15. Available in bookstores.

I WAS QUITE EXCITED TO RECEIVE A REVIEW COPY of this book; it is beautifully produced in a pleasing size and finish, and the author is a well-established writer and thinker in the field of haiku and related poetic forms. Thus I had high hopes that this book might represent an answer to the constant need for insightful introductions to the haiku genre designed for a popular audience.

However, I found myself quickly disappointed. First, only about half of the book is actually devoted to haiku itself, writing and reading it; the remaining chapters are given to strategies for “getting your work out there” (Chapter 3) and to haiku-related poetic forms (Chapter 4). The former includes everything from tips for giving haiku readings (right down to exercises to relax your voice before going onstage), considerations for publication (including types of bindings for self-published books), and even ways to turn your haiku into gifts for friends. The latter chapter is a broad compendium of possible forms to try, from those that would be familiar to *Frogpond* readers (renku, tanka, rengay, haibun) to the less known and fairly obscure (*sijo*, *choka*, *doduitsu*, *kouta*) and more distantly related (cinquain). A little theory is given for the first two well-known forms, as

well as some examples (including a “renga” written by Jane with husband Werner using verses from Basho as a third partner), but in this context it’s barely enough to get a start; far less can be made from the whirlwind of descriptions that follows, many of which concern forms that Reichhold admits are not being written currently. One wonders whether this was perhaps more a show of scholarship on her part than a real working guide, as little beyond syllable counts and general topic types are given.

But what about the first two chapters, the introduction to haiku itself? The titles of the sections of Chapter 1 immediately caught my attention as “Four Things to Do Before Writing Haiku” are listed: Learn How to Read Haiku; Know Why You Want to Read Haiku; Be Ready to Change Your Ideas of Poetry; and Find Out What a Haiku Is. Excellent! I support the goal of getting people to “unlearn” their expectations about haiku in preparation for learning to read and write them. Chapter 2 continues the promising trend, with headings like Clearing Up the Conflict Over Counting Syllables; The Place of Nature; and The Importance of Simplicity. Again, many good principles, along with such technical considerations as punctuation, revision, etc.

However, the text very quickly revealed numerous flaws. First, the author seems uncertain of the book’s intended audience. On the one hand, it offers tips for getting started with haiku, from exercises to get the nervous writer off the ground, to thoughts on keeping track of your poems (e.g., records of submissions to journals). On the other hand, many of the arguments throughout are presented in opposition to a sort of presumed “party line”, but no real explanation of the latter is given in terms of its content or rationale; as a result, much common advice frequently offered to beginners (like, “avoid ‘desk-ku’”) is made to seem absurd. Similarly, many suggestions are made for experimentation with the genre, but no real criteria are offered for how a writer might judge the “success” of such efforts, or chart their own progress in mastering the greater form. Experienced writers can put such tips and arguments into their proper context, but those are likely to be the writers who are least in need of a “hands-on guide” to haiku, and beginners are likely to find themselves either bewildered or lacking guidance at critical junctures.

The second major flaw is the almost exclusive use of the author's own haiku (and other poetry) as examples throughout the book. Perhaps this choice was made for expediency, to avoid the tiresome processes of sorting through journals or collecting permissions. However, few writers have the distance to consistently judge the quality of their own work, and Reichhold is no exception. The resulting selection varies widely in quality and appropriateness to the point. This does the reader a disservice by frequently muddying the water.

For example, the following poem is supposed to demonstrate the use of Reichhold's (very useful) phrase-and-fragment theory:

the cemetery fence
is unable to hold back
white lilies

She writes, "If the fragment in the last line was [*sic*] written as 'the last lilies,' the haiku would have been a run-on sentence. By dropping the article, a fragment is created, which causes a proper syntactical break." However, most readers (and editors) would say that this poem reads through as a sentence with or without the additional article, and thus it serves poorly as an example of the intended distinction.

Reichhold also chooses to advocate techniques whose use is controversial in the hands of experienced writers, let alone as guidelines for beginners. Thus, in addition to such fundamental techniques as linkage and contrast and use of *wabi/sabi/yugen*, she suggests trying out simile, double entendre, puns, humor, and wordplay:

strawberry	dried prune faces
another red tongue	guests when they hear
on mine	we have only a privy

Certainly there is space in the genre for such devices, but I am not certain that these examples make the case that convincingly, nor does the discussion help clarify when such approaches are appropriate. The best the author can offer is along the lines of the thought that such poems "make [the reader] feel very smart when they discover the

simile for themselves,” or the notion that “One of the aims of haiku is to confuse the reader just enough to attract interest.”

Finally, sometimes even when stronger haiku are given, they are presented in a context that undermines their effectiveness, at least to this reader, as when

a spring nap
downstream cherry trees
in bud

is explained as a comparison in which the buds are seen as flowers taking a nap. I enjoyed the more abstract emotional space created by the sense of a person napping outdoors at the first opportunity, even before it was warm enough for the flowers to be out; of happy, lazy anticipation of the season about to arrive. But thinking that the author might see the first line merely as summarizing the next two ruins it for me completely. At the very least, this kind of explication seems unlikely to cultivate sensitivity in either readers or writers of haiku.

In sum, this was a book from which I hoped much, and I was sorely disappointed. It doesn't even suggest other books for those whose interest has been piqued, choosing instead to point interested readers to Reichhold's extensive website for further resources, and advocating that old-fashioned readers should wise up and buy a computer if they don't already have one. As with the book's approach overall, this seems to indicate that more can be found only by those that already have a headstart. Hardly what one might wish for a first introduction to a challenging and surprising poetic world.

A. C. Missias

Erratum (from *Frogpond* XXVI:1)

Deep
sleeping midnight
My love
arouses
a rising moon

Pamela Miller Ness

Books Received

Eiden, William *ORKU II* (self-published, 2002). No ISBN. 8 pp., 5.5" x 8.5", saddlestapled softbound. No price. Enquire with the author at 27 W. 416 Rt. 58, Elgin IL 60120.

Eiden's approach to the genre is idiosyncratic, and those who like his work will find these to be in keeping. Nice paper, but a better command of layout technique would make these easier to read. The production is no frills, but none the worse for that.

Pelter, Stanley *Pensées* (Hub Editions, Longholm, East Bank, Wingland, Sutton Bridge, Spalding, Lincolnshire, PE12 9YS UK, 2001). 112 pp., 5" x 7.875", perfect softbound. ISBN 1-903746-25-6. £5.50 from the publisher.

Not a book of haiku, but of musings on haiku and other divers things reminiscent of the "Speculations" of the late Bob Spiess, revealing not only the author's sense of humor, which is legion, but his seriousness. An interesting read, and worth the doing.

Jenkins, Nigel *Blue* (Planet Books, Stad Glanyrafon, Llanbadarn Fawr, Aberystwyth, Ceredigion SY23 3AQ, Wales, UK, 2002). 130 pp., 8.25" x 5.75", perfect softbound. ISBN 0-954081-1-5. £6.50 from the publisher.

This claims to be the first haiku collection ever offered from a Welsh press, but the subject matter is certainly tried and true from the English-language tradition. It follows a chronological format; the 10 black and white photos by David Pearl are especially appealing.

Maya, Giselle *Sacred Trees/Arbres Sacrés/Heilige Bäume* (Koyama Press, 84750 Saint Martin de Castillon, France, 2002). 52 pp., 8.25" x 11.75", hand-sewn with oversize soft cover. Translations by Maryse Staiber, photographs by Sophie Gunther. No ISBN. Limited Edition. \$27 ppd. from the publisher.

This elegant production is typical of the poet's work, this being a tanka sequence on various aspects of tree lore as acquired in Provence. A brief intro to tanka, and an afterword by Jane Reichhold round out this interesting volume.

Moreau, June *just enough light* (Koyama Press, 84750 Saint Martin de Castillon, France, 2002). 36 pp., 8.25" x 11.75", hand-sewn with oversize soft cover. Illustrated. No ISBN. \$22 ppd. from the publisher.

A production of the same intensity as above, this time showcasing haiku and tanka by a longtime and wellknown United States poet whose particular sensibility seems informed with what we might call vitalism. Equally beautiful and interesting as the preceding entry.

Sherry, Helen J. *A Breath of Haiku* (Chocho Books, 11929 Caminito Corriente, San Diego, CA 92128, 2003), ISBN: 0-922273-05-7. 98 pp., 5.25"x8.25", perfect softbound. \$12 US and Canada, \$14 elsewhere, ppd. from the publisher.

The author's second book contains senryu, tanka, renku and a rengay along with haiku, in a nicely produced and easy to read format. Some technical inconsistencies, e.g. different spellings of the same words.

Barber, Cathy *one drop of water and the glass overflows* (self-published, 20 West Point Place, San Mateo, CA 94402, 2003), 13 pp., 5.5" x 4.25", saddle stitched softbound. No price listed. *A nicely produced pocket-size book with 13 poems from a sensibility that is suggested by the title.*

Moise, Stela *Numaio Azurul/Only the blue* (Editura Fundatiei, str. 1907, nr. 25, Constanta, 2002), ISBN 973-8146-54-2. 176 pp., 5.625" x 8.125", perfect softbound. No price listed. Enquire with the publisher.

The author styles these "lyric miniatures" and this is a fair assessment, as these arise from the "shasei" school of haiku in the main. Somewhat typical of what is most often done in Europe (outside the UK) as a full-blown collection of haiku intended to bring the author to prominence.

Lindley, David *Five, Seven, Five* (Salvo, Bird Road, Heathcote, Warwick CV34 6TB, UK, 2003). ISBN 0-9513363-3-9. 54 pp., 4.25" x 7", perfect softbound. £7.99 from the publisher.

The title is suggestive of the poet's aesthetic: excursions into generic awe and over-the-top senryu. The overall effect is entry level, not what we expect from one who essays an entire book in the genre.

Cabalona, Yvonne, and Jo Lea Parker and w. f. owen, eds. *Blink* (Central Valley Haiku Club, 709 Auburn Street, Modesto, CA 95350, 2002) No ISBN, 20 pp., 5.5" x 8.5", saddle-stapled softbound. \$5 from the publisher.

The first of what is hoped to be many chapbooks by one of our most active regional haiku groups—haiku, senryu, tanka and haibun from eleven members, including several HSA members.

Ross, Bruce *How to Haiku* (Tuttle Publishing, Boston 2002). ISBN 0-8048-3232-3. 176 pp., 5.25" x 8", perfect softbound. \$12.95 in bookstores.

There seems a spate of "how-to" books on haiku of late, and as many takes as there are styles and beliefs. This one by Bruce Ross is to be lauded for its breadth—it has useful chapters on haibun and renku and other related forms—and excellent bibliography. It has its own issues of advocacy—I say, read them all and make up your own minds.

HSA

News

The Bernard Lionel Einbond Renku Contest Awards 2002

Comments from the Judges

The first thing we both noticed after eagerly opening our thick packages of renku for the 2002 Einbond Renku Contest, and beginning to read was . . . these poets are truly enjoying themselves! Almost every poem showed an understanding of renku form and rules. But even more, the poets grasped the joy of writing together.

As judges, we concentrated on looking for a strong *hokku*, followed by a steady opening, a variety of topics, seamless link and shift, and excellent individual verses. No entry was perfect, and our choice of a Grand Prize winner and two renku for Honorable Mention takes nothing away from the delight we felt in reading individual verses and passages in the other renku.

After careful reading and analysis, we decided to award the Grand Prize to the *kasen* renku “The Wind Shifts”. The four poets who participated in this renku seemed to trust one another, comfortably tossing each verse off with a light, playful renku spirit. There were many “ooh” and “ahhs” as we read this renku. The first two verses, however, are weak when compared to other entries. A *hokku* should have all the qualities of a stand-alone haiku. We felt that this *hokku* was not well-focused in time. But the remaining verses in the opening are skillful and the linking is elegant. In the *ura* (the second fold) the energy among the poets flows strongly. The “dream of wild persimmons” verse starting this section is just one example of the inventiveness and sensitive link-and-shift that the poets achieved in this section. It might be said that that the love verses tend to develop a story, however, “such docile lions” tightens the flow. We also debated the use of “the first ants” as a spring *kigo*. Time should not move backwards in a renku—for example, from Easter (late spring) to snowmelt (early spring). In this *kasen*, time flows onward, from “plum petals” to “the first ants” to “opening game”. We appreciated the clever use of a little

word like “first”. The second set of love verses are somewhat troublesome. Avoiding cliché is important in a renku. The second moon link “... a smith beats a hammer” is unique and evocative. Finally, the last six verses move to a quick close, with a variety of focus, both on topics and on human senses—touch, hearing, aroma, and sight. We felt the cherry blossom verse was plain. But then, in the *ageku*, a *henro* (a Japanese pilgrim who visits eighty-eight temples) at the “eighty-eighth temple” was a nice surprise, ending this renku with a “warm” feeling.

“Something that Sings”, a *nijuin* renku is a close contender for the Grand Prize. Its beginning is stronger than “The Wind Shifts”. The *hokku*, in particular, is interesting as an example of using indefinite words to convey a precise feeling. But then, there are some lazy verses: ‘shouts/and laughter in #4, and “red wine/in his glass/and hers” in #7. Most of the verses in this renku show the evocative power of brevity. But being brief requires careful consideration of the juxtaposition of lines within a verse. In this renku, the second moon verse occurs earlier than is usual, and is a two-line, rather than a three-line verse. A *nijuin* has four *ori* or “folds” (as does the *kasen*), but arranged as 4-6-6-4 verses, and it includes one blossom and two moon verses. Typically, the moon appears in #1 in the second fold, the second moon in #5 in the third fold, and the blossom verse in #3 in the last fold. You can insert the moon verses earlier or later (but not the blossom verse). The linking in the third section is close in feeling, though topics are varied. We loved the impact of “I’d like to be a-l-o-n-e”. And the line break in “scent/of the bending/lilac” is very effective.

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“a peacock wanders” showed the strongest start of all the renku submitted for this year’s contest. The *hokku* concentrates the reader’s imagination, while presenting juxtaposed images that resonate gently with one another. The *wakiku* (second verse) closely follows the *hokku*, yet leaves openings for further development. And the third verse nicely shifts to a new locale and feeling. Then the flow continues from the “marathon” to the “derelict caboose”, and the “marked-down pumpkin”. The verses are varied in point of view, syntax, topics, and verse structure in a way that is especially refreshing. Unfortunately, the renku

better make
that phone call
if you want a date pwl

back in my day
this meant a shotgun wedding bw

the former prom queen
remembers the king
who went off to college mb

such docile lions
guard the library steps ch

sweat drips
as Quasimodo
greet the moon pwl

tumbling in the waterfall
rainbows over rainbows mb

somewhere
in the hall closet
my heirloom pearls ch

helicopters again
above the search zone bw

plum petals drift
from the branch she carries
to a dying friend ch

up the front walkway,
the first ants mb

the home team
crowds the pitcher's mound
at the opening game bw

a hostile witness
on the stand pwl

outside the movie
we kiss and make up
all over mb

endlessly playing
our song bw

golden jubilee and, at last, that trip to Tuscany!	ch
ravens claim the withered field	pwl
before dawn a neighbor empties ashes from his hibachi	ch
aspirin downed with <i>sake</i> from last night's cup	mb
unable to focus on the face of Dali's Christ	pwl
war protestors herd their kids toward the memorial wall	bw
under the crescent moon a smith beats a hammer at the faire	mb
so soon the bright leaves sodden in autumn rain	bw
impatient for the paraffin to harden on the canning jars	ch
he caps blank verse with lines that rhyme	pwl
a note on the card said "Fill out this check for whatever you need."	bw
near the yield sign an aroma of mint	pwl
hill by hill the cherry blossoms along the shore	mb
aglow with warm light the eighty-eighth temple	ch

First Honorable Mention: Something That Sings

a nijuin renku
by Leatrice Lifshitz (LL)
and John Stevenson (JS)

far, but not too far there is something that sings in my winter home	LL	the relief pitcher throws his first one at the batter	JS
the warm work of hauling firewood	JS	swimming hole filled with moonlight	LL
first raindrops fall just so into the river	LL	experience holding back the tears	JS
shouts and laughter	JS	taking the telephone from one room to another	LL
moon over the empty schoolyard	LL	I'd like to be a-l-o-n-e with you	JS
leaves are turning on lover's lane	JS	library books that were lost	LL
90 red wine in his glass and hers	LL	Sunday stroll among the stones at Arlington	JS
an equitable settlement	JS	her bonnet with long ribbons	LL
cormorant dries its wings on a fence post	LL	scent of the bending lilac	JS
starched collar, cuffs and posture	JS	an open can of paint on the ladder . . .	LL

Second Honorable Mention: a peacock wanders

a kasen renku
by Mark Brooks (MB)
and Paul MacNeill (PM)

spring rain—
a peacock wanders
onto the path MB

labyrinth hedges
sprout new leaves PM

in the lobby
a doorman snoozes
past lunchtime MB

slurping noodles
she trains for a marathon PM

derelict caboose
a vibrant red
under the full moon MB

yes! there is a good side PM
to this marked-down pumpkin

fragrantly
the bull moose claims
territory PM

they still debate the death
of Meriwether Lewis MB

my wife asks
“do these old jeans
make me look fat?” PM

better to send roses
this anniversary MB

a shared glance
just a pew in front
of the faded soprano PM

there goes a billboard
for last year’s jazz concert MB

the same gazebo
but the moon of youth
smiled more PM

and those frat brothers
will earn their beer guts MB

before the break
foam is sucked
into a wave PM

stone by slippery stone
the girls cross the brook MB

sepals parted
but the wild iris
not yet open PM

another April Fool
sniffs a squirting flower MB

the tail shadow
chases after
the kite shadow MB

hesitation when
I asked her phone number PM

true love
shows up
as an old friend MB

Hamlet bids goodbye
to the fair Ophelia PM

bitterly cold,
nothing stirred
that night MB

sparkling
snowfield crust PM

glitter and glue
on his pre-school artwork
and his cheeks MB

postage stamps from Trinidad
fill an album page PM

through the spotting scope
dozens of floats
line up for the parade MB

I carry the chart toward
my barium enema PM

he climbs
the outer fence
by moonlight MB

shepherds move the flock
to lower pasture PM

storm windows
installed in place
of dirty screens PM

from new hearing aids
a natural cacophony MB

our pilot draws
something
about cleared to land PM

bees return to the hive
as the sky darkens MB

a sunrise breeze
spreads through the apple tree
and blossoms PM

she washes the sand
off of a conch shell MB

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THE HAIKU SOCIETY OF AMERICA

Treasurer's Report First Quarter (January 1 through March 31, 2003)

CREDITS:

Balance from Fourth Quarter 2002	\$11,868.34
Membership Dues and Contributions	14,203.50
Education Packets	455.00
Merit Book Awards Entry Fees	60.00
Logo Contest Fee	10.00
Frogpond Samples	504.00
PayPal Deposits	1.14
TOTAL CREDITS	\$27,101.98

DEBITS:

Frogpond Account	\$172.19
Newsletter Account	1,800.00
Einbond Contest Postage	5.12
HSA 2003 Brochures	288.86
Education Packet Expenses	201.82
Miscellaneous	128.91
TOTAL DEBITS	\$2,596.90

BALANCE: **\$24,505.08**

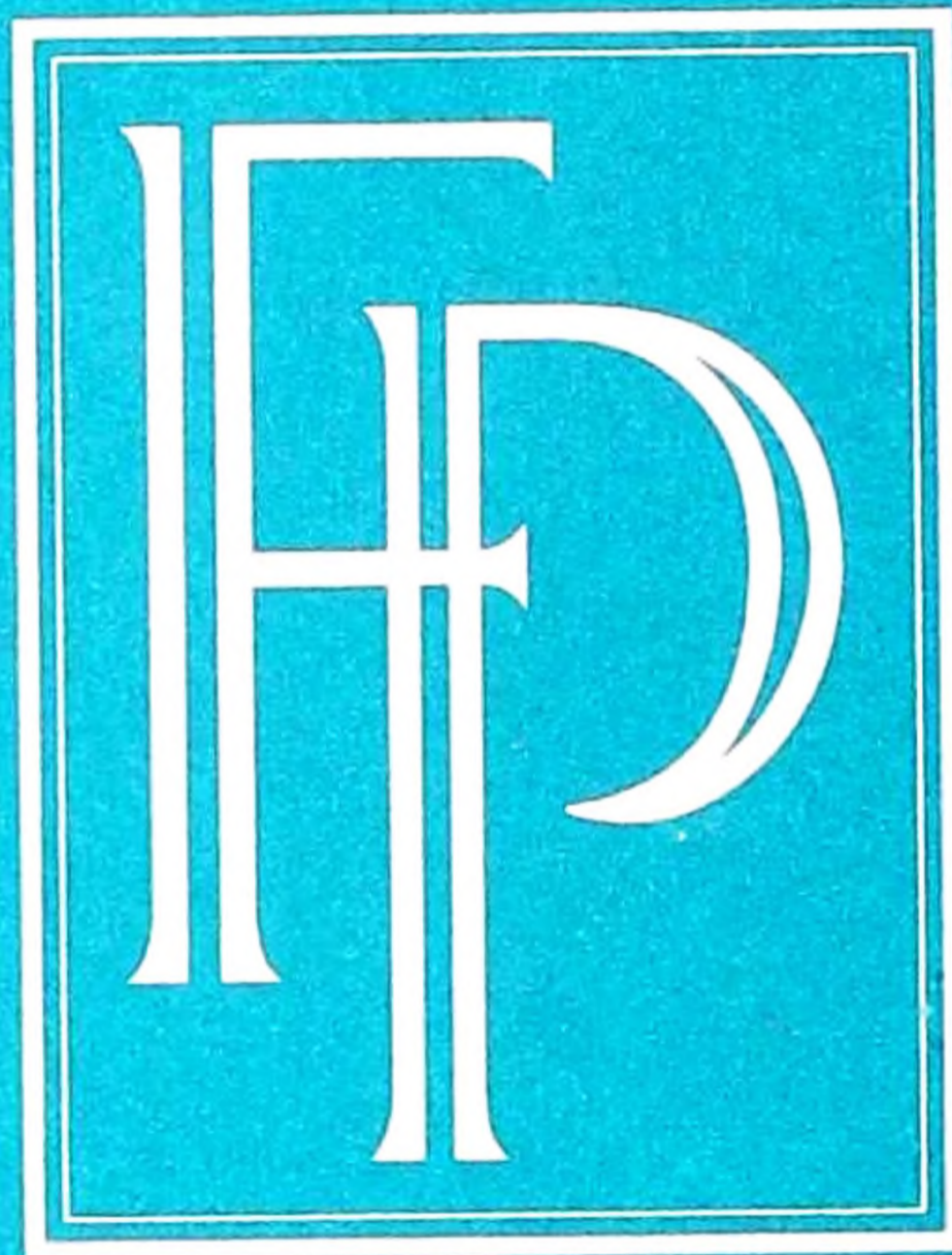
Respectfully submitted,

Thomas R. Borkowski, Treasurer

Museum of Haiku Literature Award
\$100 for the best unpublished work
appearing in the previous issue of *Frogpond*
as voted by the HSA Executive Committee

dim light
the night nurse
describes the rain

Joanne Klontz



Frogpond Capping Poem

writer's block
the return key
doesn't

Christopher Patchel

[Please submit your two-line cap to the first line "writer's block" by 08/01/03 to Frogpond, PO Box 2461, Winchester VA 22604-1661.]

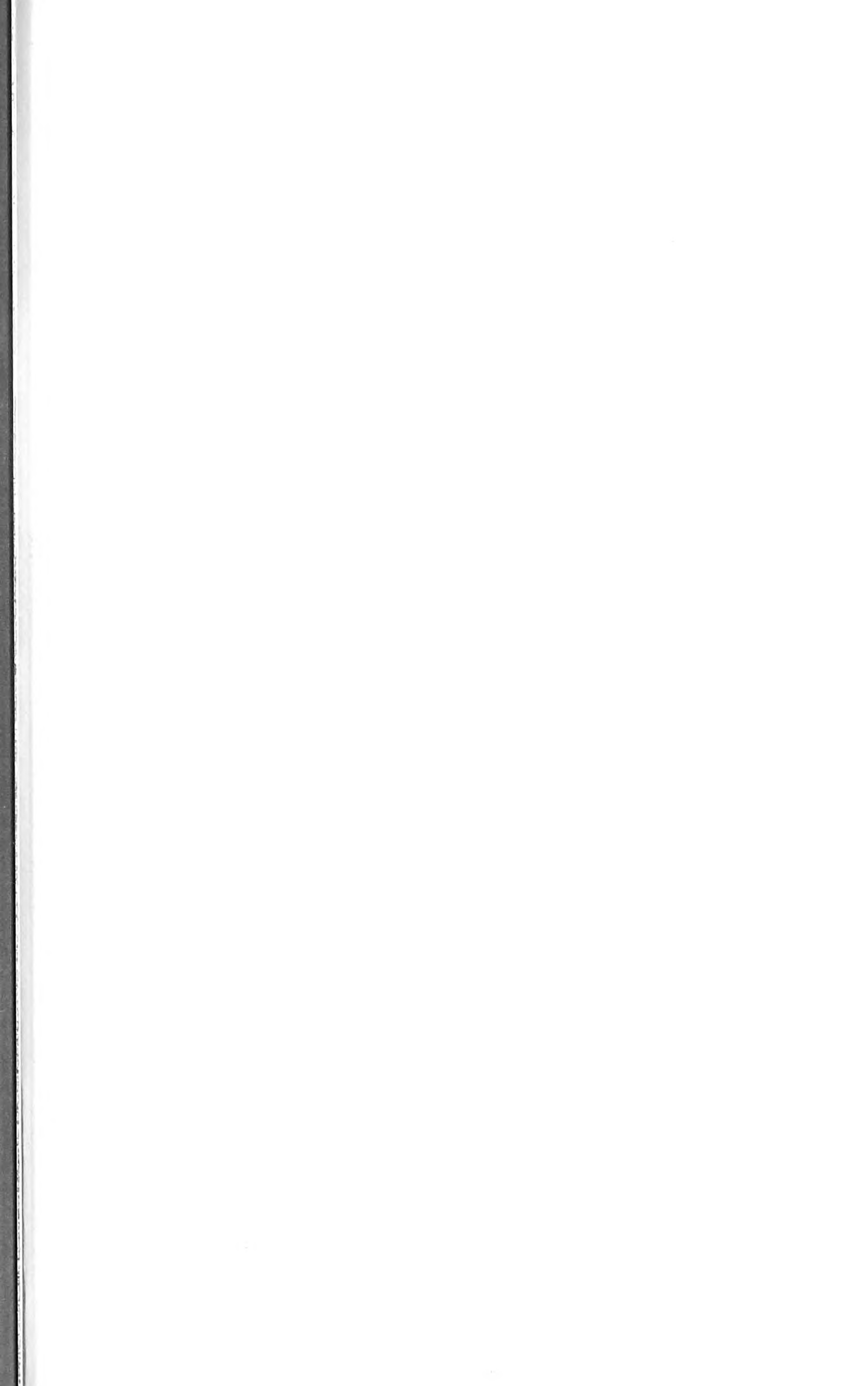


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