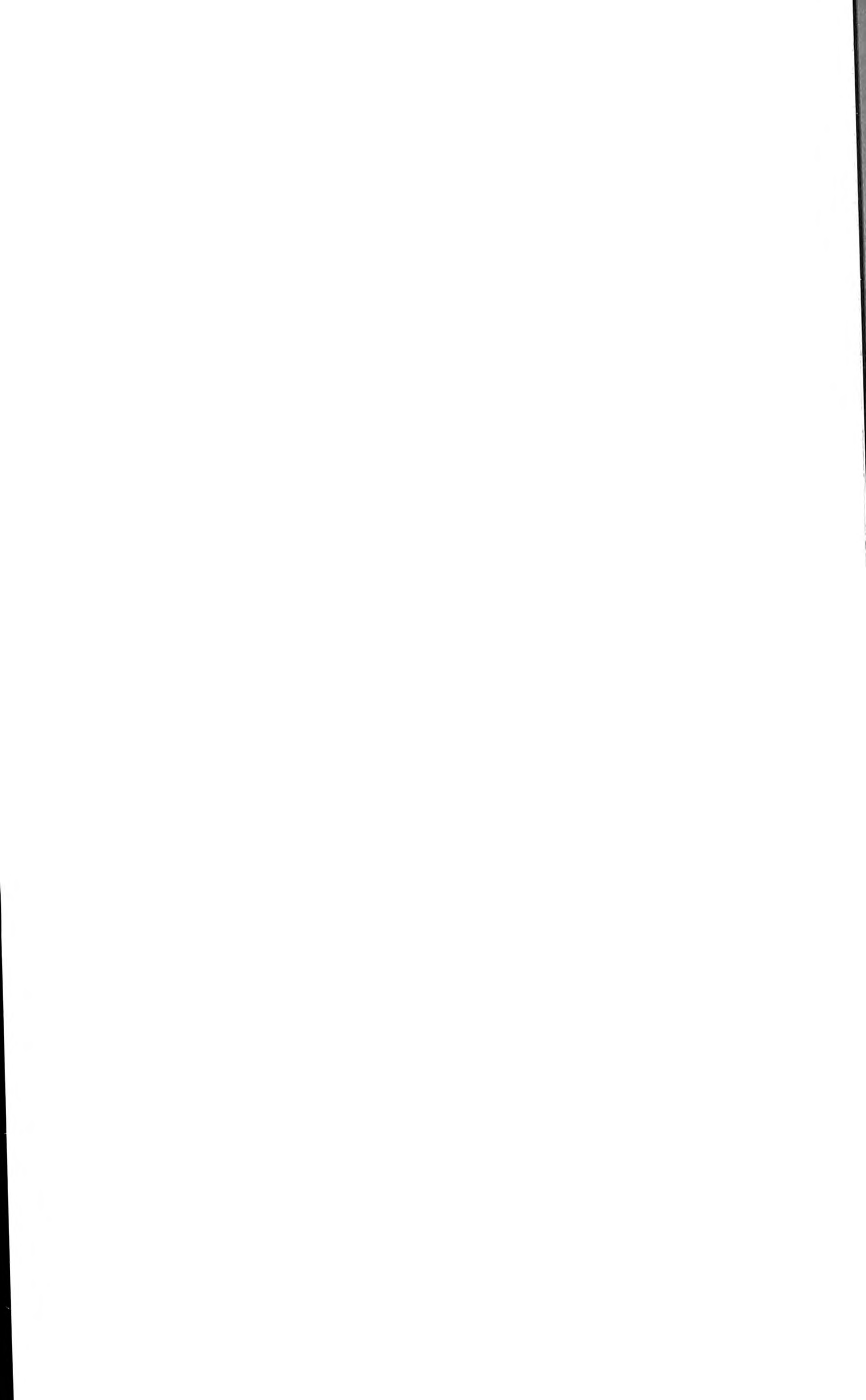


FROGPOND XXIII: I



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

Established 1968

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President's Message

Bylaws of the Haiku Society of America define its purpose as promoting "an appreciation of haiku in English." In addition to this stated purpose, there is another implicit in the term *society*: that of providing for the felicitous and constructive interaction of people with a shared interest. These purposes are achieved through regional and national meetings, workshops, contests, publication of *Frogpond*, *A Haiku Path*, the members' anthologies and the HSA Newsletter and through the recent work of an education committee, among other mechanisms. Each brings people together and fosters an appreciation of English-language haiku in slightly different ways. What they have in common is owing their existence to volunteers who serve the Haiku Society, often for years at a time.

I am delighted to have the opportunity to repay in kind some of these services. If I am confident at the outset, it is because I am joining a team of officers who have already proved themselves dedicated and effective in their various roles and because I have already been sustained by the support, guidance and encouragement of several previous officers, particularly past-presidents Paul O. Williams, Kristen Deming, Lee Gurga and Francine Porad.

That so many of the current officers have long tenure is both a benefit and a challenge. Replacing them when they move on will not be easy. Members, please let us know how we can serve you and please consider how you may serve the Society in some way, large or small, in the coming months and years.

John Stevenson

P.S. Be sure to look for the submission data for the 2000 HSA Members' Anthology and the 2000 Merit Book Awards (for books published in 1999) in the next HSA Newsletter.

haiku

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

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

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

opening day
the drift of conversation
along the trout stream

Tom Painting

fish hatchery
at my shadow fingerlings
change direction

Cherie Hunter Day

5

wind-rippled sand
wrinkling slats of sun and shade
cast by the fence

Dorothy McLaughlin

sky wires so wires blue wires

Philip Rowland

crow standing still
in its flight
against the wind

John Ower

Fence.
The black locust root
escapes home

Rees Evans

below the falls
the bright night runs
swift again

Michael McClintock

amidst mountains
we pause to admire
violets

Cyril Childs

6

they seem brighter in the damp evening the new blossoms

chris gordon

fog:
bringing out
the streetlight's aura

Tom Tico

full moon
a street musician
hugging
his sax

Christopher Suarez

first spring jaunt—
the old dog lifts his leg
a little higher

H. F. Noyes

7

Safeway parking lot—
the wind drives
a runaway cart

Rich Krivcher

unplugged clothes dryer
the sound of wrens
in the vent hose

eric l. houck jr.

after the flood—
acorns around the tombstone:
sprouting

Nina A. Wicker

my forehead
against her flank
the milk stool steadies

Joan Vistain

only a weed
but it goes well
with this shack

Robert Mainone

sunset—
honeysuckle covers
the empty cabin

Peggy Garrison

8

making a wish—
she blows away
the dandelion fluff

Betty Kaplan

dandelion down
drifts over the roofs—
tenement houses

jack galmitz

black clouds gather—
a sparrow flies out
of the tiger's cage

Mike Spikes

empty schoolyard—
at both ends of the see-saw
morning glory blooms

Robert Gilliland

9

free of the sulky
the black horse
continues to trot

Joann Klontz

a damp day—
emptying out
a boot's mint fragrance

Brent Partridge

at the summit
from the center of a stump
a sapling

W. F. Owen

Cloudless sky
beetle on its back
can't get a toehold

Bruce Tindall

fluttering faster
than I can riffle pages
in the fieldguide

Carolyn Hall

fading light
I wonder about its origin
the word "evening"

Dee Evetts

10

Coolness at day's end—
dead pines leaning
through mist at the ledge

Rebecca Lilly

hawks catch
an early evening moon
over the bald slopes

Ivan Peledov

just a trickle
seeping between river stones
summer twilight

Christopher Herold

at twilight
the temple bell
taking zen furrows

anne mckay

|| ||

summer evening
waiting
for the stars

Robert L. Brimm

A crow calling
from atop a tombstone—
fullness of summer

Richard Balus

summer thunder
slow knit of bone
beneath the cast

Judson Evans

Rainstorm
at slack tide—
empty hammocks sag
Tim Tomlinson

vacation beachfront—
tossed back into the waves
a perfect worry-stone
Francine Porad

on the white seabed
the imprint of a ray
no longer sleeping
Tim Tomlinson

12

someone shouts:
dock-lights weave
on the river
Mike Dillon

Dry season—
pine pollen marks
the water line.
A. C. Missias

morning solitude
the soft hiss of the sprinklers
in the empty park

Robert Gilliland

early round
dew streaming off
the long putt

Michael Fessler

13

Summer Sunday—
only one soprano
in the choir loft

Don L. Holroyd

summer morning
my 96-year-old friend
visits her grave

Howard Lee Kilby

Country graveyard
colorful plastic flowers
after the storm

Nancy H. Wiley

into our bones
the heat of the day . . .
cicadas drone

Peggy Willis Lyles

Dog day
breathless
kick from her fetus

D. Claire Gallagher

the breaker box open
two experts, arms akimbo
summer stillness

Del Doughty

14

heat waves
rise from the road:
hikers come apart

Lloyd Gold

sectioned oak—
a daddy-long-legs spans
a dozen summers

Rick Tarquinio

snake hunting the boy sheds his shirt

Makiko

on a twisted tree
a woman leans her body—
waves of heat

jack galmitz

15

late summer evening
a bat sweeps the wedge of light
on the horizon

Elizabeth Howard

skylight
the firefly
goes out

Ernest J. Berry

tropical night
too many stars
to recognize any

Bruce Ross

saying goodbye
to her summer romance
. . . the evening cool

Margaret Hehman-Smith

empty bandstand
a lone bird
warbling

Alec Kowalczyk

night wind—
through the maple overhang
the blink of stars

Elizabeth St Jacques

16

a dog barking
from far across the hollow—
a ringed moon

S. R. Spanyer

full moon the old man's milky eye

Alan Dow

September wind
the crackle of dry grass
as I lay down to nap

Robert Epstein

gliding
out of long shadows
—a grasshopper's shadow

S. R. Spanyer

17

the schoolbus
and his footsteps
slowing

Joann Klontz

autumn sunlight
through archive windows . . .
the crispness of old paper

Jerry Kilbride

autumn day—
our canoe gliding under
work traffic

Elsie Canfield

fall—
there are no trees
by my mother's grave

Mike Allen

a post-op patient
settles on the commode—
autumn evening

Paul Watsky

mid-autumn moon—
magnolia unveils
in full bloom

Jianqing Zheng

18

autumn equinox—
through the east window
sunshine in the shower

Nan Dozier

After the pouring rain
moonlight flows in drops
down the window glass

Gerard John Conforti

Evening cold—
bare branches scratch against
the stream bank boulders

Rebecca Lilly

far away from home—
aspens change the colours
signalling autumn

Ion Codrescu

19

peak autumn color—
appreciating those few
green leaves

Jeff Winke

Upstaging
this famous view—
cumulous clouds

Tom Tico

autumn pond—
between the dead leaves
shafts of moonlight

Melissa Dixon

no one saw a thing
the great night
of the meteor shower

Michael McClintock

frozen
above the broken alley
one of sky

Rees Evans

chilling day—
the two silvered contrails
intersect

J. Blake

20

Hunter's moon:
the coldness of shells
along the beach

John Crook

the windiest fall
I can remember—umbrella
replacements

Kam Holifield

turning the corner
at last getting help
from the wind

Leatrice Lifshitz

drizzle—
prostitutes in a doorway
between neon words

Mike Allen

21

Remembering old loves
The winter wind
blows into my shirt

Sean P. Reagan

Held indoors by rain.
The smell of oatmeal cookies
fresh from the oven

Robert Major

out early to feed the birds
cat prints
in the rime

Andrea Vlahakis

mountain pathway—
winter rain flows down
the beech bark

Dimitar Anakiev

By sunset
still no snow—
my letter to you blank

Michael Cadnum

winter wind—
the old farm house creaks
as Grandmother tucks me in

Mindy Hubler

winter moonlight
from the river
the cries of swans

Susan J. Kent

late at night
the bell striking louder
across the river

Jianqing Zheng

morning sun—
frost melted
where the robin pecks
Michael Dylan Welch

iced-over pond
the flat orange feet
of the ducks
Larry Kimmel

23

day before Christmas
acquaintances exchange greetings
without stopping
James Chessing

winter sun
a stranger makes room
without looking
John Stevenson

first snowflakes
melting in my mouth
chocolate
Carla Sari

afternoon snow
whitens the pond:
the mantle clock ticks

Mike Dillon

first snow
pigeons pluck raisins
from the bread

Gene Williamson

Quiet falling snow—
Hands touch,
Not a word.

Gary Schroeder

24

first snowfall
a turned off light becomes
its own black shape

Zinovy Vayman

snow falling
on white chrysanthemums
an evening of silence

Pamela A. Babusci

a paper lantern
snuffed out by snow—
the gate

Milton Pikramenos

snow swirls
in the pitcher's paperweight . . .
the longest night

Peggy Willis Lyles

25

wind shivering the pines
a small snowman
between their headstones

eric l. houck jr.

snow gazing all logic melts away

Robert Boldman

leftover drumsticks
. . . first Christmas
without Dad

Joyce Austin Gilbert

winter deepens . . .
my hands warm mother's
limp feet

Charlotte Digregorio

winter solitude—
one sound and another
affected by the coots

Brent Partridge

a mountain crow
hiding himself
in the dazzling winter sky

Marko Hudnik

26

sunny day
an old man repainting
the cemetery gate

Bruce Ross

all that's left
of the daylight
gathered in the moon

Francine Banwarth

February rain . . .
the taste of red hots
in your kisses

Marianna Monaco

wind after rain
the crispness of
my still-wet hair

J. Blake

27

a lecture on
Basho's *karumi* . . .
February winds

Joseph Kirschner

vernal equinox
his epitaph's last words
buried in snow

Carolyn Hall

spring morning—
all the eggs
in one basket

Robert Henry Poulin

senryū

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

2) A foreign adaptation of 1.

Budweiser Belgians—
television induces
good tidings in us

Horst Ludwig

tin soldiers
the dead and the living
in the same box

Max Verhart

29

All Souls' Day
my neighbor cleans
his hunting rifle

John J. Dunphy

safe for a while
around the haiku poets
the fly

Mykel Board

lamplight, my room:
after the poetry reading
rereading my poems

Del Doughty

lighthouse keeper
on his page
the poem
about birds

ai li

out on strike—
the uncomfortable hang
of his hands

Makiko

earthquake
reading your letter
again

Linda Robeck

30

these damn memories—
all day long
the backhoe chugs

Chuck Easter

stuck in traffic:
beside the new highway
red dirt of home

Dee Evetts

clay whistle—
I cannot make a sound
young grandson does

Naomi Y. Brown

magnetic
word
falls
to
the
kitchen
floor—
sweep

Caroline G. Banks

31

thoughts of youth—
a ceiling fan spins
in a teaspoon

Martin Vest

neon lights
reflect in the worn wood—
a blues number

Christopher Pusateri

farewell party—
a cloud moves
towards the others

Ion Codrescu

bankruptcy
judge
asks
if
the
poems
have
value

Caroline G. Banks

divorced
my brother-in-law and I
cracking stone crabs

James Chessing

lonely day
the mailman
arrives late

Chuck Easter

32

his depression
an intricate winter tree
fills my eyes

Ruth Yarrow

not yet day
the morning news
is a thud at my door

LeRoy Gorman

paper pickup day
the unfinished poem
sticks out

George Swede

on the way from work
one by one, the streetlights
go out

Arkady Elterman

33

our clothes at the laundramat tumbling
together

Anne French

still the sparking of
static electricity—
office party

D. Claire Gallagher

stag night
the subject of viagra
comes up

R. A. Stefanac

smooth cold plastic
into one ear at a time
the sounds of morning
Christopher Herold

medieval armor—
the iron worker and
tailor
trade opinins
Ross Figgins

the child
spinning
with his top
Giovanni Malito

34

swaying
down the aisle
the red flashlight
Michael Dylan Welch

sunset . . .
the weight of my hand
weighing my beer
Philip Rowland

“downsized”—
his shirt collar
suddenly tight

Diane Tomczak

32nd floor
lighter in the barbecue
flash at the balcony

Nicholaes P. Roosevelt

35

El Grillo
tattooed on the shirtless back
of the day laborer

Luis C. Berriozabal

immigration desk
security guard eyes
the child's banana

Rubin Weinstein

refugee child
with her new dress
her old eyes

Maurice Tasnier

produce stand:
a toddler crying
for an eggplant

Emily Romano

clerk in training
at the market . . . slowing down
I choose her line

Billie Wilson

climbing the rocks:
at the top i hear
deep breathing

Dejan Babic

36

chest to chest
the baby's heartbeat
between mine

Rick Tarquinio

feeling the warmth
of your hand
before it even touches

Steve Dolphy

new violin
fingers search
for an old song

Linda Robeck

smoothing out
the crumpled letter
that must be answered

Robert Gibson

37

condolence letter—
running out of ink
in mid-sentence

Jerry Kilbride

stirring noodles
the scratch of his pen
in tempo

Gloria H. Procsal

trying to read
handwriting the old teacher
once so proud of

Winona Baker

after a chat with Mother
the same
yearning

Peggy Garrison

on her thigh
distorted by age—
butterfly tattoo

Robert H. Deluty

laughing at herself
kitchen light through the grin
in her xray

Dave Russo

38

cafeteria—
watching their pastrami sliced
the hospital staff

Paul Watsky

Silent prayer worn floorboards

John Stevenson

birthplace visit
grandma remembers
what's gone

Ruth Yarrow

cigarette smoke
making small arabesques
as she talks

Fred Odell

39

after the funeral
cracking the shell
of a boiled egg

Pamela Miller Ness

in mourning . . .
his refrigerator filled
with homemade pies

Robert H. Deluty

winding mountain road
when I look too far ahead
this fear of falling

Peggy Heinrich

linked

rengay

renku

haibun

forms

Standby

after hours
a couple side by side
in the shoeshine chairs

someone parked
in the yellow zone

the rattle
of the gift shop door
being shuttered

peeking over
the in-flight magazine
she checks for a ring

the welcome kiosk
unattended

weak sunlight
through the long windows
baggage claim

4 ||

*Cindy Zackowitz
Joann Klontz*

Only Words

poem idea
on a napkin
in lipstick

my note of condolence
a run-on sentence

red
her phone card
on my dresser

carving
my initials
only

under his sleeve
concentration camp number

writer's block
the moth
circles my lamp

Smooth Stone

grey smooth stone
in the palm of my hand—
a heron glides

lacing the beach
a fringe of broken shells

leftover bait—
the swift paw
of a jetty cat

current at low tide
ripples the fine seaweed

from marsh
to sandbar—
the crescent moon

just a silhouette
beyond the breakers

Vor Wintersanfang/Dawn of Winter

Northeasterly wind:
only two leaves remaining
on the calendar.

*Allerseelengottesdienst.
Die Kerzen flackern etwas.*

Es ist Montag früh,
und der Wagen springt nicht an.
Ein Marder flitzt vorbei.

*In front of the church,
a crow slowly walks away
from some carrion.*

after Thanksgiving dinner
the lopsided football score

*Der Schnee taut noch weg.
Doch nehmen wir uns schon Zeit,
Rengay zu spielen.*

44

Wind so aus Nordost./Nur zwei Blätter bleiben noch/auf dem Kalender.
All Souls Day service./The candles flicker a bit.
Early Monday morning/and the car doesn't start—/the flash of a marten.
Vor der Kirche./Eine Krähe geht langsam weg./von irgendwelchem Aas.
nach dem/Danksagefestmahl/total einseitiger Football
This snow'll melt away./But let us take the time now/to play at rengay.

Charles Trumbull
Horst Ludwig

Red Winter Home

the old Russian man
stands close enough to kiss me
as he talks of home

through the *dacha* window
white birch trees against the snow

frozen river
in lamplight the skaters
silently glide

evening star
glows bright red
above the Kremlin

the Ukraine man refuses
the gift of the scarlet sweater

the warmth
of the vodka
going down

above the dust

worn clay road
robin songs blend
above the dust

*on this spring journey
our footprints side by side*

a pond overflows
tadpoles pour
into the ditch

*green shade deepens
to merge into night*

a low moon
between brass pots
the porch fan's blur

*new symphony for sixty
the composer's folded hands*

*rising through
clusters of leaves
dry wind*

out of bed at dawn
to hug him goodbye

*your touch
the silken throb
of moth wings*

boss's Armani tie
wears a spot of gravy

*splash of oil
spreading rainbow
at its center*

in the preacher's Bible
a lottery ticket

*between a red sun
and a haloed moon
balance of stars*

district sports meet
the limp U.S. flag

storm's end
trees bent in half
still sway

*at the cup's bottom
a swirl of eye looking up*

homeless veterans
silent at the refuge door
first snow

*vacant city lot
icy steps trailing off*

rusted fountain
cherry blossoms fill
the mermaid's lap

*rain-mist drifts
with the scent of mint*

the first yellow leaf

late summer the first yellow leaf falls inside my chest
what's left of last year's kindling stares back
swung just right the axe that splits the round cuts more than wood
don't know if the moon's waning i am
one ear to the ground one to the night sky spinning spinning
a thread from a sad part of my past hangs

lowell & jim mac: over their heads much of my blond-headed art
another rejection slip another origami crane
his nest has to be just right or she'll fly to other heights
this dirt parking lot no better no worse than i
*for you who may go and for i who'll stay a sky almost autumn**
going staying a whole life of flowers and ashes
i want to be planted here but no ground has called out to me
52 years too late i think of my umbilical cord
just a long mid-life re-evaluation too simple too complex
in the eye of the hurricane an iris opens wide
if only we could get some rain i could begin the rock soup
hummingbirds at the feeder the wind of their wings

next week a friend flies to greece a woman i love is there
time to turn on the porch light think of night
a red plum picked ripe from the tree even sweeter under the moon
as he prepares a journey his haiku longer
even this light rain will erase all trace of her footprints
for fish and for worms kitchen scraps the heat
the bone dug up once again still makes the tail wag
letter in my lap a lonely once-met david
48 before i leave if she would only give me one pink rose
long time since i've asked when will you be here
with each wave the sound of rocks knocking against each other
even in this drought a pond of many degrees

a white-tail bounds into the brush headless sunflowers and me
common bindweed and a haiku to put it in i'm rich
bird or insect its cry strains my eyes through the window
the old ram's gonad sac swings gently as he grazes
how much longer inside themselves red green grey brown lichens
before it fades the double rainbow 'look! look!'

*after Buson

Dennis H. Dutton
Marlene Mountain

When Dad Is Out of Town

Each day, in the dark before dawn, it seems as if the heavy white exhaust from the little blue car is what pushes it over the slick serpentine back-country road. As the exhaust pales, the car rolls to a halt alongside a winter-narrow stream. Then, a young teen jumps out from the passenger side to weave his way through the morning cold. He heads east, stopping at measured intervals to check his line of muskrat traps . . .

Roadside, mom keeps the car warm and running as she sips at coffee poured from a small, slightly dented aluminum thermos. As soon as her son returns, he places his catch in the blue car's trunk, hops back into his front seat, and the little blue car speeds on back to home. A washing up, some breakfast, and then the teen hoists himself up onto the schoolbus. He occupies his entire forty-minute ride to school by refiguring his math.

hides at home
plus how many more
my own canoe!

\$2 for a fare

Off the train on my way through the city. Approached by a girl, about 16 years old, dressed in the fashion of 16-year-olds these days. Could I have \$2 for a bus fare please? "No" I say, dismissively. Don't want to encourage beggars. She tries someone heading the other way—same response. I walk on, but hesitate. She doesn't look like a beggar. Think of my daughter . . . I retrace my steps. "What do you need money for?" Bus fare to meet my father. "Why don't you have any money?" I've just arrived in the city. Have got just 90c, bus fare is \$2.90. "Are you sure you want it for the bus fare?" Yes. I think she's genuine and give her \$2. She goes off towards bus-stop. I go into a bookshop and come out a few minutes later. No-one on bus stop, buses had passed through. She must have been genuine. Turn into secluded lane to head up the hill. There . . .

behind a pillar -
the girl with no fare
counting her takings

50 Probably about \$25. Confront her, "You seem to have more than enough for the bus fare now." What can I do, I need to eat too, she blurts. I wonder what to do, but only mumble "You should go to see someone. You shouldn't do this to people." (Bit lost for words as you can see.) She offers me my money back—I take it, don't want to feel I am helping a drug habit. I leave her, my smile gone.

steeper today path up the hill

Cyril Childs

Breastless

I sit at my piano, cramming for my lesson, but can't focus. I think of my boyfriend, Tom, and his idea about how I can look "better."

"Honey, I'll pay for you to have a breast augmentation," he'd said, almost desperately. It was the same day he'd surprised me with flowers—probably to soften his proposal.

Now his flowers wilt in a vase on top of the piano. As I bang the keys and sing in monotone, the roses hang their heads. "He wants" . . . plunk-plunk . . . "bazooms" . . . plunk-plunk . . . "so pumped" . . . plunk-plunk . . . "and plump" . . . plunk-plunk.

I pause, my fingers trembling in C-position. I realize: If I want to keep him, my breasts go under the knife.

after his insult
cut rosebuds
tightening into themselves

My threatened nipples quiver. When I'd said, "Tom, would you love me more if they were bigger?" he whined, "Baby, I wouldn't bring it up if you weren't a keeper." Now I wince at that choice of words.

the "keeper"—
5-pound bass
on the chopping board

I practice the same 12-bar blues sequence over and over.

My man, he wants some melons,
Don't wanna pick my sugar plums.
You know, my man—he wants his melons,
Ain't gonna pluck my li'l plums . . .
Gonna find me another man, honey,
Not one of these melon-suckin' bums.

It's not what I'm supposed to be practicing for my lesson, but I've got an excuse . . .

My teacher, Ivory Boy, arrives.

"Your rhythm's off," he says after he makes me do the scales again. He leans forward, flicks on the metronome. "I hate that thing," I say, not masking my irritation. I get a whiff of cheap cologne.

"It's the short guy again, isn't it?" he asks. Ivory Boy's six-foot-two.

"He wants me to have my breasts enlarged," I blurt, enjoying the shock value.

"Oh . . . I guess he's not a leg man," says Ivory Boy, a tease in his eye. Ivory Boy is 15 years younger than me. He can rip up the keys in an improvisation, but doesn't know jack about the blues. He leans back in his chair, fiddles with the metronome dial.

I can't stop myself: "A young guy like you and you're already slicing women up into body parts!" Ivory Boy's brown eyes go blank, and I realize how I sound.

"It seems important to him," I say, trying to calm down. "He made a joke once, about wanting just a handful."

Ivory Boy spreads out one hand on the keyboard, swallowing up 10 keys as he cuts a jazz lick. "Man, if I found a woman that could fill my hands, she'd need a breast reduction," he says laughing. "He sounds like a boob to me," he adds. And then, his tone turning serious, "Isn't it good you found out now that he doesn't really appreciate you?"

He slows the metronome to its largo setting. "My mother considered that operation—because she had to—and my dad and I said, "Don't bother . . ." His voice trails off. I knew his mother had died; now I know why. His eyes are like whole notes holding steady over sad chords.

I finger the keys, picking up the metronome beat. Our eyes meet again, and I feel the way I did when I first peered inside a piano, awed at the complexity

of all those hammers, springs, pins and strings. I catch his eyes scanning from my neck to my waist, as if pulling down a bed sheet.

“Round your fingers,” he whispers, “like you’re holding a ball.” He pulls at my knuckles, his touch surging through me. His voice has that low guttural tone a woman knows.

surprise
seduction
in
my
fingers
curve—
ball

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I know before I make the move that this will be the end. There will be an awkward few moments afterwards and tomorrow I’ll find a new piano teacher.

“You understand . . .” I say, dropping my voice with my eyes until just the right second, and then targeting his widened pupils, “. . . bite-sized is best.”

Ivory Boy takes the cue, skips my mouth, and kisses me lightly on the neck. I think, I’m going to have to show this guy a thing or two, but then his left hand juts under my right shoulder blade, arching me, lengthening my throat for his wet pressing lips, scaling down my neck. He backs me against the piano. The flower vase and I crash onto the keyboard. Rose water trickles down, seeps into my jeans. Random tones amplify each shift of our bodies. His right hand is up my blouse, the tips of his big fingers teasing just one tiny point with a syncopated beat.

long stem
pricking me—
I want all its scent

—Brynne McAdoo

The Last Romantic Idea

I've been married over 30 years. Don't remember a vacation taken without my husband. Sometimes, though, there comes the siren's song: An invitation to see Montana and Wyoming. Uncoupled. It seems an almost romantic idea. We'll fly in and then make it a road trip. Four girls on tour.

the great plains—
my neck doesn't turn
far enough

From the start we keep up a bruising schedule. I can do it. Nothing have I seen before. We're following one person's itinerary. Every morning we're given a general plan for the day. My place is the back seat behind the driver in a teal SUV. A little numbing I'll admit, and yet . . .

highway pullout
seeing the unseen
river

Often we break the miles with a hike, a climb, a visit to an historic landmark. We spend a hot afternoon at the site of a fort that only existed for two years. Burned to the ground. I wander off. Talk to some people who are digging, looking for traces. Maybe they'll find something. These people interest me.

Driving. I am content to be a designated passenger, although the others seem to resent being told who is to drive and who is not. Mostly, we move too fast: our descent out of a narrow canyon is seat-gripping; our scans for wildlife, futile. Just now we flew by a turn off and have to double back. The dirt road takes us to a trail head and a short steep trek. At the top, two butterflies—my excuse for lingering behind.

wind at the peak
staying
with it

Finally the Grand Tetons. Seeing them for the first time, I find out that we are only passing through. We are pushing it to Yellowstone so we can satisfy our planner's agenda of sights. This is not so satisfying. Alterations to the agenda are discouraged.

a "don't bother" waterfall
is filling the canyon
with rainbows

Twelve days. All this confinement in the greatest of open spaces. I run up minutes on the phone. My husband jokes that the best thing about my adventure is that now I'll appreciate traveling with him. Or being home.

morning
my breath
follows his

Laurie W. Stoelting

Spark Plugs

My mother hadn't finished her bookkeeping when she picked me up from elementary school, so she brought me to the factory where she worked. I liked it there, the same way I liked the caves my father and I visited during the summer.

There was a pool of light by the shipping station where Mr. McPherson wrote his bills of lading. He pressed hard so his writing would go through the carbon paper. He had a stand, not a desk, because

most of the time he directed fork lifts to put things in or take things out of the big trucks that were pulled up to the back, their engines idling. The fork lifts had lights and when they went down the big, wide aisles, they bounced up and down. They reminded me of the searchlights my father and I wore in our helmets when we went into the caves.

Everything had a smooth layer of grease over it, the way my dog's ears always had wax inside them. Machines stamped out metal . . .

where my mother works
my heart races with the rhythm
of the machine

My mother had a desk in an office crowded with three other desks, although she seemed to be the only one who was ever there. She looked seriously at the stack of invoices, then gave me a nickel to go to the break room. I put it in the pocket of my shorts and headed down the hall.

The men in the break room saw me coming. "Watch your trap," Mr. Johnson said. "Here comes Millie's young 'un." Mr. Johnson was a big man who made little spark plugs. I said hello to him and then put my nickel in the vending machine and yanked on the lever below the moonpie. Mr. Johnson bought me a coke to go with it. He asked me about school. I told him I had fallen while playing ball at recess. I stuck my foot up on a plastic chair so he could better see the scrape.

"Looks like a good one," he said. "You're trying hard."

I went back to my mother. As I sat at the desk next to her, eating my moonpie and drinking my coke, she punched the keys on her comptometer and then pulled the lever to clear them.

I took out the box of crayons she had stashed in her bottom drawer for me. I drew pictures of caves,

then tapped out a rhythm with screwdrivers I found in her neighbor's desk.

After I ran out of things to do, I asked if I could visit Mr. McPherson. She said I could, as long as I stayed away from the fork lifts.

When I got there, the drivers had gone home and Mr. McPherson was organizing his bills.

sunset

a paper airplane

floats across the loading dock

Chuck Easter 57

Black and White

While I was hiking alongside Morgan Territory Road in the Mt. Diablo foothills, an odd pattern amid the gravel attracted me. The small rock I picked up felt comfortable in my hand. Egg-shaped, the smooth black matrix had four white quartz latitudinal stripes of varying widths. Through the long axis on both sides ran a rough hand-chipped groove meant for a leather thong. This charm-stone at some time had dangled from the neck of a medicine man or woman. About 1500 years old, perhaps it had been handed down from wise person to wise person until the final remnants of the Volvon tribe left the Black Hills for Mission San Jose in 1806. The stone's charms could not protect the Volvons from the good intentions of Spanish friars.

empty mission yard—

a glint of frost

off unmarked graves

Anne M. Homan

Brooms I Have Known

Sweeping the porch of the beach house with this modern (or should that be “postmodern”?) broom, its handle too skinny to provide a firm grasp, its plastic bristles sending sand and pebbles flying in all directions—skittery, flighty, and frivolous, it has no character.

I sigh for an old-fashioned corn broom. That was an honest broom. The substantial wooden handle was esthetically satisfying to the hand; the stiff bristles had gumption and guts. In action, it meant business! Besides, raised above the head, and smacked down on the grass it could put all trespassing dogs to flight. How could these trivial brooms of plastic intimidate any self-respecting dog?

One of the earliest signs of spring during my childhood, in addition to robins and onion grass, was the arrival of the old peddler who sold brooms door to door. But alas, the corn broom has disappeared. It has gone the way of the besom—well, “not quite” because the quaintness of the besom allows it to be used as an accent piece in the kitchen and beside the fireplace. Being purely decorative, it does not work.

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dark winter day
they are making corn brooms
at the Blind Men's Home

Patricia Neubauer

Artifacts

I can step out my back door and enter the woods and walk for miles through the pine, birch and poplar. There's an old winter road that was used by fishermen and mink ranchers years ago.

Today, during my meandering, I find an old hay rick deep in the pine woods. There aren't any wheels left, only the weathered shape lying on its base, the wood rotting and moss-covered, the forest springing between decaying boards.

Further on, I come upon barbed wire strung between two trees. This wire has been here for many years. It seems to be growing out of the trunks, embedded in the wood several inches. What was someone keeping in or out here deep in the forest? The wire is not rusted. It is strong and like new.

Further on, I find an old heavy fishing boat that has a few last bits of turquoise paint peeling from its bow. It is far from any water. As the sun dips toward the horizon, I turn homeward.

long shadows
through dark pine—
the other shadows

Ebb and Flow

Mom sat in a teak-armed, Danish modern chair appropriated from the cozy arrangement at the end of the corridor—chairs, table, and magazines for those weary from watching loved ones sicken and die. “I can’t watch,” she said. “I just can’t be here when it happens.” So while our mother sat in the hallway just outside Ben’s door, my brother John and I stood on either side of the hospital bed holding our stepfather’s cool, papery hands. We watched Ben breathe, noisily, much the way he had always breathed when he slept, a wet burble like the ebb and flow of warm milk on a beach. Now the noise seemed to come from someplace deep in his chest, a thick, mucousy sound we had been listening to all day so that by late afternoon it was no longer alarming but rather comforting.

mums in a plastic carafe—
outside snow falls
from branch to branch

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John and I talked quietly, our words floating back and forth across the space filled with the sound of Ben’s breathing. Earlier we had tried to get his attention—purposely talking loud, calling his name. But there was no response. “Ben’s gone,” the doctor said. “What you see now is just the organs winding down.” It was not long after that that Mom went out into the hall and left John and me absentmindedly stroking her husband’s brow, talking low and slow, long pauses between our sentences like the long pauses between Ben’s breaths. Until he took one breath, but not another. I looked at Ben. I looked at John. “Do you think . . .” he said. And just then the

rattle of Ben's breath shook the room, loud to us as a sonic boom. And I exhaled the breath I had not known I had been holding and went on with whatever I was saying, whatever I was thinking, like that, for several minutes till suddenly Ben's jaw dropped open, then snapped shut, and we flinched, our hearts racing with surprise, and I turned toward the hall to get Mom, then stopped, watching Ben breathe in and out, once, twice, three times. And then nothing.

white crepe soles
on checkerboard vinyl
shoosh of a door closing

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We watched him, expectantly, for a long time, not wanting to be surprised again. But minutes went by and there was still nothing, and John said, "Is that it?" and I said, "I think so." But I went down the hall without stopping to talk to my mother and fetched a nurse and brought her back to Ben's room with me and said, "I think he's gone, but I want you to tell me for sure." And when she did, I went out into the hall and knelt by my mother's chair and held her hand and said, "It's over. It's over now, it's over."

But of course it had just begun—her life without him.

sleeping on his side of the bed
so she won't wake
and find him missing

Carolyn Hall

essays

Construction & Distortion of the Image in Haiku

In the beginning of the 1960s I read R. H. Blyth's translations of Japanese haiku. It was a rewarding introduction to the Japanese language and to Japanese literature. I did not notice at the time that the reason for the flatness of many poems very often was that Blyth had transposed the order of the three lines.

In the 1980s I realized that not only Blyth but other translators as well often changed the story of the haiku by transposing lines. An example:

*Kamo arite
mizu made ayumu
kori kana*

This haiku by Ransetsu is translated by Blyth thus:

The wild ducks there
walk across the ice
up to the water

Blyth comments that this poem is "too explanatory and matter-of-fact." But the original has a point which the translation misses:

Wild ducks
walk up to the water
over the ice

When we read the first two lines we imagine the wild ducks walking up to the water on land. In the third line we suddenly have to switch our view and replace the land with ice. It is this rapid change of image which gives the poem its surprising point.

Another example:

*To-yama ga
medama ni utsuru
tonbo kana*

This haiku by Issa is translated by Harold G. Henderson in his well-known book *An Introduction to Haiku*:

In its eye
are mirrored far-off mountains—
dragonfly!

The first line in Henderson's translation tells us nothing. Our gaze is given no concrete image on which to fix. Whose eye?

Already in the second line the point is revealed, as the reader sees the mountains reflected in an eye.

The image of the dragonfly in the third line explains whose eye it is, thus completing the picture. But its dramatic effect has been diluted by the separation of the eye and the dragonfly.

In the Japanese original the first line shows the mountains in the distance. In the second line this image shifts and the mountains appear reflected in an eye, which we finally discover to be the eye of a dragonfly.

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Blyth reproduces the correct sequence:

The distant mountains
are reflected in the pupils
of the dragonfly.

These examples demonstrate the importance in haiku of the image structure. If parts of the picture are transposed, its meaning alters and the point is lost.

Each word in haiku is a building block in the construction of an image—if the place of the word is changed in the translation, the construction collapses.

The construction of the image determines the vision of the reader and the feelings evoked by the vision. Haiku has the structure of a drama—you cannot change the order of the acts. The first line sets the scene, often with an image of tranquility such as a pond, a mountain, an autumn moon, or perhaps a close-up of a flower, a dragonfly, a parasol.

The second line describes the action or movement. The picture comes alive.

The third line reveals the meaning of the action or movement: it lets us see what it is that has caused the change. This is the element of the surprise, of insight.

Here is an elegant example that illustrates the mechanism of surprise in haiku:

Yuki tokete
mura ippai no
kodomo kana
Issa

Snow melts,
and the village is overflowing—
with children
(Henderson)

The second line excites the imagination: there is so much melting snow that the village is flooded. The third line brings the surprise: with children. When the threatening image of the torrential waters gives way to the happy image of children, our presentiment of disaster is replaced by a feeling of relief and joy. The transformation of the image transforms the feeling.

In haiku the point often consists of a shift in perspective. The distant mountains are reflected in the eye of the dragonfly. The image is reduced or enlarged, or placed within an unexpected frame, as in Issa's

*Dai-butsu no
hana kara izuru
tsubame kana*

Out from the hollow
of the Great Buddha's nose—
comes a swallow
(Henderson)

This haiku was written when the poet was looking at the great statue of Buddha at Nara. In the English translation, however, we never see the Buddha in its entirety. To start with we see a *hollow*, and the Buddha's *nose*, from which a *swallow* flies out.

The original sequence of the image runs:

The Great Buddha's
nose from comes out
a swallow

Freely translated:

The Great Buddha—
from its nose
darts a swallow

Another example:

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*Yamadera no
homotsu miru ya
hana no ame*
Kyoshi

Rain on the cherry blossoms;
looking at the treasures
in the mountain temple
(Blyth)

The reader's gaze fastens first on the cherry blossoms and then on the treasures of the temple—can this have been the poet's intention?

The original sequence of images is:

In the mountain temple
we look at the treasures—
raining cherry blossoms

The poet's gaze rises from the treasures to the petals falling like raindrops outside the mountain temple. *Hana no ame* can be translated as *rain on* or *raining cherry blossoms*—the important point is that the image of nature's treasures comes last.

*Yukiore ya
mukashi ni kaeru
kasa no hone*
Shoi

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Broken with snow,
the frame of the bamboo umbrella
reveals its original form
(Blyth)

The picture undergoes a very suggestive transformation in this haiku. The snow has broken a bamboo umbrella, but the snow also allows the original form of the umbrella to emerge. The umbrella is taken apart and put together again before our inner eye, although in reality the broken frame lies abandoned in the snow. The whole transformation takes place in the reader's mind.

The sequence of images in the original is another, but in this case I wonder whether Blyth's version is not preferable. The original—it seems to me—requires a mental lap backwards, to the second line, before the point can be fully grasped.

Broken with snow
the form reappears
of the umbrella frame

A haiku by Rinka:

*Rokugatsu-kaze
haka no ushiro mo
kage wa nashi*

Translation by Blyth:

The June breeze:
No shadow of anyone
behind the grave

The sequence of images in the original runs:

The June breeze
Behind the grave
no shadow

Haiku presents us with three images—here, a fourth image is evoked in the reader's mind. The gravestone leaves no shadow (image 3), the sun is high in the sky (image 4). The fourth image does not emerge clearly in Blyth's interpretation, which ends with the darkness of the grave.

Furthermore, Blyth has personified the shadow: *No shadow of anyone*. This interpretation has no justification in the original. Implicitly the image of *shadow* contains a suggestion of the human in this context, but the impact is weakened by the explicit statement.

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The final impression of the original is one of light: the June wind has blown the clouds from the sun and driven away the shadow of the dead.

This is a very important point, often overlooked by translators: Contrasts between darkness and light in haiku generally end with the light. A genuine haiku almost always closes with a sense of optimism and universality.

(To Be Continued Next Issue.)

Kai Falkman

Two Favorite Haiku

the spent arrow
falls short of its mark—
spring's languor

*Anna Holley*¹

Solitary spring—
throwing a javelin and then
walking up to it

*Nomura Toshiro*²

These are both great favorites of mine, but are chosen here particularly to show two very different kinds of juxtaposition—though both are highly intuitive and equally delightful examples of inner comparison. In Holley's case, the reader will quickly grasp the association she makes between those languorous days of spring, when we feel ineffectual and "spent," with that arrow that falls short. But in Toshiro's haiku we're surprised by the juxtaposition, yet sense its validity without the necessity of "nailing down" the connection. Haiku neither elaborate nor explain.

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1. *Kô*, Spring/Summer 1999

2. *Four Seasons*, edited by Kato Kokô, Kô Poetry Association 1991

books

&

review

A Haiku Correspondence

No Other Business Here John Brandi & Steve Sanfield (1999, La Alameda Press, 9636 Guadalupe Trail NW, Albuquerque NM 87114). ISBN 1-888809-17-5. 96 pp., 5.5" x 7" perfect softbound. \$12 + shipping.

No Other Business Here, a collection of haiku communications between John Brandi and Steve Sanfield, will find a ready audience because the book is fun to read, twisty as a musical journey with Miles Davis discovering his phrasing while he plays.

From the introduction, we learn that their poems "evolved over several years" and are presented "... more or less in their original order." Brandi calls the poems a kind of call and response between "two broken-shoed guys." Don't be fooled by this self-effacing pose. Brandi and Sanfield, wily as two Mexican ponies, have successfully survived the mine fields of the status quo for years, perhaps even thriving because of or in spite of it. Each has written a number of well-received books which have garnered a loyal following. Michael McClure calls the men adventurers and "pioneers of the American haiku," advising those who read their collaboration to read "these poems only for pleasure." This is a good suggestion for the purist who might question some of the three-liners as true haiku. Brandi's introductory apologia helps fog the issue. "Neither of these guys is Japanese," he says, and their "poems make no attempt to adhere to tradition" or rules. Nevertheless, this maverick book does contain some excellent examples of haiku and senryu:

Watching her sleep
he thinks: anything
anything she wants

Long after
breaking the cup
still finding the pieces

Summer's end
at the door an old friend
without teeth

Without a sound
a moon-blue butterfly
comes and goes

At the thrift store
buying back
his own shirt

Admiring snowpeaks
sixteen miles
on the wrong road

Woven among the two poetic genres are snippets of Zen impressions and aphorisms. In true Zen fashion they reflect that which is, holding nothing sacred or profane. Typical of such three-liners are the following:

Getting so clear / there's nothing / to think about

Learned a lot / hope it wasn't / too much

The stars' brightness / means nothing to the man /
who can't see that far

"Seven University Professors / Will Be Reading
Tonight" /—not to me

For those readers who would like to know who wrote which poem, they won't find either poet's name, leaving the reader to guess—a game that reflects another cut of Brandi's and Sanfield's iconoclastic personae. It doesn't matter much in the long run, however, since their poetry reads like the impressions of one mind, what can happen to old friends in sync.

"If you come to a fork in the road, take it," Yogi Berra says. This is the way the two men have chosen to live and write. No wonder it serves as an epigraph for *No Other Business Here*, a book filled with playfulness, surprises, and paradox.

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Marian Olson

Haiga Potpourri

Reviews of haiku books frequently comment on the esthetic qualities of the books themselves. Add to this a burgeoning interest in haiga and you will sense an impulse common to a significant portion of recent publications. Three of this year's entries will make the point nicely.

Lidia Rozmus *Twenty Views From Mole Hill* (Deep North Press, 2157 Ridge Ave. 2D, Evanston IL 60201, 1999) 26 unbound pages in a cleverly folded cover, 6" x 6". ISBN 1-929116-02-0. \$18. A collection combining haibun and *sumi-e*, a format for which the author has coined the term *haibun-ga*. Each page refers to a particular month or season. You will want to frame your favorites. Lidia Rozmus's Mole Hill has something in common with the Rock of Gibraltar.

first snow
I turn the lights off—
to see

Joseph Kirschner *Edges* Illustrations by Lidia Rozmus. (Deep North Press, 2157 Ridge Ave. 2D, Evanston IL 60201, 1999) 44 unnumbered pp., ISBN 1-929116-01-2, 4.25" x 5.5", paper perfect bound, \$14 ppd. Featuring Joseph Kirschner's flair for juxtaposition of images and Lidia Rozmus's generosity, in not having saved all of her best *sumi-e* for her own book.

scattered blossoms
apartment gardeners
quickly rake them up

Jeanne Emrich *Barely Dawn* paintings by Susan Frame. (Lone Egret Press, PO Box 39644, Minneapolis MN 55439, 1999) 64 unnumbered pp., 1.75" x 7.5" x 1", uniquely bound, \$18. This "book arts production" comes with instructions about how to open and close the book. You will need them. But the effort is rewarded, once you get the hang of it, in the reading style it encourages: one of mindful presence. The paintings serve as introductions to each seasonal section and the poems range from contemplative to pointed.

autumn wind -
the prairie grasses tilting
every which way

John Stevenson

Scarecrow Redux

Kanterman, Leroy (Compiler and Editor) *The Scare Crow* (Red Moon Press, PO Box 2461, Winchester VA 22604-1661, 1999). ISBN 1-893959-00-7, 80 pages, 8.25" x 5.25". \$12 + \$3 ppd. (14 + 3 US\$ in Canada). Available from the publisher.

For a start, the book is beautiful to look at. The cover design—photos of scarecrows in shades of gray with, on the front, the title and a poppy in bright red—deserves a medal. Inside, thirteen more wonderful photographs which, we are told, come from *Ephemeral Folk Figures: Scarecrows, Harvest Figures and Snowmen*, by Avon Neal, photographs by Ann Parker.

The Scare Crow opens to dramatic black and white pages and a haiku which announces one of the book's themes:

first of all
blowing the scarecrow down
autumn storm

a theme echoed at the end, in a voice which sounds truly tired of the many scarecrow haiku whether in Japanese literature or in American haiku of those days, by Ruth Latta's 1970 article "Farewell to the Scarecrow". In it, the author takes a good stab at killing off the scarecrow as superannuated in Japan and an anachronism in American poetry, where there is "no need—no place for Mr. Scarecrow."

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John Stevenson's introductory article, however, written especially for this 1999 collection of scarecrow memorabilia, gently keeps the door open for today's agriculturally unnecessary kind of scarecrow to continue acting in poetry as (to paraphrase from Kanterman's concise Preface) "the human surrogate it is, a poetic device to convey the gamut of human emotions, the comic and the tragic, humor and pathos." As Stevenson points out, the scarecrow holds a particular position between humanity and Nature, one for which it is hard to think of a substitute.

In a third article, which precedes a section of Japanese haiku translated by Hiroaki Sato and placed between two sections of English-language haiku, Yamamoto Kenkichi gives precise meanings for four Japanese words used in

scarecrow haiku. Another plus for this book is “A Scarecrow Sequence” by Frances Brandon Neighbors, a well-balanced meditation of sorts on the human condition and fog and illusion, which fits well in this collection.

Generally, the haiku interested me less than the articles and the photographs did, though many are good and all are good to use as examples for points made in the articles. There is, for instance, a more consistent linking of human nature with Nature among the Japanese haiku, where the scarecrow is more clearly felt as “a companion among spirits”, an extension of oneself, a universal experience of connection. Scarecrows in our own haiku are more often seen as objects, the evocation of the universal along with the individual being weak or missing. Among exceptions is H.G. Henderson’s haiku, quoted below.

It is comforting that the book is dedicated to Henderson. I wish his *An Introduction to Haiku* were again made available to help infuse more North American haiku with that deeper, and yet lighter, feeling for the beauty and the universality of spirit, its humor and its gentleness, and to connect with that. Neglect of Henderson’s translations and explanations—the work of a gifted teacher who deeply appreciated both Japanese and American experience—greatly deprives, in my opinion, any haiku poet beginning while Henderson’s books are out of print.

and still he stands there
the scarecrow—in a field
not planted this year.

The Scare Crow is a keeper. The stunning theme-related design could adorn every library and many many homes. The book gives valuable comments on the history, the art, and the psychology of the scarecrow as human surrogate, with haiku to prove it. In this time of increased ecological awareness, will scarecrows be resurrected to give humanity both practical and spiritual help wherever people grow crops and wear out clothes in all weathers? I hope so. We probably need them to remind us that we are human beings, not mechanical gadgets or mother boards for whom Nature is irrelevant.

—Ava Kar

Time's Errant Wisdom

Sanfield, Steve *In One Year and Out the Other* (Larkspur Press, 1999). 60 pages, 6.5" x 6", five-hole Japanese-style handstitched binding. Sumi ink drawings. Available from the publisher at 340 Sawdridge Creek West, Monterey KY 40359. \$16 + \$4 postage.

In Japanese culture New Year's Day is considered a "fifth season" and is the subject of much haiku. So too is anything done for the first time in the New Year, whether having a dream, purchasing an item of clothing, and the like. In this small, beautifully-produced collection, one haiku per page, Steve Sanfield, a long-time practitioner of what he calls "American haiku," has culled thirty-five years' worth of haiku on New Year's Day and the New Year in modern-sounding language with a philosophic undertone.

Sanfield is not so much demarcating a conventional period of new beginnings (our own New Year's resolutions) and celebration (the collection, beginning with its title's pun, has its humorous and joyful moments) as offering a meditation on temporality itself. The focus is not upon convention but upon one's existential place in this universe (4, 23):

At year's end
wondering
what I'm doing here

New Year's Day:
confused about my place
just as last year

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As if through a *koan*, he finds through nature, here concretized in snow, a means to unravel his dilemma (5, 15):

Falling snow
separates
one year from another

The snow falls
only for itself
this last night of the year

While inadvertently deconstructing the more obvious cultural facets of the New Year (34), Sanfield uncovers the telling realization, the phenomenological underpinning of temporality—that the universe, that

space-time is manifested in each moment, in each thing, making each metaphoric new day literally a new day (31):

Three weeks now	No more than yesterday
and last year's calendar	but so different—
still there	the first day

In the 1989 Korean film "Why Has Bodhi-Dharma Left for the East?" one of the Buddhist truths revealed is that those who are living on this earth will never be able to resolve the problem of death. In effect, existentially, death by seemingly ending human time with the end of human consciousness precipitates our deepest conception of time—its end with personal death. Montaigne has said that death is the true subject of philosophy. Yet most of us put off thoughts of death and how we live, how to live, until the end of our lives. This unresolved problem as it enters our lives with all too human reminders easily reduces ordinary perceptions of time to nothing (35) yet we go on living despite it (44):

Twelve months gone	While we slept
and still I carry	it arrived
the same sorrows	on its own

The antidote is of course in how we live, not in how we die. Sanfield's collection, with its many deftly expressed ordinary moments of nature, love, humor, and self-revelation, concludes with the affirmation to celebrate life, to be open to its newness and possibilities (49):

Simply another day:
what will it bring
what will it bring?

Heraclitus had stated that you can't step in the same river twice in this metaphor on space-time. Sanfield's collection is a moving testament to the assenting possibilities within this ancient truth.

—Bruce Ross

Narrow Roads

Hamill, Sam (translator) *The Essential Bashō* (Shambhala Press, 1999). 188 pages, 6.25" x 9.25", hardcover. ISBN 1-57062-282-5. \$25. Available from bookstores or the publisher at Horticultural Hall, 300 Massachusetts Ave., Boston MA 02115.

The Essential Bashō, by Sam Hamill, published by Shambhala in 1999, is the most complete single-volume collection in English of the writings of Bashō. It includes his four travel diaries (or *haibun*: *Narrow Road to the Interior*, *Travelogue of Weather-Beaten Bones*, *The Knapsack Notebook*, and *Sarashino Travelogue*) in addition to 250 selected haiku. Sam Hamill, who is the founder and editor of Copper Canyon Press in Port Townsend, WA, has written over 30 books of poetry, essays, and translations from classical Chinese, Japanese, ancient Greek, and Latin poetry.

78 Hamill opens *The Essential Bashō* with a concise, critical introduction emphasizing the religious, philosophical, and literary influences on the poet. He writes, "Bashō completely redefined haiku and transformed haibun. These accomplishments grew out of arduous studies in poetry, Buddhism, history, Taoism, Confucianism, Shintoism, and ... Zen" (p. x) Hamill traces Bashō's essential belief in man's oneness with nature back to Saigyō, the 12th century Buddhist monk-poet, and Bashō's commitment to utter simplicity to the 14th century Zen monk Ikkyū. Hamill characterizes Bashō's 4 haibun as pilgrimages "into the interior of self as much as a travelogue" and credits Bashō with "elevat[ing] haiku from wordplay into powerful lyric poetry," taking full advantage of the tools of prosody, such as rhyme, slant rhyme, and onomatopoeia.

Although I am unqualified to judge the accuracy of Hamill's translation from the Japanese, I find his translation of the haibun into English prose both graceful and poetic. The opening three lines of *Narrow Road to*

the Interior are my favorite of the several translations I have read because of the simplicity and lyricism of Hamill's language: "The moon and sun are eternal travelers. Even the years wander on. A lifetime adrift in a boat, or in old age leading a tired horse into the years, every day is a journey, and the journey itself is home." As an English-language poet and essayist himself, Hamill has a feel for the cadence of English.

In direct contrast, however, are Hamill's translations of the 250 selected haiku, presented in the book in both romaji and English translation. Not himself a haiku poet, Hamill insists on sticking as closely as possible to a 5-7-5 syllabic count, a decision he justifies in an interview in a recent issue of the journal *South by Southeast* :

. . . we in the West would do well to remember that the 5-7-5 syllabic count is a musical measure than informs all of classical Japanese poetry. Few of us have that measure so firmly ingrained in our bodies. But that music is as much a part of haiku as the meaning of the words. (vol. 6, no. 2, p. 9)

In my opinion, this decision is a mistake that compromises the quality of his translations in a variety of ways. Many of Hamill's translations are simply too wordy; include unnecessary adjectives, adverbs, and/or articles; rely too heavily on the verb "to be"; end on weak final lines; fail to juxtapose images because of Hamill's tendency to translate the haiku as a complete sentence; incorporate awkward and ineffective line breaks; utilize inappropriate enjambment; occasionally include obtrusive end rhyme; and, as a group, lack the lyrical music of his prose translations.

Let's consider a few translations of Bashō's well-known haiku in more detail. Probably one of Hamill's most effective translations is:

On a bare branch,
a solitary crow—
autumn evening

Aside from the lack of a verb common to most other translations, the juxtaposition of images is effective and separated by a cæsura, and the language is highly compressed. Other poems are much less successful:

Seeing the new year's
first flowers, I'll live seventy—
five years longer.

In this translation the line breaks are awkward, "first flowers" is redundant in that it is implied in the words "new year," and there is no cæsura creating juxtaposition.

Another haiku translated as a complete sentence is further marred by the obtrusive and unnecessary use of end rhyme:

A pair of deer
groom each other hair by hair
with increasing care.

Looking finally at one of Bashō's most famous and frequently translated haiku,

At the ancient pond
a frog plunges into
the sound of water
(Hamill)

the old pond—
a frog jumps in,
water's sound
(Ueda)

80 one can only wonder why Hamill felt the need to break the subtle juxtaposition of sensory images, created in a translation such as that by Ueda, and to make the erroneous statement that the frog plunges into the sound.

In conclusion, *The Essential Haiku* is a welcome addition to the haiku library for the insights of Hamill's introduction, the lyrical translations of the four haibun, and the inclusion of so many of Bashō's haiku in a single volume. However, the haiku translations are a matter of personal taste and, in my opinion, should be carefully compared to other translations available in English.

Pamela Miller Ness

And Wide Paths

Kimmel, Larry *Alone Tonight* (Winfred Press, 1999). 68 pages, 5" x 8", perfectbound. No price. Available from the author at 364 Wilson Hill Road, Colrain MA 01340.

This collection of haiku, sequences, tanka, haibun and other brief poems is divided into two main sections and concludes with an Epilogue in haibun form. A wide range of subject matter travels through these 150 plus poems, including loneliness, rejection, sadness, and death. To lighten the way, however, the author wisely counterbalances with moments of brightness, joy, warmth, and humor. For this review, I beg your tolerance as I focus on brighter moments.

Larry Kimmel's acute haiku eye and talent for stirring the senses are truly admirable. His attunement and oneness with the environment and humanity in general come through strongly, allowing the reader to take an active part in most of these poems. The following are among my favorites:

after sunset
we lean against the stone wall
the warmth

hunter's moon –
the cat comes home
faintly smelling of wood smoke

Equally delightful are light, humorous haiku that narrow in on moments of pure delight. I've tried for a long time to write about touch-me-nots, but have not been able to get it right. Here, Larry Kimmel captures my experience perfectly!

touch-me-nots
the big plump pod about to burst
—couldn't help myself

While many of Larry's haiku appeal to me, some word choices are questionable. In "along the snow path/the clatter of a curled leaf/rolling with the wind" the clatter of many leaves on hard packed snow would be more believable than just one leaf. Staying with this haiku a moment: "rolling with the wind" suggests that the wind is also rolling. Wouldn't "in the wind" be more accurate? The author also makes use of metaphor in his haiku (and haibun) but "small-fisted fruit" and "a fried-egg sky" (for example) seem a bit much for haiku. In my opinion, subtle metaphor is far more acceptable.

Of other poems here, I found the haibun "Evening Walk" one of the most rewarding. Comprised of six brief texts that are clearly written and successfully draw in the reader, each are followed by a haiku that adds to (rather than repeats from) the scene, as required for a successful haibun. Several of the haiku in this haibun appear as individual haiku earlier in this collection, which I feel spoils the impact of this lovely haibun.

Despite some disappointments, *Alone Tonight* contains some beautifully crafted work that arouses the senses and triggers a variety of emotions. A most satisfying read.

Books Received

Tasker, Brian *the sound of rain* (the Bare Bones press 1999). 5.875" x 4.125", 64 pages, hand-sewn softbound. \$8 (bills only). Available from the publisher at 16 Wren Close, Frome, Somerset BA11 2UZ England. *Another handsome volume from this author, and much in keeping with his house style as evidenced in Bare Bones.*

Hotham, Gary *Footprints and Fingerprints* (Modest Proposal Chapbook, 1999). 5.875" x 4.125", 32 pages, saddlestitch softbound. \$3. Available from Lilliput Review, 282 Main Street, Pittsburgh PA 15201. *More telescopic poems from this master of the minimal.*

Brooks, Randy *School's Out* (Press Here, Foster City CA, 1999). 6" x 9", 104 pages, perfect softbound. ISBN 1-878798-20-0. \$12. Available from Press Here, 248 Beach Park Blvd., Foster City CA 94404. *A long-awaited full-length collection from this vastly underrated poet, in an attractive trade paperback format.*

Ness, Pamela Miller *Alzheimer's Waltz* (Swamp Press, Amherst MA, 1999). 5.75" x 4.25", 16 pages, saddlestitch softbound. \$6. Available from the author at 33 Riverside Drive Apt. 4-G, New York NY 10023. *A small book of personal tanka, attractively presented.*

Howard, Dorothy *the photographer's shadow* (King's Road Press, Canada 1999). 5.5" x 8.5", 16 pages, saddlestitch softbound. \$2 Available from the publisher at 148 King's Road, Pointe Claire, Quebec, H9R 4H4 Canada. *Marco Fraticelli's latest volume in his Hexagram Series features excellent work from erstwhile Canadian editor Howard.*

Hotham, Gary *The Sky Stays Behind* (Chickadee 13, Juniper Press 2000). 4.125" x 2.5", 8 poems, saddlestitch softbound. \$6. Available from the publisher at 1310 Shorewood Drive, LaCrosse WI 54601. *A small book of minimalist poems in keeping with his other work.*

Gibson, Robert *Children of the Sparrow* (Holly House Publications, Seattle WA, 1999). Inkbrush drawings by Karen Klein; Foreword by Jane Reichhold. ISBN 1-57726-152-6. 144 pages. 5.5" x 8.5" perfect softbound. \$18.95 ppd. Available from the author at 929 H Street, Centralia WA 98531. *The first full-length collection by the author in an attractive perfect-bound format.*

Hardenbrook, Yvonne and Larry Smith (editors) *Haiku Poems* (Bottom Dog Press, Huron OH 1999). ISBN 0-933087-58-6. 44 pages. 4.25" x 5.5" saddlestitched. \$3.50 ppd. Available from the publisher at Firelands College, One University Road, Huron OH 44839. *An issue of the Pocket Poems series devoted to haiku.*

Otomo, Yuko *Garden: a collection of haiku* (The Beehive Press, 1999). 30 pages. 5.5" x 8.5" comb-bound. No price given. Enquire about availability from the publisher at 47 East 33rd Street, Bayonne NJ 07002. *A book of haiku translated from the original Japanese by the author into a disingenuous and engaging English.*

Martone, John *a fernpot* (dogwood & honeysuckle, Huntington IL 1999). 32 pages. 3.25" x 4" handsewn softbound. No price listed. Available from the author at 1818 Philips Place, Charleston IL 61920. *The prolific Martone offers another small book with fine papers and attractive design, all in his own inimitable style.*

Welch, Michael Dylan, Cor vandenHeuvel, and Tom Lynch *Wedge of Light* (Press Here, P.O. Box 4014, Foster City, CA 94404, 1999). Cover illustration by Jeanne Emrich. 48 pages, saddle-stapled, 5.5" x 8.5". \$7.50 plus \$1.00 postage, available from the publisher (please make checks or money orders in U.S. funds payable to "Michael D. Welch"). *The collection of haibun selected from entries in the haibun contest sponsored by this press in 1999 and adjudicated by the current editors.*

Welch, Michael Dylan and Lee Gurga *Too Busy for Spring* (Press Here, P.O. Box 4014, Foster City, CA 94404, 1999). Cover illustration by Lidia Rozmus. 36 pages, saddle-stapled, 5.5" x 8.5". ISBN 1-878798-19-7. \$7.50 plus \$1.00 postage, available from the publisher (please make checks or money orders in U.S. funds payable to "Michael D. Welch"). *The anthology from Haiku North America 1999, featuring 91 haiku; a cross-section of what is being done in haiku in America today.*

Martone, John *island* (dogwood & honeysuckle, 1818 Philips Place, Huntington IL 1999). 60 pages. 3.25" x 4" handsewn softbound. No price listed. *Available from the author as above. Another in a series of elegant small publications from this author.*

Spring Street Haiku Group *Pink Bulldozer* (self-published 1999). 32 pages, 4.25" x 5.5". \$3. Available from Dee Evetts, 102 Forsyth #18, New York NY 10002. *The latest offering from the Spring Street Group is their strongest to date: a steal at this price.*

Monaco, Marianna (editor) *The Sound of the Bell* (Two Autumns Press 1999). 32 pages. 5.5" x 8.5" saddlestitched. \$6 ppd. Featuring work by June Hopper Hymas, John Leonard, Carolyn Rohrig & John Thompson. Available from the publisher at 478 Guerrero Street, San Francisco CA USA 94110. *Another collection from the excellent readings of the Two Autumns group in San Francisco.*

INSA

News

1998 Merit Book Awards

The purpose of the Haiku Society of America's Merit Book Awards is to recognize the best haiku and related books published in a given year. Every year sees a fresh crop of fine individual collections, anthologies, translations, and books of criticism. The volumes published in 1998 ranged from an anthology of Spam pseudo-haiku to a collection of rock-star haiku (by Michael Stipe of REM and others). The year's more serious haiku books ranged from self-published, photo-copied chapbooks to deluxe letterpress editions, as well as professional trade and academic press publications. However, it is ultimately the text—the poetry or the prose—that matters most, along with the poetic images or intellectual ideas and the craft exhibited in presenting them. Choosing the best books of the year has surely been a daunting task for past judges, as it has been for us. We particularly recommend the following haiku books as the best of 1998, and regret that we could not acknowledge more books. We encourage you to support the winning authors and publishers by buying and reading these books. We have enjoyed considering these books, and are grateful for the opportunity to choose these award winners.

Mary Fran Meer and Michael Dylan Welch, judges

First Place:

- *Fresh Scent: Selected Haiku* by Lee Gurga.

Brooks Books, 4634 Hale Drive, Decatur, Illinois 62526. Hardback, 128 pages, 5.75" by 8.75". \$22.50 postpaid from the publisher. An exceptional collection of

Gurga's haiku and senryu, culling the best poems from several books and many years of dedication to the haiku genre. Also noteworthy is the aim of publisher Randy Brooks to present, beginning with this collection, a series of clothbound books featuring the selected haiku of outstanding poets who have made a significant contribution to the art of haiku.

fresh scent—
the labrador's muzzle
deeper into snow

Second Place:

- *Favorite Haiku, Volume I* by H. F. Noyes.

Red Moon Press, P.O. Box 2461, Winchester, Virginia 22604. Saddle-stitched paperback, 64 pages, 6.5" by 5". \$13.00 postpaid from the publisher. A simply produced, wide-ranging, and satisfying collection of poems by numerous poets, each enlarged with prose interpretations by H. F. Noyes. At once a haiku anthology and a book of insightful commentary, above all this book celebrates the spirit of community and sharing among haiku poets worldwide.

warm rain before dawn;
my milk flows into her
unseen

(Ruth Yarrow)

Honorable Mentions (in alphabetical order by author):

- *A Raindrop, A Flowing River*. Photographs by Graeme Matthews; haiku by Ernest Berry.

Graeme Matthews PhotoImage, Blenheim, New Zealand. Hardback, 144 pages, 11.5 by 10.5 inches. \$35.00 postpaid from Red Moon Press, P.O. Box 2461, Winchester, Virginia 22604. A stunning book of

award-winning photos enhanced by haiku of New Zealand poet Ernest Berry. This smooth amalgam of images transports the reader into realms of imagination and wonder. A perfect coffee-table book with photographs that any haiku poet would be proud to couple with his or her haiku.

incoming waves
their whiteness hissing
into the sand

- *Spring Morning Sun* by Tom Tico.

Belltower Press, 721 18th Avenue, San Francisco, California 94121. Perfectbound paperback, 112 pages, 5.5" by 8.5". \$12.00 postpaid from the author (at above address). Despite writing haiku for thirty years, this is Tico's first book publication. His haiku march down the page in unwavering steps. Many reflect first-hand observations from a man living out years of homelessness, but his work celebrates both joyful and soulful moments with a light touch. This book celebrates the work of a long-recognized poet... with the sun at his back.

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On Mother's Day
cutting all of the lilies
for her last bouquet

- *Haiku: This Other World* by Richard Wright.

Arcade Publishing, New York, New York. Hardback, 304 pages, 5.5 by 7.25 inches. \$23.50 in bookstores. When American novelist and activist Richard Wright died in 1960, he left an unpublished manuscript of 817 haiku selected from several thousand he wrote in the last year or two before he died. While the poems show weaknesses that seem a result of Wright's writing in isolation, a significant number of the poems are remarkably good, especially considering that

Wright penned them in the late 1950s while in failing health. That this collection should now be published makes it historic.

In the falling snow
A laughing boy holds out his palms
Until they are white.

Special Category Winner for Haibun:

- *Six Directions: Haiku & Field Notes* by Jim Kacian. Illustrations by Stephen Addiss.

La Alameda Press, Albuquerque, New Mexico. Perfect-bound paperback, 88 pages, 6" by 6". \$10.00 postpaid from Red Moon Press, P.O. Box 2461, Winchester, Virginia 22604. A journey to uncharted horizons, a taste of wildness, sets this journal's tone. Weaving haibun with haiku sections, Kacian skillfully portrays his ongoing fascination with the wildlife, the mosses and stones, the rivers and mountains of Virginia. Readers are transported through each new season, witnessing an artful tale as it unfolds. An awakening has taken place and a quiet resolution: "Six Directions . . . stretches out again in space and time . . . becomes the place where I live, this place, this home."

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ground fog
up to my ankles
in moonlight

Special Category Winners for Criticism:

- *Traces of Dreams: Landscape, Cultural Memory, and the Poetry of Bashō* by Haruo Shirane.

Stanford University Press, Stanford California. Perfect-bound paperback, 382 pages, 6" by 9". \$16.95 in bookstores. A landmark reassessment of Bashō and his poetry amid his cultural landscape. This book deftly de-Zens

Bashō, and shows the vertical depths (links to history and culture) and horizontal breadths (links to his contemporaries) that Bashō reached in his haiku and renga mastery.

- *The Path of Flowering Thorn: The Life and Poetry of Yosa Buson* by Makoto Ueda.

Stanford University Press, Stanford California. Hardback, 226 pages, 6.25 by 9.25 inches. \$39.50 in bookstores. A sorely needed biography of Buson, this book presents 180 of the poet's haiku in translation, and places the poetry in the context of his paintings and prose and the rich events of his life. This highly readable book opens up the poet's life and poetry, and joins Ueda's other books as a classic in haiku criticism.

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Special Category Winner for Translation:

- *Chiyo-ni: Woman Haiku Master* by Patricia Donegan and Yoshie Ishibashi.

Tuttle Publishing, Boston, Massachusetts. Perfectbound paperback, 280 pages, 6" by 9". \$14.95 in bookstores. This translation is dedicated "to all women haikai known and unknown who lived the way of haiku or who are now living the way of haiku." It was a daunting task for the authors to unravel the biography of this remarkable woman and translate her poetry. In eighteenth-century Japan, politics allowed only men to become haiku masters. Nevertheless, with her talent and resourcefulness, Chiyo-ni broke through the ranks to be honored as the first woman haiku master during her lifetime.

Special Category Winner for Anthology:

- *The Second New Zealand Haiku Anthology* edited by Cyril Childs.

The New Zealand Poetry Society, Inc., 58 Cecil Road, Wellington, New Zealand. Perfectbound paperback, 92 pages, 5.75" by 8.25". NZ\$20.00 (about US\$10.00, cash only) postpaid from the publisher. Over 300 best works from thirty-five of New Zealand's most accomplished writers appear in this book. Emphasis is on haiku with Kiwi origins and colloquialisms, and about its environs and people. Biographical snapshots bring each poet to life. This collection previews many new voices to be heard and enjoyed.

Special Category Winners for Series:

- To the Spring Street Haiku Group for its series of annual group anthologies: *The Parakeet's Mirror* (1993), *Woodshavings* (1994), *A Small Umbrella* (1995), *After Lights Out* (1996), *In the Waterfall* (1997), *Absence of Cows* (1998), and continuing. Spring Street Haiku Group, New York, New York. Saddle-stitched paperbacks, 24 pages, 4.25" by 5.5". \$3.00 each postpaid from Dee Evetts, 102 Forsyth Street #18, New York, New York 10002 (earlier books may no longer be available, so please inquire before ordering). Remarkable for their consistently high quality of haiku, these brief yearly chapbooks showcase just a few excellent haiku from each member of this dedicated group of poets.

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- To Stephen Addiss with Fumiko and Akira Yamamoto for their series of haiku translations paired with entertaining Japanese artwork: *A Haiku Menagerie: Living Creatures in Poems and Prints* (1992), *A Haiku Garden: The Four Seasons in Poems and Prints* (1996), and *Haiku People: Big and Small in Poems and Prints* (1998). Weatherhill, New York, New York. Hardback, 112 pages, 6.75" by 8.25". \$16.95 each in bookstores. Each book artfully presents a set of poems thematically grouped with vintage Japanese prints.

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THE HAIKU SOCIETY OF AMERICA

TREASURER'S REPORT (April 1—June 30, 1999)

Income

Balance	
Membership Dues	
Frogpond Samples	
Contributions	16,384.74
Museum of Haiku Literature	514.50
Fort Mason Refund	154.00
Miscellaneous	245.00
	200.00
Total Income	50.00
	10.00

Expenses

20,558.24

HSA General Account

Postage	
Supplies	493.50
Frogpond Awards	44.54
Copying/Printing	50.00
Website	71.50
Donation Virgilio Memorial	140.00
	50.00

Newsletter

Printing	975.00
Postage	498.29

Frogpond

Printing	3,727.94
Postage	325.66

Total Expenses

6,386.48

Balance (6/30/99)

14,171.76

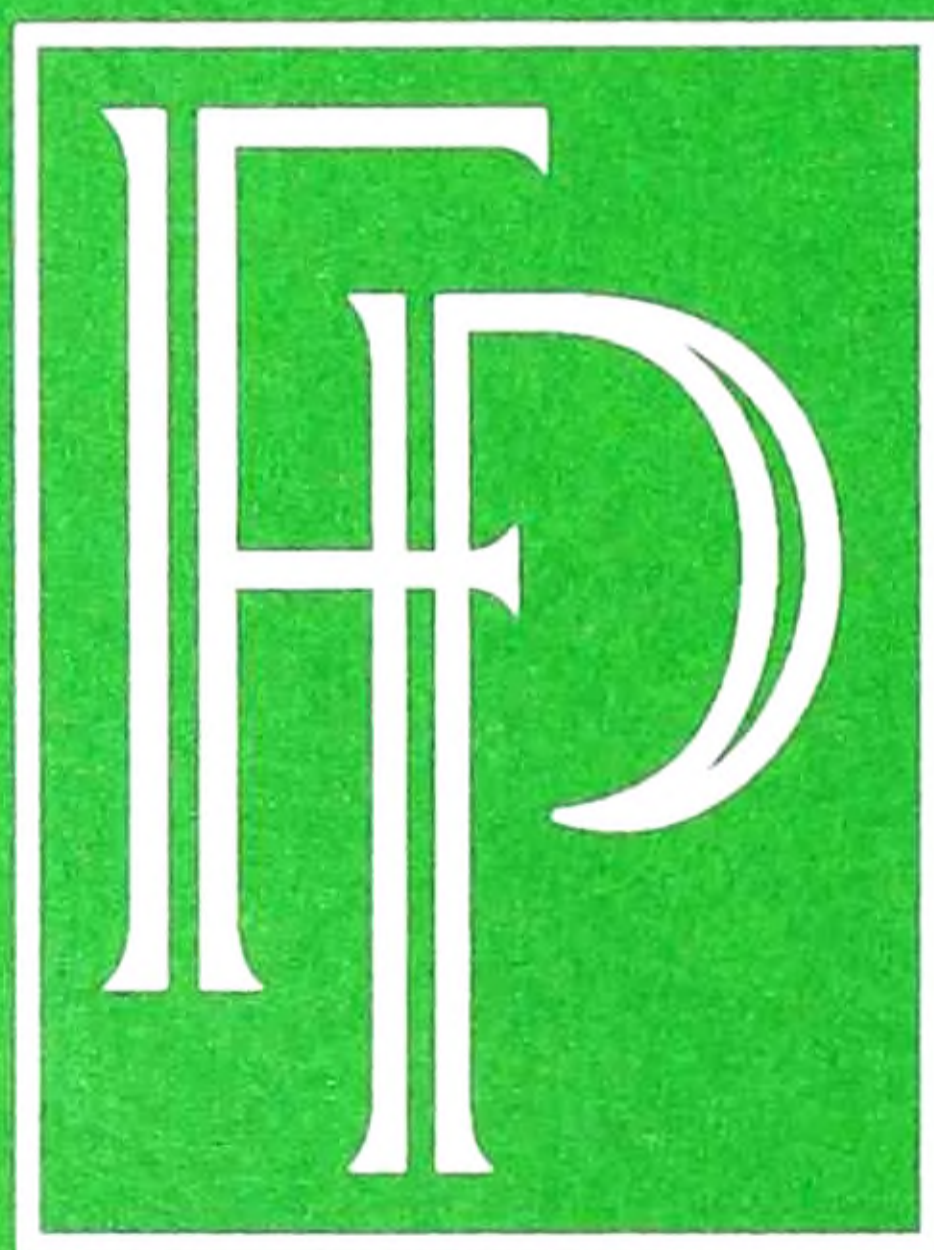
Respectfully submitted
Raffael DeGruttola, Treasurer

Museum of Haiku Literature Award

\$50 for the best haiku or senryu
appearing in the previous issue of FROGPOND
as voted by the HSA Executive Committee

dry heat—
to the same withered flower
a bee returns

Chuck Easter



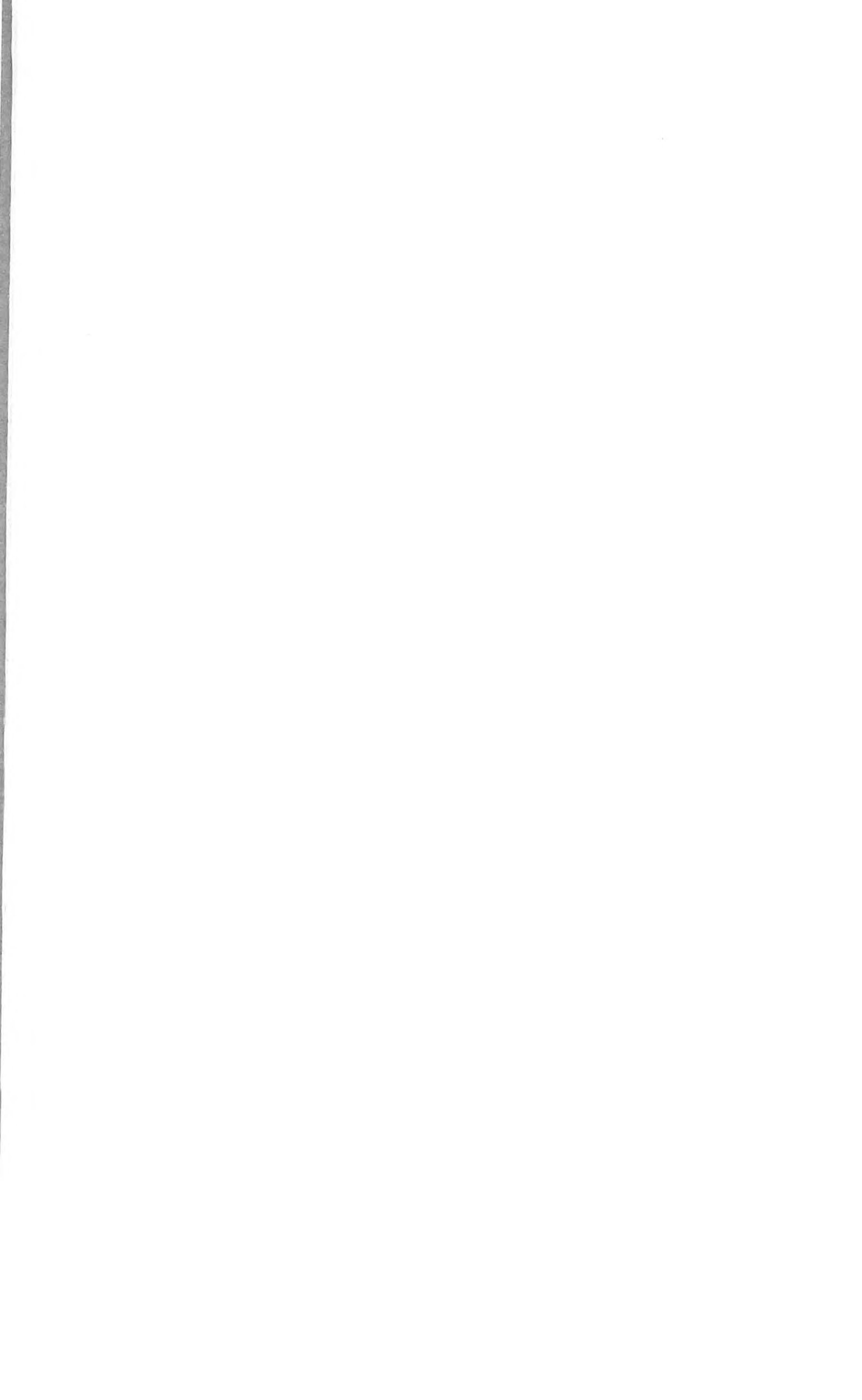


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