

FROGPOND XXIII:3



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

Established 1968

Co-founders: Harold G. Henderson and Leroy Kanterman

Officers

President: John Stevenson, Box 122, Nassau NY 12123

First Vice-President: Jerry Ball, 1710 Interlachen, Seal Beach CA 90704-4249

Second Vice-President: Alice Benedict, 176 Lakeshore Court, Richmond CA 94804-4598

Secretary: Howard Lee Kilby, P.O. Box 1260, Hot Springs AR 71902-1260

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Newsletter Editor: Charles Trumbull, 1102 Dempster Street, Evanston IL 60202-1211

FROGPOND Editor: Jim Kacian, P.O. Box 2461, Winchester VA 22604-1661

Regional Coordinators

Northeast: Lawrence Rungren, 1 Tanglewood Way N, Andover MA 01810-1616

Northeast Metro: Pamela M. Ness, 33 Riverside Dr. Apt. 4-G, New York NY 10023

Southeast: Stephen Addiss, 3040 Middlewood Road, Midlothian VA 23113-2167

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Plains & Mountains: Elizabeth J. Nichols, 690 San Juan Rd., Colorado Springs CO 80904

Southwest: Tom Lynch, 733 N. Raymond Street, Las Cruces NM 88005-2135

California: D. Claire Gallagher, 864 Elmira Drive, Sunnyvale CA 94087-1229

Northwest: Connie Hutchison, 13909 94th Avenue NE, Kirkland WA 98034-1877

Hawaii: Susan Marie La Vallee, 834 Wanaao Road, Kailua HI 96734

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President's Message

- The name of our organization contains three distinct ideas. The concepts of haiku and, to a lesser extent, society and our constructive interaction, have received plenty of attention and commentary over the years. I would also welcome more discussion of what is American about our practice of haiku. Some things have already been suggested. A sense that haiku should be printed with a generous surrounding area of blank page is in contrast to Japanese models and seems reflective of our North American landscape. Our struggle with the concept of kigo or season words is also informed by our geography, both physical and cultural.

At its inception, the Haiku Society of America had an ambitious sounding name. The Haiku Society of the New York Area might have been more accurate. We have since grown into and out of our name, with members from beyond the borders of the United States and the Western Hemisphere. I would like to hear more from poets and thinkers, both within and outside of the United States and North America, on the nature and effect, for better or worse, of what is American in our haiku practice.

- One thing I have learned about HSA this year is that its dues are too low to pay for its operations. We have been reluctant to raise dues because to do so could put membership beyond the means of some poets. In the interest of leaving the door open to those who are not able to afford more, I encourage those who can to make (or continue to make) contributions beyond their membership fees.

- My thanks to those who have made my year as HSA president a pleasant one.

John Stevenson

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)

Out of the night
and into this gray dawn—
the cawing of crows
Tom Tico

raising our cabin—
under the stacks of lumber
mice building their nest
Nancy Scott

fresh start
a spider's new web
on the laundry basket
Cindy E. Tebo

as slowly as possible
plum petal
falling
Brent Partridge

Spring run-off
washing
my floors
Alice Frampton

first star:
wishing I'd known our last good-bye
was our last good-bye

Cathy Drinkwater Better

cherry blossoms . . .
he and I have
different memories

Naomi Y. Brown

spring rain
making it hard
to finish this lie

Thom Williams

6
under the jasmine
where the cat is buried
sparrows

Robert Scotellaro

the war spring—
new death notices
at the billboard

Milivoje M. Krstic

sun showers
a stray dog runs
over the unmarked grave

Stephen Amor

distant church bells
the hour lost
on the wind

Michelle V. Lohnes

further away
than the sky—
the blue in the wilted morning glory

Gary Hotham

sun breaking through—
the white picket fence
zig-zags up the hill

Cyril Childs

After rain . . .
small boots empty
the puddles

Connie Donleycott

Blue blossoms—
twice, over coffee,
light light rain.

Lindon Stall

enough blossoms
to cut

some

Carolyn Hall

spring's height:
two strangers walking
perfectly in step
along the platform

Philip Rowland

8

northern visit—
the smell of narcissus
all over again

Paul O. Williams

drifting fog
blankets the boat
your warm hand

Merle D. Hinchee

spring equinox—
already sprouting
freckles

Carolyn Hall

evening heron . . .
taking advantage
of the time change

Robert Mainone

harlequin duck
preening itself—
tinted water

Emily Romano

spring dusk
the sudden whiteness
of a barn owl

john crook

the moon's shade—
a step past the lilacs
noticing them

Ellen Compton

The Cyber Pond

A. C. Missias

Well, finding myself in the summer doldrums, I decided it was a good time for another visit to the archives of the Shiki Internet Haiku Salon's mailing list (the last installment appeared in "Cyberpond #3", Winter 1998). Flipping through my "greatest hits" file from 1995 and 1996 I found several discussions that I thought would be of wider interest, and am thus going to excerpt slightly longer portions of each.

The first was a lengthy exploration of the nature of haiku (from the perspective of both philosophy and craft) between Richard MacDonald and Dhugal Lindsay. In the course of that discussion, Rick offered these thoughts on the role of inspiration versus the intellect in the creation of haiku:

Yes, I do think that haiku must be expressed with great consideration to technical devices as all poetry must. This is not to say that I think haiku should be contrived or appear to be contrived. I agree with the majority who feel that haiku is something that is experienced, and that successful haiku poetry is that which conveys the feeling effectively. In saying that, the implication is that the poems in reflecting a feeling are reflecting a persons feeling in the background of his/her nature contrasted or joined by the other elements of nature around him/her. So should the poem reflect some feeling relevant to human nature as a part of all nature, or is merely describing scenes alone enough? Back to structure: in the process of conveying a feeling via poetry, words are used, and one must consider the exact words to use, the order in which to structure them in their usage, essential rhythms that mirror, reflect, or deflect emotion or sensation ... must also be considered and where helpful should be used to full advantage, along with other elements of craft... Using this logic, then, to me,

even though haiku is instinctual in its being, the process of reproducing this intuitive feeling on paper or screen at its most effective makes the writing of it intellectual as well. The process becomes intuition -> intellectualization -> intuition where the middle section is the actual application of craft to precisely represent to original feeling for the reader to garner. How do you see it?

To which Dhugal replied (also in part):

Exactly. However one must be careful not to add too much logical intellectualization to the middle step. Your intellect can sense when different aspects of a poem go together without it really registering in the cognitive intellect. This is where “shasei” haiku usually come from. The core of the haiku is recognized by the intellect and jotted down... [T]he huge number of prospective haiku are then reread by the author and the best haiku selected to be kept.

|| ||

In the other major school of traditional haiku each haiku experience is nurtured and worked on until it crystallizes. If the poet feels that the experience has worth and has decided to put it into a haiku then it is up to the intellect (often cognitive) to shape the words and phrases to convey the moment as the poet felt it. It's not left to chance.

The modern school really stresses the intellect when making haiku. Although the original haiku moment doesn't change, the words and expressions used try to take the reader a step beyond the distant shapes in the haze that haiku usually convey to the reader. It's like using a lateral-like logical thinking process to understand a zen koan. Lots of mental jumps and you either make it or you don't.

At a later date, Dhugal also contributed this view of haiku craft:

When you finish making a haiku you have to ask yourself “can I substitute anything else for x word and still have the haiku work?”. If the answer is “yes” then you have to rethink the piece. For example... you would ask Could I substitute “forsythia” or “bare ginkgo branches” for “willow leaves”? If the poem doesn't suffer as a result, it has to be rethought. For me it still doesn't meld quite enough...

BTW if it melds perfectly then you also have to rethink the poem. Haiku have to share new perspectives with the reader and

if the reader feels a piece to be perfect they must have already been aware of the included Truth subconsciously without the poet needing to point it out. Good haiku shouldn't zap you, they should trigger an itch inside you. An itch that no matter how hard you try to find its source you can't quite scratch (consciously), only get close to the general area.

A second interesting discussion arose in response to the questions of several beginners about the distinction between haiku and senryu. The use of such terms is often confusing for those who are new to the genre (and a source of ongoing debate even among those well established in the haiku world), and thus leads to inquiries about what they mean and how the two poetry types may be distinguished. Several Shiki list members offered attempts to answer this question, over a period of a few months. First, this from Michael Dylan Welch:

Both haiku and senryu can be about nature or human nature. Both haiku and senryu can be serious or humourous/satirical. A serious poem about nature is certainly haiku. And a funny/satirical poem about human nature is certainly senryu. It's the *other* combinations that fall into the grey area and cause confusion. For example, both a serious poem about human nature and a funny poem about nature may seem to be either haiku or senryu. The point is, apart from the two types of poems where it is *clear* whether they are haiku or senryu, the distinctions don't really accomplish much. Just write your poems, enjoy what you write and read, and let "critics" worry about the classification.

|| 2

Followed a bit later by this musing from Kim Hodges:

From what I've heard and been reading, I think senryu tend to have more wit, even incisive wit, and perhaps social commentary. This is as opposed to the 'haiku moment' where the interaction with nature or life should lead to some insight, but perhaps of a deeper sort. I think it is often considered to be easier, more superficial. Yet there is a place for it, and sometimes one may want to do this deliberately. Of course, for most of us—especially when we deal with humor or social settings—we aren't sure which way we've gone.

But there is certainly humor in haiku. One of the mistakes

beginners (myself included in that) make is the idea that haiku should be self-consciously spiritual or elevated. After reading some of the masters, one finds they are very down-to-earth, make a point of using common language, and are often expressing whimsical or humorous insights. The idea here, I think, is to find meaning in the very humble and ordinary.

And finally this attempt, again from Rick MacDonald (after an extended quote from Yasuda):

...[I]t is clear, then, that haiku practiced in this regard is a lifestyle with a clear purpose to bring value and depth to the experience of life. So, to my mind, the biggest difference to what is haiku and what is senryu is one of attitude and perspective. Haiku speaks about life by creating experiences from experiences that speak directly to the value of life and living, by its power to absorb and then reflect the quality of an experience, and through all of this, to leave one with a sense of value in his or her own life.

Senryu, on the other hand, need not carry this burden. It may or may not come from a direct experience that when described leaves behind an “experience more like experience itself”. It may not speak to a value, but rather *about* a value. It may not make light *from* experience but make light *of* one instead. Senryu may be created in the comfort and safety of an armchair with the mind as the only road to be travelled, the only flower to be smelled, the only bottle from which to drink or the only begging bowl that one needs to carry. It can be cheap, quick, and directly stated. It can be bold, brazen, irreverent, purposeless.

To conclude this little trip through the archives, I'll include a short quote from Yoko Sugawa, who was sharing some longer sets of guidelines for what makes haiku work: “One cannot make good haiku simply by going about one's life in a day-to-day fashion. It is necessary to hone one's senses to the world around one and take an interest in all things great and small.” I hope this column has been of some interest, especially to those who missed the early Shiki days. For now, that's all from the Cyberpond!

first light—
the warmth of the grass
where the fawn lay

Tom Painting

spring weeding
a four leaf clover lost
in a sudden wind

Francis W. Alexander

gill-over-the-ground
the earth beneath white violets
violet

Elizabeth Hazen

|| 4_r

gray day
the air thick
with lilacs

Jeffrey Winke

falling asleep—
from quaking aspens
rainsong relayed

H. F. Noyes

Summit's full moon—
mist from the waterfall
lifting through forest cool

Rebecca Lilly

crowded pond—
the geese come out to drink
from rain puddles

Patricia Neubauer

15

mulling it over—
without a splash, a western grebe
surfaces

D. Claire Gallagher

backstroke
under cirrus clouds—
flow of my fingertips

Ruth Yarrow

abandoned cabin
the sound of a pond loon
through broken glass

Brett Taylor

Dad's house for sale
the strawberries not tasting
the same this year

Joyce Austin Gilbert

Raindrops
on the way to surgery—
the sunroof open

Daniel Schwerin

dust from the mountains—
a rainbow rises
on carwash mist

Rich Krivcher

16

damp morning—
some stones in the wall
still dark

Mark Brooks

bunny ears
above the clover
peace

Le Wild

deep in the river birch
after forty years
the nails we climbed

Judson Evans

pausing the mower—
a small green snake glides
to taller grass

Robert Brimm

17

sound of wings
taking off—imitated
in the bluebird's song

Brent Partridge

lost in a car lot . . . the Milky Way

Celia Stuart-Powles

moonlight
pushing my shadow
uphill

Louise Somers Winder

Independence Day . . .
slipping into the lake
for a midnight swim

Alice Frampton

sweltering airshow—
planes on the ex-
Marine's loud tie

Nina A. Wicker

sudden thunder
rumbling through the house
small feet

Kevin Smith

18

scared . . .
knocks the dirt
from his spikes

Michael Fessler

the bounce
of raindrops
on the basketball

W. F. Owen

Sunday stroll
a butterfly's shadow
ahead of me

Fay Aoyagi

garden pond—
a goldfish eats
the surface

Michael Blaine

19

through the white
cosmos blossom—
ant shadows

Pamela A. Babusci

holding dusk
in shadows behind the shed
white pheasant eyes

Merrill Ann Gonzales

summer evening . . .
fanning myself
with a paper moon

Stanford M. Forrester

The Conscious Eye

Dee Evetts

Homelessness is a topic that I have sidestepped in these pages for almost two years. This was due in part to some lingering doubts about the subject as a source or inspiration for haiku. Not on my own account, so much as given pause by opinions often strongly expressed.

At its most simplistic, the ethical or moral objection is to “making art out of other people’s misfortune”, thus perceived as a form of exploitation. My considered view is that the thinking behind such statements is both naive and confused. I would argue as follows. It is axiomatic that no subject under the sun is inappropriate to haiku, in particular, and to literature in general—neither vagrancy nor prostitution, not impotence, senility, or physical disablement. All are part of life’s pageant, or in less purple language, what we completely and collectively are.

What matters is not the subject, but the writer’s attitude. Is the reader invited to ridicule, to condescend, bolster a sense of safety and normality? Or, on the contrary, is there a spirit of enquiry, of empathy, and true compassion—founded on the underlying knowledge: there but for the grace of God go I? (Or more simply yet: *there go I.*)

I must be brief, or there will be no room left for examples. Yet in passing I want to mention a far more incisive critique, offered by John Stevenson. In

a recent conversation he speculated, “Could homelessness become the cherry blossom of our time?” Now there’s a disquieting question—which I shall leave hanging.

For reasons of space, I am ignoring work based on first-hand experience (Santoka, Tom Tico . . .) in order to focus on homelessness observed. Our first observer is Pamela Miller Ness:

daybreak
shifting his sack of cans
shoulder to shoulder¹

This poem stands out from the many I have received, for several reasons. There is no message or idea being paraded here. What we get is pure observation, acute and specific enough to make us feel the subject’s aches and pains, and thereby to enter—however briefly—into his life predicament. The piece is all the more effective for its avoidance of the term “homeless”, which being generic often hinders my perception of an individual as real as myself. (It is this formulaic aspect that troubles John Stevenson, I would guess.)

The four poems below exhibit a more standard approach to the subject. These are by Barry George, Michael Ketchek, John Dunphy, and Donald McLeod, respectively:

After the storm
he is rich in umbrellas
the homeless man²

windy day
stars and stripes waving from
homeless man’s cart³

flophouse
beneath the ex-boxer’s pillow
his scrapbook⁴

heart of the city—
a row of winos watching
the building excavation⁵

In each case the poet has taken a position that might fairly easily be paraphrased (readers may wish to try this). This is not to say that such a paraphrasing could replace the poems, for each has a life and validity of its own. These pieces succeed admirably on their own terms.

Tom Painting here offers us something to be pondered longer, perhaps:

photo exhibit
faces of the homeless
in black and white⁶

This eludes any attempt at summary. By pointing to a cliché of photojournalism, the poet may be suggesting how difficult it is for most of us not to view homelessness through a lens consisting of our own prejudices and idealizations.

An unusual angle is to be found in Ed Baker's

mowing the grass
worrying
the homeless⁷

22 Here there is interaction as well as observation. A feeling of tension arises from the potential conflict of interests—a collision of worlds usually held apart. The poem is not devoid of humor, which also works in its favor.

The same can be said of of this comically forlorn picture evoked by David Cobb:

cathedral front—
a drop-out sits with angels
made of stone⁸

He has conjured up uncannily my own memories of sleeping rough in Europe, after abandoning university. This was not real homelessness, to be sure. Yet a sufficient taste of it to glimpse how even vagrancy contains a lure that could become compelling. And this is the aspect that most unsettles us, I suspect, undermining as it does the sense of substance and identity conferred by our houses and apartments.

A suitable *envoie* is provided by Charlotte Digregorio, with this very quiet poem:

fog blankets
the downtown bridge. . .
homeless man vanishes⁹

23

As easily and anonymously as this the homeless slip from sight, and from our thoughts.



1. unpublished
2. *Point Judith Light*, Spring-Summer 1999
3. *Raw Nervz Haiku*, Vol. V, No 2
4. unpublished
5. unpublished
6. unpublished
7. unpublished
8. unpublished
9. *Modern Haiku*, Vol. XXVII, No 2

(*Submissions and recommendations for this column can be sent to Dee Evetts, 102 Forsyth Street #18, New York NY 10002. Please state whether previously published, giving details. Work may also be selected from general submissions to Frogpond, and other sources.*)

the waves
of the ocean poster—
oscillating fan

Molly Magner

blue mediterranean
beneath our window
the O in HOTEL

paul m.

gulls
each wave washes away
their reflections

Kay Grimnes

24

dolphin's arc
crossing the wave's arch
and its own shadow

Nikola Nilic

out of the fog
the great whale
bearing down . . .

Robert Gibson

hot train station
the sudden rush
of his cologne

Pamela Miller Ness

Delhi hotel
outside noises deepen
my meditation

Melissa Dixon

25

Everglades stillness . . .
a red dragonfly returns
to the same grass stem

Bruce Ross

a gust of wind
rocks the paper fan . . .
zig-zag of lightning

Emily Romano

heat wave—
my dream surfing on the hum
of the air conditioner

Yoko Ogino

breeze fluttering
her undone chemise
new moon

Gloria H. Procsal

sticky heat
the firefly's slow trek
up the laundry room wall

Francis W. Alexander

haiku
recited in one breath—
a thunder roll

Elizabeth Petty Bentley

26

power failure—
closing my book,
I listen to the rain.

Ramesh K.

Thunder—
I hug the cat
on impulse

Yasuhiko Shigemoto

heat wave
a pigeon hops downstairs
one step at a time

Doris Heitmeyer

my old neighbor
planting new marigolds
invites me to tea

sumita mukherji

27

they have more
of everything . . .
butterflies

John Stevenson

snow
in August—
crane among
tall rice

Jesse Glass

Another button
missing from my shirt
Last day of summer

Sean Reagan

fogbound
between silences
ship's bells

Gene Williamson

after the storm—
fishermen untangle nets
from trees

Neil Young

slanting sunrays
a glossy white heron glides
across the cypress swamp

Elizabeth Howard

28

autumn evening—
one fly buzzing the room
stops

Lee Giesecke

thinking about a man
I know is 'taken' . . .
three-quarters moon

A. C. Missias

autumn morning—
the startled quail
startles me

Connie Donleycott

motorcycle parked
the length of the prairie
under the wind

Page

29

zigzagging
thrushes
extend the bristle

Brandy Milowsky

watching
pampas grass waving
I missed your going

Ann Newell

after a week
of roughing it—the bite
of hot water

Larry Kimmel

The Practical Poet

Michael Dylan Welch

French impressionist Edgar Degas once said that “Painting is easy when you don’t know how, but very difficult when you do.” Perhaps the same could be said of haiku.

When one reads such observations, one cannot help but apply them to one’s own art, be it poetry, ballet, or arthroscopic surgery. Robert Spiess has for years offered an eclectic assortment of quotations with glosses and other comments in his “Speculations” column in *Modern Haiku*. Haiku poets, who attune themselves to seeing the suchness of things, and also to the “internal comparison” of one thing to another in juxtaposition, are also particular attuned, it seems, to noticing how good advice on any sort of writing might also apply to the art of writing haiku.

For example, one hallmark of contemporary haiku in English is objectivity—the facts, things, nouns, that make up the bones of haiku. If we see life and nature as a child does, with freshness and wonder, we cannot help but be awestruck and amazed. English novelist Arnold Bennett has this to say about objectivity and seeing freshly: “Every scene, even the commonest, is wonderful, if only one can detach oneself, casting off all memory of use and custom, and behold it (as it were) for the first time; in its right, authentic colours; without making comparisons. The [writer] should cherish and burnish this faculty of seeing crudely, simply, artlessly, ignorantly; of seeing like a baby or a lunatic, who lives each moment by itself and tarnishes by the present no remembrance of the past.”

Haiku poets do have a lunacy about them (something to do with so much moonviewing, maybe?); it’s an occupational hazard that seems to come with being passionate about the details of experience and observation. “Caress the detail, the divine detail,” as Vladimir Nabokov once said.

Surely haiku poetry is dedicated to such caressing. But there's a point of overkill. In her quest to be precise and specific, Anita Virgil once wrote a haiku about a particular fungus, identifying it as *Cordyceps militaris*. What could be more precise than a scientific name? But Eric Amann rejected the poem for publication because, as Anita said (in *On My Mind, Press Here*, 1989), "when specificity obscures, it is better to speak more simply." She says she learned the lesson of distinguishing between obscurity and clarity.

But there's more to the lesson, I believe, than simply being clear. By being too precise—that is, telling too much—perhaps a haiku leaves nothing to the imagination. Here's an observation on suggestion from American writer Sarah Orne Jewett: "A story should be managed so that it should *suggest* interesting things to the *reader* instead of the author's doing all the thinking for him, and setting it before him in black and white."

So too of haiku—one benefits from learning what to leave out. Dylan Thomas has a similar thought: "The best craftsmanship always leaves holes and gaps in the works of the poem so that something that is *not* in the poem can creep, crawl, flush, or thunder in." Likewise, Yoshida Kenko, author of *Essays in Idleness*, has noted that "Leaving something incomplete makes it interesting, and gives one the feeling that there is room for growth." And Mary Higgins Clark comments that, "As a writer, you paint strokes and leave suggestions so readers can create their own pictures. That allows you to know someone by a small action and it saves countless pages of explanation."

Passages from Henry David Thoreau are frequently quoted in regard to haiku (to that end I particularly recommend Mary Kullberg's *Morning Mist: Through the Seasons with Matsuo Basho and Henry David Thoreau* from Weatherhill, 1993). Here's Thoreau, on the subject of atmosphere and suggestion: "Sentences, which *suggest* far more than they say, which have an atmosphere about them, which do not merely report an old, but make a new impression, sentences which suggest as many things and are as durable as a Roman aqueduct: to frame these, that is the *art* of writing."

American writer and editor Judith Appelbaum once

wrote that "Writing from experience does not, of course, mean [simply] transcribing experience. You have the responsibility to sift and shape your material until it makes sense as a unit and until that unit can be fitted into the context of the reader's life." As an "unfinished poem," haiku depends heavily on the reader, and one of the challenges with haiku is to find that balance between too much suggestion and too much precision.

Knowing how specific to be in a haiku arises, I think, from reporting experience accurately. Here's a thought on accuracy and voice, from American novelist and poet John Gardner: "Nothing is sillier than the creative writing teacher's dictum 'Write about what you know.' But whether you're writing about people or dragons, your personal observation of how things happen in the world—how character reveals itself—can turn a dead scene into a vital one. Get exactly what is there. . . . Getting down what the writer really cares about—setting down what the writer himself notices, as opposed to what any fool might notice—is all that is meant by the *originality* of the writer's eye."

French writer André Gide once stated that "The most subtle, the strongest and deepest art—supreme art—is the one that does not at first allow itself to be recognized." Samuel Taylor Coleridge had a similar conviction: "Words in prose ought to express the intended meaning; if they attract attention to themselves, it is a fault; in the very best styles you read page after page without noticing the medium." Didn't Basho say something similar, that haiku is like a finger pointing to the moon, and that if the finger is bejeweled, we would fail to see the moon and see just the finger?

In a haiku the poet objectively presents certain facts of observation, relying on what T. S. Eliot called the "objective correlative" to convey emotion—that for every emotion, an object can be presented that objectively conveys or represents that emotion. To find such emotional correlatives, the haiku poet begins with astute observation, not just of the world around him, but of himself also. "The first secret of good writing," wrote American political columnist James J. Kilpatrick, is that "we must look *intently*, and hear *intently*, and taste *intently* . . . we must

look at everything *very hard*. Is it the task at hand to describe a snowfall? Very well. We begin by observing that the snow is white. Is it as white as bond paper? White as whipped cream? Is the snow daisy white, or egg-white white, or whitewash white? Let us look very hard. We will see that snow comes in different textures. The light snow that looks like powdered sugar is not the heavy snow that clings like wet cotton. When we write matter-of-factly that *Last night it snowed and this morning the fields were white*, we have not looked *intently*."

Indeed, the crafting of haiku requires discipline. American naturalist Rachel Carson has this to say on the subject: "The discipline of the writer is to learn to be still and listen to what his subject has to tell him." As French-American historian Jacques Barzun also said, "Simple English is no one's mother tongue. It has to be worked for."

33

William Faulkner, on purpose: "The aim of every artist is to arrest motion, which is life, by artificial means and hold it fixed so that a hundred years later, when a stranger looks at it, it moves again since it is life." Likewise, this thought from novelist Jeanette Winterson: "If truth is that which lasts, then art has proved truer than any other human endeavor. What is certain is that pictures and poetry and music are not only marks in time but marks through time, of their own time and ours, not antique or historical, but living as they ever did, exuberantly, untired."

E. B. White, on style: "Place yourself in the background; write in a way that comes naturally; work from a suitable design; write with nouns and verbs; do not overwrite; do not overstate; avoid the use of qualifiers; do not affect a breezy style; use orthodox spelling; do not explain too much; avoid fancy words; do not take shortcuts as the cost of clarity; prefer the standard to the offbeat; make sure the reader knows who is speaking; do not use dialect; revise and rewrite."

And finally, Ludwig Wittgenstein, on silence: "Whereof one cannot speak, thereon one must remain silent."

Many of the preceding quotations are from Good Advice on Writing, compiled and edited by William Safire and Leonard Safir (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1992). If you'd like to share favorite quotations on writing that also apply to haiku, please send them to me at 248 Beach Park Boulevard, Foster City, California 94404 USA, or e-mail me at WelchM@aol.com. Suggestions for future columns are also welcome.

haying time
horses' hooves
clopping in rhythm
Jack Barry

crossing the meadow
the hawk's shadow
out in front
Joann Klontz

October wind—
between rest and motion
a cold-eyed crow
Francine Porad

34

the greyness
goes right through us
autumn wind
Peggy Willis Lyles

Sun breaking through—
on the trail ahead
red maple leaves
A. C. Missias

Frost-etched window—
the teakettle whistle's
steady pitch

Rebecca Lilly

October chill
the smell of the steam radiator
back in use

Tom Gomes

35

election night—
the moon illuminates
a wisp of cloud

D. Claire Gallagher

Veterans' Day:
the flag folded over itself
outside a closed shop

Bruce Ross

lifting the veil
of the mourner
autumn wind

Nikhil Nath

late autumn leaves
scattered across
a trampoline

Richard von Sturmer

rain cold forest
my breath
part of the fog

Tom Gomes

Shinto shrine;
through delicate engravings
worm holes

Thomas Hoyt

36

driving home at five—
in my rear-view mirror
a blazing sunset

Frances Rhoads

night rain
down the window
streaks of light

Yu Chang

light snow falls
driving my father
to the nursing home

Michael Ketchek

a growing snowdrift
all around it
a drained sky

Maurice Tasnier

37

drifting snow on the porch . . .
far from here
she has my name

Charlotte Digregorio

a moonless night,
satellite dishes
half-filled with snow

Richard von Sturmer

freight train
a load of snow
going south

Max Verhart

in the pine woods
snowing
only under the squirrel

Elizabeth Hazen

a strong draft
as you enter
embers glow

Peggy Willis Lyles

steaming oatmeal
memories of childhood fall
off the spoon

Edward J. Rielly

38

the dryer steam vent
melting icicles
on the clothes line

Le Wild

winter night
the comforting warmth
of dishwater

Marc Thompson

scribbled late last night
illegible this morning
the year's first moment
Christopher Herold

the mousetrap
sprung
a deeper silence
ai li

39

new millennium—
July's hoarded fireworks
smoke up the backyard
Paul Watsky

tearing down the house
your long blond hair
in a phoebe's nest
Jack Barry

on top of everything
rain
John Stevenson

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.

after meditation
he sees the smudge
on his glasses

Robert Epstein

Brewed Awakenings
a wild-haired waitress
. . . doses

Jeffrey Winke

flea market—
seeing my old shirt
on her new husband

W. F. Owen

shipping the manuscript
at last
declaring its value

Peter Meister

on hold with the IRS
“Peter and the Wolf”
crescendoes

Veronica Johnston

from home
to the court
my poor ballhandling
Ayaz Daryl Nielsen

finding him homeless—
the terror in my father's face
lifted to mine

Michael McClintock

in the shadow of
(really doesn't matter)
a poem I let go
LeRoy Gorman

42

washing money
a bird rattles around
the rafters

Gregory E. Harrison

signing loan papers
the peace plant on the table
trembles

Kay F. Anderson

at the entrance
to the museum
graffiti

Veronica Johnston

beneath the foot
of the hero's monument
the tourist's shadow

Dimitar Anakiev

43

in the monastery
the click of my camera
too loud

Angelee Deodhar

finding his name
in the index
he pockets the book

Stephen Addiss

closing time
the barber combs
his hair

Cathy Drinkwater Better

small town café
the Greyhound schedule next to
the menu

Jen Jensen

his hands
reading travel brochures
rarely visit her

Steve Dolphy

cell phone
out of town
roaming charges

Jewel D. Rettenberger

44

a country drive—
the loud mooing
of my children

Robert H. Deluty

county fair—
the first prize lemons smaller
than the second

Paul Watsky

merry-go-round
the child waves
every ten seconds

Will Brideau

the top
still spinning
the child's eyes

Lloyd Gold

45

showing her off—
everyone talking baby-talk
but the baby

Ernest Sherman

the toddler's tantrum—
dad spoons deeper
into a bowl of jello

Anthony J. Pupello

Evening meals over;
next-door neighbor at her sink
gives a friendly wave

Robert Major

the clock chimes
 marking the hour moving on
 we smile at each other

Ronan

great-granddad's longevity
 sandblasting 19
 from his tombstone

R. A. Stefanac

Driving home
 from dinner at a friend's—
 the smell of strange soap on my hands

Eric Rutter

46

before the ballet
 particles of dust
 circle the footlights

Pamela Miller Ness

indoors
 her hair retains
 its windblown look

Kam Holifield

chill in the air—
mother-in-law's bowl
stuck in the dishrack

Anthony J. Pupello

Gripped
in his gnarled hand
his new work gloves

Tom Tico

47

bad news . . .
the doctor folding,
unfolding his glasses

Robert Scotellaro

After a stress test
the technician's remark:
"You can smile now."

Don L. Holroyd

IV pump
in the nurses' station
the drip of coffee

Marlene J. Egger

faded schoolbus—
the junkyard keeper
curled with a book

Linda Jeannette Ward

nearly at school—
the child stops
to admire a snail

Sheila Windsor

long first class
I finish
my dream

Steven Bleich

48

Spelling test—
the teacher's
squeaky shoes

Barry George

clock ticking
like a bomb
history almost over

Matt Burn

psychology exam—
one of the students
out-stares me

Cyril Childs

learning new words
at an upscale bookstore:
scones, gelato

Robert H. Deluty

49

lunchtime
the café fills
with gossip

john crook

memorial . . .
how beautiful
your reach

Joan Morse Vistain

tonight's lecture
on reincarnation . . .
I've heard it all before

Charles Scanzello

linked

forms

Tanrenga

sidewalk booksale -
a bright penny among
the crabapple petals
*posted on her dorm door
a love sonnet in Latin*

51

on a rock cliff
neither able to go up
nor down
*waking to cold toes
and a squabble of crows*

Larry Kimmel
Carol Purington

other rens

rentaboo

she asks if it will kill the iris to transplant during menstruation
i break thru my own taboos with wren friends
the 'thou shall not' commandments have a good reason for being
a healthy baby springs from the 'kissing cousins'
infidelity talk all the rage but the three monkeys for battered families
mixed-race child: hybrid vigor at its finest

rentattoo

the swaying gal on his chest is definitely not his mother
may still get a blossom petal behind my left ear
regarding tattoos the closest i'll come are annual flu shots
ritual scarring in circular patterns
onto wet skin the mysteries of Nepal are transferred
she pulls up her sleeve a nazi number

rencoo

52 *a morning dove weaves her call into my dream of sailing*
spring pairing of birds and humans
years ago the appearance of brooks' 'high/coo' magazine
no clone to send to Decatur World Conference
cooing over the new-born babies in hospital wing B
what is it then that doveturtles say

Marlene Muntain
Kris Kondo
Francine Porad

Treadmill

December 31 . . .
noon
by the sundial

Y2K—
a little before midnight
I rewind the heirloom clock

fireworks at midnight—
a piece of Y2K confetti
lands on the sundial

Y2K celebration—
the city park sundial
knocked on its side

what computers feel,
clocks feel, I don't know—
millennium's end
(after Bashô)

New Year's Day—
the computer keeps working
I feel about average
(after Issa)

January 2nd—
middle-aged jogger on the treadmill
running backwards

Knotholes

blows of an axe
the rising groan
of a tree that falls

a gentle rain darkens
the cedar mulchbed

on the shelf
mahogany black
ancestors

mother's cuckoo
still keeping
perfect time

magpies assembling a nest
from odd twigs and branches

sundown
a carpenter sips beer
on the porch he framed

Unfolding Miss July

rainy afternoon . . .
in the dollhouse bedroom
dad's old cigar box

thimbles on her fingers
the toddler plays piano

in the closet
with flashlights . . .
unfolding Miss July

first day of school—
cardboard in the spokes
held by a clothespin

two soup cans and a wire—
the beat of your heart

dressing up
in mother's old evening gown—
uneven nerf balls

55

*Jeanne Emrich
Michael Dylan Welch*

History As Slaughter At Ilium

the morning light
comes first to the cloud
shining over the ocean

The city is broken. Over the stones an acrid smoke, a stench that chokes us, so deadly even now, days after, birds are pulled down from the air, they flop helpless and die vibrating in the black scorched weed, soft dying birds in the fields and gardens, huddled among clay shards, the wine vessels from Priam's own house, goblets from his table, plates and combs Hecuba touched, and among the bone pieces and segments of women, children, men, they die—among cowards, merchants, saints, masons—all dead; the soft birds pulled down from the air dying in all that debris of passion, the terror and costs of love.

where the ships went down
on the ocean the porpoise
are playing

56 We who come after, we who just stand and look, remember Ilium's golden days: the light was bad, the hallways stank of urine, stale detritus, dissolute lives. We who come after, to whom all history comes to sit and rot beside our beds,—unbelievably, it doesn't matter, this abomination. We may suppose the Greeks took back their whore—who knows? Details are seldom sure, each age tells its own story.

a woman putting her eyes on
young men
who will touch her no more

Art yields its treasured despairs.

Lessons will be learned, certainly: already the scribes are busy with their tablets, scribbling words, marking

the bodies, sketching the unspeakable, yet note the quick bird, a bee in its beak; note the green vegetable world, here and there, pushing up through the ash and not one atom of care but hunger, the warring hum and hunger of bees.

Practical men, men without imagination, men just like those who died here in such numbers with their families, their dogs, their secrets, move at last into the rubble and smoke, amazed that the simple shovel remains a good tool for knowing the world.

darkening
the ocean, the light
slips away

57

Michael McClintock

Aboriginal Dawn

Minutes after leaving the Albury station, we rumbled over the Murray River bridge in a diminishing rain. the dawn was grim and heavy, creating a feeling that the darkened train moved without purpose or destination as it crossed a wide savanna on the earth's oldest continent. The rain-streaked windows garnered a soft and chalky light as the interior of the coach slowly and imperceptibly entered the realm of the third dimension. All of the passengers slept, except for the dimly-silhouetted Aborigine woman sitting directly opposite—I sensed that the battered suitcase at her feet held all she owned. Nodding shyly before opening her blouse to feed a ravenous child, she then turned to scan the ancient land as it wakened to another day.

sleeping passengers
the passing landscapes
of their dreams

Jerry Kilbride

A Boston Tea Party

A walk through her flowers slowly, interspersed with flying saucers, set by her husband to measure dust particles in the atmosphere. Through lilacs, columbines, calendula—to sit beneath a wide umbrella. She arrives carrying an earth-colored stoneware teapot with matching cups. The *piece de resistance*, one of her rhubarb cakes with meringue topping, follows. We tune into mutual interests—enquiries into the nature of life. I relax, soothed by the herbal tea with a spoonful of lavender honey. We talk of the Venus of Laussel, the earth goddess, and her dance; and I look at her, personified, across from me. An intimate hour passes.

“And if we must go, what other world will take our place . . .” she says.

spring afternoon
in and out of the teacup
lilac shadows

Giselle Maya

A Captured Memorial

58 In Ho Chi Minh City—the city Americans will always remember as Saigon—there are two museums devoted to Vietnam War memorabilia: the *War Remnants Museum*, housed in a compound used by the U.S. Information Agency during the war; and the *Revolutionary Museum* in the old Gia Long Palace, built in neoclassical style by the French in 1886, which served as the presidential palace.

In one display in the latter museum there is a plaque inscribed with the names of GIs killed when Vietcong “sappers” (commandos who infiltrated American facilities, often on suicide missions)

assaulted the U.S. embassy during the 1968 Tet offensive. It had been hung there as a memorial, but was left behind when American forces pulled out of South Vietnam. Since the fall of Saigon in 1975, it had been the property of the opposition.

on a plaque
in the enemy's museum
names of our dead

John J. Dunphy

Haibun

59

On a warm spring evening Echo and I were lying naked, or nealy so, on the lawn of the state capitol in Salt Lake City waiting for our bodies to return to normal. We were looking to the east and waiting for the full moon to rise over the Wasatch Mountains.

I mentioned the *moon illusion* of the moon looking very large when it just rises, but seeming to become smaller as it moves higher in the night sky. I said that I had been told that if you look at the rising moon from between your legs the illusion didn't occur, but that I had never tried it out.

As the moon just peeked above the snow capped mountains, Echo stood up and said, "I'll try it and see." She moved her feet far apart, and waited to bend down and look at the moon from between her legs.

just stand there
let me watch the moon rise
between your legs

We waited in silence until the moon had passed into her body, and then, still silent, she returned to my arms.

Robert Gibson

town cemetery

We walk down Main Street beneath a harvest moon, headed for the old cemetery. I point out the high school where Johnny Depp once made a movie, the town clock hand-wound by the same family for nearly two centuries, and favorite vintage houses—some are now home to antique shops or other businesses. Rumor has it that the historic brick two-story, now a ski shop, is haunted.

Entering the cemetery through the old iron gate, we step into a garden of headstones aglow in the moonlight. There are a few recent graves; but most hold founding families and their generations. A few have fallen; some are cracked or chipped, while others are worn nearly smooth. The oldest ones often bear verses or prayers. We stoop and read a few to each other, squinting in the darkness. The tiny markers on the graves of long-dead children make me want to cry.

There's a stone bench beneath a heavy-limbed tree. The moon makes us look like ghosts to each other. Surrounded by the dead, we sit and talk about mortality. I wasn't born in this town; but sometimes I think I'll die here.

60

evening walk:
two-hundred-year-old tombstones
lean into the moon

Cathy Drinkwater Better

Rain

Many people complain about the rain this spring, but the rain has always reminded me of when I was a young child growing up in a small village near Chungking, the wartime capital of China. A rainy

day meant there was no need to run to the makeshift air-raid shelter, an old coal mine just beyond the terraced fields of the village. The grassy trails to the shelter could be quite slippery even when dry. One time, after the siren sounded, I ran so fast to try to catch up with everybody else that I fell face down into the field below. Oblivious to the mud all over my body, my mother hugged me after she pulled me up from the rice paddy. I wish now that I had said "I love you," but I just squirmed out of her arms. We were the last ones to get to the shelter. "We are safe now," she smiled.

deep in the coal mine
my mother's grip
tightens

Yu Chang

Genesis

"The world, the whole universe, is an evolution—a genesis."
Teilhard de Chardin

Near the edge of the woods, the lowering moon peers through the shadowy branches of a tall pine that is playing toss and catch with an easterly wind blown in off the ocean from thirty miles away, while the first glimpse of daylight appears in the orchard below the house where a deer nibbling on a still green apple pauses—head and tail raised in caution—perhaps at the sound of the screen door closing behind the cat just let out.

walking the wrap-around porch
night into morning
one more time

Evelyn Lang

essays

Haiku Techniques

In my early years of haiku writing, I easily accepted the prevalent credo being espoused on how to write haiku. This was, sometimes implied and occasionally expressed, as being: if the author's mind/heart was correctly aligned in the "proper" attitude, while experiencing a so-called "haiku moment", one merely had to report on the experience to have a darn-good haiku.

One reason for rejoicing in the acceptance of this view, was that it by-passed the old 5-7-5 barrier crisis. This was certainly a plus for the whole 70s haiku scene as there seemed a danger of the entire movement bogging down in fights, arguments and broken friendships. Another advantage of this system of defining a haiku was that it bestowed near-religious honor on the author of a passable haiku. No one knew exactly why a particular haiku was 'good' but it was clear from the ku that the author had experienced a moment of enlightenment (or *satori* for the Zen inspired). If the moment was holy and the form fit in with the group's philosophy publishing the ku, the haiku was said to be an excellent one. This happened more often if the person judging the ku was a good friend of the haiku's author. Another plus for this viewpoint was it allowed endless articles to be written for magazines on the Zen aspects of haiku writing, and even fuzzier articles of how to prepare for, find, recognize, and advertise one's haiku moments. Books were even compiled around this semi-religious idea.

However, many of us, recognized that "haiku moments" were very much like other flashes of inspiration which, when transported into other media, became paintings, stories, dreams or even new color schemes or recipes. And many others shared the frustration of having a truly life-altering moment of insight and then never being able to write a decent haiku that expressed the wonder and majesty of that moment. They would ask,

what was wrong with me? Was I not spiritually prepared enough? Was I too common? Too inattentive? Too word-numb? Maybe too many of my Christian beliefs kept me from the Zen nirvana of haiku?

The truth is: probably all of the above can weaken one's ability to write good haiku. *Ouch*, that hurts. However, I felt rescued when I came across *Aware*—a haiku primer written by hand and illustrated by Betty Drevniok, who was at the time she wrote the book (early 80s I am guessing as it has no date in it), president of the Haiku Society of Canada. Among the many great tips for writing haiku (and obtaining the questionable Zenniness of Zen) I came away with her precept: "Write [haiku] in three short lines using the principle of comparison, contrast, or association." On page 39 she used an expression I had been missing in the discussion of haiku when she wrote: "This technique provides the pivot on which the reader's thought turns and expands." Technique! So there are tools one can use! I thought joyfully. And I practiced her methods with glee and relative (to me) success and increased enjoyment. Suddenly I could figure out by myself what was wrong with a haiku that failed to jell as I thought it should. I could ask myself if there was a comparison, a contrast or an association between the images and if this relationship was clear and understandable for the reader.

64

Slowly, over the years, I found by reading the translations of the old Japanese masters and the haiku of my contemporaries whom I admired, that there were more factors than just these three on which one could build a haiku. However, there seemed a disinterest in others wanting to study these aspects which I call techniques. Perhaps this is because in the haiku scene there continues to be such a reverence for the haiku moment and such a dislike for what are called "desk haiku". The definition of a desk haiku is one written from an idea or from simply playing around with words. If you don't experience an event with all your senses it is not valid haiku material. A ku from your mind was half-dead

and unreal. An experienced writer could only smile at such naiveté, but the label of “desk haiku” was the death-knell for a ku declared as such. This fear kept people new to the scene afraid to work with techniques or even the idea that techniques were needed when it came time to write down the elusive haiku moment.

At the risk of leading anyone into the quasi-sin of writing dreaded desk haiku, I would like to discuss and illustrate some of the haiku writing techniques which I have recognized and used. In order to avoid my seeming to accuse others of using techniques, the ku quoted are all my own.

1. The Technique of Comparison—In the words of Betty Drevniok: “In haiku the SOMETHING and the SOMETHING ELSE are set down together in clearly stated images. Together they complete and fulfill each other as ONE PARTICULAR EVENT.” She rather leaves the reader to understand that the idea of comparison is showing how two different things are similar or share similar aspects.

a spring nap
downstream cherry trees
in bud

What is expressed, but not said, is the thought that buds on a tree can be compared to flowers taking a nap. One could also ask to what other images could cherry buds be compared? A long list of items can form in one's mind and be substituted for the first line. Or one can turn the idea around and ask what in the spring landscape can be compared to a nap without naming things that close their eyes to sleep. By changing either of these images one can come up with one's own haiku while getting a new appreciation and awareness of comparison.

2. The Technique of Contrast—Now the job feels easier. All one has to do is to contrast images.

long hard rain
hanging in the willows
tender new leaves

The delight from this technique is the excitement that opposites creates. You have instant built-in interest in the most common haiku 'moment'. And yet most of the surprises of life are the contrasts, and therefore this technique is a major one for haiku.

3. The Technique of Association—This can be thought of as “how different things relate or come together”. The Zen of this technique is called “oneness” or showing how everything is part of everything else. You do not have to be a Buddhist to see this; simply being aware of what is, is illumination enough.

ancestors
the wild plum
blooms again

If this is too hard to see because you do not equate your ancestors with plum trees, perhaps it is easier to understand with:

moving into the sun
the pony takes with him
some mountain shadow

Does it help for me to explain how this ku came to be written? I was watching some ponies grazing early in the morning on a meadow that was still partially covered with the shadow of the mountain. As the grazing pony moved slowly into the sunshine, I happened to be focused on the shadow and actually saw some of the mountain's shadow follow the pony—to break off and become his shadow. It can also be thought that the pony eating the grass of the mountain becomes the mountain and vice versa. When the boundaries disappear between the things that separates them, it is truly a holy moment of insight and it is no wonder that haiku writers are educated to latch on to these miracles and to preserve them in ku.

66

4. The Technique of the Riddle—this is probably one of the very oldest poetical techniques. It has been guessed that early spiritual knowledge was secretly preserved and passed along through riddles. Because poetry, as it is today, is the commercialization of religious prayers, incantations, and knowledge, it is no surprise that riddles still form a serious part of poetry's transmission of ideas.

One can ask:

“what is still to be seen”
on all four sides
of the long gone shack

The answer is:

calla lilies

Or another one would be:

spirit bodies
waving from cacti
plastic bags

67

The ‘trick’ is to state the riddle in as puzzling terms as possible. What can one say that the reader cannot figure out the answer? The more intriguing the ‘set-up’ and the bigger surprise the answer is, the better the haiku seems to work. As in anything, you can overextend the joke and lose the reader completely. The answer has to make sense to work and it should be realistic. Here is a case against desk haiku. If one has seen plastic bags caught on cacti, it is simple and safe to come to the conclusion I did. If I had never seen such an incident, it could be it only happened in my imagination and in that scary territory one can lose a reader. So keep it true, keep it simple and keep it accurate and make it weird.

Oh, the old masters favorite trick with riddles was the one of: is that a flower falling or is it a butterfly? or is that snow on the plum or blossoms and the all-time favorite—am I a butterfly dreaming I am a man or a man dreaming I am a butterfly. Again, if you wish to experiment (the ku may or may not be a keeper) you can ask yourself the question: if I saw snow on a branch, what else could it be? Or seeing a butterfly going by you ask yourself what else besides a butterfly could that be?

5. The Technique of Sense-switching—This is another old-time favorite of the Japanese haiku masters, but one they have used very little and with a great deal of discretion. It is simply to speak of the sensory aspect of a thing and then change to another sensory organ. Usually it involves hearing something one sees or vice versa or to switch between seeing and tasting.

home-grown lettuce
the taste of well-water
green

6. The Technique of Narrowing Focus—This is something Buson used a lot because he, being an artist, was a very visual person. Basically what you do is to start with a wide-angle lens on the world in the first line, switch to a normal lens for the second line and zoom in for a close-up in the end. It sounds simple, but when he did it he was very effective. Read some of Buson's work to see when and how he did this.

the whole sky
in a wide field of flowers
one tulip

68 7. The Technique of Metaphor—I can just hear those of you who have had some training in haiku, sucking in your breath in horror. There IS that ironclad rule that one does not use metaphor in haiku. Posh. Basho used it in his most famous “crow ku”. What he was saying in other words (not haiku words) was that an autumn evening comes down on one the way it feels when a crow lands on a bare branch. I never understood this hokku until one day I was in my tiny studio with the door open. I was standing so still I excited the resident crow's curiosity causing him to fly down suddenly to land about two feet from my cheek on the tiny nearly bare pine branch. I felt the rush of darkness coming close, as close as an autumn evening and as close as a big black crow. The thud of his big feet hitting the bare branch caused the tiny ripple of anxiety one has when it gets dark so early in the autumn. In that moment I felt I knew what Basho had experienced. It is extremely hard to find a haiku good enough to place up against Basho's rightly famous one, so I'll pass giving you an example of my ku. But this is a valid technique and one that can bring you many lovely and interesting haiku.

8. The Technique of Simile—Usually in English you know a simile is coming when you spot the words “as” and “like”. Occasionally one will find in a haiku the use of a simile with these words still wrapped around it, but the Japanese have proved to us that this is totally unnecessary. From them we have learned that

it is enough to put two images in juxtaposition (next to each other) to let the reader figure out the “as” and “like” for him/herself. So basically the unspoken rule is that you can use simile (which the rule-sayers warn against) if you are smart enough to simply drop the “as” and “like”. Besides, by doing this you give the reader some active part that makes him or her feel very smart when they discover the simile for him/herself.

a long journey
some cherry petals
begin to fall

9. The Technique of the Sketch or Shiki's *Shasei*—Though this technique is often given Shiki's term *shasei* (sketch from life) or *shajitsu* (reality) it had been in use since the beginning of poetry in the Orient. The poetic principle is “to depict as is”. The reason he took it up as a ‘cause’ and thus, made it famous, was his own rebellion against the many other techniques used in haiku. Shiki was, by nature it seemed, against whatever was the status quo. If poets had over-used any idea or method his personal goal was to point this out and suggest something else. (Which was followed until someone else got tired of it and suggested something new. This seems to be the way poetry styles go in and out of fashion.) Thus, Shiki hated word-plays, puns, riddles—all the things you are learning here! He favored the quiet simplicity of just stating what he saw without anything else having to happen in the ku. He found the greatest beauty in the common sight, simply said. And 99% of his haiku were written in his style. And many people still feel he was right. And there are some moments which are perhaps best said as simply as it is possible. Yet, he himself realized, after writing very many in this style in 1893, that used too much, even his new idea can become boring. So the method is an answer, but never the complete answer of how to write a haiku.

evening
waves come into the cove
one at a time

10. The Technique of *Double-entendre* (or double meanings)—Anyone who has read translations of Japanese poetry has seen how much poets delighted in saying one thing and meaning something else. Only insiders knew the secret language and got the jokes. In some cases the pun was to cover up a sexual reference by seeming to speaking of something commonplace. There are whole lists of

words with double meanings: spring rain = sexual emissions and jade mountain = the Mound of Venus, just to give you an sampling. But we have them in English also, and haiku can use them in the very same way.

eyes in secret places
deep in the purple middle
of an iris

11. The Technique of using Puns—Again we can only learn from the master punsters—the Japanese. We have the very same things in English but we haiku writers may not be so well-versed as the Japanese are in using these because there have been periods of Western literary history where this skill has been looked down upon. And even though the *hai* of haiku means “joke, or fun, or unusual” there are still writers whose faces freeze into a frown when encountering a pun in three lines.

a sign
at the fork in the road
“fine dining”

12. The Technique of Word-plays—Again, we have to admit the Japanese do this best. Their work is made easier by so many of their place names either having double meaning or many of their words being homonyms (sounding the same). Still (there is one meaning ‘quiet’ or ‘continuation’) we have so many words with multiple meaning there is no reason we cannot learn to explore our own language. A steady look at many of our cities’ names could give new inspiration: Oak-land, Anchor Bay, Ox-ford, Cam-bridge and even our streets give us Meadowgate, First Street, and one I lived on—Ten Mile Cutoff.

moon set
now it’s right—how it fits
Half Moon Bay

13. The Technique of Verb /Noun Exchange—This is a very gentle way of doing word play and getting double duty out of words. In English we have many words which function as both verbs and nouns. By constructing the poem carefully, one can utilize both aspects of such words as leaves, spots, flowers, blossoms, sprouts, greens, fall, spring, circles and hundreds more. You can use this technique to say things that are not allowed in haiku. For

instance, one would not be admired for saying that the willow tree strings raindrops, but one can get away with making it sound as if the strings of willow are really the spring rain manifested in raindrops. This is one of those cases where the reader has to decide which permissible stance the ku has taken.

spring rain
the willow strings
raindrops

14. The Technique of Close Linkage—Basically this could come as a sub-topic to association but it also works with contrast and comparison so I like to give it its own rubric. In making any connection between the two parts of a haiku, the leap can be a small and even a well-known one. Usually beginners are easily impressed with close linkage and experiment first with this form. They understand it and feel comfortable using the technique.

7 ||

winter cold
finding on a beach
an open knife

15. The Technique of Leap Linkage—Then as a writer's skills increase, and as he or she reads many haiku (either their own or others) such 'easy' leaps quickly fade in excitement. Being human animals we seem destined to seek the next level of difficulty and find that thrilling. So the writer begins to attempt leaps that a reader new to haiku may not follow and therefore find the ku to espouse nonsense. The nice thing about this aspect, is when one begins to read haiku by a certain author, one will find some of the haiku simply leave the reader cold and untouched. Years later, returning to the same book, with many haiku experiences, the reader will discover the truth or poetry or beauty in a haiku that seemed dead and closed earlier. I think the important point in creating with this technique is that the writer is always totally aware of his or her 'truth'. Poets of the surrealistic often make leaps which simply seem impossible to follow (I am thinking of Paul Celan) where the reader simply has to go on faith that the author knew what he was writing about. This is rare in haiku. Usually, if you think about the ku long enough and deeply enough, one can find the author's truth. I know I have quickly read a link in a renga and thought the author was kidding me or had gone off the deep end. Sometimes it is days later when I will go, "Ah-ha!" and in that instant understand what the ku was truly about.

wildflowers
 the early spring sunshine
 in my hand

16. The Technique of Mixing It Up—What I mean here is mixing up the action so the reader does not know if nature is doing the acting or if a human is doing it. As you know, haiku are praised for getting rid of authors, authors' opinions and authors' action. One way to sneak this in is to use the gerund (-ing added to a verb) combined with an action that seems sensible for both a human and for the nature/nature to do. Very often when I use a gerund in a haiku I am basically saying, "I am..." making an action but leaving unsaid the "I am". The Japanese language has allowed poets to use this tactic so long and so well that even their translators are barely aware of what is being done. It is a good way to combine humanity's action with nature in a way that minimizes the impact of the author but allows an interaction between humanity and nature.

end of winter
 covering the first row
 of lettuce seeds

17. The Technique of Sabi—I almost hesitate to bring up this idea as a technique because the word *sabi* has gotten so many meanings over the innumerable years it has been in Japan, and now that it comes to the English language it is undergoing even new mutations. As fascinated as Westerners have become with the word, the Japanese have maintained for centuries that no one can really, truly comprehend what *sabi* really is and thus, they change its definition according to their moods. William J. Higginson, in *The Haiku Handbook*, calls *sabi* "(patina/loneliness) Beauty with a sense of loneliness in time, akin to, but deeper than, nostalgia." Suzuki maintains that *sabi* is "loneliness" or "solitude" but that it can also be "miserable", "insignificant", and "pitiabile", "asymmetry" and "poverty". Donald Keene sees *sabi* as "an understatement hinting at great depths". So you see, we are rather on our own with this! I have translated this as: *sabi* (SAH-BEE)—"aged/loneliness—A quality of images used in poetry that expresses something aged or weathered with a hint of sadness because of being abandoned. A split-rail fence sagging with overgrown vines has *sabi*; a freshly painted picket fence does not." As a technique, one puts together images and verbs which create this desired atmosphere. Often in English this hallowed state is sought by

using the word “old” and by writing of cemeteries and grandmas. These English tricks wear thin quickly.

rocky spring	coming home
lips taking a sip	flower
from a stone mouth	by flower

18. The Technique of *Wabi*—the twin brother to *sabi* who has as many personas can be defined as (WAH-BEE)—“poverty—Beauty judged to be the result of living simply. Frayed and faded Levis have the *wabi* that bleached designer jeans can never achieve.” Thus one can argue that the above haiku samples are really more *wabi* than *sabi*—and suddenly one understands the big debate. However, I offer one more ku that I think is more *wabi* than *sabi* because it offers a scene of austere beauty and poignancy.

parting fog
on wind barren meadows
birth of a lamb

19. The Technique of *Yûgen*—another of these Japanese states of poetry which is usually defined as “mystery” and “unknowable depth”. Somehow *yûgen* has avoided the controversy of the other two terms but since deciding which haiku exemplifies this quality is a judgmental decision, there is rarely consent over which ku has it and which one does not. In my glossary I am brave enough to propound: “One could say a woman’s face half-hidden behind a fan has *yûgen*. The same face half-covered with pink goo while getting a facial, however, does not.” But still haiku writers do use the atmosphere as defined by *yûgen* to make their ku be a good haiku by forcing their readers to think and to delve into the everyday sacredness of common things.

tied to the pier
the fishy smells
of empty boats

20. The Technique of the Paradox—One of the aims of the playing with haiku is to confuse the reader just enough to attract interest. Using a paradox will engage interest and give the reader much to think about. Again, one cannot use nonsense but has to construct a true (connected to reality) paradox. It is not easy to come up with new ones or good ones, but when it happens, one should not be afraid of using it in a haiku.

climbing the temple hill
leg muscles tighten
in our throats

21. The Technique of The Improbable World—This is very close to paradox but has a slight difference. Again, this is an old Japanese tool which is often used to make the poet sound simple and child-like. Often it demonstrates a distorted view of science – one we ‘know’ is not true, but always has the possibility of being true (as in quantum physics).

evening wind
colors of the day
blown away

waiting room
a patch of sunlight
wears out the chairs

22. The Technique of Humor—This is the dangerous stuff. Because one has no way of judging another person’s tolerance for wisecracks, jokes, slurs, bathroom and bedroom references, one should enter the territory of humor as if it is strewn with land-mines. And yet, if one is reading before a live audience nothing draws in the admiration and applause like some humorous haiku. Very often the humor of a haiku comes from the honest reactions of humankind. Choose your terms carefully, add to your situation with appropriate leaps, and may the haiku gods smile on you.

dried prune faces
guests when they hear
we have only a privy

In searching for these examples, I found so many more of my haiku which did not fit into any of these categories, which tells me there are surely many more techniques which are in use but are waiting for discovery, definition and naming. I stop here, hoping I have given you enough to pique your interest in the quest and new ways of exploring the miracles of haiku.

Blessed be!

Approaching Infinity: A Favorite Haiku

dark dark night
a leaf strikes the pavement
stem first

Christopher Herold

This poem approaches infinity. It is not just about a leaf falling, but about a mere *part* of a leaf's fall—that moment, and only that moment, when the leaf's stem first touches the ground. We know the leaf will immediately fall to its side and come to rest, but for the split second captured in this poem, the leaf has only just struck the pavement and remains balanced and suspended in time. We as readers benefit from the poet's sensitivity and revel in the poem's focused expression of what James Hackett and others have called the "eternal now." This delicate instant is made even more captivating by the time of day. The night is so utterly dark that perhaps the poet doesn't even see the leaf at all but only hears it. What subtlety to sense, by sound alone, that the leaf is landing stem first! The briefness of the moment is thus made more profound through the means by which it is perceived. Here, with this poem, the poet has crystallized one of the briefest moments I've ever seen in a haiku. By converging keenly on such a fleeting moment in time, the poem approaches infinity and, in the process, lets us touch the very face of timelessness.

75

Michael Dylan Welch

"dark dark night" first appeared in the 1993 *Ueno Bashô Festival Anthology*.

books

&

review

The Other Tradition

Ueda, Makoto (Editor and Translator) *Light Verse from the Floating World, An Anthology of Premodern Japanese Senryu* (Columbia Univ. P., 1999), 273 pages, 6"x10", perfectbound softback. \$17.50.

The cultural background of the birth and Golden Age of Japanese senryu is dominated by eighteenth-century mercantilism. Samurai values are replaced by merchant class values and recognizable issues of greed and corruption dominate the senryu collected here in fresh-sounding translations. The authoritative introduction traces the history of senryu from its beginnings in comic verse to the modern period. The nine pages on the post-Meiji Restoration senryu (1868 to the present) reflect Western values. In many ways these pages call for an anthology of modern senryu, although the few examples betray Western lyricism (38) in an example from the best-selling senryu collection *Yûfuren (The Love of a Married Woman, 1996)* and out-and-out satire (37):

with a man
who is merely a male
I look beyond the sea

That house of mine,
my secretary built it
without my knowledge

Ueda lets us know that politicians tried to evade prosecution by blaming their corruption on their secretaries. Like many of the ten thematic sections of this anthology, particularly the one on myth and cultural history, most of us will have to rely on Ueda's footnotes and commentary to uncover a senryu's humor. Yet the instruction into the period allusions is worth it! Nothing is sacred in this

rollicking time and Bashô, revered cultural heroes, priests, and the like take their lickings.

Perhaps the most amusing section is on professional corruption:

the official's little son—
how fast he's learned to open
and close his fist

“Sudden change for the worse”
a doctor always has
that escape clause

“There is no hell”—
to his mistress, the priest
tells the truth

somehow the palmist
always finds a line
that is no good

Related to these are conceptual puns, reminiscent of Garry Gay's weight lifter and Michael Dylan Welch's bald man in *Fig Newtons, Senryu to Go* (1993), in which there is a play on a person's profession or appearance. Here we find a ladder salesman escaping to a roof (84) and a chinaware seller whose “business crashes” (85).

78 Other subjects include love and lust, children, the seasons, and city life:

Her husband's
becoming a little too kind
weighs on her mind

now that he has a child
he knows all the local dogs
by name

till the rain lets up
he haggles over the price
of an umbrella

“Don’t let this worry you”
he says, then tells you something
that has to worry you

These observations have a contemporary, if not universal, feel and suggest the wry tone of American senryu writers like Alexis Rotella, Carol Montgomery, John Sheirer, and John Stevenson.

Some of these collected senryu sound like a Henny Youngman joke like the wife who doesn’t nag her husband when he has won some money (126). Others, like the example from *Yûfuren*, don’t seem to be senryu as we understand it. Here the pathos of an unwed mother’s attempted suicide (108) or a father reunited with his lost child (153) are offered as senryu because they depict human nature in what has been called “serious senryu.” They seem in fact a miniaturization of the serious themes found in Japanese short stories, fiction, and film. But most of the senryu take their form as humorous satiric drama, not unlike situation comedy, and parody, with art and the artist a common butt. And in many of these senryu we find the weaknesses of human nature exposed with a humorous ironic turn, not unlike the punch line in a joke. Ueda’s valuable anthology stands beside his collections of modern haiku and tanka and, unlike most reference works, it is a hoot to read.

No Free Ride

Cekolj, Marijan & Marinko Spanovic, editors *Otvoren Put (Free Road)* (The Croatian Haiku Association, Samobor 1999). 257 pages, 5.5' x 8", perfect paperbound. ISBN 953-6677-06-7. \$20 incl. postage. Enquire at 10430 Samobor, Smerovisce 24, Croatia.

At the end of a millennium which has shown a pretty much catastrophic face to the people of southeast Europe, the creation of good haiku nevertheless continues, even though most of the people typically earn less than \$50 per month as they recover from the most recent spate of atrocities. This fact speaks to the special position of haiku in the Balkans.

Following upon the publication of a haiku anthology haiku anthology of all the SE Europe—*Knots*, and the new on-line Balkan haiku network HASEE, (<<http://users.win.be/W0056898/hasee/hasee.html>>), comes the Croatian Haiku Anthology *Free Road* edited by Marijan Cekolj and Marinko Spanovic, the most successful tandem in SE Europe haiku. The volume brings together approximately 570 haiku poems from 77 authors, in Croatian and English.

The Croatian word for “free” in the title might also be translated “open”, which in some ways would be an even better choice for this work. The book opens in many ways to provide a consideration of Croatian and Balkan haiku in general. First of all the book continues a dialogue with the father of the Balkan haiku movement, Vladimir Devidé (the book is dedicated to him) which his students, especially Cekolj and Spanovic, have maintained for many years. So, the role of the teacher in haiku is one of the crucial points of the book.

Secondly, the authors open with a polemical question concerning the role of politics in writing haiku. The first such attempt was by Serbian critic Zivan Zivkovic in his voluminous and unique book

Gost sa Istoka (*A Guest from the East*, Nis, 1996). Most of the poets from our region at the time were writing “political haiku,” i.e. poems dedicated to the regime or some political aspect of life here. Cekolj and Spanovic include some of these poems in this volume, even though I believe no one really cares to see this kind of poem in any anthology:

Life without Tito ?
Separate the shine from light,
the symbol from the seeing!
Zvonko Petrovic

Professor Zivkovic has a name for this kind of poem: *Flattering Haiku*, which seems to be a regular practice in the Balkans, not to mention Japan. Of course this can be seen as a question of relationship between any poet and his chosen ideology (Zen, for example) or authority figure (Bashô, say, or Blyth).

Thirdly, Cekolj and Spanovic violated a national haiku taboo in the new Croatian state by publishing poems from the Serbian minority in Croatia which had left Croatia after it become independent from Yugoslavia. Such an example is a case of Serbian/Croatian poet Ljubomir Dragovic:

Old men are sitting . . .
warm day burning down
in their pocket-watches

This book poses many of the actual questions in today’s Balkan haiku practice. It is a good collection of poems by the best Croatian haiku poets. The English translations seem to be nearly as good as those in *Knots*, and provide a modern and international feel to this national anthology. A book worthy of our attention.

Dimitar Anakiev

Brief Review of Brief Volumes—A. C. Missias

Gourlay, Caroline *Through the Cafe Door* (Snapshot Press, 2000; \$6) Saddle-stitched, gloss cover, 32pp. Author is current editor of *Blithe Spirit*. Minimalist and impressionist poems, some previously published. Gourlay's work varies from wonderful to ordinary, but little here that I would call 'pseudo-ku'. On the whole, pretty high quality, some very striking moments.

ill in bed—
slow passage of a cloud
across the hill

Uchida, Sono *A Simple Universe* (Press Here, 1995; \$8) perfect-bound, black-on-black cover design, 48pp., one haiku/page. Author was president of Haiku International, haiku columnist. Introduction by Higginson talks about Uchida's role in "internationalizing" haiku, but also notes that much of this innovation is along the lines of including subject matter that Japanese would find 'exotic' (e.g. foreign places and experiences). They seem fairly traditional to me, and are arranged into seasonal sections; but within that context, they are very nice haiku, often quietly reflective, and I enjoyed reading them. As an added bonus, romaji versions of the original Japanese poems are given at the end of the book, for those who may get added meaning from the comparison.

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The autumn fly—
nothing but its shadow
to play with.

aki no hae onore no kage to tawamurestu

Kirschner, Joseph *Edges* (Deep North Press, 1999; \$15) Perfect bound, matte cover, includes sumi-e

44pp. The author's introduction contains an admission that not everyone will view these poems as haiku (some senryu or even an epigram), but that they are unified broadly by an exploration of the "edges of things" where transitions occur. I think it contains some of Kirschner's best work, and I enjoyed seeing it all in one place where I could get a sense of the poet. Not all the poems work for me, but many of them had a lot of resonance. The beautiful sumi sketches Lidia Rozmus are a real bonus—sometimes they seem to illustrate the poem on the same page, but often they are abstract and merely contribute atmosphere.

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old maple
a freshly severed limb
buds anyway

Cobb, David *A Bowl of Sloes* (Snapshot Press, 2000; \$6) Saddle-stitched, gloss cover, 32pp. Author is President of the British Haiku Society. I think that Cobb is a talented writer, and he captures a wealth of rustic moments here. However, for me this collection really highlights the difficulties in transporting the rich local language of the British Isles across the ocean: many of these poems use vocabulary, references, and grammatical constructs which are quite uncommon in the US, and a few were literally incomprehensible to me. Cricket I know something about, but:

stuffing the guy—	puddles
drafts of poems	at the Cenotaph
long ago in print	reflections

???

Much of his language is bound to endear him to the British reader, and rightfully so, but I fear that a lot of the richness of connotation is lost in "translation"

...

Pavic, Aleksander *A Scarecrow in the Snow* (Moment Book, 2000; \$2) Saddle-stitched, gloss cover, 32 pp. 17 poems in Cyrillic with translations. The essay by Dimitar Anakiev speaks of this book as a landmark for Serbian haiku, in that it is a collection of all strong poems, without any weak or pseudo-haiku, focussed on a haiku moment. I think, therefore, that its publication is part of an effort to direct the development of haiku in that country along lines consistent with contemporary international standards. I think it certainly succeeds, capturing both individual and historical moments.

green meadow	sleepless night--
mingled with flowers	the gust of wind
NATO leaflets	brings a dog's howl

Hardenbrook, Yvonne and Larry Smith, eds. *Haiku Poems* (Bottom Dog Press, "Pocket Poems" Series #4, 1999?; \$3) Saddle-stitched, gloss cover, 41pp. This is a very cute (tea bag icon) and inexpensive collection, so I looked forward to recommending it to haiku newbies near and far. It has a page each for a variety of authors, most quite well-known, with three haiku for each (often sharing a theme); also a brief informative introduction by Hardenbrook. The quality of the selections is quite variable (some just ho-hum, some rather metaphorical), and there is a somewhat shocking lack of attribution for previously-published poems (occasionally footnoted, generally omitted), even those that have been publicized within an inch of their lives . . . But I guess that I'd still have to say it's head and shoulders above much of what's out there in the poetry press world, and a definite value at this trivial price (about 2.5 cents per haiku!).

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mesmerizing moon
 all the answers
 so near

Jerry A. Judge

BOOKS RECEIVED

Pavic, Aleksandar *A Scarecrow in the Snow* (Moment Book, Novi Sad 2000). Afterword by Dimitar Anakiev. 32 pp., 4" x 5.75", saddlestitch softbound. No price or availability information provided.

England, Gerald, Editor *The Art of Haiku* (New Hope International, UK 2000). 80 pp., 5.5" x 8", perfect softbound. ISBN 0-903610-24-8. £10 from the publisher at 20 Werneth Avenue, Gee Cross, Hyde, Cheshire, SK14 5NL, UK. Information <<http://www.nhi.clara.net/hk.htm>>.

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Cekolj, Marijan *Tu I Sada/Here and Now* (The Croatian Haiku Association, Samobor 2000). 156 pp., 5.5" x 8", perfect softbound. ISBN 953-6677-11-3. No price information given. Available from the publisher at 10430 Samobor, Smerovisce 24, Croatia.

Childs, Cyril *Beyond the Paper Lanterns—a journey with cancer* (Paper Lantern Press, 2/206 Waterloo Road, Lower Hutt, New Zealand, 2000). 36 pp., 6" x 8.25", saddlestitch softbound. ISBN 0-473-06540-1. \$8US or £5 postpaid. Available from the publisher.

Gourlay, Caroline *Through the Café Door* (Snapshot Press, PO Bop 35, Sefton Park, Liverpool, L17 3EG, UK, 2000). 32 pp., 4" x 6", saddlestitch softbound in full color. ISBN 0-9526773-4-2. \$9US postpaid. Available from the publisher.

Gabudean, Ioan *Toate se Iniampla Azi/Everything Is Happening Today* (Bradut Publishing House, B-dul 1 Decembrie 1918 Nr. 234 Ap. 14, 4300 Targu-Mures, Romania, 2000). 32 pp., 4.25" x 8", perfect softbound. ISBN 973-8085-00-4. No price given. Enquire with the publisher.

Cobb, David *A Bowl of Sloes* (Snapshot Press, PO Bop 35, Sefton Park, Liverpool, L17 3EG, UK, 2000). 32 pp., 4" x 6", saddlestitch softbound in full color. ISBN 0-9526773-3-4. \$9US postpaid. Available from the publisher.

Morden, Matt *A Dark Afternoon* (Snapshot Press, PO Bop 35, Sefton Park, Liverpool, L17 3EG, UK, 2000). 32 pp., 4" x 6", saddlestitch softbound in full color. ISBN 0-9526773-5-0. \$9US postpaid. Available from the publisher.

Renschler, Robert *Michigan: Four Seasons* (privately published 1980). 70 pp., 6" x 9", perfect softbound. No ISBN. No price. Enquire with the author.

Welch, Michael Dylan (editor) *Countdown: HPNC 200 Members' Anthology* (Two Autumns Press, 478 Guerrero Street, San Francisco CA 94110, 2000). 20 pp., 5.5" x 8.5", saddlestapled softbound. No ISBN. \$6. Available from the publisher.

Tasnier, Maurice *From the Ninth Star on the Left* (Snapshot Press, PO Bop 35, Sefton Park, Liverpool, L17 3EG, UK, 2000). 32 pp., 4" x 6", saddlestitch softbound in full color. ISBN 0-9526773-6-9. \$9US postpaid. Available from the publisher.

86 Cekolj, Marijan *Dah Vjecnosti/Breath of Eternity* (The Croatian Haiku Society, 10430 Samobor, Smerovisce 24, Croatia, 2000). 200 pp., 5.5" x 7.75", perfect softbound with color illustrations. ISBN 953-6677-12-1. No price given. Enquire with the publisher. *The prolific Cekolj's first bilingual book of waka (tanka).*

Gorman, LeRoy, Editor *all going somewhere* (Haiku Canada Archives, 67 Court, Aylmer, QC J9H 4M1 Canada, 2000). 32 pp., 5.5" x 8.5", saddlestitch softbound. ISBN 0-920752-21-7. \$6US postpaid. *The Haiku Canada Members' Anthology 1999-2000.*

Addiss, Stephen with Jonathan Chaves and J. Thomas Rimer *old taoist* (Columbia University Press, 2000). 174 pp., 6" x 9", perfect clothbound. ISBN 0-231-11656-X. \$27.50. Available at bookstores.

Porad, Francine *The Perfect Worry-Stone* (Vandina Press, 6944 SE 33rd, Mercer Island WA 98040-3324, 2000). 28 pp., 5.5" x 8.5", saddlestitch softbound. ISBN 1-887381-16-3. \$6.50US postpaid. *The author's twenty-somethingth volume, and arguably her best.*

Zalokar, Jadran *Osmijeh Putnika/Smiling Wanderer* (The Croatian Haiku Society, 10430 Samobor, Smerovisce 24, Croatia, 2000). 92 pp., 5.5" x 7.75", perfect softbound. ISBN 953-6677-00-8. No price given. Enquire with the publisher. *Volume 18 in the Croatian Haiku Poets Series, featuring bilingual renderings of over 100 of Zalokar's naturalist poems.*

Plazanin, Darko, Editor *Samoborski Haiku Susreti Zbornik/Samobor Haiku Meeting* (Matic hrvatska Samobor, 2000). 72 pp., 5.75" x 8", perfect softbound. ISBN 953-6588-13-7. No price. Available from the publishers. *A brief but high quality bilingual (Croatian/English) anthology of the best haiku poets of Croatia.*

Falkman, Kaj and Sten Svensson and Shimizu Tetsuo, Editors *Aprilsnö* (Podium, Skeppsholmen, Slupskjulsvägen 34, 111 49 Stockholm, Sweden, 2000). 240 pp., 4.75" x 7.25", perfect softbound. ISBN 91-89196-19-8. No price given. Available on demand at bookstores which offer such services. *One hundred Swedish poems translated into Japanese, and one hundred Japanese poems translated into Swedish in an elegant & attractive volume.*

Ketchek, Michael *The Joy of Fatherhood* (privately published, available from the author at 125 High Street, Rochester NY 14609, 2000). 12 pp., 5.5" x 6", saddlestitch softbound. No ISBN. No price given. *The author's paeon to his most recent rite of passage.*

HISA

News

Virgilio Haiku Contest 2000

“We feel honored to have this chance to share moments in your lives. Many submissions had the snap and humor of senryu, but since this is a haiku contest, we didn’t choose them. A number of haiku not among these six were close to being selected. We chose the ones that for us evoked emotion, as we’ve tried to sketch in our comments. We find that fresh images, often two that reverberate with each other, work best. You don’t need to summarize your experience in the last line—readers can share what you’re feeling simply from the way you capture the experience. If yours was not one of the six we finally chose, please know that other judges may well have chosen different ones, and don’t be discouraged. Know that your poems were read and enjoyed, and that you have ahead of you a life of moments to capture. We hope you all keep writing!”

Ruth Yarrow and Kathleen Decker, Judges



spring morning	<i>Nathaniel B. Gach; 18, Gr. 12</i>
the dewy grass	<i>Marple Newtown High School</i>
holds the shape of her step	<i>Newtown Square PA 19073</i>

RY: There’s a freshness about this bright green haiku that captures the essence of spring. You can see where she stepped because the tender grass is squashed down, and the dew drops knocked off. But it’s a light, transitory step, just as the season itself is light and transitory. The step took just a moment, the length of a haiku. The poet has captured the feeling of this moment and the whole season in a few words.

KD: This poem has captured a fleeting moment, and the beauty of a beloved's footsteps, in very few words. There is an optimism in the implied word-play on spring morning, and springy step (leaving the imprint of her step).

Thanksgiving Dinner
Silence, and the
pendulum swinging

*Dave Ferry; 17, Gr. 12
Marple Newtown High School
Newtown Square PA 19073*

RY: This moment of silence, probably the grace before the meal, feels heavy and ponderous, like the pendulum of a grandfather clock. We can feel that strong emotions exist between family members. While the family is still for a moment, the poet is suddenly aware of the movement of the pendulum. Paradoxically, while this special moment is frozen like a snapshot, time moves on. The next Thanksgiving will not be the same; individual family members may come or go, and each may change. One thing is certain—they will all be older, because the pendulum is swinging. The poet has captured the contrast between stillness and movement in one moment.

90 KD: This had a different feel for me—I felt that the poet might have been capturing extreme tension. Thanksgiving, a time of joy and plenty, is suddenly arrested and held captive by silence. Perhaps no one dares to speak, or a *faux pas* has been committed, and the conversation is arrested.

a whale's last call
the blue sea—
red

*Elizabeth Frank; 17, Gr. 12
Wahlert High School
Dubuque IA 52001*

RY: Contrasts enrich this haiku. First is the obvious contrast between the translucent blue waters and the opaque red blood. The whale's last call contrasts with the silence of death. Its call reaches out while its

death closes in. The enormity of the whale and the distances in the sea contrast with the close immediate wound. The poet, in a few words, gives us a life and its end.

KD: I have little to add to this elegant comment except that the contrast in the warm color of life, the sea, (blue) is laid in stark contrast to the red of death, and find this exceptionally well done for a student haiku.

autumn afternoon
hole in the stone wall
a perfect frame

*Nathaniel B. Gach; 18, Gr. 12
Marple Newtown High School
Newtown Square PA 19073*

9 ||

RY: The poet might have just walked on by, barely noticing the hole in the wall, let alone what lies on the other side. But he or she stopped and let the neutral colors of cool stone frame the bright colors of flaming autumn. The “aw” alliteration in “autumn afternoon” and the “oh” sounds in “hole in the stone wall” are a perfect frame for the feeling of appreciating beauty that pervades this haiku.

KD: This haiku reminds us of the process of writing haiku—to stop and examine the moment, and to glory in its simplicity. In my mind, the author was hurrying past the wall, and was stopped by the view through the wall. A lover, or perhaps just a distant landscape, suddenly enriched by its quaint frame.

from Orion
a bat flits
to the moon

*Thomas Murray; 15, Gr. 9
School of the Arts
Rochester NY 14607*

RY: The poet submitted this in capital letters, which may indicate how he or she felt about this special moment. We feel it works just as well in lower case, so have taken the liberty to write it this way. In just the fleeting moment that it takes a bat to fly, it

appears to have linked the great distance from Orion's stars to the moon. Two cold bright distant points in the night sky are joined by a warm, dark, near fellow mammal.

KD: I particularly enjoyed the contrast between the bat, and the immensity of the dark night sky. Of course it is impossible to fly from Orion to the moon, but the bat is impossibly small next to the stars, and it is that contrast which is endearing, and striking.

mountain view photo
capturing
the tourist's breath

*Kate Chapman; 18, Gr. 12
Wahlert High School
Dubuque IA 52001*

RY: A photograph is taken in an instant, and captures an image. This haiku on the surface simply describes that picture. The poet, though, has written more than a matter-of-fact description. We can tell it's cold on the mountain, because the tourist's warm breath has condensed in the chilly mountain air. We can guess that the tourist may have climbed, and is breathing hard. But most importantly, the emotion slips through. We can feel the tourist's deep breath as she or he takes in the majesty of the scene, and then exhales in awe at its beauty. Not just the photo but the mountain itself has captures the tourist's breath.

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KD: There is another way to look at this moment. Perhaps the tourist's breath has given the mountain a faint haze in the photo. So perhaps the tourist's breath has given another dimension to the mountain in the photo, and they have added some mystery to the scene as it was captured on film.

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THE HAIKU SOCIETY OF AMERICA

Quarterly Financial Report April 1—June 30, 2000

Income

Balance	11,813.85	
Membership Dues	3,817.00	
Contributions	213.00	
Patron	1,000.00	
Contest Fees (MBA)	200.00	
Frogpond Samples	311.00	
Haiku Path	75.95	
Haiku Anthology	0.00	
Education Packets	800.00	
Miscellaneous	75.00	
Total Income		18,305.80

Expenses

HSA General Account		
Postage/Tel:	86.00	
Copy/Printing	0.00	
Supplies	49.78	
Best-of-Issue Award	50.00	
HSA Website	432.00	
Educational Packets	754.40	
Bad Checks Fee	7.98	
Newsletter Account		
Printing	1,660.00	
Postage	612.59	
Frogpond Account		
Printing	3,847.06	
Postage	790.42	
Total Expenses		8,290.23
Balance		\$10,015.57

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

whistling
he
hangs
the
birdhouse
he
built

Carolyn Thomas

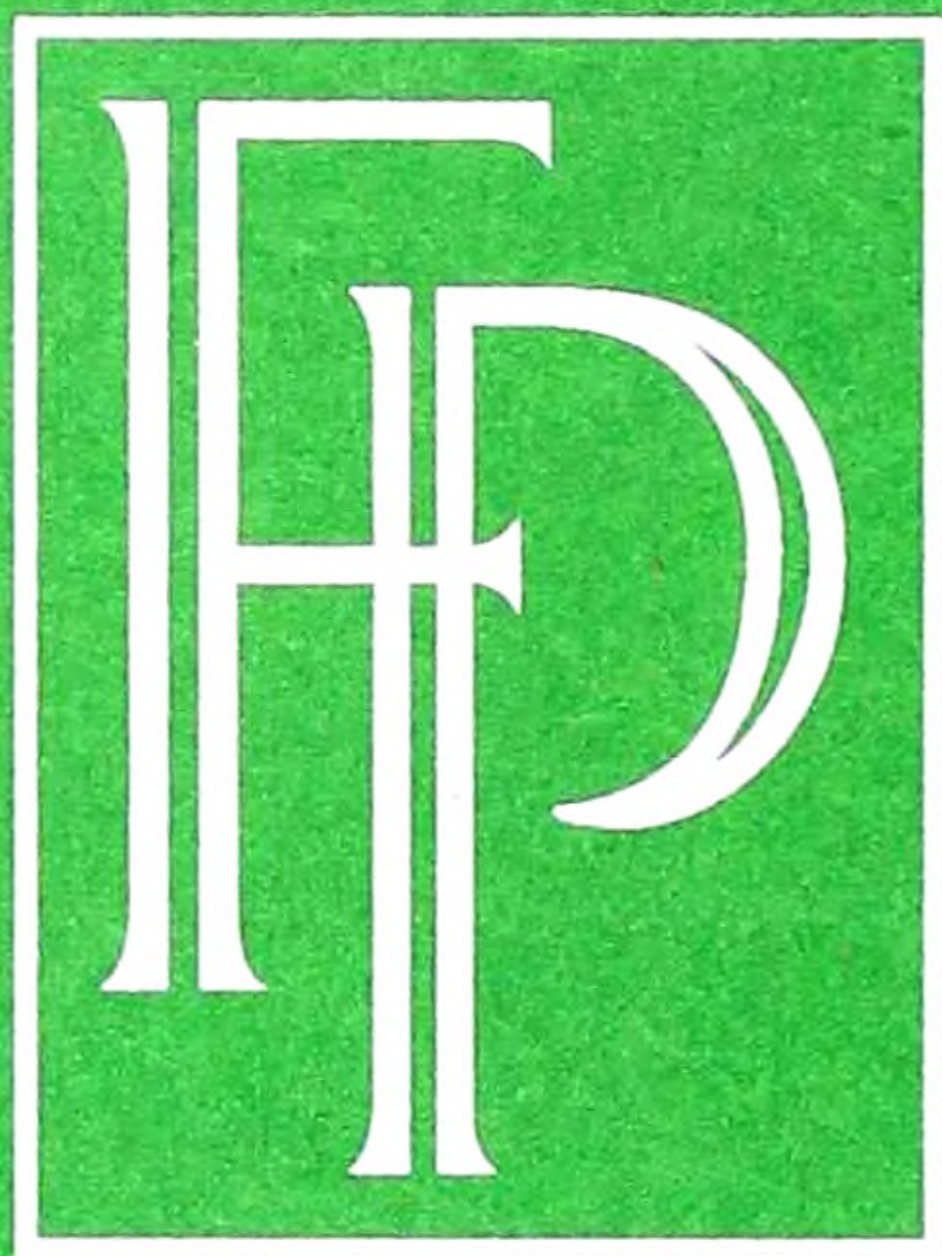




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