

Angelee Deodhar, ed. *Journeys, An Anthology of International Haibun*. Hyderabad, India: Nivasini Publishers, 2014, 252 pp., perfect softbound, 6 x 8 inches. ISBN 978-8-192960-21-6. Price: Rs 300/India and others US\$18 (postage paid). Contact: angeleedeodhar@gmail.com.

by Marjorie Buettner, Chisago City, MN

I have been an editor, briefly, for *Contemporary Haibun Online*, and I know how difficult this position can be and yet how rewarding it is when all is said and done. Angelee Deodhar, in the introduction to *Journeys, An Anthology of International Haibun*, states that she would like her anthology to “attract more interest in the genre,” an interest which Jeffrey Woodward admits, in an interview with Ray Rasmussen at *Contemporary Haibun Online*, is deficient in representative anthologies:

There are few haibun anthologies and not one, to my knowledge, that even approaches a fair representation of the good work that has been done in the past dozen years or more . . . A comprehensive anthology of haibun’s best, therefore, would be one of many needed steps in preserving the genre. General articles and critical essays—publicity and education, if you will—are also essential, particularly in venues like *Modern Haiku* or *Frogpond* that appeal to the broader haikai community.

Journeys, in my estimation, accomplishes this task of attracting more interest in the genre. The anthology includes 122 haibun from 25 international poets; as such, it is a landmark achievement. I would have liked, however, to have seen fewer haibun included by each poet (five were accepted from each) and a larger selection of poets represented in order to expand the range of contributors. Perhaps this will be a future endeavor to “preserve the genre” as Woodward has suggested. Nevertheless, *Journeys* is the first anthology of haibun published in India and Nivasini Publishers should be congratulated for this; hopefully it will not be their last. The publication reading took place at SIES College in Mumbai where literature students were introduced to the haibun form in a workshop by

Dr. Angelee Deodhar and Sonam Chhoki of Bhutan. This brings me to one additional quibble: the introduction includes a definition of haibun by a collection of haibun writers taken from Jeffrey Woodward's website *Haibun Today*—word for word. I would have liked a more individualistic and personalized definition of haibun given by Dr. Deodhar and not something taken from the internet. That being said, there are some stellar haibun in this collection by respected and talented poets. Many are among my favorites, including Penny Harter's "Moon-Seeking Soup," Jeffrey Woodward's "The Sweet Wild Grass," Jim Kacian's "miles out at sea," Ray Rasmussen's "my reader . . .," and Bob Lucky's "Most Bones Never Become Fossils." Here is a short excerpt from "After the Blizzard" by Penny Harter; it is a haibun which touches the heart—if this is one of the necessary goals of haibun, the anthology *Journeys* accomplishes this task:

Tonight as deep snow presses against my windows, I remember
slow-dancing, my head leaning on my love's shoulder, our arms
wrapped around each other. I want to dance that way again.

mating, the monarchs
seem one butterfly—
wings upon wings

The other contributors are Roberta Beary, Sonam Chhoki, Glenn G. Coats, David Cobb, Angelee Deodhar, Victor P. Gendrano, Ken Jones, David Macmurray, Johannes Manjrekar, W.F. Owen, Patricia Prime, Kala Ramesh, Michael Rehling, Bruce Ross, Adelaide B. Shaw, George Swede, Paresch Tiwari, Charles Trumbull, Michael Dylan Welch, and Robert D. Wilson.



Marjorie Buettner lives in Minnesota and has written book reviews for Modern Haiku, Frogpond, Gusts, Raw NrVz, Lynx, Moonset, Cattails, and North Stone Review. She has taught haiku and tanka at the Loft in Minneapolis and has given workshops throughout the state. Her collection of haibun, Some Measure of Existence, was published in 2014 by Red Dragonfly Press.