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OF AMERICA**

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## Submissions Policy

(Please follow the submission guidelines carefully.)

1. Submissions from both members and nonmembers of HSA are welcome.
2. All submissions must be original, unpublished work that is not being considered elsewhere and must not be on the Internet (except for Twitter and Facebook) prior to appearing in *Frogpond*.
3. Submission by e-mail is preferred
  - (a) in the body of the e-mail (no attachments)
  - (b) with subject line: Frogpond Submission + the kind of work sent
  - (c) with place of residence noted in the body of the e-mail
4. A submission by post will receive a reply only if accompanied by a self-addressed stamped envelope with sufficient U.S. postage to reach your destination.
5. Only one submission per issue will be considered.

### The Submission May Include Any or All of the Following:

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

### Submission Periods:

1. February 15 to April 15 (Spring/Summer Issue)
2. June 1 to August 1 (Autumn Issue)
3. September 15 to November 15 (Winter Issue)

Acceptances will be sent after the end of each period.

### Note to Publishers:

Books for review may be sent at any time.

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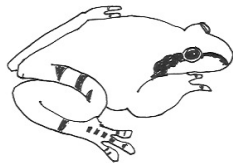
**Museum of Haiku  
Literature Award  
\$100**

for the best previously unpublished work appearing in the  
last issue of *Frogpond* as selected by vote of the HSA  
Executive Committee

**From Issue 37:1**

air show . . .  
the ice cream girls  
compare nail polish

*Anne L.B. Davidson*  
Saco, ME



## Haiku & Senryu

winter evening  
only my thoughts  
give warmth

Leroy Kanterman, Forest Hills, NY

dandledines  
he used to know their names

Phyllis Lee, Sebring, OH

nude painting  
the model's eyes  
follow a midge

Klaus-Dieter Wirth, Viersen, Germany

still watching me  
with her knowing look—  
my childhood doll

Gwenn Gurnack, Boston, MA

thunderclap  
the sound of lily pads  
scraping the hull

Wendy Smith, Rochester, NY

desert rose  
opening up to  
the mere suggestion

forest floor once upon all the time in the world

Michael Henry Lee, Saint Augustine, FL

the cat's ear  
catches the sound  
that i miss

Joe D. Proctor, Louisville, KY

evening chill  
her autumn kimono  
a little threadbare

Johnny Baranski, Vancouver, WA

the long night collects  
my optimistic thoughts  
right to the end

Janelle Barrera, Key West, FL

estate sale  
Dad's only bowling trophy  
in the freebie box

John J. Dunphy, Alton, IL

sake with friends  
the moon and my shadow  
three drunkards

Doug D'Elia, Syracuse, NY

yesterday's sea in the dark clouds my unmoored heart

Pris Campbell, Lake Worth, FL

glacial ice  
the way her blue eyes  
took the news

william scott galasso, Edmonds, WA

sunrise  
bending a little  
to brush her waist-long hair

Jeffrey McMullen, Cuba, NY

tulip sprouts  
tip their soil—  
a shirtless jogger

Pearl Pirie, Ottawa, ON

heavy rains—  
the grasshopper creeps  
into the box

Archana Kapoor Nagpal, Bangalore, India

freezing mist  
an argument on the bus  
becomes heated

Frances Jones, Bend, OR

Walden Pond  
from a tree to my hand  
autumn leaf

Bruce Ross, Hampden, ME



used book sale  
a penny  
for Plato's thoughts

Edward Cody Huddleston, Baxley, GA

nursing home  
finding my mother  
under her skin

Veterans Day  
the wear on her  
worry stone

Tom Painting, Atlanta, GA

dawn silence  
the garbage truck drives  
right into it

Rachel Sutcliffe, Huddersfield, England

voices  
between white-washed walls  
Athens at dusk

George Gerolimos, Chapel Hill, NC

dwindling sunlight  
a godwit nudges back  
the tide

the dead of night  
my father wanders  
through my dreams

Gregory Longenecker, Pasadena, CA

an hour later  
she's still listing my faults  
auld lang syne

Ignatius Fay, Sudbury, ON

dead last—  
Tuffernhorseradish  
stretches at the wire

Dennis E. Thompson, Boone, IA

new flowers  
around the mailbox  
red flag up

Randy Brooks, Decatur, IL

midnight waking . . .  
the cat's face  
studying mine

Bonnie Stepenoff, Cape Girardeau, MO

spring garden  
the child's eyes flit  
from flower to flower

Gautam Nadkarni, Mumbai, India

midnight sun  
a mosquito whines  
in circles

islands of ice  
the moon  
without an oar

Lorin Ford, Melbourne, AUS

crows talking—  
feeling left out  
of the conversation

George Dorsty, Yorktown, VA

miles from sea  
a fish in the cooler  
still bites

Glenn G. Coats, Prospect, VA

a gull keens  
above the driftwood—  
another lure cast

Sharon Hammer Baker, Findlay, OH

with each stroke  
of the tower clock  
magnolias

Phillip Kennedy, Monterey, CA

slipping between my thoughts crow shadow

Patty Hardin, Long Beach, WA

spring sunset  
the narrowing road  
turns to larkspur

Richard St. Clair, Cambridge, MA

all those stories  
bound together  
rag rug

Barbara Snow, Eugene, OR

remembrance day  
we watch  
two minutes of silence

John Parsons, Norfolk, England

sunlight through aspens no petticoat

Lew Watts, Santa Fe, NM

deep forest  
all the saplings  
that won't be here next year

Michael Ketchek, Rochester, NY

no trees in the woods  
only snow fog blowing  
now into then

Andy Fogle, Saratoga Springs, NY

bend in the river  
the old man walking  
one less dog

Els van Leeuwen, Sydney, AUS

approaching hospice  
the car at the intersection  
reads URN

Caroline Giles Banks, Minneapolis, MN

forgetting myself . . .  
cherry blossoms  
in the wind

Anna Cates, Wilmington, OH

driving home  
the wee side of today  
in the full moon

Jeffrey Winke, Milwaukee, WI

narcissus in snow  
the waitress  
warms my hands

Michael Fessler, Kanagawa, Japan

the  
spring  
dark

pulses

(her  
diving  
bell)

a wing held to the wind a circle opens

Mark Harris, Princeton, NJ

origami birds  
some of my childhood  
in the folds

Stephen A. Peters, Bellingham, WA

on and off the bus changes every mile

John Watson, Columbia, CA

snow filling the gutters the aroma of a bean chilli

John Kinory, Oxfordshire, England

measured against starlight  
and horsetails . . .  
words in the wind

Angela Terry, Lake Forest Park, WA

snow falls on snow  
barmaids gossiping  
about last night

Ben Moeller-Gaa, St. Louis, MO

icy sidewalk  
no one steps on  
a child's lost glove

John Vukmirovich, Chicago, IL

waiting for a tow . . .  
a cemetery fills  
with snow and dusk

Rob Dingman, Herkimer, NY

lights out . . .  
i see  
silence

Charlotte Digregorio, Winnetka, IL



rising early  
over the pond  
today's grace

Joseph M. Kusmiss, Sanbornton, NH

creaksong . . .  
autumn wind swinging  
on the barnyard gate

Kala Ramesh, Pune, India

planting bulbs  
my hands cleansed  
in the dirt

Neal Whitman, Pacific Grove, CA

spring evening  
without philosophy  
I strip the red onion

Patrick Sweeney, Misawashi, Japan

butterfly wings . . .  
her blue rattle  
lies untouched

Paresh Tiwari, Hyderabad, India

kissed . . .  
the afterword  
of a struck bell

Kristen Deming, Bethesda, MD

her tears reach  
her outer ears  
trumpets in love

holding her just so all docks in all oceans creak

Scott Metz, South Beach, OR

moonglow  
the basso profundo  
of bullfrogs

Ellen Compton, Washington, D.C.

cooling okra and peas  
sisters revise the terms  
of a trade

Bill Cooper, Richmond, VA

day drinking  
the jukebox sings a song  
it's already sung

Collin Barber, Memphis, TN

I listen to the sea  
hoping to catch  
where something begins

Jack Galmitz, Elmhurst, NY

soft clay on the wheel  
the potter's hands  
shape mine

Angelee Deodhar, Chandigarh, India

twilight on snow shadows deepen the grip of stars

Alan Summers, Wiltshire, England

still pond  
I sabotage the moon  
with a stone

Ajaya Mahala, Pune, India

skylight  
boxing  
the stars

cello solo the owls in my bones

Tanya McDonald, Woodinville, WA

children kneeling  
next to a shoebox  
autumn clouds

Joe McKeon, Strongsville, OH

an old tin  
of powdered ginger  
light from Arcturus

Pat Tompkins, San Mateo, CA

extra hour now I give the trout more play

ice jams the crumbling river winter slow to move on

Jeff Stillman, Norwich, NY

big bones  
through the museum window  
a passing cloud

Lenard D. Moore, Raleigh, NC

all day I listen  
the river tells me nothing  
but catfish

Olaf Nelson, Brookfield, IL

how to ask for love poppy seeds

Marie Louise Munro, Tarzana, CA

wedding cake—  
more than one layer  
to slice through

Devin Harrison, Vancouver Island, BC

end-of-year storm  
snowblowing a new path  
from me to you

Edward J. Rielly, Westbrook, ME

prairie wind . . .  
the chatter of corn husks  
on the old school road

ancestral ruins . . .  
the crying of terns  
in our ears

Michael McClintock, Clovis, CA

landlocked  
for the rest of my days—  
blue-eyed gannets

Ruth Holzer, Herndon, VA

magnolia blossom  
I unfold the kimono  
instructions

Johnette Downing, New Orleans, LA

eighth month  
the curve of the pear tree  
heavy with fruit

Catherine Anne Nowaski, Rochester, NY

Burns night  
the warm smell of rosin  
from a fiddle's bow

Katrina Shepherd, Dublane, Scotland

her flower of youth  
in a long-closed book  
brittle petals

Ronald L. Kirkland, Harvest, AL

spring mist  
caught between  
wet lace and pearls

Charles Baker, Mineral Point, WI

hazy moon . . .  
my daughter rides  
a unicorn

Shloka Shankar, Bangalore, India

mosaic  
in a butterfly's eyes  
the world for a while

Robert Kania, Warsaw, Poland

sunrise  
no revisions  
expected

Michael Blottenberger, Hanover, PA

afternoon birdsong  
the fish-bone fern  
brush my knees

Jonathan McKeown, Sydney, AUS

spring fever  
replacing silk flowers  
with dandelions

Lori Lang, Decatur, GA

supper time  
the taste of broccoli  
in mother's voice

Victor Ortiz, San Pedro, CA

the horned owl  
making an appearance  
crescent moon

James W. Pollard, Kowloon Bay, Hong Kong



spring morning  
tiled, untilled  
we emerge

Marika Josephson, Makanda, IL

cherry petals  
fall into this haiku—  
windless night

William Seltzer, Gwynedd, PA

the apple's crispness . . .  
i put an x thru  
the new poem

a loose end  
flaps in the wind  
fresh grave

George Swede, Toronto, ON

a drift  
of travel brochures  
deep winter

Ann K. Schwader, Westminster, CO

catalan alley—  
the busking harpist  
plucks our heartstrings

Ruth Yarrow, Seattle, WA

spring wrens  
the canes of escallonia  
sing again

Greg Piko, Yass, AUS

curve of the river our last fishing trip he says

P M F Johnson, Minneapolis, MN

tink of forks  
touching our plates  
fireflies

Sharon Pretti, San Francisco, CA

out of one fog bank  
and into another . . .  
her father's coffin

Stewart C. Baker, Dallas, OR

a tea kettle sings  
through the open window  
sparrows on cue

Ken Olson, Yakima, WA

summer rain—  
the sound of bachata leaks  
under the door

Ryan McCarty, Bay City, MI

harvesting the last of the runner beans her giant son

J. Zimmerman, Santa Cruz, CA

pace after pace  
sneaking more bits of road  
out of no land

Alessio Zanelli, Cremona, Italy

winter wind  
one of the cows  
faces into it

Susan Constable, Nanoose Bay, BC

trade winds  
figuring out the odds  
of an afterlife

ripcord in love again

Robert Epstein, El Cerrito, CA

record heat—  
his bishop stalks  
my queen

Alanna C. Burke, Santa Fe, NM

off to bed  
she answers  
in B-flat

Jayne Miller, Hazel Green, WI

scars of store names where once flowers

even for the little breeze bought with insect wings

David Boyer, Stamford, CT

Saigyo's Day  
the slow breathing  
of "sun and moon" scallops

faint deer whistle from the sumi-e scroll

Fay Aoyagi, San Francisco, CA

evening alone  
the only language  
animal tracks in snow

Dietmar Tauchner, Puchberg, Austria

after surgery  
the doctor's voice  
flatlining

memories come easier now gossamer wind

Karen DiNobile, Poughkeepsie, NY

the tightening of a fishing line how silence ends

Carl Seguiban, Burnaby, BC

redbud  
I relinquish father  
from my sacrum

halfight  
a color between  
flesh and bone

Eve Luckring, Los Angeles, CA

XY-chromosomal,  
part of me always  
alone

Michael Nickels-Wisdom, Spring Grove, IL

the square root  
of negative one . . .  
clouds

Deborah P Kolodji, Temple City, CA

summer heat—  
the outdoors shower  
with Venus

Charles Shiotani, Watsonville, CA

tree frogs  
as far as the ear  
can remember

polar vortex  
another shot  
of vodka

Christopher Patchel, Mettawa, IL

spring equinox  
a dinosaur found buried  
in the sandbox

Billie Wilson, Juneau, AK

wayward clouds  
the drum major  
blows his whistle

Michele L. Harvey, Hamilton, NY

summer dusk  
the outline of the baseball  
in the bruise

Jeremy Pendrey, Walnut Creek, CA

ponies a pasture beyond  
the last known color  
in the twilight sky

watermelons  
the weight of our grunts  
breaks an axle

Chad Lee Robinson, Pierre, SD

all-night pharmacy  
his anti-nausea drug  
and a pack of cigs

Marsh Muirhead, Bemidji, MN

talking politics  
just to kill time  
the hawks' wide circles

Matthew Robinson, Warner Robins, GA

oratory  
the wounded soul  
of a soldier

Metod Češek, Zagorje, Slovenia



which lie  
sounds more truthful  
moths drawn to the light

prize pumpkin  
it doesn't matter  
what I weigh

Carolyn Hall, San Francisco, CA

lazy noon  
the scarecrow indifferent  
to the new dress

Poornima Laxmeshwar, Bangalore, India

Sunday lunch—  
we pick apart the chicken  
and the sermon

Kristin Oosterheert, Grandville, MI

Father's Day—  
blueberry pie softens  
the conversation

Bill Deegan, Mahwah, NJ

long day—  
my unscheduled meeting  
with the farm goose

Alison Woolpert, Santa Cruz, CA

all because  
she needed a light . . .  
wildfire

no matter how I try to dilute you absinthe

S.M. Abeles, Washington, D.C.

lonely man drifting the new year's miasma

Susan Diridoni, Kensington, CA

snowdrift—  
she tells me nothing  
ever changes

ghost stories . . .  
campfire coals  
hiss in the rain

Bill Pauly, Asbury, IA

thawed hemlocks  
tossing in the breeze  
the foal's ragged tail

Jack Barry, Ashfield, MA

hypnagogia  
a rainbow ending  
in the ocean

a (white-throated) high note and I disappear

Michelle Tennison, Blackwood, NJ

my vital information cloud-based

Peter Newton, Winchendon, MA

selfies  
next to the waterfall  
moss green moss

eulogy  
chunks of river ice lifted  
with the tide

Cherie Hunter Day, Cupertino, CA

curtains the light  
blown into  
a rose

frost on the window  
the face looking through  
my face

Peter Yovu, Middlesex, VT

smell of bleach  
the baby I lost  
all over again

Susan Burch, Hagerstown, MD

only their shadows  
are growing—  
autumn marigolds

Barry George, Philadelphia, PA

ants navigate  
the patio stones . . .  
my do-nothing day

Terri L. French, Huntsville, AL

spider's web  
tying the coleus  
to the stone

old photographs  
the uncle  
no one talks about

Gayle Bull, Mineral Point, WI

low tide  
ghost crabs scuttle  
from their burrows

Craig W. Steele, Cambridge Springs, PA

scent of rain  
sakura petals fall  
without a sound

Yuting Lin, Taipei City, Taiwan

sake gently warmed  
between us . . .  
moon flowers opening

Louisa Howerow, London, ON

peeling me open . . .  
the ocean's dusk  
in palest tangerine

Renée Owen, Sebastopol, CA

untouched  
she was my first  
haiku

Aaron Packard, Colorado Springs, CO

saying Ō to all things snow

putting on glasses to write in the dark obsession

Jim Kacian, Winchester, VA

giving up  
giving up  
Lent

what's mine  
and what's not  
baggage claim

Joan Prefontaine, Cottonwood, AZ

tooth prints  
on a Dixon Ticonderoga  
beaver moon

Scott Mason, Chappaqua, NY

whip-poor-will  
having faith  
in my words

Jeff Hoagland, Hopewell, NJ

winter solstice  
the abridged version  
of my bio

after my brother and me roe v. wade

Roberta Beary, Bethesda, MD

collabor tion

a tune  
in the shepherd's head  
sung by wolves

John Stevenson, Nassau, NY

writing down  
the mud on my boots  
before it dries

Brent Goodman, Rhinelander, WI

morning commute  
a stranger waves  
me in

Joyce Clement, Bristol, CT

hyacinths  
the deep blue scent  
of evening

Patricia J. Machmiller, San Jose, CA

church bells . . .  
the pack of gum I stole  
fifty years ago

John J. Han, Manchester, MO

stained glass windows . . .  
hearing the silence  
I came for

Ivan F. Randall, St. Mary's, NSW, AUS



long road home  
the sea's journey  
in the rock face

Mary Kipps, Sterling, VA

March sunshine—  
the email mentions  
spots on his lungs

Maeve O'Sullivan, Dublin, Ireland

spring equinox  
the time it takes  
to not decide

James Won, Temple City, CA

first warm breeze  
hearing my name  
in his voice

Julie Warther, Dover, OH

twilight  
my child stretches  
the end of play

Ramesh Anand, Bangalore, India

a simple grace  
for eggs  
sunny side up

I dream of running  
shoes with their tongues out  
by the bed

Dan Schwerin, Waukesha, WI

Mars rover retrieves a bone

D W Brydon

restoring the bentwood candelabra magnolia in bud

Helen Buckingham, Bristol, England

a black tern lilt  
over the scrapes  
wind-strewn clouds

whispering through the dead-nettles the sides of a vole

John Barlow, Ormskirk, England

spring fever  
every nose stuffed  
in a lilac

long way from home  
my shadow  
sticks by me

Deb Koen, Rochester, NY

moss-covered bricks  
the poets gather  
for a morning meeting

she slips off her shift   pears in bloom

Charles Trumbull, Santa Fe, NM

his scent my scent separate beds

Pamela A. Babusci, Rochester, NY

lighthouse wall the waves licking it slowly away

Diarmuid Fitzgerald, Dublin, Ireland

hospice visit  
his favorite topic still  
buying and selling

Sheila Sondik, Bellingham, WA

a sad tune  
the old fiddler's bow  
stops bouncing

Ernesto V. Epistola, Sarasota, FL

placid lake  
the dog mirrors  
my gaze

Gwen Stamm, Eastsound, WA

the sun sets  
silence  
darkens the wine

Robert Witmer, Tokyo, Japan

garbage pickup—  
morning rays warm  
the confessional

s.m. kozubek, Chicago, IL

a thought  
on the tip of my tongue  
zucchini blossoms

Bob Lucky, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

sunset . . .  
the lamps of fishing boats  
one by one

Tomislav Maretić, Zagreb, Croatia

paper boat  
another worry  
sails away

Anna Maris, Tomelilla, Sweden

brussels sprouts . . .  
the moments I remember  
to forget

Vinay Leo R., Bangalore, India

morning yoga  
I unfold to a blur  
of snowflakes

G.R. LeBlanc, Dieppe, NB

small round river stones . . .  
the bumps of your spine  
at dusk

Bud Cole, Ocean City, NJ

the way birds know  
when to circle as one  
a lover's gaze

kate s. godsey, Pacifica, CA

night lost in our light  
seedless grapes overflow  
our bowl

rocks not moving in a lifetime  
winds turning around  
our feelings

Gary Hotham, Scaggsville, MD

the oldest love poem  
cuneiform symbols  
etched in clay

Doc Drumheller, Christchurch, NZ

autumn garden—  
gathering this and that  
for a last display

Adelaide B. Shaw, Millbrook, NY

vultures settle  
on a cell phone tower . . .  
autumn evening

Larry Gates, Portal, AZ

time's shadows . . .  
the wind leaves frost  
in its path

the flight of dust  
down an old jeep road . . .  
Mars in the east

Allan Burns, Colorado Springs, CO

the projects . . .  
all the satellite dishes  
face the same way

Elmedin Kadric, Helsingborg, Sweden

winter leaves  
when no one is looking  
fiddlehead ferns

June Rose Dowis, Shreveport, LA

forgetting  
the nest is empty—  
closed bedroom door

Wanda D. Cook, Hadley, MA

hum    ming  
      hum    ming    bird  
                  bird

Mike Taylor, San Francisco, CA

waning crescent  
a hint of deer  
in the meadow

Aron Rothstein, Toledo, OR

crossing my eyes  
and dotting my tea  
houseflies

Shrikaanth Krishnamurthy, Bangalore, India



Bending the reed  
with each note of its song—  
a hermit thrush

Edward Zuk, Surrey, BC

geese in the clouds  
ducks at lake's edge—  
the whistle of wind

Steve Addiss, Midlothian, VA

*pantry*

s

w

c r o p

LeRoy Gorman, Napanee, ON

speaking in tongues autumn leaves

Mark E. Brager, Columbia, MD

never found his map becomes a wilderness

Adan Breare, Portland, OR

haiku addiction  
I fill the syringe  
with syllables

Haiku Elvis, Shreveport, LA

munching cookies the commas in our conversation

Sanjuktaa Asopa, Karnataka, India

park bench—  
yesterday's warmth  
old news

Hansha Teki, Upper Hutt, NZ

undecided . . .  
each twist  
of the apple stem

Marilyn Appl Walker, Madison, GA

blue moon at sunrise  
the unknown side  
of myself

Scott Glander, Glenview, IL

promising all  
the usual things—  
moonlit carnival

Sandra Simpson, Tauranga, NZ

drone attack  
when science was  
only fiction

waging war when you had to be there

John Soules, Wingham, ON

spun silk:  
from dew-dropped veil  
to wasp's shroud

Mollie Danforth, Alexandria, VA

lab report  
a butterfly dithers  
between flowers

Quendryth Young, Alstonville, NSW, AUS

spring fever  
I ride the rails  
to anywhere

Janet Qually, Memphis, TN

child's gift:  
basketful of weeds  
with a few bees

CaroleAnn Lovin, Clearwater, FL

sidewalk flower shop—  
a butterfly ignores  
the traffic lights

Lavana Kray, Iași, Romania

plum blossoms  
a handbag mirror  
on the garden bench

Stella Pierides, Neusaess, Germany

cotton candy  
the taste of a rainbow  
on my tongue

Barbara Tate, Winchester, TN

shaded bench  
covered with lichen  
scent of old roses

Claudia Chapline, Stinson Beach, CA

in the right place  
at the right time  
leaf fall

Simon Hanson, Allendale, SA, AUS

retirement  
a flash of sanderlings turns  
toward the sea

Bruce H. Feingold, Berkeley, CA

ice flowers  
the solstice sun  
rounds a corner

Kim Peter Kovac, Alexandria, VA

sleepwalking  
i bump into the last  
line of the poem

Roman Lyakhovetsky, Maale Adumim, Israel

a rusty knife  
grandfather left me  
without any point

Noel Sloboda, York, PA

changing my mind  
as I go  
stepping stones

Jennifer Sutherland, Victoria, AUS

opening  
a full octave—  
summer rose

Mary Weiler, Baja California Sur, Mexico

he was our father's age  
looking through my closet  
for black layers

Deb Baker, Concord, NH

summer blackout  
a candle swells  
into drips

Edith Muesing-Ellwood, Bushkill, PA

after the burial  
a train's whistle  
through the pines

Maureen Virchau, Elma, NY

snowy night—  
falling silence  
thickens our discord

Padma Thampatty, Wexford, PA

nogoingbumpertobumperalone

autumn duck call hinges in the wind

Joseph Salvatore Aversano, Ankara, Turkey

ash  
wednesday's  
child

Roland Packer, Hamilton, ON

first thaw  
our spades remove  
the end of winter

Marion Clarke, Warrenpoint, N. Ireland

lunch in town  
the waitresses  
a class apart

David Jacobs, London, England

Olympic games—  
on the barroom table  
overlapping wet circles

David Oates, Athens, GA

spider's silk  
the tensile strength  
of dreams

Beverly Acuff Momoi, Mountain View, CA

too close the trees in these woods the truth

Johnnie Johnson Hafernik, San Francisco, CA

the little girl  
whips her doll with a switch  
windless summer day

Brandon Bordelon, Baton Rouge, LA



muffled voices  
from the confessional  
shadows on the wall

Mary Frederick Ahearn, Pottstown, PA

thuds echo  
under thickened pond ice  
the dead of winter

Nathan Renie, Chicago, IL

winter rain . . .  
all the stories  
in the button jar

Claire Everett, North Yorkshire, England

firefly flashes    the distance    of narrative

Aubrie Cox, Taylorville, IL

Pebbles shaken out  
of worn walking shoes—  
pondering the worth of truth

Rebecca Lilly, Charlottesville, VA

the postman's routine  
on icy steps  
white envelopes flutter

Stuart Walker, Sapporo, Japan

a butterfly's  
erratic path  
my day unpinned

Andrew Shattuck McBride, Bellingham, WA

summer rain  
the girls run out  
of hair to braid

bare branches  
a gravedigger whistles down  
the sun

John McManus, Carlisle, Cumbria, England

into the future  
the great blue heron's  
widespread wings

Anne L.B. Davidson, Saco, ME

## International Exchange Poets of the Bulgarian Haiku Union

With this edition of *Frogpond* we continue our international outreach to sister haiku organizations. Zornitza Harizanova, secretary of the Bulgarian Haiku Union, sends the following selection of poems by their members, along with her own English translations that I have helped to polish. In exchange, a selection of haiku by HSA members will appear in an upcoming issue of the BHU journal, *Haiku Svyat* (“Haiku World”).

~David Lanoue, President, HSA

Дъждовна утрин.  
Безнадеждно забива  
интернетът.

Rainy morning.  
The Internet  
hopelessly lags.

Elisaveta Shapkareva

Година на змията.  
Татуировката ѝ  
сменя кожата си.

Year of the Snake.  
Her tattoo  
sheds its skin.

Dilyana Georgieva

*VI Autumn Saloon of Poetry, 2013*

Стар бележник.  
Всички имена имат  
един адрес.

An old notebook.  
All the names  
the same address.

Dimitrina Gancheva

*Haiku Svyat* (“Haiku World”) Vol. 1, 2013

Зимна нощ.  
Улично куче лае  
по снежен човек.

Winter night.  
A stray dog barks  
at a snowman.

Zornitza Harizanova

*Hungarian Anthology of Bulgarian Haiku: Different Silence, 2012*

езеро с лотоси  
няма място  
за луната

lotus-covered lake  
no room  
for the moon

Lucy Hristova  
VI National Haiku Contest for Haiku on Free Topic, 2013

През листата  
на сливата—  
зелено слънце.

Through the leaves  
of the plum tree—  
a green sun.

Antonina Karalambeva  
*Haiku Svyat* (“Haiku World”) Vol. 1, 2013

Две рижии опашки  
се люшкат едновременно.  
Момиче на кон.

Two red-haired tails  
sway simultaneously.  
Girl on horseback.

Stanka Boneva  
*Literaturen Glas* (“Voice of Literature”), 2013

Любовна нощ.  
Блуждаят по тавана  
светлини от късни фарове.

Night of love.  
Reflections of headlights  
wander the ceiling.

Alexandra Ivoylova  
*Hungarian Anthology of Bulgarian Haiku: Different Silence*, 2012

Стопиха се  
границите на хоризонта.  
Гледа ме око на гларус.

the horizon’s line  
has melted away  
a seagull’s eye holds me

Sofia Filipova  
*Otglasi* (“Echoes”) Poetic Dialogues Between A. Ivoylova and  
Sofia Filipova, 2009

# Rengay

## A Door Slightly Open

William Hart, Montrose, CA

*Victor Ortiz, San Pedro, CA*

leaving a dream  
to close the window  
on a chill breeze

*a ripe persimmon  
drops into the sea*

a child's clap  
lifts the crows  
onto a bare bough

*autumn dusk  
his heart tattoo  
begins to sag*

after this rolling poker game  
is peace the prize

*a door  
slightly open  
the Milky Way*

**These Old Stones**

Garry Gay, Santa Rosa, CA  
*Carolyn Hall, San Francisco, CA*

dead seas  
on the distant moon . . .  
my dark winter dreams

*the figure skater leaves behind  
infinity signs*

these old stones  
do they know  
immortality

*lifting mist  
the Grand Canyon  
reveals its strata*

once a dense forest  
petrified trees

*Ice Age mammoth  
should we clone  
its DNA?*

**déjà vu**

Angela J. Naccarato, Vancouver, BC

*Johnny Baranski, Vancouver, WA*

during the darkest  
part of the year—  
blue jay

*mountain switchbacks  
flying blind*

wild ash berries  
hooded in snow  
black moon rising

*something magical  
lights the stone lantern  
rice wine*

a lull in the wind  
déjà vu

*shooting stars  
in the hour before dawn  
the silence*

## Autumn Dreams

John Thompson, Santa Rosa, CA

*Renée Owen, Sebastopol, CA*

hovering  
in wind-orchestrated reeds  
blue dragonflies

*pine-scented shade  
last of the wild azalea*

making me homesick  
for autumn colors—  
poison oak

*what did I do  
to deserve this gold  
harvest moon*

the wick's ember glow  
as he blows out its flame

*smoky dawn  
the remnants of my dream  
on the leaf-strewn pond*



## Partial Eclipse

Phyllis Lee, Sebring, OH

*Julie Warther, Dover, OH*

anniversary  
I buy back my red dress  
from Goodwill

*additions to the menu—  
we still make the same choices*

sky one shade of gray  
the fortune teller told me  
I'd marry him

*partial eclipse . . .  
not exactly how  
it was supposed to be*

stargazing  
he reaches for my hand

*thrill of recognition  
we find the one constellation  
we know*

## Creak of the Waterwheel

Angela Terry, Lake Forest Park, WA

Julie Warther, Dover, OH

Cara Holman, Portland, OR

a puddle of lamplight . . . the stories he told	Angela
weaving soaked reeds through the basket's ribs	Julie
persimmon slices drying on the kitchen counter early winter	Cara
cutting out biscuits with crinkled edges	Angela
flour mill . . . the slow creak of the waterwheel	Julie
grandma's ring encircling my finger	Cara

## Haiku Sequences

“J”

paul m., Bristol, RI

polar vortex  
the shaved back  
of a rescue dog

daffodil tips  
the tension  
in her leash

walking side by side  
some give  
in the frozen lawn

a new girl  
in my bed  
rescue dog

spring evening  
the dog marks  
another spot

star field  
the dog's nose  
in each recycling bin

off-leash  
for the final yards home  
remaining snow

all the thief left  
on the kitchen counter  
pale moonlight

## Lithography

Scott Mason, Chappaqua, NY

sun returns  
to the intihuatana:  
a lost city found

depositing gold  
desert light  
on the Khazneh

a tropical plain  
Pagan Kingdom pagodas  
pierce the haze

dream time:  
Uluru's red glow  
slowly dims

Notre-Dame de Chartres  
from the Dark Ages  
starlight arrives

### Notes:

intihuatana—the “Hitching Post of the Sun,” a ceremonial Incan stone pillar; one of the few surviving examples can be found at Machu Picchu in Peru

Khazneh—the “Treasury” building (actually a royal tomb) cut from rock in the Nabatean city of Petra in modern-day Jordan

Kingdom of Pagan—the first Kingdom (dating back a millennium) to unify the regions that would later constitute modern-day Burma

Uluru—aboriginal name for Ayers Rock located near the geographic center of Australia

Dreamtime—basis of the creation myth of Australia's aboriginal people

## Colosseum

Fay Aoyagi, San Francisco, CA

low winter sky  
hoofbeats approaching  
from behind

audio-guided tour  
I switch to  
the Empire's frequency

beneath winter moss  
the vestige  
of a lion's growl

winter drizzle  
a warrior impersonator  
smokes a cigarette

a glass of Chianti  
for the winter moon  
I power off my tablet

## **Last Ski of the Season**

Marcyn Del Clements, Claremont, CA

spring skiing  
my tips cross uncross  
I am seal

young boarders clutter  
the exit from the chair lift  
elephants in snow

sun melting  
ice on the slope—  
a flying giraffe

last ski  
browning snow on the runs  
penguins driving home

(After reading Paul Miller's essay, "Haiku's American Frontier," *Frog-pond* 35:1, Winter 2012.)

## **Ties That Bind**

Michele L. Harvey, Hamilton, NY

red roses . . .  
mother's belief  
in corporal punishment

a second lie  
to cover the first  
gully snow

giving up  
on being understood . . .  
small clouds dot the sky

puddle ice  
I'm asked to write  
the eulogy

wild violets  
the color  
of forgiveness

## On a Siding

Cor van den Heuvel, New York, NY

keeping me company  
as I walk back from the bar  
my cigar and the moon

winter hallway  
a spark leaps from the key  
into the keyhole

the short story takes me  
onto a lantern-lit gondola  
on a dark night in Venice

our train passes through  
a small town the last picture  
show's letting out

from a jukebox through  
the screen door of the roadhouse  
"Take Me Back to Tulsa"

sheet lightning  
a freight car on a siding  
in North Dakota



# Renku

## Radiant Sunrise

### A Triparshva Renku

Richard St. Clair, Cambridge, MA

Tzetzka Ilieva, Marietta, GA

Elizabeth McFarland, Karlsruhe, Germany

#### *Side 1 - jo*

fresh snow everywhere  
a radiant sunrise  
fills the stadium

Richard

steaming earl grey  
in a styrofoam cup

Tzetzka

an invitation  
to the captain's table  
but what's the dress code?

Elizabeth

bobblehead him and her  
atop the wedding cake

Richard

faster and faster  
the pinwheels spin  
for no one but the moon

Tzetzka

a flying leap  
and into the dream!

Elizabeth

*Side 2 - ha*

telling tall tales  
the camp counselor  
holds a frightened kid

Richard

wet irises  
stashed in the car trunk

Tzetzka

how those ants  
completely ignore  
the neat Zen paths!

Elizabeth

whistling a happy tune  
on the chain gang

Richard

he is the only man  
who makes me feel  
like a schoolgirl

Tzetzka

bone china crashes  
to the back of the skip

Elizabeth

the rattling on  
of the auctioneer's call  
at sundown

Richard

near the full moon,  
Uranus' cyan face

Tzetzka

with a tiny sigh  
the puffball sets free  
its cloud of spores

Elizabeth

only busy signals  
on the crisis hotline

Richard

*Side 3 - kyū*

last on our list—  
those battery packs  
will come in handy

Tzetzka

dulse on the beach  
and a mermaid's purse

Elizabeth

thumbing for a ride  
his hip-length ponytail  
a no-no

Richard

out of the haze—  
a cardinal's love song

Tzetzka

like a benediction  
overflowing blossoms  
on the cherry tree

Elizabeth

the trickling rill has grown  
to a babbling brook

Richard

# Tan Renga

Kathe L. Palka, Flemington, NJ  
*Peter Newton, Winchendon, MA*

from the heart  
of the gorge  
river song

*an old poem  
fills me with silence*

Ron C. Moss, Tasmania, AUS  
*John Stevenson, Nassua, NY*

tunnel of love  
the bearded lady gets shot  
from a cannon

*Tom Thumb  
all thumbs*

# Haibun

## @ Restaurant Nora

Roberta Beary, Bethesda, MD

My friend Yuriko unpeels an orange in one fluid motion.  
When my turn comes I use a knife. I am left holding an orange  
jigsaw of jagged pieces.

Yuriko tells me this is bad luck. A great misfortune will befall  
me she warns.

Yuri's English can be rather formal.

Sometimes.

A few years later my husband divorces me, moves to Japan,  
and marries her.

Yuriko.

She got the misfortune part right.

blood moon  
half my name  
in katakana

## Shared Custody

Tom Painting, Atlanta, GA

I'm sure these summer road trips will reside in your memory.  
Long after I'm gone you will recall the experience of new  
places with varied landscapes and perhaps a shred of the con-  
versation that traveled between us in the front seat of the car.

backcountry range of motion

## **Burying Gertrude**

Alanna C. Burke, Santa Fe, NM

My mother, Gertrude, resists the idea of adult diapers, so we stage an impromptu runway show. Erin struts around the assisted living apartment modeling all the latest fashions in diapers on the outside of her tight jeans. Gertrude screams with laughter, but will she accept this latest indignity?

Months after the funeral, when I'm certain that the worst grief is over, I round a corner in the supermarket to encounter a display of Depends. Abandoning my shopping cart, I stumble outside to the parking lot and lean against a stranger's car to keep from falling.

only today the wild rose blossoms

## **Lost and Found**

Adelaide B. Shaw, Millbrook, NY

The pain of loss never goes away permanently. Sometimes remembering brings sadness, sometimes joy, sometimes pain. The realization that so many once in my life are gone pounds like a full-blown migraine. Again, I go through an array of emotions, wishing I had said this or that, done this or that. Father, mother, brother-in-law, people I have known well and those who were only acquaintances. It hurts to remember, but it would hurt more if I forgot, if I tried and couldn't picture my mother smiling as she stitched a dress for me, my father whistling as he made the Christmas dinner, Archie as he smoked his cigar and sipped a scotch, Herman as he sat at a picnic table laughing with my son. The pleasure and the pain.

daffodils  
remembering again  
when to bloom

## Night Fishing

Lew Watts, Santa Fe, NM

It is late afternoon and I am wading in Argentina's Rio Grande, buffeted by an incessant February wind, still hoping for a giant sea trout to seize my fly. I should be enjoying the endless sky and the starkness of a grass horizon, but I cannot stop thinking of my beloved River Teifi in Wales. There too, sea trout return from the sea to spawn, and in a few weeks I will be waiting for them, in March, the month of madness.

The Welsh fish are fickle. They shy away from any sound or hint of light so that we fish for them only at night, in the hours after the pubs have closed, stalking down familiar river banks to pools and riffles, listening for a splash or a swirl. Even a crescent moon is sufficient to create a shadow and many is the hour an angler will wait for a passing cloud before casting to a fish. Yet if the silver gloaming fades to black, I always find myself changing—my pulse slows, my hair no longer stands on end and I seem to become less animal, more human. Perhaps this is why, alone amongst my friends, I prefer the hopeless light of a full moon, doomed to a fishless night but fully alive and alert, with a hunter's eyes and heart.

Soon, I will be heading back to the lodge to watch the sun set, to a plate of beef and a long evening beneath the Southern Cross. With luck, the moon will rise before we sleep.

wild mint—  
two mojitos  
and you are a lamb

**Solace**

George Swede, Toronto, ON

Thoughts escape via fingers and tongue to what they imagine  
are freedom and fortune.

driftwood still wet—  
the sea unseen beyond  
the vast tidal flat

**A Journey's Step**

Wanda D. Cook, Hadley, MA

I watched my boy-child take another step toward manhood  
today as he gripped his uncle's coffin to bear his share of fam-  
ily weight. Yet later from the long black limousine, for one  
quick moment, he turned and flashed a child-like grin at me.  
The important pleasure of riding in such a wondrous car was  
clearly written on his face.

brittle winds  
mushroom barley soup  
thick on my tongue

**Through the Blinds**

J. Zimmerman, Santa Cruz, CA

Missouri summer night and the temperature of the air is the  
temperature of our bodies. In a while we will fall deeply  
asleep but we are watching the full moon paint yellow and  
black tiger stripes that ripple across our bed.

such brilliance  
the moon that will slow one day  
and crash upon us



## Old Bonds

Seren Fargo, Bellingham, WA

Three weeks after his death, she asks if I'm better yet.  
Three months after his death, she tells me to "get over it."  
Three years after his death, I am no longer talking to her,  
and find myself healing on two fronts.

rocky shore  
an exposed hermit crab  
tests out a new shell

## Chiaroscuro, the Magic Box

Carol Pearce-Worthington, New York, NY

In a white wicker box a Brazilian steak house brochure. It is  
from Christmas Eve 2005 . . .

After swimming at a fitness center, we find a high table near  
the window; a waitress brings hors d'oeuvres and we order  
Brazilian beer. The room rustles with winter coats the chime  
of chandeliers the rush and the calls and at the curb limos park  
and go tourists spin through the revolving doors in out bring-  
ing cold taking warmth with them and winter rushes recedes  
returns through the buffet the bar the spun-round chairs and  
tables. He finds the elaborate-expensive menu so pleasing that  
he declares we will return for dinner another time and specu-  
lates until he believes that when this happens—our return—he  
will surely order a Brazilian cowboy steak . . .

Shh. He's sleeping now. The Churrascaria Rodizio brochure  
from 2005 goes back into its place in the white box.

setting aside hope  
we carve a home  
from city snow

## Groundling

Peter Newton, Winchendon, MA

I remain seated as instructed because the plane can take a helluva lot more than the people inside can a pilot told me once at a party and I believed him because he knew all the stats and says the time to worry is at take-off the point when kinetic energy (hurtling down the runway) becomes potential energy (lift-off and steep ascent) that's the point of no return when your engines are rocketing full-throttle you're committed forget that little jump in your gut telling you you're not a bird that's the whole point right then and there when anything can go wrong doesn't.

first date  
a small clutch  
of daffodils

## Name-Calling

Mary Frederick Ahearn, Pottstown, PA

Out of the blue he came to mind and a memory of that long ago winter morning. We were all standing about waiting for the bus, often a hazardous time for kids like me. But that day, for whatever reason or none, it was another's turn.

Whenever his name was called, Billy had the habit of turning a full circle around to face the caller. The boys, delighting in his obsessive, tortured twists and turns, repeated "Hey Billy!" over and over until the bus came. We boarded the bus, some of us laughing, some of us ashamed, and a few of us relieved to have escaped. Billy sat alone.

thin ice  
the cries of wild geese  
falling behind

## Smoking

Ruth Holzer, Herndon, VA

The children are asleep in the back seat as the countryside rolls by, Dad driving, Mom riding shotgun. He's contentedly inhaling. She turns away from the view of hills and fields to let him know that if he only had the sense he was born with he'd stop smoking, it's ruining his health, or at least he could do it for her sake, she can't stand the smell in his hair and on his skin, or he should think of the kids, who'll need him to be around as they grow up, plus there's the cost of his filthy habit, they'd easily save hundreds a year if he'd quit. He continues silently concentrating on the road. Suddenly, she nicks the cigarette from his lips and throws it out of the window. A long spray of glowing ash and it's gone. Then she wrests the pack from his breast pocket and flings that out too. The car veers, soars, and comes to a halt, wheels up in a ditch.

dum-dee-dum  
something something something  
Burma-Shave

## Determining the Magnitude

Deborah P. Kolodji, Temple City, CA

a circle of frogs, mouths open  
waiting for the ball to drop

Newton and inertia, pens on pendulums  
Dr. Jones calls a press conference

dip-slip, strike-slip, oblique-slip  
the house creaks with uncertainty

analysis  
of the fault line . . .  
his side, mine

## Granny

John Stevenson, Nassau, NY

Her death is the death I want. She seemed to simply wear out.  
An hour before, she was laughing with me about how she was  
reaching out for a hallucination. Or was it.

light  
and the question  
of light

## salvation

Cynthia Cechota, Dubuque, IA

some things you can't throw away — my unread  
10-pound  
white leather  
bible  
is sitting high on a closet shelf next to Mother's  
worn out  
blue suede  
dancing shoes.

plastic roses oh to be the lilies of the field

## Logic

John Stevenson, Nassau, NY

It seems to me there's a difference between the pleasure of  
solving one or two Sudoku puzzles in a daily newspaper and  
solving one of many in a pocket book entirely devoted to them.

public beach  
the attention due  
a wave

## Five Mountains

Michael Fessler, Kanagawa, Japan

North Kamakura. Late summer. Cicada drilling away. Technically, *zansho*, or the period of “remaining heat.” I climb the steps to the main entrance of *Engakuji*, or Complete Enlightenment Temple. I’ve been here many times and head toward a large wooden structure, the *Butsuden*, or main hall of the compound.

temple brochure  
a tourist shades her eyes  
against the sun

*Engakuji* is one of the “Five Mountains,” or *Gozan*. Many of the monks during the Kamakura Period wrote *kanshi* (Chinese poetry) here and at the *Gozan* in Kyoto. Their poems focused on what was directly before them. Cold rooms. Mice. Disrupted meditation. There’s a kind of *haikai* humor to these poems. (The *hai* of *haikai*.) A tie-in with the kind of haiku that appeal to me. Ordinary extraordinary.

single leaf  
floating over the water  
in a stone basin

“Separateness is illusion.” I enter the *Butsuden*. The interior is dark and brown. I bow before the statue, as I’ve done many times before, then exit. I go deeper into the temple grounds. Monks chanting. Cicada chanting. Stone lanterns, green and crumbling. I scatter some gravel underfoot, listen to the sound, bow to all things.

pesky mosquitoes  
an important  
cultural property

### Overcorrection

Roberta Beary, Bethesda, MD

At midnight the computer screen freezes and turns blue. The blue screen of death. I think about calling you to come by and fix it. But you are on a journey where no one can reach you. Months later I learn you were trying to pass a truck and swerved. The police report says you tried to overcorrect.

security camera  
the stone path  
out of focus

### Starlight

Susan B. Auld, Arlington Heights, IL

After the news of my brother's illness I walk in and out of the tunnels of my father's death, my mother's. Outside my window a moonless January night shades snowy pines. Through the clouds an occasional star beats a trace rhythm—barely holds the sky together, barely keeps the night from snuffing out all the light. When we were children we wished upon these stars . . .

winter garden—  
the sound of pages  
turning in an old book

## Colloquy

Matthew Caretti, Mercersburg, PA

What is it that compels us to contend with ourselves  
to contend with the world?

*Love calls us to battle at this time to inspire  
in this place and to be peace.*

What is it that makes us run toward elusive horizons  
run toward places and persons unknown?

*To love is to perceive our true self to realize  
perfection in this realm.*

What is it, this love we soon define as our own  
now define as our source?

*To attain this love has become living has become  
for many life itself.*

one voice still following its echo

## Tween

Jeremy Pendrey, Walnut Creek, CA

The report card looks good. Very good. But still I knock and enter her room and after perfunctory congratulations start in about effort and commitment and doing even better. She turns her back to me. When I finish speaking she turns toward me and says “You still here?”

kleenex flower—  
putting the kids to bed  
over the phone

## To a New Bride from Her Mother-in-Law

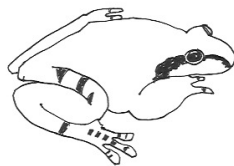
Sharon Lask Munson, Eugene, OR

My dear, I must advise, we invite friends *to* dinner, not *for* dinner. At formal parties, use white linen. Colorful cotton is too casual. Placemats are best left for breakfast or lunch. When setting the table, choose a low centerpiece. One suggestion would be heads of white hydrangeas spilling from a shallow bowl. Of course, these considerations are seasonal.

When shopping for beef, ring for the butcher. He will cut your roast to order. As to side dishes, be aware of freshness and color. Never serve tinned; frozen, only in an emergency. Include a green vegetable with every evening meal. A second offering might be a corn soufflé, orange yams stuffed with mixed fruit, or a dish of garden beets. You'll be surprised at how many people think they dislike beets, but in a fragrant and colorful sauce, the crimson-colored root will have most guests coming back for more.

After dinner, lead your guests into the front room. End the meal with hot tea around the fireplace. Serve lemon slices with a light Darjeeling or smooth Earl Grey. You may also offer the choice of cream with a hearty Assam if serving fish or dairy. Buy a sturdy brass tea trolley with a glass top. Fine china sparkles on glass.

one perfect pear  
on crystal  
autumn's reflection





## Essays

### Word Choice in English-Language Haiku: The Use of Foreign Words

David Grayson, Alameda, CA

As befits such a short form, word choice is of capital importance in haiku. As a haiku poet explores the best words for a poem, it's not surprising that occasionally he or she will land upon a non-English word. Sometimes a poet will determine that a foreign word better conveys the intended meaning than an English one, or perhaps adds an association that English cannot. In a world where cross-fertilization between languages is commonplace, haiku poets can turn to an expanded poetic "inventory" to create their work.

Not surprisingly, one topic in which other languages are used is travel. These two haiku, from the quartet "Four Rome Haiku" by Dietmar Tauchner, are examples:<sup>1</sup>

*curia*  
the constant chatter  
of tourist tongues

a downpour  
cleans the *via del corso*  
of people

The Italian words in these haiku instantly transport the reader to the city of Rome. It's important to note that the words that Tauchner chooses to retain in Italian are Italian-specific. The *Via del Corso* is a historic thoroughfare in central Rome; *curia* refers to the organization of the Vatican. These unique local terms help draw the reader into the experience.

Ash Wednesday—  
carrying a *retablo*  
through the pelting rain<sup>2</sup>

In this poem by Patricia Machmiller, the word *retablo* (a Latin American term referring to a small religious painting, often used in home altars)<sup>3</sup> roots the haiku in a place. It evokes a cultural event for the reader. If Machmiller had substituted an English word for the original Spanish, the haiku would not be as effective. A close equivalent in English (“reredos”) is derived from the Latin and is too formal; there is no colloquial counterpart. A more informal phrase, for instance “religious altar painting,” would be unwieldy.

In all three examples, it’s clear how important sound is in the experience of a poem. These words stand out because their sounds are so distinct from those of English. This quality helps to remove the reader from his or her local environment and jar them into another world.

Beyond subjects like travel and culture, a non-English word can add a layer of meaning to any subject, as in this poem by Bill Kenney:

*la petite mort . . .*  
as though I could  
live forever<sup>4</sup>

The French phrase is literally translated as “the little death,” but, as many readers know, refers to an orgasm. The phrase is the linchpin of the poem: it sets the rhythm in place and confers a playfulness. If Kenney had instead used the English “orgasm,” the poem would not be as lighthearted. Moreover, *la petite mort* adds an association that the English counterparts do not. The literal meaning of “mort” is death. Behind the light tone of the haiku stands an allusion to the cycle of sex, birth, and death.

English-language haiku can also accommodate words from languages with non-Latin scripts. However, inserting language with a different script or alphabet is risky as it can prove a disruptive experience. An English speaker can readily research a word in a language with a Latin-based alphabet. It’s more difficult to do so for a word with a different

character set. Languages that are written from right to left (Arabic and Hebrew, for instance) will require a layout that can accommodate bidirectional text.

However, judiciously used, words from such languages can be useful, as in Lee Gurga's haiku:<sup>5</sup>

*Θάλαττα! θάλαττα!*  
we patter around the deck  
in fair trade sandals

*("The sea! The sea!" after Xenophon)*

slow motion rollers  
caress the glacial shore  
ἰκτῆ ἠ εὐρυτῆ

*("icy and eager," from Beowulf)*

Gurga borrows phrases from classical work in Ancient Greek and Old English<sup>6</sup> to throw relief upon our relationship with the sea. The first is a famous quote from *Anabasis*, when a re-treating Greek army arrives to safety at the shore of the Black Sea. From *Beowulf*, the second quote is part of a description of the funeral of the king, Shield Sheafson. In both poems, the immortality of the sea is contrasted with mortal humanity. In the first poem, the tone is humorous: the smallness of people and their concerns is represented by "patter" and "fair trade sandals." In the second, the tone is sober. The body of the deceased king is sent off in a ship to drift on the sea. The vessel that holds the king's body is characterized as "icy" (which indicates the season) and "eager." Despite the fact that the boat is laden with treasure and gear, the Beowulf narrator reflects that no one knows "who salvaged that load."<sup>7</sup> In each case, the Greek or Old English reinforces the distinction between us and the unknowable oceans. The non-Latin scripts make the words seem remote and impenetrable. The antiquity of the two languages also underscores the passing of time.

Although not using a Latin-based script, Japanese represents a special case for haiku poets.<sup>8</sup>

after the ginko—  
still there, all the things  
I never noticed<sup>9</sup>

Most haiku poets know the meaning of the term *ginkō* (a haiku walk), and over time the word probably sheds some of its “foreign-ness” to our specialized community. But there is no direct counterpart in English. A word like “stroll” might be a usable ingredient, but it would not match the precise meaning that Carlos Colón intends. In contrast to a recreational stroll or walk, the *ginkō* is a practice with an explicit aim: to encourage the process of “noticing” and writing.

Over time many Japanese terms have migrated into English and become part of the language. They cover many aspects of life, including religion, the arts, cuisine, and sports.

vintage kimono  
my seams unraveling  
this perfect life<sup>10</sup>

The use of “kimono” in this poem by Renée Owen raises a question: what defines a word as English? Where is the border between English and non-English words? As a word becomes prevalent in English usage, at what point does it become an English word? A formal solution would be to declare that a word has to be present in an authoritative resource (say, the *Oxford English Dictionary*) for it to be accepted as English. But, of course, some words used in the United States are not used in the United Kingdom, not to mention other Anglophone countries.

For a writer, a strict ruling on a word may not be useful. A “borderline” word (one that retains an association with the original language but is becoming common in English) may be used effectively as a foreign word even if it’s also recognized as an English one.

slow down  
mañana still  
under construction<sup>11</sup>

“Mañana” is an example of a word that has made its way into English but is still closely associated with Spanish. The word’s sounds are distinctly Spanish (for instance, the “eñe”) and have not been Anglicized. This quality aids the word’s centrality in the poem by Lauren Camp. In this poem, “mañana” acts like a Spanish, not an English, word.

This poem also shows one of the pitfalls of resorting to a foreign word. If “mañana” is replaced with “tomorrow,” the tone and meaning change little. The word “mañana” is typically used in informal slang and speech; it often implies slowing down. But this is not the overall tone of this haiku, and “tomorrow” seems as fitting a choice. In this case, the non-English word does not add much more value.

There can be significant benefits to using foreign words. A haiku is rooted in a specific time and place—and a foreign term or *kigo* can authentically reflect this. Similarly, a foreign language term may be better suited to a haiku or senryu with a cultural theme. Also, a non-English word may convey a sentiment or feeling that is distinct from its English counterpart. Finally, foreign vocabulary can add another layer of experience onto a haiku, and encourage readers to learn more beyond the poem.

Despite all of these benefits, the use of foreign terms also presents challenges. Non-English terms can be poor surrogates for English ones that are more concrete. Misused, the practice may be seen as a cliché or a device to salvage an otherwise unsuccessful poem. It’s easy for foreign words to seem out of place and to be disruptive and confusing—distracting the reader from the whole poem.

As global travel and cross-border migrations continue to grow, and people of diverse cultures interact with greater

frequency, it seems likely that the prevalence of multilingual vocabulary in haiku will only increase. Like any formal practice, the use of multilingual vocabulary offers opportunities and pitfalls to the poet. An awareness of these will help poets produce original and meaningful work.

### Notes

1. Dietmar Tauchner, from “Four Rome Haiku,” in *Modern Haiku* 41.1 (winter-spring 2010), 86.
2. Patricia Machmiller, in *Mariposa* 10 (Spring/Summer 2004), 7.
3. Ibid. Machmiller defines “retablo” as “Mexican folk art. A small religious painting on tin, originally used to decorate home altars.”
4. Bill Kenney, in *Modern Haiku* 42.3 (autumn 2011), 12.
5. Lee Gurga, in *Modern Haiku* 44.2 (summer 2013), 33.
6. Although a precursor to Modern English, Old English is sufficiently different so as to be considered a foreign language.
7. *Beowulf: A New Verse Translation*. Seamus Heaney, ed. (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2000), 5. In the Heaney version, “icy and eager” is translated as “ice-clad, outbound” (5). I used “icy and eager” because of Gurga’s reference.
8. A Latin-based script for Japanese does exist (*rōmaji*), which can make the language more accessible to Western readers. However, *rōmaji* is mainly used for non-Japanese speakers and learners.
9. Carlos Colón, in *Frogpond* 34:1 (Winter 2011), 30.
10. Renée Owen, in *Frogpond* 34:1 (Winter 2011), 30.
11. Lauren Camp, in Matthew Chase-Daniel & Jerry Wellman, “Axle Contemporary’s Haiku Roadsign Project” [photo-essay], *Frogpond* 35:1 (Winter 2012), 139.



*David Grayson’s haiku and essays have been published widely in haiku journals. He was featured in A New Resonance 6: Emerging Voices in English-Language Haiku.*

## Santōka: Taking a Second Look

Marian Olson, Santa Fe, NM

I can't give up sakè;  
The budding trees,  
The budding grasses.

Verse 242, from *Mountain Tasting, Zen Haiku* by Santōka Taneda<sup>1</sup>

I almost passed up this poem in John Stevens's venerable collection of Santōka's work, as one often does when nothing much seems to connect. Then I stopped myself. If the haiku were so prosaic and inconsequential, why would Stevens have bothered to include it? He had a plethora of the poet's verses from which to choose, and yet he chose to include this haiku.

The question is why?

A little background may lend some insight. To begin, Santōka is honored today as a great Zen master as well as a great haiku poet who chose the life of a beggar priest. In his day, however, Santōka Taneda alienated many of his literary contemporaries who scorned him because of his disruptive behavior incited by his intemperate consumption of sakè. However, since his death in 1940 at the age of fifty-eight, his poetic reputation has soared. Among lay people, poets, and scholars East and West he is respected for his Zen haiku with its focus on the unadorned, straightforward, and impermanent. While these qualities can be found in all true Zen haiku, they are not mere conventions with Santōka. In contrast to the popular poetry that was being written by the majority of his peers, his haiku were not dalliances. They mirrored a life of eccentricities, vulnerabilities, and excessive drinking. Thus, in all ways, it is virtually impossible to separate the man from his poetry.

Long before undertaking his mendicant Zen pilgrimages, Santōka's life was plagued with tragedies that left him bruised

with multiple heartaches. His young mother committed suicide. The sight of her corpse being lifted from the well of their home left a deep scar in his ten-year-old psyche. In his early twenties he was already smitten with sakè and had become its slave. In his late thirties, the marriage to his one and only wife failed. He was unsuccessful in business after business. High-strung by nature, he struggled with several mental breakdowns and attempted suicides, the most dramatic being the day he stood on the railroad tracks of an oncoming train. Fortunately, the conductor saw him and was able to stop the train before it killed Santōka. Following this attempted suicide, he found shelter in a nearby Zen temple. In its sanctity, he refocused his life and became an ordained Zen priest.

By the time he was forty-three, he chose to leave monastic life as well as the acolytes who were half his age and devote himself exclusively to a life without material and emotional commitments. While walking the countryside with his begging bowl and writing tablet, he recorded his journey in prose, as well as in haiku, a poetic form that had become an integral part of his spiritual diary. During this period, he wrote 242. Knowing this about him, I was challenged by 242 and how to interpret it. Not only disjunctive, it reads like a wounded man's cry.

By nature sensitive as a leaf on a tree in the wind, and as fragile, he cries, "I can't give up sakè." He doesn't say he won't give up the powerful rice wine, or even that he wants to give it up, he says, "I can't." Can't? Why not? Clearly, Santōka suffered from alcoholism, a chronic, debilitating disease. The fact is that Santōka didn't consider the potent wine his nemesis or undoing. It was as essential to him as the air he breathed, a holy substance. He wrote in his diary

Sakè for the body, haiku for the heart;  
Sakè is the haiku of the body,  
Haiku is the sakè of the heart.<sup>2</sup>

But what does Santōka's love of sakè have to do with the budding of early spring? Therein lies the key. Sakè makes him



feel renewed, alive. Lines 2 and 3 tell us that it is the time of year when branches still look naked and the fields look sere. Yet energy is ready to explode into the bright greens of new leaves and fields. It is still too early for the myriad perfumes and abundant blossoms that will come later. Right now, though, winter is retreating, and spring power pushes, ready to burst open and fill the trees and fields with the dance of life. But Santōka, a middle-aged man in the midst of this nascent awakening, is not dancing, not without his cherished wine.

Day after day and year after year without family or friends as traveling companions to undergird him, Santōka walked the coastline into the mountains and through the countryside, free of all worldly encumbrance and attachments. That is not to say he did not have friends. He did. He often met up with them when stopping for an evening in their villages to share poetry, and, of course, drink the fermented rice wine. If he did stay for a few days with this friend or that, he soon grew restless and left, driven to resume his spiritual journey. His commitment was to the way of Zen, the begging bowl, and writing haiku. His intention was clear: live in the present moment and eschew bonds with people or anything that restricted his spiritual path.

Simply clothed in a robe, straw sandals, and a large straw hat to shield him as much as possible from the harsh elements, he traveled on foot every day ten miles or so with his walking stick and begging bowl until he gathered just enough coins—no more, no less—to pay for the cheapest of inns where he could buy a simple meal and some rice wine before settling in to write his haiku verses and musings of the day. Mornings, he bathed and had a meager breakfast before resuming his journey to rid himself of self with all its judgments of good and bad, true or false. His goal was to be free as the wind, clouds, or running water, an absolute goal impossible to attain, but one he pursued to the end of his life.

Being a true intuitive, Santōka says, “Clear or cloudy I compose each verse in a state of body and mind cast off.”<sup>3</sup> He used everyday language when writing his haiku, no allusions, no traditional form, only simple and transparent lines. What he

saw and experienced he wrote down. The rice wine appears to mitigate his loneliness and emotional pain caused by all the failures in his life. This haiku encapsulates his state of mind, recognizing the tension of opposites that coexist in his world. Had he tried to analyze the complexity of his life and then compose his haiku, he would never have written these three short lines, for they come from this instinctive inner source rather than a rational one. Not only do we see the landscape, we feel winter versus spring and the feebleness of age versus the energy of youth—or that which pushes against restraint like an active volcano soon to break free of dormancy and erupt in unrestrained flow—or as he states it, in the budding of trees and grasses. The acknowledgement of his life in the midst of a world awakening to the blood pulse of spring imbues 242 with power.

I can't give up sakè;  
The budding trees,  
The budding grasses.

### Notes

1. *Mountain Tasting: Zen Haiku* by Santōka Taneda, translated and introduced by John Stevens (New York and Tokyo: Weatherhill Press, 1980), 92.
2. *Ibid.*, 26.
3. *Ibid.*, 25.



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## Haiku and War<sup>1</sup>

Paul Miller, Bristol, RI

Part one of this essay, published in *Frogpond* 37:1, outlined the landscape of war haiku. I looked at its history, who was writing it, pointed out some major themes, and speculated upon why such poets might choose haiku over other genres. Finally I looked at haiku that referenced particular conflicts and suggested that such haiku might be useful in building a vertical axis.

In the concluding part of this essay, I will make a distinction between haiku written by participants in war and those written by outside commentators to see if there is any important difference. I will explore haiku that take a moral stand, examine the idea of authenticity in war haiku, and conclude with concerns about historical revision.

### Commentators

In part one of this essay I didn't make a differentiation between poems written by participants in the various conflicts and those written by commentators. In fact, most of the poems presented in part one were written by actual participants: either combatants or those physically affected by war as either civilians in a war zone or as refugees. However, there is a large population of war haiku written by commentators. In the United States, the number of haiku by commentators far outweighs the haiku of actual participants.

Haiku by commentators can be found in any number of places. The first poems I'd like to look at come from the Internet: in particular, several anti-war haiku walls. As would be expected, the quality isn't always very high.

diarrhea, cholera  
a humanitarian gift  
to Iraqi children

Daniel<sup>2</sup>

What wise forefathers  
once gave, Gucci-loafered faux  
fathers take away.

libbyliberalnyc<sup>3</sup>

Poetry walls are websites established for specific purposes. For example, the webpage “100 Thousand Poets for Change” collects poems by poets “to create serious social and political change.” Such sites are essentially participatory blogs, and the posters are more known for their dedication to a cause than for their poetry. Frankly, the quality of the poetry doesn’t seem to be the point. These sites are really a place for people to give voice to their opinions.

The first poem cited above comes from Serge Tomé’s website *temps libres*. The site is undoubtedly the largest and most diverse depository of online English-language war haiku. It covers a variety of wars and has an especially large selection on the wars in the former Yugoslavia. And while most of those web pages related to specific conflicts contain more literary haiku, this one is from the generic “Anti War Haiku Wall.”

Like most haiku wall poems, it can be dismissed as poetry designed for a bumper sticker. While haiku wall poems can be effective commentary, they are usually lectures and violate the “Show Don’t Tell” rule of haiku. In fact, they are often not haiku, or at best they are poor quality haiku. We know they concern a specific war only because the name of the wall tells us so.

Poor quality anti-war haiku are not, however, isolated to haiku walls. Anthologies can suffer the same fate when editors value message over poetry, as in these two haiku from the recent *Kamesan’s World Haiku Anthology on War, Violence, and Human Rights Violation*.

After a war  
a man with one leg  
is he a hero?

Karunush Kumar Agrawal<sup>4</sup>

Human rights my arse  
If good for America  
Then by all means yes

Tomas O Carthaigh<sup>5</sup>

These examples notwithstanding, in the main, haiku by commentators are of a high standard. One from the aforementioned anthology and a second from *The Gulf Within*, an anthology of Gulf War haiku edited by Christopher Herold and Michael Dylan Welch:

spring dewdrops  
cling to a blade of grass—  
Iraqi children

Chen-ou Liu<sup>6</sup>

talking to the tree  
outside the window  
about rain, about the war

Marlina Rinzen<sup>7</sup>

As would be expected, many commentators' haiku fall thematically into some of the categories discussed in part one of this essay. Most concern the subject of waste: usually the waste of human life. However, there are some themes that seem solely existent among commentators. I'd like to point out a few.

One theme is the overall reach of war, how it has expanded from the battlefield into the everyday civilian landscape, especially in this age of twenty-four-hour news—and there seems to be no escaping it.

the latest war news  
I drink my whiskey  
straight

Carla Sari<sup>8</sup>

on every channel—  
a scud attack  
in my living room

Garry Gay<sup>9</sup>

Another theme is the powerlessness that many poets feel.

fall leaves  
burying toy soldiers  
her small son

Fonda Bell Miller<sup>10</sup>

Parakeet  
locked in a cage  
with the war news

vincent tripi<sup>11</sup>

Some poems illustrate a distrust or suspicion of government leaders—another form of powerlessness, but directed toward governments, and in some cases describing a segregation of those in power from those outside.

parting clouds reveal  
a full Snow Moon—  
the president's war speech

Barry George<sup>12</sup>

groups of schoolchildren  
entrance to the parliament  
by reservation

Hanne Hansen<sup>13</sup>

Some express hope, either for an end to conflict, or simply for peace of some kind. The hammer and chisel in the following haiku by Gerd Börner refer to the coming down of the Berlin Wall.

bright November—  
the ring  
of hammer and chisel

Gerd Börner<sup>14</sup>

long winter of wars  
yet still we kneel  
. . . crocus in the snow

Evelyn Lang<sup>15</sup>

Additionally, some express sympathy with troops overseas, as in the following haiku by Adele Kenny; and some protest war, as in Ruth Yarrow's.

moonless night—  
in the streetlamp's brightness  
a yellow ribbon

Adele Kenny<sup>16</sup>

I send a fax  
protesting the bombing  
pages come out hot

Ruth Yarrow<sup>17</sup>

Something to note: most commentator haiku are not disguised as participant haiku, meaning that most of these poets write about the war honestly from the sidelines. They don't pretend to be in a war zone. They write about their concerns and the effect the war has upon them—at home. Of course, there are exceptions, which we'll review later.

### **Morality**

Most haiku on the subject of war don't reach into the larger question of a war's rightness or wrongness. However, some haiku do take a stand and present a moral perspective. Consider the following poem from Ruth Yarrow, an anti-war activist:

against the wind  
we hold the peace banner—  
our spines straighten<sup>18</sup>

Morality aside, Yarrow's haiku is technically excellent. On the surface the peace activists are fighting to keep the wind from blowing down their banner; but they also stiffen their spines against the metaphorical wind of public opinion, power brokers, or the military industrial complex. There is, however, no doubting her message. She is against war.

However, haiku poets have not always been of the same mindset, as seen in the following pro-war haiku written in reference to Japan's 1942 capture of Singapore.

Nation victorious: with cold smoke high the train departs

Yamaguchi Seishi<sup>19</sup>

Public opposition—poetic or otherwise—to the Japanese expansion in World War II was a dangerous risk to a Japanese citizen. Yet as Hiroaki Sato explains in his essay, “Wartime Haiku,” to suggest that most poets were against the war would be a mistake.

the majority were for it. Following the darkening atmosphere of the 1930s when Japan's military adventure . . . got nowhere in China and the world's criticism of Japan mounted, the Japanese experienced a collective sense of liberation and intoxication when their army and navy simultaneously attacked the United States, the Netherlands, and Great Britain toward the end of 1941 and won a string of victories.<sup>20</sup>

A prime example of this nationalism comes from Kyoshi Takahama, poetic heir to Shiki and editor of the influential journal *Hototogisu*. In 1928, at the start of the Second Sino-Japanese War, he wrote a series of haiku with the title “Conquering Singapore.” During World War II he served as president of the Haiku Branch of the Japanese Literary Patriotic Organization and wrote what are known as “Holy War” haiku. However, since these wars ended in defeat for Japan, many such nationalistic poems were destroyed or conveniently forgotten. Itō Yūki, in the *Simply Haiku* article “Forgive but Do Not Forget,” references the difficulty he had finding copies of “Holy War” haiku, and was shocked that in the fifteen-volume *Collected Works* of



Kyoshi, and in virtually all other books on this “haiku saint,” his war haiku are either ignored or rarely mentioned.<sup>21</sup> Similarly, Seishi’s poem, cited earlier, was also excluded from his translated collected works.

It is not surprising that years after the war many poets would try to downplay their support. A question that has to be asked, however, is what would be collected today had the Japanese military effort been successful, and Japan had exported its culture to Southeast Asia and the South Pacific? Would those same poets, who now refute their wartime poetry, be singing a different tune?

In hindsight it is easy to cynically view such nationalistic poetry as Kyoshi’s and Seishi’s (and thousands of others) as a result of blind nationalistic enthusiasm, or naiveté concerning the effects of war. We must be careful at this point not to impose our current morality on different times, and also, and perhaps more importantly, to realize that there is no absolute morality. For example: some have successfully argued for the achievements of the Roman and British empires—despite the heavy toll they often took on native populations. I’m reminded of a Monty Python sketch from the film *Life of Brian*, in which the People’s Front of Judea—listing their grievances against Roman occupation—humorously end up with:

apart from the sanitation, medicine, education, wine, public order,  
irrigation, roads, the fresh water system and public health, what  
have the Romans ever done for us?<sup>22</sup>

Indeed, we do well to remember that the American Revolution can also be viewed as a nationalist movement. Perhaps had haiku been available to the colonists, we’d have today established *kigo* such as “tea tax day” or “Bunker Hill.” We tend to look through a colored lens at that “justified” conflict, yet it included atrocities perpetrated by revolutionaries that are the equal of those in any other war.

As we’ll see later, there is a subset of war haiku that deal with the dropping of the atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

In some cases the haiku take the moral stance that the dropping of the bombs was a crime against humanity. Yet it can be persuasively argued that the bombs ended the war with fewer casualties on both sides than had the U.S. had to attack the Japanese mainland.

A similar moral complexity may be present in Robert D. Wilson's and Ty Hadman's haiku on Vietnam, seen in part one of this essay, which make the case that American involvement was morally wrong. However, the Dalai Lama's comment justifying the Korean War as a vehicle promoting democracy, also seen in part one, might suggest otherwise. Additionally, in relation to haiku opposing more recent wars, you can surely find Shia in Iraq and women in Afghanistan who welcomed America's military intervention.

I bring up the murky question of morality, not to dissuade anyone from writing war haiku that take a moral stand, or to try to convince anyone that there is a particular "right" side to any conflict. On the contrary, polemic poetry has a well-established history in American poetry and Yarrow's poem, for one, sits nicely inside that tradition.

### **Authenticity**

Up to this point I have steered clear of questions concerning the authenticity of these haiku moments, because I believe that participants and commentators can write about their direct or indirect experience of war without violating the reader's trust. However, some commentators have written haiku as if they were participants. A good example is a series of haiku written by Dean Summers based on photos of the Iraq war he had seen in *Time* magazine. Two from that series:<sup>23</sup>

sandstorm  
for this the young marine  
hides his face

children and fathers  
their smiles for the soldiers  
not the same

Additionally, Anita Virgil wrote *Pilot*, a collection of found haiku based on Stephen Coont's Vietnam War novel *Flight of the Intruder*; and other poets have published similar haiku in journals and anthologies.

the attack pilot  
    rocketing down the valley  
        startling birds

Anita Virgil<sup>24</sup>

Dumping sand from his boot,  
the soldier looks up  
at the stars.

Alexis Rotella<sup>25</sup>

These haiku follow an established tradition in Japan. During World War II, such haiku would be called *senka sōbō*, meaning “imagining and watching the fire of war from afar.”<sup>26</sup> Initially, such haiku were condemned by those poets who felt that haiku ought to describe only things actually experienced, but their views were in the minority, and numerous poets wrote *senka sōbō* haiku.

As far as quality goes, the haiku of Summers, Virgil, and Rotella are the equal of any written by a participant, so I'm not sure a distinction between participant and commentator haiku is valuable—or that from a reader's perspective one is more authentic than the other. And it is worth asking if we need a special category for haiku written by Lenard Moore, who served in the army, so clearly he has some sense of its sights and sounds, yet he wasn't actually in an active war zone. His inspirations came from conversations with his brother who served as a marine in Desert Storm and from others who served in war zones. Similar are the haiku of Edward Tick, a psychologist who received his knowledge of combat indirectly from soldiers with whom he worked.

blood-stained shirt  
on a wounded soldier  
rising desert moon

Lenard D. Moore<sup>27</sup>

Swinging in her hammock  
between banana trees  
cradling her AK

Edward Tick<sup>28</sup>

Also, what about poems written by a participant decades after the war? The poet writing now, with the benefit of hindsight and added maturity, is most likely a very different person than the one who lived through the actual experience. Robert D. Wilson is perhaps a good example. You'll recall his poem from part one of this essay:

End of Tet—  
the marks on her back, a letter  
I'd rather not read<sup>29</sup>

In his collection *Vietnam Ruminations*, written decades after the fact, Wilson empathizes deeply with the Vietnamese people and understands how destructive the war was for those caught between the Viet Cong and American forces. His descriptions and analysis of the various scenarios show how much he has reflected upon the war. The haiku in *Vietnam Ruminations* are followed by brief prose passages. This poem in particular is followed by a paragraph explaining that the young woman was a laundrywoman whose family had been tortured and murdered by the Viet Cong because of her employment by the Americans. Clearly, Wilson's *Ruminations* presents a mature viewpoint, unlike the one he presents in his blog of his time as an eighteen-year-old sailor who spent his nights in Vietnamese brothels and engaged in drug use, "coping," he explains, "with a war we were ill equipped to handle."<sup>30</sup>

It could be argued that we have two different people—one, the young Wilson (a participant) who knew nothing about haiku, who was just a scared kid trying to survive; and years later a very different person, a writer (a commentator). Which begs the question: how authentic are the poems by the latter? I don't suggest that the younger Wilson was an advocate for the war, but this illustrates the complexities of talking about war—or

in our case today, in talking about poetry on war. Because of these gray areas, “authenticity” in haiku is something that has never really been explored. Yet, to return to the very start of this essay in part one, I have always felt that some kind of authenticity was at issue in the war haiku I read—the ones I had a slight discomfort in reading.

I think most haiku poets’ definition of an authentic haiku is similar to the one expressed by Michael Dylan Welch on the Haiku Foundation blog:

What matters to me, as a reader, is for the poem to strike me as seeming to be real, echoing my own experiences, or providing enough detail for me to empathize with it even if I’ve not experienced it. It has to FEEL real, regardless of whether it really did happen or not—which is seldom provable anyway.<sup>31</sup>

The notion of believability is a key factor in determining a haiku’s authenticity. But believability in and of itself doesn’t define authenticity for me. Like many things haiku, the notion of authenticity depends (as Welch pointed out) upon whether you are the reader or the writer. For a writer, I think a fair definition is that upon revisiting a haiku a year or so later, does it still present the discovery, or emotional moment, of the original impetus? If yes, then it is authentic. For a reader, authenticity is a trickier issue.

Haiku are poems of engagement. We want the reader to be able to take the usually objective parts of a haiku and re-create the moment or discovery for themselves; or to paraphrase Ogiwara Seisensui: to complete the poem. It is this engagement that is at the heart of my definition of authenticity:

An authentic haiku is defined by a reader’s ability to engage a haiku with the minimum of distraction.

What do I mean by that? A haiku presents a series of observations that are designed to represent a situation, an emotion, or a moment. These observations are like the words used to express the situation: they are stand-ins for the thing itself. For me,

authentic haiku are ones that I as a reader can engage with fully. They are the perfect observations; they are the perfect words; and they are shared with me in the perfect way.

My definition isn't so much about an authentic haiku "moment" as it is about an authentic haiku "sharing." Haiku, after all, got its start in renku, so it has an inherent basis in sharing. It isn't about the truthfulness or falsity of the observation, but about its transmission from writer to reader. How seamless is it? To help better explain this, let's look at some possible distractions to a haiku's transmission.

*Distraction: The poet has a point to make.*

This distraction comes into play most often on haiku walls and in collections of anti-war, anti-nuclear power, anti-politician—anti-anything poems. And I suppose in pro-anything poems as well. Because haiku are poems of engagement, where the reader is the ultimate decider of what the poem means, haiku that are placed on sites with advertised polemic purpose are saying to the reader: there is no point interpreting this poem for yourself; it means X. It is someone telling you how a book ends, and from that point on you can't read the book without that voice or knowledge in the background. The distraction is knowing that your reading of a poem is purposely steered.

Let's examine how this distraction works in a poem by Billie Wilson:

howling wolves—  
there's still enough light  
to find our way home<sup>32</sup>

It can be found on the "Anti War Haiku Wall" on Serge Tomé's *temps libres* site. Now, if you came across this poem in *Frogpond* or *Modern Haiku*, it is open enough to let you decide what it means to you. You may not even think of war when you read this poem. But given where it was published, you know even before reading the poem that it is about war—and, based on the title of the wall, that the poet believes that that particular

war is bad. My personal reading of this poem starts with its surroundings (the haiku wall), and I think, “Okay, here comes an anti-war poem.” Then I read the poem, and I think, “Yup, there still is time to get ourselves out of this war.” Wilson meant me to “get” something and I got it. No need to ponder . . . or experience . . . or engage this haiku further.

Additionally, because I know this poem is about war, despite containing no overt references to war, I am forced to find a way to make it about war. So for me, the wolves in the first line take on a metaphorical meaning and the poem as a whole becomes a bit abstract—which is what happens when haiku are messages instead of shared experience.

*Distraction: The poem is made up.*

If readers know that a poet wasn't in a war zone they automatically question the details of a poem. A poem after all is made up of details. In a poem written by a poet who was present for all the details, the reader can trust that the details weren't manipulated for effect. But in a poem that we know to be made up we unconsciously question why some details were given rather than others and look for motivations.

A well-known haiku poet, who has judged a number of contests, once told me about a fellow haiku poet who always submitted haiku about children and their dolls. The children and their dolls were out in the rain, sitting alone on the swings, or looking into empty refrigerators. It was this judge's opinion—and one it's hard not to share—that the poems were created with the purpose of manipulating the judge's emotions. Believability is important here. It is especially important in poems for which the reader doesn't have direct experience. Recall Welch's comment about haiku “echoing [his] own experiences, or providing enough detail for [him] to empathize with it even if [he's] not experienced it.” Most readers don't know the details of a war: the uncomfortable boots, the living on edge, the lack of sleep, the weight of body armor. So they are relying on the poet more than ever. Welch says—and I agree—that from the reader's point of view, whether a poem happened or not is irrelevant. But if

the pieces of a haiku don't—for whatever reason—ring true, we suspect it is a made-up poem, and thus question the “point” of it. It becomes no different than the poems about the children and their dolls.

One key to a made-up poem is the poet's name—often called the fourth line of a haiku. For example, if I read a poem about the Iraq War by Kylan Jones-Huffman, knowing that he served in Iraq I can re-create the moment much more comfortably—and without distraction. If I read that same poem by a poet who I know wasn't in Iraq, then I experience that moment with less enthusiasm, because I suspect they got the details from television or the movies. I know that they don't know the sounds and smells of the place, which prevents me from fully engaging the poem. And I read it at a bit of a distance.

Of course, we don't always know if a poet was there or not—which either might make things worse (because doubt is a distraction as well) or better (because we are a trusting person and assume all the information given is true). For example, two poems about Hiroshima:

black ash  
covers the trees  
somewhere a sister

Tanaka Kaito

Children—  
floating lit paper lanterns  
not knowing Hiroshima

Yasuhiko Shigemoto<sup>33</sup>

If you didn't know anything more about the poets, both names being Japanese, it would be reasonable to believe that both poets were there. Tanaka was with a group of students weeding a potato field on the east side of town, while Yasuhiko was part of another group of children who were sent to dig tunnels outside the city.



But what if one of their backgrounds changed, and I told you instead that Tanaka was actually born and raised in Tokyo—years after the bombing—and that it was his parents who directly experienced the black ash. Does that change your engagement with the poem? What if he was actually born in Hawaii by parents who were in Tokyo during the war?

Yasuhiko's story is true, and he has written a number of poems on his experiences in Hiroshima. However, I wrote the Tanaka haiku. Now take a moment to read the "black ash" haiku again. I'd be surprised if anyone rereads the poem, knowing that I wrote it rather than an actual survivor, with the same engagement. It isn't that it is a bad poem, but knowing that I wrote it, you're a bit distracted—disengaged—by my artifice, my manipulation.

*Distraction: Unrealistic elements.*

A third kind of distraction is that a poem contains unrealistic elements. Here, the poet creates a barrier between the transmitted moment and the reader through stylistic choices. And I believe this is why the reading of some avant garde or science fiction haiku can seem less engaging. Haiku, I believe, are about sharing, and such abstract or imaginary elements force the reader to step back from the poem to figure out how to engage with it. That "stepping back," that uncertainty, is a distraction.

A good example is a haiku by Sugimura Seirinshi:

war dead  
exit out of a blue mathematics<sup>34</sup>

There is no doubt that this is an interesting haiku, but I find the pairing of generic war dead (no context is given) with the abstraction "blue mathematics" gives me pause. I can think of several meanings for the abstract phrase and even more possible relationships between it and war dead. Indeed, I suspect if polled, it is doubtful that a collection of readers could come to a single consensus as to the haiku's meaning.

Philip Rowland, a supporter and publisher of this poem, referred to its image as “oblique.”<sup>35</sup> That is hardly a synonym for engagement.

This lack of clear focus, the bouncing from one idea to another, without actually settling on one—as I’m trying to engage with the poem—means I am disengaged. I am trying to second guess Sugimura’s intentions, and I end up with competing meanings—meaning no one clear meaning—at the end of the day. Now, I think a fair argument against this is that in reading any haiku not on war we go through a similar process. After all, words are abstractions. So when I come across a haiku about a generic tree I have the same concern. I have similar competing images: is it a pine, oak, or hemlock? Which is why the best haiku find a balance between the specific and the general. And I would argue that when they are too general we don’t engage as much.

Additionally, abstract haiku send a clear message that the writer is being clever, which isn’t a bad thing in itself, but it can be at the expense of the reader. Obviously there are degrees to this cleverness and degrees to its distraction. At one end are perhaps mild distractions such as Watanabe’s haiku “war was standing at the corridor’s end” mentioned in part one of this essay; while at the other end, if such distractions are carried too far, the reader ceases to become a participant in the haiku, and instead becomes an observer.

Additionally, haiku on war come with baggage that haiku on birds and flowers don’t have. Haiku on war almost demand realism, because unrealistic elements may come off as flippant, and I suspect most readers want the issue of war dealt with in a serious manner. War is a serious subject after all.

Perhaps this one distraction (unrealistic elements) really comes down to a sense of seriousness. And perhaps this distraction only applies to haiku on war, child abuse, domestic violence, or any other weighty topic. Haiku and senryu have a well-established history of puns and humorous wordplay—but not about such grim topics.

There are undoubtedly other kinds of distractions, but the important thing is that these distractions shape how we read a poem, as well as how deeply we engage with it. In a perfect transference from writer to reader, there wouldn't be any distraction.

Revisiting my definition of authenticity you'll recall that it isn't about things being true or false. And I don't mean to suggest that certain poems are worth less than others, just to point out to writers how readers may read, and question, their haiku—and based on that questioning, possibly adjust their engagement with a poem. Now does the presence of one of these distractions mean that a haiku is inauthentic? No. In fact I would suggest that there are levels of authenticity, based upon how distracted you as a reader are. Again, any one of these distractions, or even a combination of them, doesn't make a poem bad.

### Historical Revision

Every poem begins with a choice: to write about subject A instead of subject B. To mention the underside of a leaf instead of its top surface. Of interest to me are the numerous haiku written on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. As would be expected, the bomb sites are fertile poetic ground for Japanese haiku poets. For example, we learn from Kyoko and Mark Selden's *The Atomic Bomb: Voices from Hiroshima and Nagasaki* that "In 1983 a Tokyo press published a 15-volume compendium of 'the atomic bomb literature of Japan.' Volume 13, devoted to poetry, includes almost 800 haiku about Hiroshima drawn from anthologies published in 1955 and 1969, and these haiku constitute only a fraction of all haiku written about Hiroshima."<sup>36</sup> Note, that doesn't even consider Nagasaki.

This output is to be expected. A couple examples of atomic bomb haiku from the Japanese:

atomic bomb anniversary  
a streetcar dangling countless arms

Imai Isao<sup>37</sup>

In an atomic bomb picture mouths open. I too open my mouth: cold

Katō Shūson<sup>38</sup>

However, the Japanese aren't the only ones writing haiku on these two bombings. English-speaking poets have also written haiku on Hiroshima and Nagasaki—and these are the ones that I find most interesting.

Hiroshima anniversary—  
throughout the garden  
empty snail shells

James Chessing<sup>39</sup>

Hiroshima  
another anniversary  
not a cloud in the sky

Lee Lavery<sup>40</sup>

a thin *futon*  
and everything beneath  
Hiroshima

David Cobb<sup>41</sup>

Nagasaki, Hiroshima  
names etched in the memory  
of our collective guilt

Cara Holman<sup>42</sup>

The majority of English-language haiku written on Hiroshima and Nagasaki relate to the loss of human life, or the general horror caused by the bombings, as seen in Chessing's poem. Some hope to learn a lesson from the event, as in Lavery's haiku. Others find fragility in life. However a number of haiku—like Holman's—speak of guilt, or the wrongdoing by the United States. This is something the Japanese don't do. In going through the numerous Japanese haiku on the two bombings that are available in English

I found none that blame the United States. Japanese haiku are primarily about loss and the general horror of the events. I won't go into the complex morality of whether the U.S. should feel guilt or not, or why perhaps the Japanese don't express blame; I merely want to point out that these American haiku on the atomic bombings differ from the Japanese in that regard.

That said, if there is a subset of haiku that I feel is inauthentic, again, meaning they have too many distractions for me to comfortably or fully engage, they are atomic bomb haiku written by non-Japanese. This leads me to wonder why Americans write Hiroshima/Nagasaki haiku. I would hate to think that poets are simply playing along—that Americans are writing these kinds of poems simply because the Japanese are doing so. For the same reasons Americans sometimes write haiku on tea ceremony, geishas, and samurai swords?

A fellow poet suggested instead that these haiku are really anti-war protest poems, in which case they are similar to poems written for a haiku wall (albeit more literary), and there is a long-standing tradition in American poetry into which we could place them. But if they are protest poems, why the focus on the atomic bomb sites? Where are the Pearl Harbor, Bataan Death March anniversary, or Nanking haiku? When I pulled a sample from Charles Trumbull's haiku database, there were multiples of Hiroshima/Nagasaki haiku to only a handful of Pearl Harbor haiku. In fact there were only ten haiku on Pearl Harbor—and none on Bataan or Nanking. Interestingly, numerous poems were written about 9-11 at the time of the attack, but few since then. Yet we continue to see fresh atomic bomb haiku written by poets outside Japan.

Another poet suggested that the poems were really about the historical significance of this new and terrifying weapon. Or as Jonathan Schell is quoted as saying in an essay by Ruth Yarrow: "These bombs were built as 'weapons' for 'war' but their significance greatly transcends war and all its causes and outcomes. They grew out of history yet they threaten to end history."<sup>43</sup> In this scenario, atomic bomb haiku are not so much

about those particular bombings, but perhaps are a stand-in for all wars, all bombings, or the possible final bombings that will eradicate mankind. Yet this is something that a reader of these haiku wouldn't necessarily know. If this is the case, I think a better strategy would be to speak directly of the weapon itself, as Charles Trumbull does in his sequence "Trinity." An example:

Trinity Site  
in the guard's vehicle  
fuzzy dice<sup>44</sup>

Another poet suggested that the haiku were not so much anti-war haiku, but rather anti-nuclear power haiku, and pointed to the many haiku on Fukushima. While this is perhaps a satisfying answer, I have to wonder what the explanation was prior to Fukushima. After all, if poets are writing anti-nuclear power haiku when they write on Hiroshima or Nagasaki, then Three-Mile Island and Chernobyl provided ample opportunity, yet a pull from Trumbull's database finds few poems on those accidents as well.

Alternatively, on the Haiku Foundation blog, Scott Metz made an interesting comment during a conversation about war haiku. He said, "[I] find myself trying to put myself in the shoes of the citizens the U.S. military terrorizes and dictates over."<sup>45</sup> In this scenario, poets are using their imagination to write "in character" and from angles they normally wouldn't write. Yet I think similar questions apply. Why so few haiku from the perspective of an Afghani or Iraqi?

Finally, another poet suggested that the emphasis on the atomic bombings was from a sense of collective guilt that some Americans feel. This is a valid reason, but then I have to ask: why no haiku on the fire-bombing of Dresden or Tokyo? Or the United States' treatment of the American Indian?

Personally, I wonder if it isn't perhaps a combination of protest (whether anti-war or anti-nuclear power) and playing

along, in which, like calls from haiku anthology editors for anthologies on flowers, death, and so on, there is an established Japanese tradition that calls out for these kinds of poems on a regular basis—whether as an anniversary contest or a memorial. And American poets read these invitations and write a haiku to participate? Whereas no editor in the United States makes the same call for Pearl Harbor or 9-11 poems.

Beyond these thoughts I don't have a definitive answer for why Americans write so many atomic bomb haiku, but I think it is a question worth exploring by those who do.

The result, though, is that such poems place an emphasis on the two atomic bomb sites at the expense of other wartime locations, or at the expense of other war victims—which has the effect of simplifying history. The overwhelming volume of atomic bomb haiku, compared to haiku on other war sites, suggests that the only terrible, or perhaps the most terrible, events were the atomic bombings, and that the Japanese suffered the most. This is clearly not true, yet if a future historian only had haiku to go on, it is understandable that he or she might come to that conclusion.

### **Conclusion**

War has many reasons—biological, sociological, historical—that lie beyond the scope of this essay. I would only point out that systematic conflict is a complex issue and ought never to be simplified. A wonderful trait of haiku is that they come to a reader unresolved, in a way that can mirror the complexities of war, and possibly our feelings about a particular war. It becomes the reader's job to complete a haiku—to resolve it, if possible. Based upon the variety and quality of war haiku, I don't think war haiku have to be composed solely by soldiers or other participants. I think successful war haiku can be composed by anyone who feels touched by war—whether in person or tangentially.

In her essay “Haiku Awareness in Wartime,” Yarrow notes that many poets have “strong feelings about [war] . . . when it permeates our news media and our world.”<sup>46</sup> In another essay, “Haiku and the Mushroom Cloud,” she could be talking about the larger population of war haiku when she concludes, “Writing haiku about the mushroom cloud, then, while certainly not easy, is clearly appropriate, possible—and necessary.”<sup>47</sup> Metz treads similar territory in the sadly defunct Envoy Series on the Haiku Foundation blog: “Writing from interests and experiences is, of course, vital.” He then asks, “If we want to stop the atrocities of war and their destructive repercussions, shouldn’t we be writing about it then, instead of, say, birds and baseball?”<sup>48</sup>

Some poets and readers would agree. Yet haiku on the subject of war—unlike those about birds and baseball—have to work that much harder to overcome questions of distraction and authenticity. Personally, I might go so far as to suggest that the most successful war haiku are those that are specific to human circumstance within a war, yet don’t take on the larger issue of war as a whole, but I would never presume to tell another poet what to write.

Ultimately, it is not desirable to bring issues of morality, authenticity, motivation, manipulation, and historical revision raised in this essay into the moment of poetic composition. However, I think it is appropriate and necessary to ask these questions after a poem is written, considering how war haiku may be shared with individuals of diverse experiential, political, and historical understandings.

### Notes

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**“Let There Be a Little Country”:  
A Conversation with Lidia Rozmus**

Michele Root-Bernstein, East Lansing, MI

For many years I have taken interest in the invention of imaginary worlds. In childhood, worldplay, as I call it, often begins in those special places where persistent make-believe happens: a woodland glade, perhaps, or a Lego block house, or a hand-drawn map of a treasure island. In adulthood, imaginary world invention is highly (though not exclusively) associated with the literary arts, with compelling visions of a Wessex or a Middle-earth. I am particularly fascinated by what it takes to evoke the “realness” of a parallel place or paracosm: a skein of associations, a visual image or two, a handful of words? In many of the sumi-e paintings, haiku, and “haibun-ga” of Lidia Rozmus these questions take flight.

full moon  
between me and Mole Hill  
headless snowman<sup>1</sup>

What follows is an edited version of a conversation with the poet-painter, which took place in August 2013 at the Haiku North America Conference held on the Queen Mary in Long Beach, California.

**Michele:** Lidia, your book *Twenty Views from Mole Hill* delighted me right from the start with its unusual presentation—a collection of 6-inch-by-6-inch cards held together, not by any kind of binding, but by an intricately folded box. I was also intrigued by this Mole Hill, which served as an artistic touchstone. Here and there in the book you let your readers know that Mole Hill is “not an official geographical name”; that you “see Mole Hill every day from my apartment”; that “from the top of Mole Hill I can see forever.” Mole Hill is a place, certainly. But at some point I began to suspect it was also an imaginary world. Am I right? Is there more to Mole Hill than meets the eye?

**Lidia:** Yes, of course. At first, Mole Hill was just a hill. The story begins when I moved from the city to the suburbs. At the death of my father I inherited enough money for a down payment on an apartment. I looked north of Chicago at this place on the third floor and it had a big balcony with a breathtaking view of a park with a lake and a hill. I went out on this balcony and then I said to the realtor, I have to have this apartment. Just do everything necessary. I will pay anything. I had to be there, you see. I remember that going back home someone asked me, do you know if there's a dishwasher? Do you know how many rooms? I had already given an offer—and I said, no. But I knew that it was my place, with its charming hill, which was something interesting in Illinois's painful flatness.

Almost right away, I started to take photos of the lake and hill from the balcony. Every morning I was running to see the view. It was a wonderful, seasonal experience. Not just watching, but really seeing every day from the same place, you see how things change.

I started to write haiku about Big Bear Lake, which is its real name. I made up the name Mole Hill about two or three years later. It was my molehill and it was my Mole Hill. Then I decided to write *Twenty Views from Mole Hill*. And the title is, of course, a reference to Hiroshige and his *Thirty-Six Views of Mount Fuji*.<sup>2</sup> Most of the pieces in my book are about very small and not important events in my life. I call them haibun-ga, which sounds so funny in Polish and in English, too. Haibun refers to the prose plus haiku of the written work and ga, which means picture, refers to the sumi-e (ink drawings). I define haibun-ga as “sumi-e and haibun together on one page.”<sup>3</sup>

**M:** So you were playing off of Hiroshige—and playing, too? Creating something parallel to his artistic endeavor, a kind of parody, but also embroidering the reality of your Mole Hill with imaginary dimensions?

**L:** Oh, yes. Of course, the “hai” of haiku or haibun means playful. But the book was play from the beginning. Somehow

I dare to compare Mole Hill to Fuji! The effort has this charm to it. But Mole Hill is also my reality. You know, as an immigrant from Poland, I spent many years never feeling quite at home. When I found Mole Hill that started to change. I was somehow politically angry with what was going on in Poland and in America. And I said, gosh, do I have to emigrate again? No, I will not start from the beginning. In a moment of enlightenment, I realized that I have my republic; I have my Republic of Mole Hill. It's mine. And it will always be just mine. That may be selfish of me, but everyone will be welcome. I can share this place. It makes me laugh to think, you know, others can have green cards, but they can't be citizens—just me, because I was chosen by all the animals that are living there.

**M:** Citizen Rozmus, that has a nice ring to it.

**L:** Actually, though I don't feel higher than the butterflies, it just so happens that they and the other animals wanted me to be president, for which I'm very grateful. And you can be chargé d'affaires. Already I have four embassies for Mole Hill. One in Tokyo; one in Poland in a small town near Krakow; one in Geneva, Switzerland; and one in Madison, Wisconsin. My Polish ambassador is very serious about this and asked me about some emblems and such to represent the Republic the right way. The ambassador in Madison sends me regular communiqués. I even asked Charles Trumbull when he worked for Encyclopædia Britannica, would he please, before he retired, insert the Republic of Mole Hill? He was chicken, you know.

**M:** Oh, too bad! You must have been channeling Jorge Luis Borges. He wrote a story in which a bogus country is entered into a reprint of Encyclopædia Britannica of 1902. The fictitious literature of this Uqbar is, in turn, comprised of counterfeit fantasies based on imaginary regions of an imaginary planet. And so on down the tunnels of the mind: feigned philosophies, anthropologies, biologies, geometries, and geographies all describe the intimate laws of a "paracosmos." Borges's narrator surmises that the dreamers

responsible for this incredible labyrinth would end by changing “the face of the world”<sup>4</sup>—the real one, presumably—or our perception of it.

**L:** Well, it so happens that eight years ago, though I try not to be political, I was worried. I had lost hope in the human race. The pain in the daily news—you can’t in this world be completely happy. Sometimes it’s so overwhelming you just sit and cry, because you are powerless. And I remember saying to myself, what are you going crazy about, you have Mole Hill. Everything is okay in the Republic of Mole Hill. It’s like comfort food, a comfort place. Mole Hill, somehow, is escape, is solace. I’ve never drawn a map of Mole Hill, but it’s everything I can see from the balcony. On the one hand, it’s somehow reality, with an imaginary name, but on another hand, it’s an imaginary world that does not exist; it’s part of a park.

**M:** And yet, judging from your website, the imaginary dimensions are real enough.

**L:** Yes, I put up some of the pictures I have taken from my balcony at different times of the year. And I describe Mole Hill, its population, and so forth. I want one of my friends, a musician and composer, to compose an anthem for Mole Hill. Also, I want postmarks. I even thought about money, but I said, no, this is a pure country—no money! I imagine an ideal little place, somewhat on the lines of the “little country” described by Lao Tzu in the *Tao Te Ching*, as translated by Ursula Le Guin:

Let there be a little country without many people.  
Let them have tools that do the work of ten or a hundred,  
and never use them.  
Let them be mindful of death  
and disinclined to long journeys.  
They’d have ships and carriages,  
but no place to go.  
They’d have armor and weapons,  
but no parades.  
Instead of writing,  
they might go back to using knotted cords.

They'd enjoy eating,  
take pleasure in clothes,  
be happy with their houses,  
devoted to their customs.

The next little country might be so close  
the people could hear cocks crowing  
and dogs barking there,  
but they'd get old and die  
without ever having been there.

**M:** Extraordinary! This might almost be a description of my daughter's play when she was nine and twelve and sixteen—or a précis of the imaginary countries invented by any number of well-known writers, artists, or scientists: the Brontë siblings, for sure, but also writer-philosopher Stanislaw Lem, sculptor Claes Oldenburg, and zoologist-painter Desmond Morris. Did you play this way when you were a child?

**L:** It's been so long it's hard to remember. There was a lot of the imaginary in my play, perhaps because we lacked toys when I was a child in Poland and we had to make our toys by ourselves. When we played at "stores" where someone was selling and buying things, I remember using the leaves of the lilac as money. Other than this kind of play, however, I don't remember having had an imaginary world of such proportions.

**M:** And, yet, as an adult . . .

**L:** It's somehow very important.

**M:** For all of us, I imagine. We all enter into imaginary worlds daily, don't we, whenever we suspend disbelief in the fictions of literature, art, dance, history, philosophy, or science?

**L:** I have been thinking about this. Is it just escaping from reality? Not much, because I don't have a lot of reasons to escape from reality. So far my reality is something that I accept and sometimes even like. But always in my life I have been pretty skeptical and I have asked myself what is real, what is unreal, and how is time playing with us? What of

quantum physics, with its parallel worlds? I believe that we don't know a lot of things. And it's very possible there's another earth where there is life like here. Sometimes I joke that on another world or earth, I am doing this or that. But it's not just joking; somewhere in this there's a moment of possibility. Who can tell if it's one hundred percent true that our reality is not our dream and vice versa?

**M:** You refer, don't you, to the now famous speculation of the ancient Chinese philosopher Zhaungzi or Zhuang Zhou, who dreamed he was a butterfly and, upon awakening, did not know if he was then a man dreaming himself a butterfly or was now a butterfly dreaming itself a man. The theme has reverberated down through the haiku ages.

**L:** Exactly. There's nothing new in what I'm saying. A lot of people, a lot of physicists, are thinking this way. You and I can somehow imagine worlds in four dimensions, when they, the physicists, are talking about thirty-something dimensions. Scientists are like contemporary philosophers because they speculate but they can't prove. For me, that's philosophy and it has an impact on my art and my approach to reality. Because I'm not just here, you know. I once had a real experience merging with the universe—nothing particularly rare, lots of people have such a moment at some time in their lives. In my case, I found myself in a place where it was dark enough to see at night an almost white sky full of stars. And I wrote,

starry night  
I'm here  
and there

I was thinking then what I'm talking about now. What is here and there? Everything! It's happened in my life that I feel very much part of the cosmos. I feel like a child of the universe.

**M:** You mentioned that the possible worlds of philosophers and scientists have affected your work. Can you speak to the role that Mole Hill may play in your art—is it central or peripheral to your artistic effort as a whole?



**L:** In my sumi-e and some of my haiku, of course, and in some of my latest oils, which are abstract, I try to paint microcosms. Thinking about microcosms I'm thinking about inside the tree or inside the blade of grass, something smaller than an atom. I believe in the string theory—

**M:** In which all the fundamental particles of the universe—electrons, protons, quarks and more—are different oscillations of the same string?

**L:** Yes. I try to paint this. And if I think about where this is happening, I think of Mole Hill, the nature I find there. The paintings are abstract, but the place, the idea, is somehow real. It's also unreal because nobody actually sees the strings. Yet somehow I imagine this and I place it in Mole Hill—in a few brush strokes, which are coming from my inside, my intuition. The brain and heart start to work later, but first it's this something that I have inside. Then I start to make rational these paintings, to name them, and I think about Mole Hill; I take energy from the water there.

**M:** Your art doesn't take place in an imaginary world, but it's tied with strings to the imaginary world?

**L:** Yes.

**M:** All of your artwork?

**L:** Sometimes not. I just try to follow my intuition. Sometimes I can't name the inspiration or track it back to Mole Hill. Sometimes my imagination gets going later—many times when I'm writing haiku:

on the Mole Hill  
Milky Way  
the only way

I imagine seeing this; being there. Not just the microcosmos, but the cosmos, too, is present in Mole Hill.

**M:** Mole Hill is all encompassing, as big as your imagination can make it.

**L:** Yes. I feel comfortable with this, that it's imaginary. I'll let you know when my friend who is a psychiatrist says no more Mole Hill!

**M:** Not any time soon, I hope! As chargé d'affaires, I'm planning to send you bulletins from BirdGirl Garden.

**L:** This is great! Who says you have to have things to have a wonderful life! When they dress us in white, at least we will be in the same hospital!

**M:** Seriously now. Can we talk a bit about your upcoming exhibition?

**L:** I'm preparing now a multimedia exhibition to be called "Views from Mole Hill." Right now, the exhibition is scheduled for March, 20, 2015 at the Polish Museum of America in Chicago. There will be around 140 photographs to document what I see from the balcony. I will also have some oils and sumi-e and haiga and haiku. I'm going to corral friends and poets into writing haiku about Mole Hill and I want to paint haiga to this haiku—all towards publishing a small anthology celebrating the Republic. During the exhibition I want people to read haiku and, as I mentioned, I've commissioned a Mole Hill anthem. I said to my composer friend, you know, just a little piece like Vivaldi's "Four Seasons"!

**M:** Naturally! You are reminding me of J.R.R. Tolkien, who I'm sure you know also indulged in the private hobby of world invention, composing just about every aspect of an imaginary history for an imaginary Middle-earth—languages, legends, and landscapes, not to mention the maps, chronologies, and high adventures captured in *The Hobbit* and in *Lord of the Rings*. Over sixty years ago he suggested that some American museum should devote a gallery or two to imaginary worlds as a "New Art, or New Game" worthy of recognition.<sup>6</sup> Your upcoming exhibition sounds very much

along those lines—and might inspire more of us to embrace our secret, inner lands.

**L:** Why not? When I talk about why I have this Mole Hill, some people say, oh, god, it's a great idea. And I say, you can have your Mole Hill, too. You can imagine. They say, oh, I love one part of my garden, I can name this. And from there, I say, you can have an imaginary place. Mole Hill started from a real thing, but the Republic of Mole Hill is completely imaginary. I'm joking and I'm laughing, but it's important. I think that everybody alive has their own stories, their own imaginary worlds. These may seem nothing special, but somehow they are necessary to survive.

**M:** Before we go, do you have a favorite Mole Hill haibun-ga?

**L:** Each haibun-ga calls up so many memories and places from the past, I can hardly choose. Perhaps this one:

The day after the meadow was mowed around Mole Hill, the aroma of yesterday's flowers and grasses is everywhere. Now they're drying in the sun, just inviting me to lie down and observe the white clouds flowing, changing their shapes and meanings. Grasshoppers everywhere; they're breaking Olympic jumping records.

Blessed laziness, memories, and this aroma.

summer noon  
grass and song bird  
so high

**M:** I love the sense of reverie you impart; the invitation to observe not just what is real, as in the clouds, but what is beyond real.

**L:** Yes. It is for this that I open *Twenty Views* with

first snow  
I turn the lights off—  
to see<sup>8</sup>

## Notes

1. Lidia Rozmus, *Twenty Views from Mole Hill: The Last Haibun-ga of the Twentieth Century* (Evanston, IL: Deep North Press, 1999), 8.
2. Hiroshige (1797–1858) produced two series of woodblock prints collected under this title in 1852 and 1858. His *Thirty-Six Views of Mount Fuji* recalled an identically titled collection by Hokusai (1760–1849), whose woodblock prints on the subject were composed between 1826 and 1833.
3. Rozmus, *Twenty Views from Mole Hill*, author’s preface. See also, Rozmus, “The Mystery of Haibun-ga,” *Modern Haiku* 42.2 (summer 2011), 80–81.
4. Jorge Luis Borges, “Tlön, Uqbar, Orbis Tertius.” In *Labyrinths, Selected Stories & Other Writings* (Trans. various). (New York: New Directions Publishing Corporation, 2007/1962), 18.
5. Lao Tzu, *Tao Te Ching, A Book About the Way and the Power of the Way*. Trans. Ursula K. Le Guin (with J.P. Seaton). (Boston: Shambhala, 1998), 100–101.
6. J.R.R. Tolkien, “A Secret Vice” (initially titled “A Hobby for the Home”). In Christopher Tolkien, ed., *The Monsters and the Critics and Other Essays* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1983), 198.
7. Rozmus, *Twenty Views from Mole Hill*, 18.
8. *Ibid.*, 4.



*Born in Poland, Lidia Rozmus has lived in the United States since 1980 and works as a graphic designer, teacher, painter, sumi-e artist, and haiku poet. In addition to illustrating dozens of books and chapbooks, Lidia has published four books of her own graphic work and poetry and has shown her sumi-e and haiga throughout the U.S., Poland, Japan, and Australia. She is art editor of the journal Modern Haiku. ([www.lidiarozmus.com](http://www.lidiarozmus.com))*

*Michele Root-Bernstein studies and writes about creativity across the life cycle, recently completing the book *Inventing Imaginary Worlds: From Childhood Play to Adult Creativity Across the Arts and Sciences* (2014). She also composes haiku, haibun, and the occasional haiga, some of which appear in North American journals and in *A New Resonance* 6. Currently, she serves as associate editor of *Frogpond* and as minor diplomat to countries of the mind.*

*In Memoriam*

*Laurie Wachtel Stoelting*  
(1955–2014)

white water  
it took the moonlight  
to show me

high meadow  
opening myself  
to the mountain's face

*Light on the Mountain* (Field Trips, 2000)

the phoebe's erratic flight  
this canoe trip  
won't settle anything

1st Place 2003 San Francisco International Haiku Contest

*Martin Lucas*  
(1962–2014)

again I fail  
to follow instructions . . .  
autumn mist

*Presence* 33

the echo behind  
the chanting of monks . . .  
folded clouds

*Blithe Spirit* 12:1

all the departure times  
have faded . . .  
a thin autumn rain

Betty Drevniok Haiku Contest 2005

## Reviewed

**Stephen Henry Gill, ed. *Meltdown: an anthology of haiku.***  
Kansai, Japan: Hailstone Haiku Circle, 2013, 226 pp., perfect  
softbound, 5 x 7.5 inches. ISBN 978-4-9900822-5-3. US\$20  
airmail postage paid from the editor at heelstone@gmail.com.

by George Swede, Toronto, ON

I first met Stephen Gill (aka Tito) in 1994 when I gave a paper for the conference, “The World of Haiku: From Bashō to the Present and Beyond,” at the School of African and Asian Studies, University of London. Gill was one of the conference organizers and interviewed me about my haiku for BBC 3 radio for which he was a producer. A year later, he moved with his Japanese wife, Kazumi, to Kyoto, where he teaches, writes, edits, creates artworks with stones (*ike'ishi*), participates in nature conservation, and also heads the group, Hailstone Haiku Circle, which published this anthology as well as earlier ones.

The book is laid out in Japanese style—to be read top-to-bottom and right-to-left. The result is that readers must start from what we in the West know as the back cover. The 494 haiku, haiku-like poems, and four twelve-stanza renku were all composed in English by the 75 contributors, including the 50 or so from Japan. The poems are arranged by topic according to an inverse alphabet, Z to A, which for Gill reflects the topsy-turvy times in Japan. For instance, S includes typically whimsical subsections: Sunset, Stump, Stream, Storm, Spring, Sport, Spell, Sound, Song, Seed, Secret, and Scarecrow. The title, *Meltdown*, is meant to evoke not only the Fukushima disaster, but also the general decline of well-being in this complex nation, as echoed in these poems:

Earthquakes, tsunamis,  
meltdowns;  
yet still the cherries bloom

Yoshiharu Kondo

Spring night—  
inside the spiral shell  
whispers  
the radioactive sea

Masako Fujie

Autumn sadness—  
it might be buried  
in that ancient river  
they found on Mars

Keiko Yurugi

Reed blinds  
rolled up at sunset—  
the blood donation tent

Akira Kibi

Most of the poems, however, strike more calming and pleasant tones:

Door creaking as it shuts—  
the icy night

Mizuho Shibuya

Morning sun . . .  
nice print shirts  
on the scarecrows this year

Duro Jaiye

From barbers to the bar  
winter evening calm

Hisashi Miyazaki

Once seated  
it begins to move,  
the ball of knitting wool  
in Mother's hands

Michiko Suzuki

The kingfisher rends  
the valley into two halves  
with its beam of light

Nobuyuki Yuasa

Crows high on the temple hill  
narrate the ancient story  
of evening

Robert MacLean

Quiet temple—  
the sound of a stream  
in Buddha's eyes

Akito Mori

The preponderance of poems in the anthology are of similar quality to these, with only a small percentage lacking the expected resonance. What unilingual North Americans might find intriguing is how two-thirds of the contributors, for whom English is not their first language, can write so well.

In terms of format, the anthology shows considerable variation. In addition to the given examples, there are one-liners, five-liners (that could pass as tanka), as well as poems with from six to eleven lines. Adding to the mix are four of Gill's haiku arranged in a circle. For him, these "cirku" suggest the value of re-reading: "When the eye has read through a haiku once, the mind may decide to read it over again . . . and again, till a more complete satisfaction wells (p. 11)." There is, however, one uniform text element—the first letter of each poem is capitalized—something that Gill, as editor, seems to have required from his contributors.

The four twelve-verse renku (viz. *junicho*) at the end of the anthology are, in Gill's words, "mercifully short" and I'm in full agreement with him when he further states that, "each packs a punch (p. 10)." After the renku, Gill includes a list of 46 Hailstone events already held from 2010 to 2013 as well



as 3 forthcoming in 2014. Clearly, this haiku society has a vigor to be envied by other organizations.

While Gill expresses personal gloom in the Foreword—“For how long, I wonder, should I remain in this beloved but unsettling land (p. 8)”—the prevailing mood of the anthology is upbeat and is, ironically, best expressed by the editor himself:

Our little world—  
from it we search for meaning  
in the spring stars

Readers will need an extra effort to navigate *Meltdown*, but, ultimately, the experience will be rewarding. They also will come away impressed that a distant outpost of English-language haiku is creating such fine work involving a broad range of topics and formats.



*George Swede cofounded Haiku Canada in 1977; was the Honorary Curator of the American Haiku Archives, 2008–2009; and edited Frogpond from 2008 to 2012. His latest collection is micro haiku: three to nine syllables (Toronto: Inšpress, 2014).*



**John Stevenson. *d(ark)*.** Winchester, VA: Red Moon Press, 2014, unpag., perfect softbound, 5 x 7 inches. ISBN 978-1-936848-27-0, US\$12 from [www.redmoonpress.com](http://www.redmoonpress.com).

by Michael McClintock, Clovis, CA

Prolific and far-ranging, John Stevenson is one of the most sagacious poets writing haiku today. His poems are consistently fresh, original, and entertaining. Few other living American haiku poets come close to his aptitude for the memorable line or his mind for being present in the unforgettable moment. This modestly sized collection of 60 haiku, 8 tanka, and 3 haibun fully meets the expectations we may have for a poet of such authentic finesse and savvy.

What is the “ark” in *d(ark)* about? In his introduction to the book, Scott Metz writes, “In relationship to John Stevenson’s poetry, the ark is at play in various ways: the ark as symbol of body, mind, and psyche; the ark as poem; and the ark as a collection of poems—perhaps even as a symbol for how Stevenson views his entire oeuvre of work, or how any poet may view their own work for that matter.”

Metz has taken time in his introduction to put together an intelligent, appreciative essay about Stevenson’s work and why it succeeds, time and again, as path-breaking American haiku. Metz’s comments and observations are good preparation for the reader who may wish to experience more deeply the textual body of Stevenson’s poetry, or better understand the many connections it makes to the culture outside, and surrounding, the boundaries that are commonly associated with haiku literature.

Stevenson’s haiku are suffused with the personality and autobiographical details of their author. As such, and in full awareness of their influence, his work is at the core of the American-Canadian-United Kingdom evolution and development of the modern haiku in English, wherein the focus is not nature but the psychology and behavior of man—primarily the individual, the self:

it's winter now  
people have stopped saying  
it's winter

His subject is people, is human behavior, within a world that is ever-changing and ever the same, and what we do, think, and say determine the world we experience.

Nevertheless, nature exists as an element that impinges upon or frames the emotional human landscape that this poetry explores and observes, in objective and subjective modes, as in this poem about being away from home:

my house  
without me  
autumn wind

If that were a summer wind, the feeling and meaning would be entirely different. Additionally, here the sound of the spoken voice delivers and amplifies the sense of this poem in parallel to the meaning of the words used. In fact, sound and sense bind or fuse meaning and form into one seamless experience, or aesthetic whole, in the assonance of *house*, *without*, and *autumn*, reinforced by the double “*wi*” of *without* and *wind*. In the sameness of sound there is, in effect, a diminishment of sound variety—a diminishment of texture and materiality—which augments the poem’s meaning and bare imagery. The haiku becomes a poem about physical death and the return of all things belonging to us to the natural world, which consumes them back into itself. Those encroaching forces of entropy are here embodied in the “autumn dusk,” sound and sense in poetic fusion with its advance.

Following are a few more prime examples of Stevenson’s voice and vision:

a candy wrapper  
joins the leaf pile  
autumn dusk

Pure, modern haiku! The rule-bound haikuist might argue that “leaf pile” and “autumn dusk” constitute a double-*kigo*, a redundancy. Redundancy, however, is the point. The discarded candy wrapper is a kind of *kigo* in itself, and is *about us* and the life we both live and lose here. Our debris is one and the same with the leaves of autumn. The candy wrapper becomes a vivid symbol of human existence and all that we use up and discard while we are here. Said Forrest Gump, “Life is like a box of chocolates.”<sup>1</sup>

A similar theme is treated in this haiku:

transit lounge  
the toppled suitcase  
left that way

The contemporary language is something we hear every day, and the words are simultaneously symbolic and *inside* the actual, concrete present.

Here are two of my favorites. Stevenson places us in the moment as well as inside his skin and mind:

putting them away  
I hope my clothes  
were good enough

Saturday morning  
a pat of butter  
in the skillet

That pat of butter is what puts our daily life in motion, and where we find the courage (is it courage?) to face it: we are simple creatures of appetite.

Here is a poem that reads like a proverb:

winter night  
the irrational  
is where the warmth is

This hybrid of haiku and senryu expresses the skeptical attitude toward Western rationalism and the abstract that R.H. Blyth expounds and illustrates at length in *Zen in English Literature and Oriental Classics*.<sup>2</sup> Blyth repeatedly points to an orientation to reality in haiku literature that is fundamentally in contrast and opposition to the intellectual morbidities and habits of mind that prevail in Western arts, humanities, and sciences.

Stevenson's tanka are made with the same careful, exacting chisel that is used to make his haiku:

outside  
the cinema  
a line  
of people waiting  
to be shot

The five lines of the tanka unfold/uncoil this poem in a way not possible in the three-line haiku format. Stevenson has mastered an idiomatic language that contains within its cadences and accents—the sound and the pauses—each poem's inevitable (or so it feels) form. We can see it in his one-liners, too, as in the dry, skeptical humor of the following:

as I always say spontaneity

The stark horror of the event alluded to in “outside” is not so much a contemporary depravity as it is truthful observation of the human condition and circumstances that have existed through all history.

Stevenson is a master at folding American idiom into a haiku. The sound of the language in poems like those cited above (and they are typical of this collection) carries all of the mood and tone, and much of the meaning.

If there is a great bell in the House of Haiku (I think there is), John Stevenson is frequently the one who rings it. Echoes

bounce, ripple, and ricochet through every room—for months, for years. That has been the effect of his earlier books, *Something Unerasable* (1994), *Some of the Silence* (1999, 2008), *Quiet Enough* (2004), and *Live Again* (2009). This collection will do the same, and will do so without being “like” any of the others except in the confidence and sureness of the voice in the poems, and in the clarity of the mind from which they originate.

A book having so many revelatory moments and strengths is tough to summarize, but one word about its author does persistently resonate in my mind: genius!

### Notes

1. *Forrest Gump* [film, dir. by Robert Zemeckis], (Paramount Pictures, 1994). Based on the 1986 novel of the same name by Winston Groom.
2. R.H. Blyth, *Zen in English Literature and Oriental Classics* (Tokyo: The Hokuseido Press, 1942).



*Michael McClintock's lifework in haiku, tanka, and related literature, as both poet and critic, spans over four decades. His latest haiku collection, Sketches from the San Joaquin, is from Turtle Light Press (2008). He resides in central California's San Joaquin Valley with his wife, Karen.*



## Briefly Reviewed

by Michele Root-Bernstein, East Lansing, MI  
& Francine Banwarth, Dubuque, IA

**Carol Pearce-Worthington.** *We Are Not to Sing in the Car, Haibun 2005–2013.* New York, NY: 2014, perfect soft-bound, 107 pp., 5.5 by 8.5 inches. ISBN 978-1-492873-83-9. US\$11.99 and variable from [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com).

Poignant, haunting, immeasurably sad, incredibly brave—these are some of the words that come to mind after reading this collection of 78 or so haibun from a remarkable practitioner. Divided into 7 parts, the book wends its chronological way through a life of common happenstance and uncommon misfortune: a theme amply developed in pieces such as “Lifelines,” “Ballet Class,” “Self Surrender,” “I Heard She Took His Ashes,” and “This Papillon.” Pearce-Worthington reveals a deft hand at crafting allusive prose, pregnant haiku, and space in between the two. As well, she creates such a magnetic pull from one autobiographical vignette to the next that the reader is drawn to conjure what remains unspoken—and to care. Though verging at times on the bleak, the work inspires trust.

*. . . I was young and hopeful and wanted to be an actress a singer and a dancer wanted to be all things never questioned whether I had the talent or the chance just knew that otherwise life was unbearable performed and toured and fell for a law student on his way to Vietnam . . .*

*all the nickels  
and the dimes  
of your days*

(From “What Are You Doing for the Rest of Your Life”) ~MRB

**Graham High.** *The Window That Closes.* Arlington, VA: Turtle Light Press, 2013, perfect softbound, 26 pp., 5.25 x 8 inches. ISBN 978-0-974814-7-42. US\$11.95 from [www.turtlelightpress.com](http://www.turtlelightpress.com).

Graham High, president of the British Haiku Society, has authored a dozen or more books of poetry. Anyone wondering whether 5–7–5 haiku have seen better days should read his latest, *The Window That Closes*. This collection of 40 poems, winner of the 2012 Turtle Light Press Chapbook Contest, utilizes the formalism to probe the last days of the author’s mother with descriptive delicacy as well as insightful punch. There is close attention here to what remains for a life well lived when health and energy slip away, when one crosses the final “rift of waiting.” For High, the debilitations of the journey do not outweigh the affirmations of love and life. *out to see the spring, / she notes the coldness of wind / through thinning hair; the cat on her lap— / an ear flicks forward every / time she turns a page; just below the moon / the small circle of her breath / in the window frost* ~MRB

**David Cobb.** *Anchorage, Selected Haiku 1991–2013.* Winchester, VA: Red Moon Press, 2014, perfect softbound, 100 pp., 5.25 x 7.75 inches. ISBN 978-1-936848-26-3. US\$17 from [www.redmoonpress.com](http://www.redmoonpress.com).

In this collection of his best work over the past 25 years, the “patriarch of British haiku” presents some 200 poems rich in the secular values of a life examined through the double lens of society and of nature. As the excellent introduction by Michael McClintock states, Cobb’s imagery is earthy, rather than mystical; his phrasing colloquial as well as sensual. A number of poems are presented twice, in different formats, offering opportunity to consider how one line rather than three may subtly expand meaning. The book holds treasures that promise to reward multiple re-readings. *eclipse of the sun a snail slides out from under a stone; spring sunshine / my dead wife’s handprints / on the window pane; running downhill / to see the sun rise / a second time* ~MRB



**Mitsu Suzuki.** *A White Tea Bowl, 100 Haiku from 100 Years of Life.* Translated from the Japanese by Kate McCandless. Berkeley, CA: Rodmell Press, 2014, perfect softbound, 165 pp., 5.5 x 8.25 inches. ISBN 978-1-930485-35-8. US\$14.95 from [www.rodmeilpress.com](http://www.rodmeilpress.com).

A birthday gift from the Zen community to the widow of Shunryu Suzuki Roshi, Zen priest, founder of San Francisco Zen Center, and author of *Zen Mind, Beginner's Mind*. After his death in 1971, Mitsu Suzuki remained at the center, taught tea ceremony, and began to write haiku, publishing her first collection in 1992. The 100 poems compiled here are drawn from the 4000 or so she wrote after her return to Japan in 1993. Though the collection is rife with the particular concerns of Zen philosophy and practice, a great many—most—of the haiku speak with age-old wisdom to a wider audience. *Mashing yams for soup / with this pestle / three generations old; Autumn chill— / tea bowl's roundness / wrapped in my hands; Learning from haiku / sustained by haiku— / this path of dew.* In addition to an introduction by Zen priest Norman Fischer, the book ends with nearly a dozen salutes to a well-loved spirit. ~MRB

**Dietmar Tauchner.** *Noise of Our Origin / Rauschen Unseres Ursprungs.* Winchester, VA: Red Moon Press, 2013, perfect softbound, unpaginated, 4.25 x 6.5 inches. ISBN 978-1-936848-27-0. US\$12 from [www.redmoonpress.com](http://www.redmoonpress.com).

In his preface to Dietmar Taucher's first bilingual collection, Richard Gilbert remarks on the poet's "unique sensibility," one that makes the language of galactic time, space, and cosmos its own. If readers find it necessary to brush up on their astronomy and their physics, the effort will certainly reward. Despite his grasp of recondite matters—or perhaps because of it—Tauchner's poetic vision is simple, precise, and allusive. Likewise, his choice of phrase and form is as experimental as it is elemental. The result is a kind of discovery that the science and the mystery of human understanding are ultimately one. *between dream and reality a black hole; sleepless/ the moon's /tick; apple wormhole to the core* ~MRB

**paul m. *Wanderlost*.** Illustrations by Merrill Ann Gonzales. No place, 2014, unpag. (36 pp.), handsewn card covers, 4.25 x 5.5 inches. No ISBN. US\$8 from Paul Miller at Modern Haiku, PO Box 930, Portsmouth, RI 02871.

Such an apt title for the process of writing, thoughts just on the tip of consciousness, yet out of reach, nearfelt, demanding a focus, much like studying the night sky for the flair of comets. Though the 2013 New England skies were uncooperative, the author writes in the afterword, the presence of comets “tinged other relational orbits, returns, and near misses.” These themes are skillfully woven into 34 solid, well-crafted haiku in which we feel the poet’s subtle yearning for some order in the universe all the while he is grounded in the natural world, of which he is keenly aware. *returning comet— / movement within / a vernal pool; tidal berm / wasps search the inside / of a glass bottle; low winter sun / my fingers probe / the empty birdhouse* ~FB

**Cherie Hunter Day. *Apology Moon*.** Winchester, VA: Red Moon Press, 2013, unpag. (76 pp.), perfect softbound, 4.25 x 6.5 inches. ISBN 978-1-936848-28-7. US\$12 from [www.redmoonpress.com](http://www.redmoonpress.com).

In a collection that brings to mind the words of poet Mark Strand, *I move / to keep things whole*,\* we find 60 poems of self-discovery and self-doubt, of human frailty as well as strength, of gain and loss and transformation in the process. Day’s work is not static. She engages a variety of themes and approaches with haiku that range from the traditional to those with more disjunctive qualities. A biologist by training, she explores personal insight through images and juxtapositions that are fresh and surprising and sometimes jarring, as in the title poem: *apology moon / tonight the word / is ‘meniscus’*. By definition, is the reference to the crescent shape of the moon or the cartilage in a knee joint, or both, which infer bending and flexibility on the part of both apology giver and receiver? Haiku of deeper contemplation can be a window to the soul. *sharing my plan / to travel the world / dandelion; donating / my son’s cello— / red leaves in the wind; middle age I believe the azaleas pink lies* ~FB

\* (“Keeping Things Whole,” *Sleeping With One Eye Open*, 1964)

**Charlotte Digregorio.** *Haiku and Senryu: A Simple Guide for All.* Winnetka, IL: Artful Communicators Press, 2014, 232 pp., perfect softbound, 5.5 x 8.5 inches. ISBN 978-0-9912139-0-0. US\$19.95 from the publisher at artfulcommunicators@icloud.com or PO Box 25, Winnetka, IL 60093.

Digregorio is a prolific writer and educator who has a passion for “the rewarding art of haiku and senryu” and for sharing that passion with others. Midwest coordinator for the HSA since 2010, she has given countless workshops for adults, students, and teachers. *Haiku and Senryu* is a practical guide delivered in a relaxed, conversational tone so that the lessons and examples are informative and easily accessible. Targeted for beginning and intermediate haiku and senryu poets, chapters feature haiku and senryu background and basics, voices of the form, the significance of nature and seasons, teaching and lesson plans, tips for polishing work and getting published, and extensive appendices and bibliography. The author includes insightful perspectives of a variety of haikuists along with a generous sampling of published haiku and senryu. An energetic and comprehensive guide. ~FB

**Steven Carter.** *The Distances of Sleep* (2013); *City of Shaded Light*; *Heart Murmurs*; *Letters to My Parents* (2014), all published by Alba Publishing, Uxbridge, U.K., perfect softbound, 5.75 x 8.25 inches. US\$15/\$16 from the publisher. *After Vincent and Theo.* Winchester, VA: Red Moon Press, 2014, 177 pp., perfect softbound, 5 x 7.5 inches. US\$12 from www.redmoonpress.com. (See publishers for ISBN numbers.)

If you are looking for the muse, she is most likely with Steven Carter. Time and inspiration for writing are often elusive, but this author is seizing the moment. All are collections of his latest haibun, with the exception of *The Distances of Sleep*, which features haiku, tanka, “stalactites,” and “new Zen aphorisms.” Carter is a skilled narrator, he does not shy away from experimentation with form, and he approaches his craft through the lens of a lively and introspective mind. At times the haiku could be better nuanced, but all in all, each collection promises an engaging read. ~FB

## Other Collections Received

**Jim Kacian & the Red Moon Staff, eds. *Fear of Dancing: The Red Moon Anthology of English-Language Haiku 2013.*** Winchester, VA: Red Moon Press, 2014, 194 pp., perfect softbound, 5.5 x 8.25 inches. ISBN 978-1-946848-24-9. US\$17 from [www.redmoonpress.com](http://www.redmoonpress.com). Eagerly anticipated by poets and editors alike, the 2014 volume marks the 18th in an annual series that features some of the best work in the genre.

**James Fuson. *Twenty Years: Reflections of an Empty Sky.*** Detroit, MI: [sic] Press, 2014, 78 pp., perfect softbound, 5.5 x 8.25 inches. No ISBN. US\$15 from [www.sicpress.org](http://www.sicpress.org). The impact of incarceration on a single life examined through 20 years of changing seasons and concrete imagery inside the walls of prison. *the fall rains / bring a stark chill / through an open window; a wet floor / a warning sign / too late*

**Stanley Pelter. *Haibun Notebook.*** Hampshire, U.K.: George Mann Publications, 2013, 158 pp., perfect softbound, 6 x 9 inches. ISBN 978-1-907640-00-1. No price given, from the publishers. True to its title, a collection of expanded notes that guide the reader through the author's long relationship with the craft of haibun.

**Franco Debono. *Almond Blossoms.*** Malta: Privately Printed., 2012, 75 pp., perfect softbound, 4.25 x 6.75 inches. ISBN 978-99957-0-307-3. No price given from [www.play.com](http://www.play.com). Sketches of nature and the human environment in 109 haiku, followed by 3 brief essays on metaphysical truth and the mathematics of poetry. *light years / spiralling leaf scars / on the almond twigs*

**David Oates. *Drunken Robins.*** Columbus, GA: Brick Road Poetry Press, 2011, 109 pp., perfect softbound, 5.25 x 8 inches. ISBN 978-0-9841005-1-4. US\$12.95 from [www.brickroadpoetrypress.com](http://www.brickroadpoetrypress.com). A collection from the author's 20-year body of work with an eye focused on nature and human experience. *after communion / he finds a bit of meat / between his teeth*

**James Fowler. *Falling Ashes.*** Brookline, NH: Hobblebush Books, 2013, 54 pp., perfect softbound, 6 x 9 inches. ISBN 978-1-939449-02-3. US\$16 from [www.hobblebush.com](http://www.hobblebush.com). Haibun, haiku, and 9 slightly longer poems recounting the author's 25 years in the navy, interwoven with nature and other matters on the homefront. Riveting prose and haiku that are image driven. *desert war / the grains of sand / keep moving*

**Rob Flipse and Eric Hellal. *Haikool: 108 Haijins.*** France: Éditions L'iroli, 2013, 141 pp., perfect softbound, 7 x 6.75 inches. ISBN 978-2-916616-19-3. Price: 15 € from [editions\\_liroli@yahoo.fr](mailto:editions_liroli@yahoo.fr). One haiku by each poet translated into six languages. The haijin are sketched by artist isabel Asúnsolo in what she calls "carinatures," which pair delightfully with the *hai* or humorous and comic nature of most of these haiku.

**Gabriel Rosenstock. *The Naked Octopus.*** Ireland: Evertype, 2013, 77 pp., perfect softbound, 5.5 x 8.5 inches. ISBN 978-1-78201-048-7. US\$10.95 from [www.evertype.com](http://www.evertype.com). Trans. into Japanese by Mariko Sumikura, and in the tradition of Japanese erotica, haiku charting the adventures of an amorous octopus in love with a human woman. Poems culled from the imagination with a healthy dose of wit and humor. *octopus yogi / I stand for you / on one tentacle*

**Philomene Kocher. *Singing in the Silo.*** Ontario: Catkin Press, 2014, 74 pp., perfect softbound, 5 x 8 inches. ISBN 978-0-9880784-9-9. \$15 Cdn + S/H from the author at [pkocher24@gmail.com](mailto:pkocher24@gmail.com). Haiku, tanka, and haibun by a poet whose imagery quietly conveys the "oneness" of a moment and the beauty found therein. *morning light / a single thread / anchors the spider web; the crow lands / a petal falls / into the pond*

**Jon Petruschke. *Dream Haiku: Poems from Nights and Naps.*** No place: CreateSpace, 2013, 200 pp., perfect softbound, 5 x 6 inches. ISBN 978-0-615916-51-4. US\$9.50 from online booksellers. "Whimsies, ideals, desires" from the author's active dream world find their way into haiku form. A broad range of the surreal leaves room for interpretation. *All his pets / sit inside his / body's chalk outline.*

## Re:Readings

### From *Frogpond* 37:1

**Merrill Ann Gonzales**, Dayville, CT, on Michael Ketchek's haiku:

Quite a few years ago, my husband John and I followed a brook down past the waterfalls in a place we called "Deer Hollow," which of course was not its name but that's another story. As we followed the brook deeper into the woods that spring, we passed the ravages of winter and the rejuvenation of things like the Indian pipes rising from leaf mold. We discovered a foundation stone of what had been a mill and the ghosts of that vanished civilization, so recently vanished it seemed to linger still. As we came to the foundation stone, we discovered footprints of the deer coming to drink. Seeing those footprints gave us the feeling of the life that was all around us . . . yet life we could not see or understand.

When I came to Michael Ketchek's haiku

pine-needled ground  
the silent steps  
of the deer

I was filled with all the memories flowing back and mingling with Michael's haiku. The words "silent steps" had even more meaning to me since the painting John had done of "Deer Hollow" was the last oil he ever did and it was never finished. It hangs in my living room and the silent steps are my memory tiptoeing back to that magical spot. The "silent steps" of the deer that were not there, yet were the subject of it all.

Michael's haiku may at first seem like a "painting" haiku . . . the simple delineation of a scene. But the carefully chosen words create a doorway into another dimension, the dimension of something deeply held in our own silences that give rejuvenation to things the storms of life ravage.

## Corrections

### From *Frogpond* 36:3

Our apologies to Dragan J. Ristić, whose haiku on page 42 was credited to another author:

Зоолошки врт—	the zoo—
чапља на једној нози	a heron staring
загледана у ништа	at nothing

(3rd Place, Apokalipsa Haiku Contest, Slovenia, 2006)

Драган Ј. Ристић (Dragan J. Ristić)

### From *Frogpond* 37:1

Modified translations received for “Nacht der Museen—” and “bewachen,” published on page 45 in the German International Exchange, are noted here:

Night of the Museums—	guard the cat
somebody touches a wind chime	passing away
of rat guards	magnolia buds

Wolfgang Beutke

Simone K. Busch



### *Call for Designs*

Help stock this pond with frogs! We welcome frog designs in black and white for inclusion in the pages of this journal. We hope to choose a different frog design for each issue, so please e-mail your submission of high-quality .jpeg or .tiff files to the editors of *Frogpond* at [frogsforthepond@gmail.com](mailto:frogsforthepond@gmail.com).

# 2014 Nicholas Virgilio Haiku Contest

## Judges

Rick Black, Arlington, VA  
Raffael de Gruttola, Natick, MA

It has been a real pleasure to judge the 2014 Nicholas A. Virgilio Memorial Haiku Competition.

We received 793 entries—a daunting number—but we each read all of the poems and then narrowed it down to approximately 20 of our favorites. We then read the final poems out loud to each other and discussed the merits of each one.

Our criteria were as rigorous as they would have been for an adult contest—weighing the overall effect, sensibility, grammar, pacing, and word choice. We were looking for poems that resonated beyond the verse itself or were moments keenly perceived. It was not easy to narrow down our selection and to choose six of the best poems. A lot of the submissions dealt with difficult circumstances, whether divorce, the death of a loved one, or illness. It's extremely difficult to write about these subjects because it requires an emotional restraint that is hard for anyone, adult or adolescent, to achieve.

Whether or not you were among the winners, we hope that you will continue to write and to plumb the depths of your life through haiku and other forms of poetry. You are doing a great job using words to try to make sense of life and to record those moments most precious to you that you would like to share.

The following are our winners; they are not listed in any particular order in terms of one being better than another—they are all wonderful poems.

*Rick Black and Raffael de Gruttola*



napping cat  
her heart beating  
on mine

Marisa Schwartz  
Grade 9, The Paideia School, Atlanta, GA

We love the way in which the author depicted the close relationship that people and animals have with each other—simply manifested in the sensation of a heartbeat. The acceptance of feeling and trust of this simple moment captures the symbiotic sensation from cat to person and person to cat. It's the relationship that a mother might have with her newborn, two hearts beating in unison. Trust is never compromised.

abandoned trailer park  
a pink flamingo  
on the lawn

Aja Smith-Saunders  
Grade 8, The Paideia School, Atlanta, GA

In this poem, a bird of flight is present while the people have moved on. There is a poignancy between the abandoned homes and the flamingo, which may or may not be real. This bird of flight, this pink flamingo, serves as a symbol that we, whomever that might be, may not or can not ever return. For one of the judges, this poem recalled the image of Katrina when so many people were displaced.

after the beach  
five-day-old sand  
between my toes

Mariah Wilson  
Grade 12, Sage Hill School, Newport Coast, CA

Sand from the beach sticking between our toes long after we've left is a familiar feeling for many of us. The tiny, left-over granules of sand recall a day at the beach—wind flapping

against kites, seagulls, beach umbrellas, and sun shimmering on waves. In fact, the author prompts us to remember our own beach experiences—and the way in which they have gotten stuck in our own memory.

my Grandma  
watching her pine trees  
for the last time

Grant Dunlavey  
Grade 9, Sage Hill School, Newport Coast, CA

To write about separation is not an easy task, but this poem manages to do so in a poignant way. We naturally get a sense of sadness even though this emotion is never explicit. A grandmother apparently has lived in this place a long time and perhaps is off to a nursing home or another less homey place. The sense of *sabi*—of sadness at parting, of loss and aloneness—resonates long after our finishing the verse. Yet, of course, we don't know for a fact that the grandmother is sad; it is quite possible that she is happy to be leaving this place, and it's also this breadth of interpretation that we found so appealing.

her greenhouse  
16 plants  
she knows by name

Ryan Shuman  
Grade 12, Sage Hill School, Newport Coast, CA

In this poem, one can imagine the devotion to life that this person gives to the plants inside her greenhouse. We imagine her rising early, perhaps, watering the ones that need it or pinching off some yellowed leaves in the middle of winter. It's the preciseness of observation that is so memorable and that particularly captured our attention—not one more, not one less plant. Similarly, the author has used not one more, not one less word than necessary.

El Morro  
saltwater stinging  
my sunburned back

Michelle Oglevie  
Grade 12, Sage Hill School, Newport Coast, CA

We like the richness of possibility that this haiku presents as well as the way in which the resonance of a Spanish presence is retained through the original name. While haiku are often about smaller things, they can also reflect the vastness of a landscape. El Morro (as a number of places were called by the Spanish explorers) could refer to a variety of locations, including a California beach, a national monument in western New Mexico, or the castle guarding the harbor in Havana, Cuba. The author of the poem contrasts a sense of history with the palpable sensation of saltwater on a sunburned back—all of which deepens our sense of the landscape as well as our interaction with it.



*Rick Black is a poet and book artist who runs Turtle Light Press. His haiku collection, Peace and War: A Collection of Haiku from Israel, has been called “a prayer for peace” by Emmy-award-winning poet Kwame Dawes and his most recent book, Star of David, won the 2013 Poetica Magazine poetry contest. Black has garnered several international awards for his haiku poetry and his poems and haiku have appeared in a variety of journals. He was haiku poet of the month in April 2013 at Cornell University’s Mann Library.*

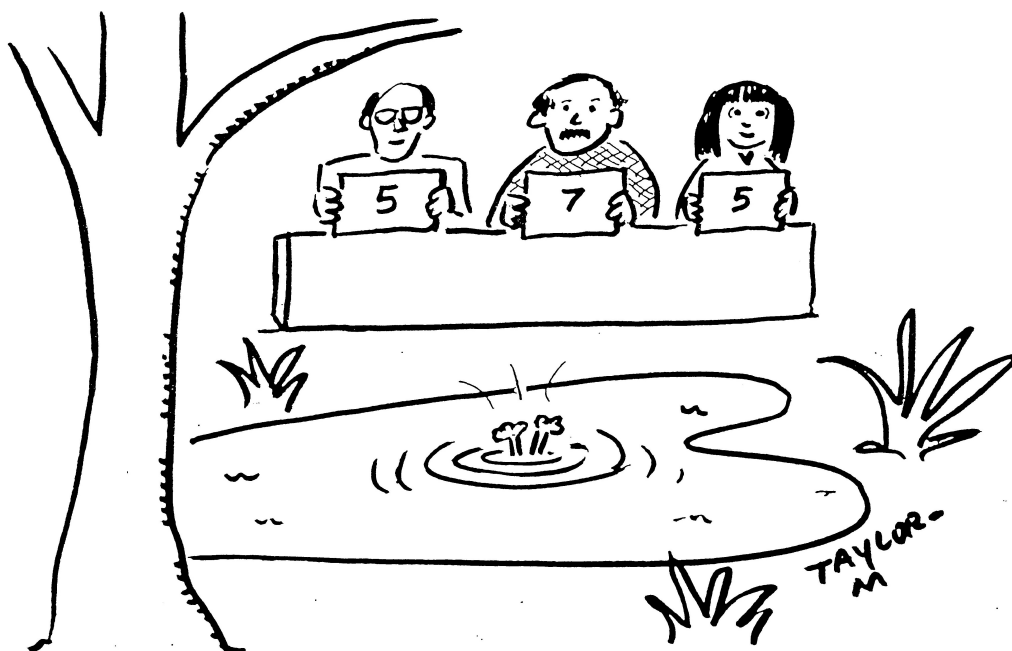
*Raffael de Gruttola, past president and treasurer of the HSA in the 90s, is a poet and editor of haiku, senryu, renku, haiga, and haibun. In 1988 he was a founding member of the Boston Haiku Society and the editor of its newsletter. He recently was elected as the 2nd vice president of the United Haiku and Tanka Society of America. His haiku and other Japanese poetic forms have been printed throughout the U.S., Japan, Canada, Romania, Ireland, England, and other countries.*

## *The Haiku Society of America Annual Contests*

Thank you to the judges and contest coordinator, Sari Grandstaff, and congratulations to the winners of the 2014 Nicholas Virgilio Haiku Contest.

The deadlines for HSA-sponsored contests are:

- HSA Haibun Contest: July 31, 2014
- Harold G. Henderson Haiku Contest: July 31, 2014
- Gerald Brady Senryu Contest: July 31, 2014
- Bernard Lionel Einbond Renku Contest: February 28, 2015
- Nicholas Virgilio Haiku Contest: March 25, 2015
- Mildred Kanterman Merit Book Awards: March 31, 2015



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**HSA Membership**

Thank you to all who have renewed your membership for 2014. There is still time if you've forgotten, and you'll receive all issues of *Ripples* and *Frogpond* published this year, as well as the 2014 members' anthology. Also, please consider paying 2015 dues early. The HSA spends close to \$1000 for postage to mail *Frogpond* to late renewers and this money could be better spent on member programs and educational outreach. Please see page 2 for membership information. We appreciate your support.

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## From the Editors

*Words mean more than what is set down on paper. It takes the human voice to infuse them with shades of deeper meaning.*

*The idea is to write it so that people hear it and it slides through the brain and goes straight to the heart.*

~Maya Angelou

We could not let this issue go to print without remembering Maya Angelou, who passed out of this world on May 28, 2014, a few weeks after celebrating her 86th birthday. (Word has it she wanted to live to be 100. How magnificent it would have been to see her reach that goal!) The creative act of writing is and should be transformative. No one knew this better than Angelou, who discovered power, beauty, and brilliance in the spoken and written word: “We delight in the beauty of the butterfly, but rarely admit the changes it has gone through to achieve that beauty.” Angelou honed her transformations daily in her quiet place, where “we talk . . . and listen . . . to ourselves.” Her dedication to the act of writing equaled her passion for life: “. . . it takes me forever to get it to sing. I work at the language.” Her trust in that process is a great part of her legacy—something all writers can emulate. Excellence in the “haiku arts” attests to the hard work of transforming our thoughts and revising our language. This is true whether we speak of HSA board members selecting over several rounds the “best” of an issue for the Museum of Haiku Literature Award; or essayists weighing the sounds and meanings of words and the formative experiences of our own and other times; or poets themselves, attending to each other as readers, reviewers, and collaborators. It takes uncommon effort to dream ourselves as butterflies and as fully human beings.

As editors, we salute that uncommon effort and are grateful to all of our contributors and readers, to Charles Trumbull and Bill Pauly for their expertise, to Noah Banwarth for production assistance, to Chris Patchel who delights with a taste-of-summer cover design, and to Marcy Clements for lending her frog to our pond. Thank you!

Francine Banwarth, Editor

Michele Root-Bernstein, Associate Editor