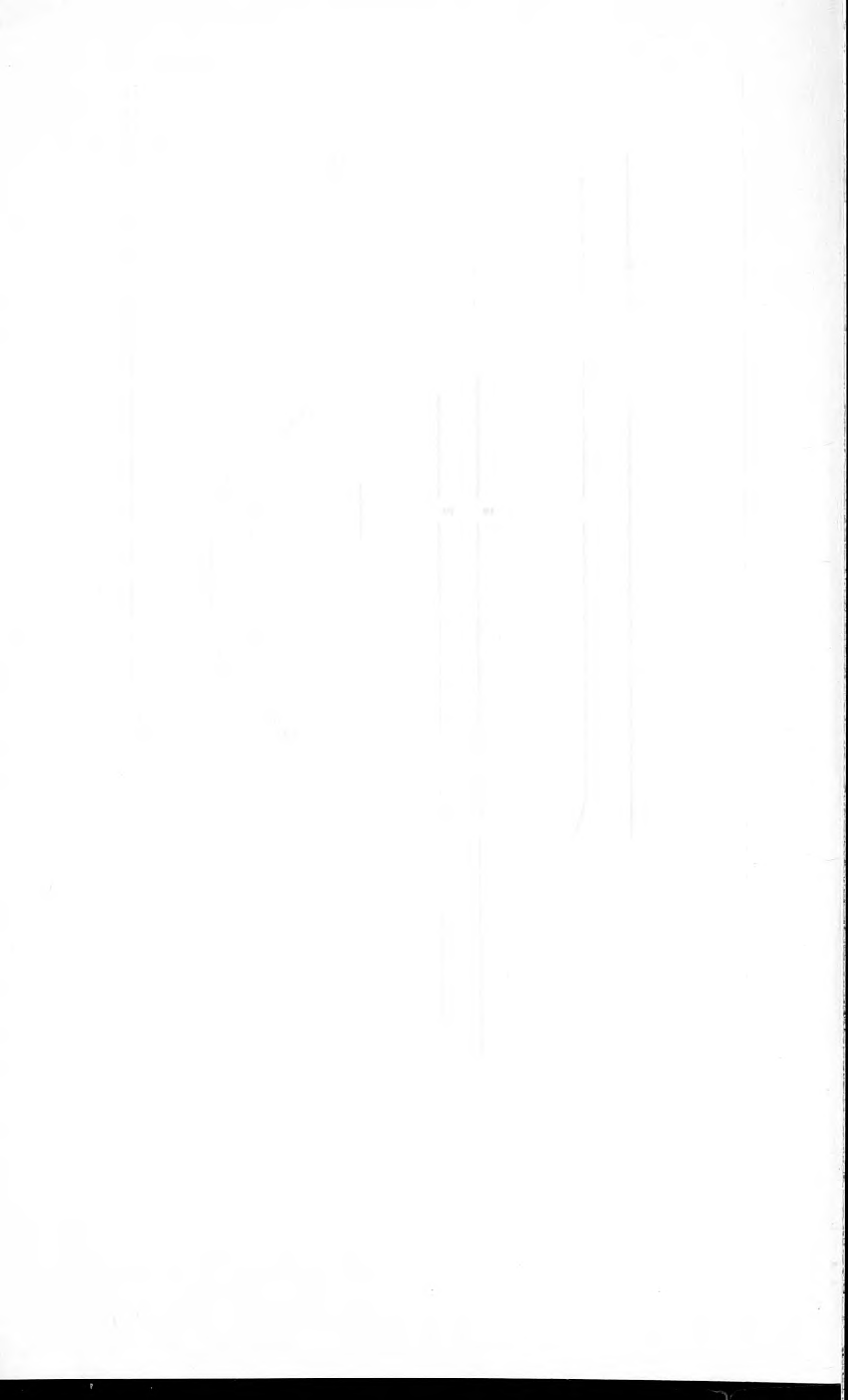




25th
Anniversary
Year

FROGPOND XXV:1



FF

HAIKU SOCIETY OF AMERICA
333 East 47th Street, New York, NY 10017
<<http://www.hsa-haiku.org/>>

Established 1968

Co-founders: Harold G. Henderson and Leroy Kanterman

Officers

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

First Vice-President: Pamela Miller Ness, 33 Riverside Dr. 4-G, New York NY 10023-8025

Second Vice-President: Stanford Forrester, 2 Fernwood Street, Wethersfield CT 06109-2321

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

Treasurer: John Stevenson, P.O. Box 122, Nassau NY 12123-0122

Newsletter Editor: Charles Trumbull, 2021 Harrison Street, Evanston IL 60201-5838

Electronics Media Officer: Dave Russo, 221 Danforth Drive, Cary NC 27511-3185

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: Brenda J. Gannam, 291 State Street, Brooklyn NY 11201-5820

Southeast: Wyman Rousseau, 9241 Heritage Woods Place, Charlotte NC 28269-0300

South: R. Paul Tucker, 125 Conway Terrace, Hot Springs AR 71901-2792

Midwest: Joe Kirschner, 2157 Ridge Ave. Apt. 2D, Evanston IL 60201-6200

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

Southwest: Naomi Y. Brown, P.O. Box 640286, El Paso TX 79904

California: Paul O. Williams, 2718 Monserat Avenue, Belmont CA 94002-1448

Northwest: Ruth Yarrow, 4417 Cascadia Ave South, Seattle WA 98118-1641

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

Alaska: Mark Arvid White, P.O. Box 1771, Palmer AK 99645-1771

Japan: Sosuke Kanda, 190-22 I-chome Kushibiki-chou, Ohmiya, Saitama, 331-0051 Japan

Subscription/Membership \$28 USA, \$30 Canada, \$40 Europe and \$45 elsewhere in US dollars by check on a US bank or International Postal Money Order. All subscriptions/memberships are annual, expire on December 31, and include 3 issues of FROGPOND as well as occasional Supplements. Single copies: US\$7 USA & Canada, US\$9 overseas, except 1992 & 1993 double issues, US\$10 US & Canada, US\$12 overseas. If xeroxed copies of out-of-print issues are *not* acceptable, *please specify* when ordering. Make checks payable to Haiku Society of America, Inc.; send subscription/memberships, renewals, and donations to the H.S.A Secretary, and back issue orders to the FROGPOND Editor.

Also send all changes of address and requests for information to the H.S.A. Secretary. Send all editorial material (with SASE) to the FROGPOND Editor. Send all other correspondence to the pertinent officers at their home addresses. **Mail sent to the permanent corporate address at the top of this page will be subject to delay in forwarding.** When a reply is required, SASE *must* be enclosed.

All prior copyrights are retained by contributors. Full rights revert to contributors upon publication in FROGPOND. Neither the Haiku Society of America, its officers, nor the editor assume responsibility for views of contributors (including its own officers) whose work is printed in FROGPOND, research errors, infringements of copyrights, or failure to make proper acknowledgements.

Editor's Message

With this issue, *Frogpond* enters its twenty-fifth year of continuous publication. During this time, it has had eight editors, has published (by conservative estimate) more than 12,000 poems, 500 articles, 500 linked forms, has moved from 32 typed saddle-stapled pages to 96 computer-set pages perfect-bound. In the same time, membership has grown from a couple hundred poets centered primarily in New York City to nearly a thousand poets around the world.

The occasion has prompted me to look back at the first issue of this impressive run, to discover not only where we've gotten to, but to see where we had begun. Sections of the inaugural issue included "Haiku News" (3 pages, including a 2-line Treasurer's report, with current balance \$414.30); "Croaks", being members' work (5 pages, a total of 28 poems); again, "Croaks", this time being articles and essays (10 pages, including an essay advocating "rime" in haiku by Raymond Roseliep); 12 pages of translations from the Japanese, or discussion of same; a page of recommended books, a page of current journals (only one is still extant: *Modern Haiku*).

English-language haiku, it would appear from this roster, was a long way from knowing what it was or even where it was going. In this first issue, fully half its pages are dedicated to Japanese poems and/or poetics.

This has changed now, and forever, and one of the seminal reasons for this change has been *Frogpond* itself. Over the years of its existence it has become one of the chief arenas in which serious poets whose form of choice is haiku might display their findings. At the same time, it has remained open to the work of newcomers and experimentalists. It has courted no school, and by retaining its independence has been inclusive of the best work of all. It is now possessed of its own shapes and structures, its own styles and sensibilities, its own, albeit brief, history, and most of all, its own future. I expect *Frogpond* to be there for the next twenty-five years as the youth of English-language haiku turns to maturity. Meanwhile let us celebrate what has been a remarkable quarter century of growth and accomplishment for the Haiku Society of America, its member poets, and its journal.

Jim Kacian

1 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.

deep breath of spring
the empty space inside
the Big Dipper

James Paulson

77th spring—
forcing forsythia
in the same old vase

Emily Romano

5

knowing your cough
but not your face—
invalid neighbor

Valerie Matsumoto

shadow of the coffin longer than the grave

Jon Iddon

re-reading
your final letter—
a fog horn in the distance

Carolyn Rohrig

sun on the Mt.—
each sag in the powerline
silver

Harold Bowes

the grey voice of old corduroy

Stephen Addiss

migrating geese—
what clumsy things
these arms are

Max Verhart

Oregon trail . . .
over the top of the moon
the rest of the world

an'ya

6
each swig
of the bottled water
the sky

Robert Epstein

well back
from the cliff
dandelions

paul m.

unwinding
the secret of the old fence
honeysuckle vines

Ross Figgins

Indian mound . . .
its circle of trees
whispering

Robert Mainone

evening coolness
a grosbeak sings
in a shaft of light

A. C. Missias

echo
a glimpse of bright water
through the pines

Robert Gibson

reeling
down the cobbled lane
scent of lavender

Janeth Ewald

rolling a cigarette
the canoe drifts
just where I want to go

Michael Ketchek

threatening rain—
the breeze brings
a mosquito

Paul Watsky

on the bank
fish holding the curve
of the bucket

W. F. Owen

the raindrop
the moon follows
into the pond

Merrill Ann Gonzales

june rain
the squeak of sneakers
in the grade school hallway

Karl Bakeman

rainy afternoon
the only child plays
dot to dot

Tom Painting

national anthem
my ice cream cone
dripping

Lynne Steel

accompanying the tune
of the ice-cream van—
thunder

Peter Williams

Her body
Spread on the blanket:
A quiet sea

Jack Galmitz

sunny dental office
bird on the windowsill
singing

Nina Wicker

cranes fading into clouds . . .
from whence but a life ago
this *déjà vu*

Robert Spiess

Your new blouse
so red the parrot
won't stop singing.

Michael Cadnum

10

distant thunder—
the glow of a hummingbird
at the porch light

Linda Jeannette Ward

dusk . . .
the window moth's feelers
vibrating

Bruce Ross

watering the grass—
a smile from the man
who passes by

Alice Frampton

vacant lot—
firemen practice
shooting at the sun

Barry George

|| ||

sunlight spills along the canal
another breath of solvent

John Edmund Carley

the long gap downstream
to the bridge's shadow
evening coolness

Burnell Lippy

summer drought—
the Zen garden
in bloom

Stanford M. Forrester

departing summer
my path through the lily pads
closes

Rick Tarquinio

wild silverberry
finding a new route
to the library

Yoko Imakado

News of a death—
The time it takes
to make out against the trees
the diagonal rain

Philip Rowland

12

Autumn on the road—
the procession of trees
and fresh tombstones.

Branislav Brzakovic

at the base
of the tombstone,
worms

R. A. Stefanac

autumn heat
the heavy click
of a turnstile

paul m.

afternoon sun
through golden leaves
the mare's whinney

A. C. Missias

13

last bale of hay
one strap holds
his overalls

W. F. Owen

Afterglow—
the graveyard path winding out
of a gold maple's shadow

Rebecca Lilly

moon almost full
my wife smiles
in her sleep

John O'Connor

The Conscious Eye

Dee Evetts

This past summer an old friend took issue with my commentary (in *Frogpond* XXIV:2) on Jane Reichhold's poem

Mother's Day
the daughter's call
about her divorce¹

I had read this as the daughter being caught up in her current problems, which are eclipsing the day's customary significance. My friend remarked that, as a woman, she must disagree with this interpretation. Unfortunately I never learned what her own take had been. My guess is that for her the poem is about solidarity between mother and daughter.

That is certainly one possibility—and no doubt there are still others. However, I question whether a reader's gender *per se* determines one's response to a piece of writing. I believe it is far more likely to be a reflection of our personal history and family relationships, and to an extent, our convictions and ideals.

A more fundamental question is this: if we were to ask the poet what he or she intended, would the reply necessarily prove one reader wrong, and the other right? Surely that would impose an excessively narrow definition of "meaning". I would argue that a poem such as that above is to be regarded as richly ambiguous, appealing to different readers in different ways.

In a recent letter, Alice Frampton wrote, "I guess eventually you'll have to handle the kid stuff." Duly prompted, I have been looking at a half-dozen poems relating to custody and access, including this one of hers:

between mom and dad
the clickity-clack
of suitcase wheels²

This can be placed alongside Tom Painting's

my toddler
helps pack her travel bag
co-custody³

Both of these poems, which depict very similar scenes, remind us how the children of a divorce often have to grow up more quickly than their contemporaries. How desirable this is—how advantageous or harmful in the long term—is debatable, with so many other factors to be considered. My own parents divorced when I was nine, and for a few years I became to some degree my mother's companion and confidante. A child psychiatrist might frown over this; I recall thriving on it.

Frampton's poem is the more complex of these two, with her "clickity-clack" evoking a child's busy—even fussy—concentration on a new skill. And there is a nicely understated play on "between", which works on both the spatial and relationship level. If there is a price for this subtlety it is that the piece, if read on its own without any supporting context, could give a different picture altogether—that of a family going off happily on vacation together.

Painting takes a simpler—almost naive—approach, and what his poem depicts is unmistakable. One could add, unremarkable. Yet the poet succeeds in making his scene genuinely touching, rather than sentimental.

All of this prompts me to consider how we can appreciate some haiku for their transparency, and others because they are more opaque. On the one hand Roberta Beary gives us a straightforward observation of body language:

custody hearing
seeing his arms cross
i uncross mine⁴

The message is clear, we enjoy the moment, end of poem. Yet the same poet can challenge her readers with

court-ordered visit
i take up her unfinished
crossword⁵

There are deep currents here. While “unfinished” is the crucial word (and we understand that it applies to far more than just the crossword) there is also a suggestion that the writer sees herself as holding on to her daughter, by appropriating the puzzle she has put aside. Here is a haiku that, in its way, achieves the density of a psychological novel.

The more open-faced poems by their nature tend to have the most immediate impact. They may depend for their effect on a surprising turn or twist, typically in the last line. An example of this is found in John Stevenson’s

Christmas Day
the exchange
of custody⁶

Using just six words, and with a gentle yet rueful irony, the poet conveys how profoundly the holiday season has changed for this family.

Stevenson’s poem can be contrasted with this by Claire Gallagher:

weekend custody—
granite boulders grow
from remaining snow⁷

What is the significance of the disappearing snow and the reappearing rocks? How do they relate to weekend custody? I feel that it all hangs together, without quite being able to say why. If pushed, I would hazard the notion that the natural phenomena provide this parent with a measure of time’s passing, on this all-too-short weekend. Then I reflect that the children too are inexorably growing: nothing remains fixed or given.

But none of this serves as an adequate explanation. As Edward Hirsch remarks in his lucid and passionate book *How to Read a Poem*: “The poem is an act beyond paraphrase, because what is said is always inseparable from the way it is being said.” Gallagher’s wonderfully elusive haiku serves as an apt illustration.

For purely circumstantial reasons, her poem recalls one that I wrote a few years ago:

custody battle
a bodyguard lifts the child
to see the snow⁸

I will leave this picture with readers, to interpret as they please.

|| 7

* * *

1. *A Dictionary of Haiku* (AHA Books 1992)
2. unpublished
3. *Brussels Sprout* XXII:2
4. *pocket change* (towpath anthology, Red Moon Press 2000)
5. unpublished
6. *Red Moon Anthology* 1996
7. *Frogpond* XXI:3
8. *endgrain* (Red Moon Press 1997)

(Submissions and recommendations for this column can be sent to Dee Evetts, P.O. Box 955, 128 East Broadway, New York, NY 10002. Please state whether previously published, giving details. Work may also be selected from general submissions to Frogpond, and other sources.)

catching a maple leaf
just before the ground—
Indian summer

Christopher Patchel

autumn clouds . . .
the little tick before
each petal falls

Bruce Ross

autumn evening
weaving
unweaving
between the cars

Philip Rowland

twilit chill;
clouds move
a boat for sale

Susan Marie LaVallée

cold moon
a wind gathers the garden
into itself

Maurice Tasnier

frosty morning
removing the layer
of floor wax

Connie Donleycott

autumn wind . . .
untying his bedsheet
from the crossbeam

D. B. Devlin

19

persimmon so sweet
it almost hurts
—the heart of Indian summer

Brent Partridge

autumn chill
a surfer alone
in the curl

Darrell Byrd

leftover foam
crackles in the bath
chilly night

Peter Williams

homecoming game—
a swarm of moths circles
the stadium lights

Lenard D. Moore

How far
will this stray dog follow me?
late autumn

Yasuhiko Shigemoto

river leaves
halfway to the bottom
All Hallows' Eve

Burnell Lippy

All Saints' Day—
a salmon runs through
a gap in the ice

Cindy Zackowitz

among leaves
the old man opens
a birthday card

David Athey

Cold morning.
Clatter of pulleys
against the flagpole.

Matt Fox

All Saints' Day
the shimmer of blackened cornstalks
in morning mist

Susan J. Kent

21

veterans day parade—
the homeless man stands
on a different corner

Kathy Lippard Cobb

passing the old man
again— but this time
facing him

Giovanni Malito

autumn gathering . . .
adding leaves
to the table

Connie Donleycott

black ice
a car slides into
the sun

Michael L. Evans

snowy dusk
parkinglot strangers exchange
whispered hellos

LeRoy Gorman

December shadows
across the beach the length
of the cold

Victor Ortiz

22

dwindling light
the telephone's silence
deepens

Robert Scott

she's late . . .
snowflakes
becoming snow

Giovanni Malito

swirl of snowflakes
around the lamppost . . .
mailing the Dear John letter

Emily Romano

tonight's moon
so cold
to the touch

R. P. Carter

23

the minty tang
of dental floss;
winter night

Tom Tico

snow lightening
the night . . .
listening, too

Edward J. Rielly

old barn—
the occasional squeal
of nails

Dan McCullough

in fading light
thin clouds over a distant ridge:
snowcreek's sound

David Landis Barnhill

winter solstice
the circling hawk
widens its range

Ferris Gilli

reaching the binding
in the middle of the book—
New Year's Eve

Efren Estevez

new moon
the scent of snow
on the dark wind

William Cullen Jr.

new year
we listen to noises
in the old house

Robert Gibson

emigrating—
the first plum blossom
in their garden

Maria Steyn

winter thaw . . .
the constant tapping
of grandma's cane

Ed Markowski

sickle
day
moon
snow
melting
in
the
bend

odd g. aksnes

Easter vigil:
candles pass the new light
face to face

Pamela Connor

purple lilac . . .
learning to breathe
all over again

Anne LB Davidson

senryu

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.

pressing the mute button
as a Tower collapses
my niece asleep in my lap

Carrie Etter

talk of war
our teenage son
allows a hug

Joann Klontz

27

recycling day
I stare at headlines
from September 10th

Dee Evetts

NPR—
between reports of war
snippets of Bach

Yvonne Hardenbrook

war crimes trial
the defendant tries to suppress
another yawn

John J. Dunphy

his former girlfriend
in a girlie magazine
that shy mole touched out

Max Gutman

working the garden
the gloves stay on to shake
the new beau's hand

LeRoy Gorman

in over my head
and a head shorter
than she is

Christopher Patchel

she's unhappy
I'm unhappy
scrod for dinner

Charles Douthat

she's late
my coffee
lukewarm

Ayaz Daryl Nielsen

menstruation
the child we talk
and talk of having
Linda Robeck

discussing divorce
yin and yang
on her wrist
Pariksith Singh

29

arguing in bed—
half your face in moonlight
half in the dark
Patricia Bostian

after angry words
we pretend to sleep—
moon through the shutters
Joyce Walker Currier

in the mountains
divorce papers
delivered by hand
Dee Evetts

baggage claim
two women compare
their swelling wombs
Lori Laliberte-Carey

weekend alone—
a show of hands
on the radio
Steve Dolphy

waiting for the meditation tape to rewind
Carolyn Hall

30

imagination . . .
approaching a box
marked "free"
John Stevenson

wishing fountain
outside the cancer clinic:
some heads, some tails
Alice Frampton

junk mail
for the dead:
“You may have won . . .”

Robert Henry Poulin

the suicide's name
in my address book—
not crossing it out

John Sandbach

31

birth mother's house
I begin at the end
of a snow-covered walk

D. Claire Gallagher

rented room—
still tripping over
the same sagging step

Jack Barry

hesitating
at the chalk tray
suddenly older

Michael Fessler

road map
coffee circles confuse
the detour

Elizabeth Howard

fjord overlook
the waiting bus driver
lights a cigarette

Gretchen Graft Batz

anglers casting glances

Tom Painting

32

watching a stoat
I become the landscape
he moves towards

Caroline Gourlay

daily run
the woman with a husky
on time

Yu Chang

counting the clouds
in the sky
my daughter—
always ten

Pariksith Singh

The youngest grandson
on my 74th birthday,
carefully counting candles

Don Holroyd

33

kneading dough
the push and pull
of grandma's breath

Ed Markowski

batter's box
an eleven-year-old winces
at Dad's voice

D. Claire Gallagher

applauding
the mime
in our mittens

John Stevenson

linked

forms

Snap of Her Suitcase

restitching a button
on my lover's shirt . . .
the end of summer

Matterhorn view
snap of her suitcase

the open road—
a cloisonné barrette
holds back the wind

35

withered pole beans—
unwinding the runners
she whispers a prayer

the shine of scotch tape
on the paperback's spine

guitar capo
raising the pitch—
Stand by Your Man

Ebba Story
D. Claire Gallagher

Tea Ceremony

tea ceremony—
whirr of the ancient kettle
stirs the cool air

*seizing the acorn
a squirrel flees*

**clocks turned back
the Sunday walk
overtaken by dusk**

decayed oak stump
woodborer camouflaged

*last of the moon
soundlessly, the door
opens . . .*

**he leaves for the office
with a bag of garbage**

from the A Train
seagulls in and
out of fog

*with closed eyes the saxman
lost in "Satin Doll"*

**feigning sleep:
the hesitant kiss
returned**

her sash untied—
the taste of wild strawberries

*green flag
a beach vendor opens
the first red umbrella*

**still searching hopefully
among the cheap souvenirs**

Old Glory
tattooed on her cheek
paparazzi take notice

*Frightened Coyotes Moon
hot ash cools in the horno**

**closing the fireplace
remains of a letter
crumble to the touch**

wing-filled sky
in El Niño's wake

*cherry blossoms!
the jogger's pink knees
don't stop*

**all six cylinders
firing smoothly**

on the dance floor
steam heat
sizzles from the radiator

*last drops of brandy
lace the eggnog*

**the angel's halo
at the top of the tree
lop-sided**

the Buddha moves
with ripples on the pond

*snail
to know
its heart beats too*

**a different drum
for a different dream**

on the telephone
news of his separation
mid-day sun

*her gold charm
placed to seduce him*

**not interested
he throws out
the fall catalog**

*pressed to each other
leaves in a book*

*full moon—
ironing a wrinkle
into his pants*

**a vote of no confidence
at the faculty meeting**

*in the dormitory
mirror, rain has
turned to snow*

*just misses the pine
new toboggan*

**slow progress:
both children avoiding
cracks in the sidewalk**

*the bell tower
strikes noon*

*a puff of wind
showers the headstones
with blossoms*

**the old gardener
predicting a record crop**

**horno = a dome-shaped outdoor oven, made of mud and
straw, used by the Navajo for baking*

Raffael de Gruttola
Marian Olson
Dee Evetts

solo sequence

Ants in the rice
an empty house
filled with a love note

As the rain falls
the distance between us
widens

Even the angles of the walls
are different
without you here

Such stillness
only
the palmetto bug jumping

Dingy trailer
in the forest
echoing my loneliness

Forgotten Locks

acacia in bloom—
discarding keys
to forgotten locks

a photo of her first beau
in the safe deposit box

all the “i”s
dotted with hearts:
her sixth-grade diary

beyond the iron gate
a gravel path
to the secret garden

the cat burglar
tries another window

monastery—
ivy covers
the wine cellar door

Walk Unseen

I HAVE BEEN LOOKING FORWARD to this walk for weeks, since the announcement that the trail would open. Now I am here at the beginning, the guide rope under my hand and my white cane ready for examining details.

another fragrance
the deep drones of bumble bees
alight and alight

Layer on layer of sound. Feet through leaves, pine needles, pebbles. The breeze on near and far trees. Creakings of limb against limb. Insects. Birds.

4 ||

higher octaves
beyond the background
a hermit's nest

The trail dips toward the scent of water. Other people are taking to the woods today. Footsteps come back up the path, the three-for-one scamper of small feet keeping up. A child's voice questions frankly. The adult's is embarrassed in the presence of a white cane.

the lap of lake shore—
trees and grass receive the waves
with much less ado

The rasp of swamp grass against my ankle. The sticky buoyancy of a young burdock tip. A crow's call. With the guide rope under my hand I can afford to wool-gather. Now an aroma so sweet it blocks out all other landmarks. The guide rope ends. Gravel grates underfoot. The sun warms my other shoulder. My driver's voice moves this way.

the air around
so full of honeysuckle . . .
lost going home

Elizabeth Hazen

Koi in Winter

IT'S TRUE—a snowflake screams as it enters water.

George had read my haibun about the dish at Arecibo that listens to the stars. “This is the other end of the spectrum—micro sound.”

George smiled at my alarm. We were in his backyard, near the koi pool, testing the sensitivity of sound equipment he was engineering for the next Martian probe, intended for landing at that planet's southern pole.

“What do you make of it?” he asks. “I thought you'd appreciate it. Our senses are gross. Imagine a disk the size of a quarter. Lay a human hair on it. The human hair represents the breadth of what we see and hear of the world. Poets write about the human hair—that's all.” He said this teasingly; he was always at me about my interest in poetry. “Of course, you're welcome to it. But for me that's not enough data to draw conclusions.”

I am unnerved by what I hear. Snowflakes are falling into a shallow pan of water. Thin, insulated wires run from the pan to a book-sized electronic device, into which our earphones are jacked.

George sniffs the air, like a dog. “Perfect conditions today, just a few flakes falling.” He turns to his meter. “Here, listen to this . . .”

I hear heavy panes of glass falling into a street and look at him in disbelief. There is screaming among the falling shards.

“ . . . a snowflake hitting this little metal plate,” he says.

That was four weeks ago. I gaze over the wall into his yard, at the wind-sculpted white. I listen to the sifting shadows. A bright half-moon shines hard in the dogwood tree, a splintered wedge.

I keep going back to what George had asked so casually. I wonder what he meant when he said, “What do you make of it?”

do they dream?
the fish pond
deep under snow

Michael McClintock

Land of Opportunity

ENRIQUE WORKS a 12-hour day six or seven days a week during the growing season, for less than minimum wage. He is exposed to dangerous chemicals, lacks hand-washing and toilet facilities, lives in a squalid, unsanitary shack. His life expectancy is 25 years less than mine.

When a union organizer asked a grower how he could treat Enrique and his fellow migrant workers so shamefully, the grower shrugged and replied, "It's easy. They're the new niggers."

migrant farm worker
his own bit of land
in the potter's field

43

John J. Dunphy

opening day

LITTLE LEAGUE STARTS EARLY with the decoration of a parent's truck in the team's colors. Being March and barely 8:00 a.m., sweatshirts cover the uniforms. But, we have our true Big League caps! Next, a raucous parade with parents and onlookers lining suburban streets in lawn chairs, then back to the field for ceremonies. As a coach this year, I sit with the players in right field for the introduction of league officers and a few ceremonial pitches—again, in the dirt low and away. Parents surround the field and fill the bleachers.

We stand for the pledge: *I trust in God. I love my country and will respect its laws. I will play fair and strive to win. But win or lose, I will always do my best.*

opening day
in separate bleachers
the boy's parents

W. F. Owen

Hit smells right

good. You say hit cost you twelve? Law I remember when you could get you 2 gallons for that much. Shake that up. Looky there at that bead. Hit sure makes a good one. See how long hit stays? Now that there used to be a sure sign hit was made good, but I tell you a honest fact you can't tell no more. There's a whole lot of them what puts them a bit of Clorox in hit. Now I tell you, boys, that stuff will make you a right smart bead too. But law that there is pretty as a necklace.

the moonshine:
the beads a necklace from my throat
to my stomach

You say you got this here on the hill above the swimming pool? You know I won't say nothing. Fact is that's where my daddy gets his'n. He usually goes of a evening and just gets him a quart. Then if he thinks hit's a good run, he'll go back of a morning and get him a gallon. He's been buying there for years. Now I hope you ain't been getting none from Fairview. They's mean over there. They all make theirs in radiators and I'll tell you sis that there stuff'll kill you. Myself I like that there Scotch.

mixing moonlight
and moonshine together
and the screech of a guinea

Marlene Mountain

Leaves

ANOTHER YEAR DAWNS. In the ancient, dying Sauratown mountains, I hike into the coldest day. Along Cook's Wall, my eye is caught. I stop, squat, and gaze into the long, rippled fall of earth. Endless twigs of bare trees weave through the ravine, layered, shining and shadowed with the sun. A breeze lifts, crinkling up the slope of ground twigs and leaves, and then is heard slowly along the pine ridge.

At the knob at trail's end, I sit on an outcrop of hundreds of millions of years. The sky is cerulean, empty to foothill horizon. Beside me, soil is being formed on cliffrock, dark grey and light, lichenized, sparkling.

Will this ache ever go? Or is it my own soil? Over the gap glides a single, silent raven. It dissolves into the powder grey of winter hardwoods that extends to mountains, and beyond. In the descending day, I hear the sound of brittle leaves freezing.

broken oak reaching
over the downsweep of leaves:
a ringing sky

45

David Landis Barnhill

Haibun

NINE AT NIGHT I'm in line to buy diapers at Kroger. The old couple ahead of me in their moldy clothes counting browned pennies. The clerk, his eyes averted, tells them "no", not enough, and the old folks fumble a moment, chuckle an apology, throw their loaf of bread off the conveyor belt. I offer to float them the difference, but no, we've gotta go, and they scamper out of the store, their step quick as the nip in the evening air.

My turn. The clerk scans my diapers and recites the price. I'd like, I say, to buy those folks that loaf of bread. The clerk snaps his hand and gives the command to the bagger to go and fetch a new loaf. But isn't it just right here? I say, motioning under the counter. The clerk shows me the loaf he'd thrown in the trash. "Store policy," he says. I shrug and hand him a Hamilton.

waiting for my change—
the store clerk and I talk
about the wind

Del Doughty

essays

Avant-Garde Haiku

While the basis for most of these new poetries has been a drive toward social—even spiritual—transformation, the experimental moves on their structural/compositional side have involved a range of procedures that bring out the opaque materiality of language as a medium, as against a “romantic” view of language as purely a transparent window toward an ideal reality beyond itself.

To bring this to a more specific focus within the context of haiku, I am reminded of the anti-“romantic” drive suggested by Masayo Saito’s *Short History of Takayanagi Shigenobu* (1923-83), “without question one of the few most progressive haiku poets in the history of haiku”:

Unlike orthodox haiku poets, most of whose works are a sort of predetermined translation or summary of what they perceive, Shigenobu sought to encounter a certain language cosmos that transcends reality in order to conjure up “the world that reveals itself only once and for the first time through written language.” His experimental attitude, naturally, got on the nerves of haiku poets in general, who insisted that his works were anything but haiku.

This modernistic approach to haiku is bound to be transgressive simply because it is first and foremost language-oriented. It calls into question the received notion that haiku can point to (even if it cannot represent) “an ideal reality” and thereby transcend language. The poems I shall now turn to extend this line of questioning while employing more concrete imagery than Ashbery’s haiku.

Robert Grenier’s Sentences

In 1978 the American Robert Grenier published *Sentences*, a “Chinese-style unfolding box” containing “500 note cards, each with a short poem printed in the center.” I cannot refer directly to this rare publication but the items included in the anthology *In the American Tree*, in Barrett

Watten's essay in *The L=A=N=G=U=A=G=E Book*, and in the essay, "Here and Now on Paper: the Avant-Garde Particulars of Robert Grenier," by Bob Perelman, provide a representative selection. As Perelman points out, the poems in *Sentences* may be brief, but are "not exquisite haiku; what [is] 'good' [about them] often seem[s] to lie in a much more recalcitrant direction" (52). For starters, they are not (judging from the 50 or so that I have seen)—"sentences"—grammatically speaking. But Perelman's chosen point of contrast is telling, and in our pursuit of avant-garde haiku, worth extending, given that it leads in "a more recalcitrant direction." (Besides, one wouldn't necessarily expect "exquisiteness" of a poetic genre in which—as Gabriel Rosenstock has pointed out—the poet "may—and can and must" write about things as plain as "parsnips".)

Grenier's *Sentences* are also recalcitrant, however, in that one may not so easily say what particular poems are "about." To cite an instance that calls into question the very notion of "concrete imagery":

two trees

As Perelman says: "Especially when seen in the center of the otherwise blank card 'two trees' reveal themselves as, primarily, two words" (48)—words "written," rather as Barthes wonders of haiku, "'just to write'" (Barthes, 82). In *Sentences*, visible language is as much the issue as concrete imagery. On the other hand, their written-just-to-write immediacy does often relate to a haiku-like "moment . . . an island in time":

except the swing bumped by the dog in passing

Here the transition between the said and unsaid is seamless. How much sense of presence would be lost if we were to preface the poem with the words "Nothing moving" (as Perelman suggests) so as to "complete" the sentence. The word "except," which frames the image of the moving swing, stands out in such a way that the image cannot float free of it (towards an "ideal reality"). Grenier is fond of starting his

Sentences, as it were, in mid-sentence, fore-grounding small words that usually go by unnoticed—articles, prepositions, conjunctions—as in the following:

or the starlight on the porch since when

Should this be read as an incomplete statement or a question, or both? Here as elsewhere in *Sentences*, syntactic deviation, more than unresolved tension between juxtaposed images, serves to create the poem's "open-endedness." This is not to suggest that ambiguity is alien to our model of "acceptable" haiku: as the BHS pamphlet mentions, "Writing a haiku in one line may add to the ways we can read it"—citing Ruby Spriggs' "my head in the clouds in the lake". But Grenier's poems suggest new, more literal (that is, less "readerly") ways of understanding the notion of haiku as a "half-said thing." One is also reminded of Louis Zukofsky's speculation: "a case can be made out for the poet giving some of his life to the use of the words *a* and *the*: both of which are weighted with as much epos and historical destiny as one man can perhaps resolve. Those who do not believe this are too sure that the little words mean nothing among so many other words" (quoted by Perelman, 50). In the following example Grenier follows this directive even more meticulously, staking the poem's "destiny" (concomitantly, a sense of his own) on mere vowels:

TWELVE VOWELS

breakfast
the sky flurries

As Perelman asks, "Is the field of experience here life or letters?" (Note also that *y* must be counted as a vowel.) "Meanwhile, beneath such calculations: breakfast in a cold world" (Perelman, 49). It would be difficult—indeed, beside the point—to say whether this poem is more "self-referring" or "referential"; the opposition between poem-making as abstract, quasi-mathematical artifice and as transcription of particularistic life-experience is imploded.

In light of my previous emphases, it should be noted that “TWELVE VOWELS” enacts its “project” within an otherwise “readerly discourse”: little “opaque materiality of language” in this instance, though we are invited to read some into it. In another, structurally similar instance, a relatively abstract and at first sight incongruous word, “corroborative,” is included in an otherwise readerly, image-oriented poem, to create an evocative if slight discursive shift in synch with an abrupt adjustment of visual perspective:

corroborative mountainous panorama
POPLARS
facing away

“Corroborative” is a word, I suspect, that most haikuists would steer clear of, but surely few would deny its effectiveness in, well, corroborating that “mountainous panorama,” furthered by its contribution to the syllabic disproportion (and assonance) between the first and the second-to-third lines. At the same time, it stands out because usually we think of more abstract statements, or evidence, as “corroborative.”

In my final, paired example a more “opaque” sort of corroboration takes place:

SNOW

snow covers the slopes covers the slopes
snow covers the slopes covers the slopes
snow covers the slopes covers the slopes
snow covers the slopes covers the slopes

“Perhaps,” as Perelman suggests, this “can be read as miming the depth of falling snow . . . but with the repetitions (between and within the lines) ‘snow’ and ‘slopes’ start to lose their referential bite” (47-8)—just, I would add, as snow loses its “bite” upon falling. “SNOW’s” loss of “referential bite” is figured more concisely in the following, separate poem, by the small word “with,” and in the significant difference between “the snow” and “snow”—as if the very essence of snow lay in such small aural and semantic shifts. It reads simply:

the snow with snow

The Haikuesque in Larry Eigner

By way of abrupt introduction to the more haikuesque poems of Larry Eigner, I'd like to juxtapose the following to the above:

the fleering snow
off the eaves
of the garage

Here the work of voice and ear achieves a more satisfying precision. The gradation away from the first, stressed 'f' in "fleering" to the unstressed 'ff' of "off" to the still gentler 'of' (anticipated by the pivot-word "eaves") takes on added precision against the "neutral" backdrop of "the's", and is complemented by the typographical indentations. Structurally, a great deal is going on in these 11 syllables; and yet they present only a single movement—just as, according to our model, "the best haiku" should. Indeed, a surprising number of the poems (written between 1959 and 1992) selected for inclusion in Eigner's 1994 collection *Windows / Walls / Yard / Ways* could well qualify as haiku. Take, for example:

the wind stirs up
shadows on a bush
the fading sunlight fills (42)

or

politics
suspended in snow (72)

or

freedom aging
the air
of this mountain (177)

or

pruning the tree
clearing the skies (184)

A comment made by Eigner's editor in a "Note on the Text" will come as no surprise to readers and writers of haiku: "It is difficult to suppress the inclination to remark that there is something improvisatorially 'Eastern' about these verses" (17). Likewise his description, elsewhere, of the work as "strangely cleared of personality." Small surprise, also, that the editor in question is Robert Grenier.

The relatively traditional, haikuesque line arrangement in the first instance above is rare among Eigner's shorter verses; typically, the spatial potential of the typewriter is intrinsic to "thinking with things as they exist" (Zukofsky) . . . while remembering that "only the Imagination is real" (WCW)—hereabouts using his eyes & ears," as Grenier puts it. For Grenier, this approach is epitomized by this quasi-didactic poem of Eigner's:

no past

no future

music

wake up in the head (15 & 53)

The poetics suggested by this poem corresponds quite closely to the following formulation as to "true haiku" by Robert Spiess: "The whole of life is in each moment, not in the past, not in the future—and thus a true haiku is vitally important because it is a moment of total and genuine awareness of the reality of the Now." In Eigner's poem it is "music" (the most obviously abstract of the arts) which would perhaps "waken" awareness—implying a poetics of attentive listening. What differentiates Eigner's characteristic approach from most haiku poets' is his attempt to have each

poem—as one of his most attentive critics, Barrett Watten, puts it—“account for its own existence . . . as Eigner says, ‘to find the weight of things.’” This entails a more careful weighing of words, a closer engagement with the poem’s process, than is customary among haiku poets. The distribution of words on the page is crucial, measuring unpredictable correspondences between language and self and the external world. The words too are “things,” are not merely “seen through.” Take, for example:

	(l i k e B u s o n	
light	s a i d	
Spring		
dark		
old		
candle		
smell	(54)	

53

—echoing Buson’s “Lighting one candle / With another candle; / An evening of spring” (in R.H. Blyth’s translation). Eigner has realigned the simplest elements of Buson’s poem almost entirely as nouns, at the same time bringing the poem to the sharper sensory focus of “smell.” The vertical one-line arrangement, the words wisping hesitantly to the right, delays and heightens the perception. The singling out and unpretentious choice of words (note the simple contrast between “light” and “dark,” “Spring” and “old,” providing a structural base for and a link with “candle // smell”), the typographically spaced, “lazily” aligned reference note; together these qualities seem to acknowledge that these are, after all, only words (partly derived from another’s words): words “telling the truth as if it were false,” to appropriate Yatsuka Ishihara’s belief as to “the essence of haiku.” They take on present “reality” in terms of what our “Imagination” makes of them. Otherwise (and also) they amount to nothing more than

pages and pages	
brief things	(73)

As if to underscore Ishihara's definition, there are instances in Eigner where the poem incorporates an "echo" of itself, as according to the traditional manner of reciting a haiku—with a difference:

Change of life? ah
 Living changes ah
 the dark rain
 the dark rain
 against the dull trees
 against the dull trees (104)

The modified, "secondary" version indicates the provisional nature of "both" utterances: the truth must be told "as if it were false" because truth-telling is never final, never absolute.

"Like Buson said" demonstrates simply Barrett Watten's identification in Eigner of "the autonomy of the noun phrase in the argument of the poem"—which marks another striking point of correspondence with haiku:

But this is not a phenomenon of Eigner's work alone; the constructive potential of the noun phrase, often involving a blurred distinction between reference and predication, is common throughout the poetry of the postmodern period. For example, the lyrical quality of the haiku, popularized during that time, is basically that of the independent noun phrase. . . . Moreover, this could be seen as a reaction to and rejection of the metaphysics of referentiality, canonized by the New Critics, that identified poetic means with such distancing devices as metaphor and irony while grounding meaning in a simplistic priority of the world over the poem. (Watten, 179)

Eigner's "syntactical jarring of the perceptual space" constructed by the poem (Watten, 176)—more extreme than that practised by most haiku poets—points up innovative possibilities for haiku in English. Take the following:

w i d e - r a n g i n g
 cloud over
 sunlit
 somewhere enough for a storm (163)

The presentation of the image without preliminaries in the first two lines is common practice in haiku, but a more abrupt “syntactical jarring” occurs between the third and fourth lines, where we are left wondering—left to imagine—what is “sunlit.” A form of predication (incomplete and unemphatic without a verb) completes the tentative proposition of the poem: “cloud . . . somewhere enough for a storm.” The omission of a referent after “sunlit” underscores this tentativeness and heightens the sense of perceptual immediacy. Effectively, the “syntactical jarring” of the poem’s “perceptual space” serves to prevent disruption of the “nounal state” into which the final thought dissolves—thereby achieving a haikuesque, Barthesian “suspension of meaning.”

In many other instances, Eigner introduces relatively abstract phrases, often of the sort that float around in one’s head, echoing with questionable meaning until set in juxtaposition with more concrete imagery—as in the following:

w o r l d w i t h o u t e n d

and the back yard
 phonepole
 branches
 sky
 transformer

(90)

Notice how the arc of swiftly observed objects (both natural and man-made) in the “world” creeps back toward the beginning, left-hand margin, so heightening the contrast with the idea of a “world without end.” As mentioned earlier, the inclusion of such abstract, generalized concepts is not generally deemed “acceptable” in haiku, though I wonder whether, say, the opening line of Gary Hotham’s “this day in history— / the air / the leaves fall through” is really any less abstract (despite the pointed “this”) than “world without end.” Clearly there is a place in haiku for such abstractions, set in juxtaposition with more concrete images, resulting not

only in a greater breadth of meaning but also a slightly more
“opaque” or tangential vision, perhaps truer-to-life:

s t i l l
s l i g h t
the cat up
the roof slope
in under the pane
reflecting the sun (181)

The image of the cat tucked away “under the pane” is clear enough, but the “moment” also entails the bringing of the perceptual “fact” to a focus, through the words “s t i l l” and “s l i g h t.” These words help to enact the uncertain process, as well as the final “product” of perception.

As perhaps the most haikuesque of the poets profiled in this paper, Eigner’s more senryu-like qualities also deserve mention. I’ll use the term loosely, to include moments of off-beat hilarity:

happy chicken
in life
must be
tasting so good (130)

—which could be read as satirizing both the callousness of meat-eaters and the humourlessness of the opposition! In a similar, but more poignant vein:

56
bowels
brewing
j’ai 50 ans (72)

—where the abrupt code-switch translates the otherwise rather unsavoury implications of “bowels // brewing.” Here’s an incredulous, yet utterly realistic observation on a related theme:

g a l e u n d e r t h e h e d g e
is that dog merely messing ?? (146)

More politicized and aphoristic :

O Jerusalem
fighting for a waterhole is one thing
a dispute over a graveyard is
something foolish (98)

Eigner's insistence, like the haikuist's, is on the priority of particulars over "absolutes" which, as he begins another poem, "are nothing / like the sky / an / illusion" (101). Finally, in a lighter "philosophical" vein:

Drive you
up
the wall
is right
but it all seems to be
windows and doors
on top
too (49)

57

A lengthy conclusion to such a speculative essay (with "windows and doors / on top / too," I hope) would be inappropriate. My broadest aim has been to challenge or at least complicate the received view that it is necessarily "concrete images, not abstract words, that carry the meaning and create the tension and atmosphere in haiku." The fact that no clear line can be drawn between "abstract" and "concrete" (word and world) can, as we've seen, enable new inflections of the haiku spirit. To explore such "language-oriented" possibilities may well be to challenge the haiku community's bias against the "intellective." But more important is the bid for a broader and more discriminating approach to the open, continually evolving question of the avant-garde vs. the traditional, made in the belief that such questioning may itself be a vital sign of a genuine "tradition" of English-language haiku.

Philip Rowland

Notes

John Ashbery, *Reported Sightings*, ed. David Bergman (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1991), 389. As Ashbery points out, to the extent that the avant-garde can be discussed at all, it must constitute “a tradition of sorts.” The Tzara quotation may be found in full and is further explicated in Jerome Rothenberg and Pierre Joris, eds., *Poems for the Millenium Vol. I* (Berkeley, LA & London: University of California Press, 1995), 289.

Poems for the Millenium, 8.

Hiroaki Sato, “The HSA Definitions Reconsidered,” *Frogpond* XXII:3, 73.

John Ashbery, *A Wave* (Manchester: Carcanet Press), 1984, 37-8.

Roland Barthes, *Empire of Signs*, trans. Richard Howard (New York: Hill and Wang, 1995), 70. Further references to this work are cited in the main text by author and page number.

Quoted by John Shoptaw in *On the Outside Looking Out* (Cambridge, Mass. & London: Harvard University Press, 1994), 3.

Ibid.

from the Introduction to *Hosai Ozaki, Right Under the Big Sky, I Don't Wear a Hat*, trans. Hiroaki Sato (Berkeley, California: Stone Bridge Press, 1993), 11.

See Shoptaw 260-1

The Haiku Anthology, ed. Cor van den Heuvel (New York and London: Norton, 1999), xxix.

Barthes makes the distinction between “readerly” and “writerly” texts in *S/Z*. Readerly texts, according to Barthes, “are products (and not productions),” whereas the writerly text aims “to make the reader no longer a consumer, but a producer of the text.” See *S/Z*, trans. Richard Miller (London: Jonathon Cape, 1974), 4.

Modern Haiku XXIX, Summer 1998.

In the American Tree, ed. Ron Silliman (Orono, Maine: The National Poetry Foundation, 1986), 20-25. Ed. Bruce Andrews and Charles Bernstein, *The L=A=N=G=U=A=G=E Book* (Carbondale and Edwardsville: Southern Illinois University Press, 1984), 235-7. Bob Perelman, *The Marginalization of Poetry* (Princeton, New Jersey: University of Princeton Press, 1996), 46-52. Further references to Perelman’s own words will be cited in the main text by author and page number. *Sentences* itself was published by The Whale Cloth Press, Cambridge, Mass. in 1978.

Gabriel Rosenstock, "The Stairway of Surprise," *Blithe Spirit* 8:4, Dec. 1998, 21.

Quoted by Perelman, 48.

Quoted by Perelman, 47. A "moment : an island in time" is a quotation from David J. Platt's preface to the British Haiku Society Member's Anthology 1998, Island.

In the American Tree, 24.

In the American Tree, 22 and Perelman, 48.

In the American Tree, 20-21.

In the American Tree, 22; Perelman, 47; *The L=A=N=G=U=A=G=E Book*, 236.

In the American Tree, 20.

Larry Eigner, *Windows / Walls / Yard / Ways*, ed. Robert Grenier (Santa Rosa: Black Sparrow Press, 1994), 72. All further Eigner quotations are from this book, and are cited in the main text by page number only, in most cases.

Rothenberg and Joris, eds. *Poems for the Millenium Vol. II* (Berkeley, LA and London: University of California Press, 1998), 301.

From Grenier's prefatory essay to Eigner, 15. Another useful "way in" to Eigner is Charles Bernstein's piece, "Again Eigner," in *My Way: Speeches and Poems* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1999), which is suggestive of further kinship with haiku. For instance: "This is a poetics of 'noticing things', where, as Eigner writes, 'nothing is too dull with material (things, words) more and more dense around you.' But equally, Eigner's is a poetics of coincidence, where 'serendipity' (contingency) takes its rightful place as animating spirit, displacing the anthropocentric sentimentality of much of the verse of our time" (86).

Quoted by Bruce Ross (ed.) in his Introduction to *Haiku Moment* (Rutland, Vermont and Tokyo: Charles E. Tuttle, 1993), xiv.

Barrett Watten, *Total Syntax* (Carbondale and Edwardsville: Southern Illinois University Press, 1985), 190. Further references to this book are cited in the main text by author and page number.

R.H. Blyth, *Haiku*, Vol. 2 (Tokyo: Hokuseido Press, 1992), 394.

Quoted in *Blithe Spirit* 8/1, editorial.

Hotham's haiku can be found on page 94 of *Haiku Moment* (see note 23 above).

(A version of this paper was presented at the London Conference of the World Haiku Festival 2000.)

Haiku Workshop: Inspiration

THINKING OF THE HAIKU I WROTE while living and working in Japan for two years—a large majority of those that were published (and the editors are teachers) have a spiritual quality. This is to say, a quality of interconnectedness is also about the qualities of liberation and of the invisible.

a paraglider
over the cherry blossoms—
rising yet again¹

The interconnection of themes when a haiku “happens” is often not appreciated even by the poet at the time of writing.

mountain church in rain—
their ardent spirits reflect
in what’s being sung¹

What is it that takes us out of, or beyond, our “selves”?

hundred of beanpoles
a dragonfly atop each
—brooding darkly²

60 Yet, of course, spirituality always has a background of angst.

on an old scroll—
under mustard leaves
a crane is cleaning its foot¹

In parallel to selflessness in the human world—is the timelessness of the natural world.

dragonflies have moved
up to the ridgetops
—where the sun lingers²

The energy of nature often shows us how to proceed beyond it.

snowstorm continuing—
the wooded mountains growing
more and more purple³

Japan is so humid that colors are lent great subtlety.

a sapling forest
and yet, somehow, the light seems
very far away²

Although sometimes things seem to be lost, the ecology movement in Japan has been very successful in the last twenty-five years or so.

6 ||

lily's opening
and seems to be inhaling
the light⁴

Often one learns what may be called spiritual lessons, from nature . . . inspiring.

Brent Partridge

-
1. first appeared in *Modern Haiku*
 2. first appeared in *The Mainichi Daily News*, English Edition, Tokyo
 3. first appeared in *Frogpond*
 4. first appeared in *Haiku Canada Newsletter*

(*Haiku Workshop* articles are welcome. Please send your work of 400 words or less to Editor, *Frogpond*, PO Box 2461, Winchester VA 22604-1661.)

books

&

reviews

Four Seasons

Louvière, Matthew *The Marsh and Other Haiku and Senryu* (Modern Haiku Press, 2001). No ISBN. 71 pages. 5.5" x 7" perfect softbound. No price. Enquiries to the publisher at Box 1752, Madison, WI 53701.

One of the great debates surrounding the haiku today is whether it should be a local or international poem. Haiku are now being composed in Japan, Canada, the U.S., Britain, Australia, and the Balkans. The question is, should a haiku be written only in the most general terms so that it may be understood by readers anywhere, or should it depict a given time and place, even at the risk that many readers will be puzzled by some of its images?

63

This problem is far from settled, but *The Marsh and Other Haiku and Senryu* helps to remind us how powerful poetry can be if it is immersed in a particular place. These haiku revel in their invocations of slave cabins, pirogues, grouse, mallow petals, muskrats, egrets, and dozens of other local references that recreate the marshes of the American deep South. There is so much local colour here that I found it impossible not to be carried away by it all:

moonlit sky
—a white mallow petal floats
onto the trap's tongue

old slave cabin
whiff of sweat
in the trunk

Even though I have never seen a mallow petal or a slave cabin, I can feel how hollow and thin these haiku would be if they were simply about a “white petal” or “the old cabin”; the local detail is the soul that animates the poetry. Louvière makes his local references so accessible and meaningful that it may be instructive to consider how he does it. The trick, it seems, is to include no more than a single specifically local reference per haiku: for example, the mallow petal is the only thing that would be unfamiliar to readers outside of the southern U.S. in the first haiku quoted above, while the slave cabin is the only specifically local reference in the second. The remaining images and the theme, meanwhile, must be

universal. A moonlit sky, trap, whiff of sweat, and trunk are known everywhere, and I cannot imagine that anyone could fail to sense the danger lurking behind the lovely scene in the first haiku, or the reminder of the human toll of slavery in the second. This careful cultivation of images ensures that some local colour is present, but that it does not spoil the haiku for readers unfamiliar with their settings.

The Marsh is divided into four sections. The first two are devoted to the marsh of the title, the third is devoted to senryu, while the second section, surprisingly, transports us to Hokkaido, Japan. It is a testament to Louvière's skill that his haiku about flower arrangements and noodle vendors are as convincing as his work in an American setting. So I was surprised to learn that this is Louvière's second book, and that his first *The Terrible Stars*, dates back to 1958. Forty-three years is far too long between collections for a poet who can write haiku as fine as the following:

legacy	plantation ruins
surveying the starry marsh	morning glories twine
in his rubber boots	the standing column

The complexity of Louvière's vision, as well as the high level of his craft, are a constant delight, and I can only hope that he will not let so much time pass before his next book appears.

64

•

Spiess, Robert *some sticks and pebbles* (Modern Haiku Press, 2001). No ISBN. 64 pages. 5.5" x 7" perfect softbound. No price. Enquiries to the publisher at Box 1752, Madison WI 53701.

Robert Spiess casts a long shadow in the haiku community. He is the editor of *Modern Haiku*, one of the oldest and most respected haiku magazines being published today. He is also a tireless explorer of the spiritual and aesthetic dimensions of the form, having written hundreds of aphorisms under the title of *Speculations on Haiku*, including the following:

The whole of life is in each moment, not in the past, not in the future—and thus a true haiku is vitally important because it is a moment of total and genuine awareness of the reality of the Now.

Last, but certainly not least, he is a poet who has published seven books of haiku, short lyrics, and haibun. *some sticks and pebbles* is Spiess's eighth collection of verse (he has published two books of speculations), and the first since his unique volume *noddy* of 1997.

As editor of *Modern Haiku*, Spiess has encouraged hundreds of young poets, myself included, and I suspect that many of them will read *some sticks and pebbles* out of a sense of respect. What they will find will seem startling, since Spiess's recent work is so different from the majority of haiku being written today. Many of the haiku in *some sticks and pebbles* follow a 5-7-5 syllable count; many go beyond nature as a subject to describe old Zen masters, clearcut logging, and lethal injections; and rather than being snapshots of the here and now, many rely on poignant or witty observations:

this creek with coursing swallows!	the neighbor's trim lawn...
if heaven has not the like	ha! it's over here
well then...	the fireflies disport

Few poets, I imagine, would venture a thought about heaven in a haiku or use archaic diction like "not the like" or "disport," but these kinds of pleasant surprises run throughout the collection.

Included in *some sticks and pebbles* are some traditional, rhymed poems that reaffirm Spiess's willingness to swim against contemporary trends, as well as several short haibun on such unexpected topics as modern psychology, a Buddhist response to the poisoning of stray dogs, and thoughts of Henry David Thoreau. Together, these writings reveal a poet who is determined to go his own way, even at the risk of self-contradiction. Spiess's proclamation that a haiku should express "the reality of the Now" which I quoted above lies behind many of the haiku here, but is glaringly absent in others, as these two examples show:

winter dusk—
as one, the chirping sparrows
fall silent in the spruce

there was leisure, then:
turning-down-the-wick
to-put-out-the-lamp

I have no doubt that some readers will have trouble reconciling a poet who quotes R. H. Blyth's belief that "mud is the most poetical thing in the world," and then includes a poem about an abortion clinic; others will find it exciting and recall Emerson's saying that "a foolish consistency is the hobgoblin of little minds."

I would incline towards the latter view. I found it difficult to follow Spiess on all of his excursions, and I left with the feeling that perhaps too many directions were being pursued in one book. But haiku needs its nonconformists too, those who are brave enough to take the risk of writing concrete poems, haiku on controversial contemporary subjects, and short sequences in order to establish tomorrow's conventions. *some sticks and pebbles* attempts all of this, for which we should be grateful.

Gilroy, Tom, Anna Grace, Jim McKay, Douglas A. Martin, Grant Lee Philips, Rick Roth & Michael Stipe *The Haiku Year* (Soft Skull Press, New York 1998). No ISBN. 112 pages. 5" x 7" perfect softbound. \$12 in bookstores.

66 The most charming thing about this small book is the story behind its creation. In 1996, four friends agreed to write each other one haiku a day for a year and to mail their poems to one each other on the back of old postcards. Soon three others joined the project, and *The Haiku Year* is the result. In his introduction, Tom Gilroy, one of the first four poets, describes the excitement roused by this simple act:

Within a week the haiku challenge was inspiring and changing what we noticed in our everyday lives. Suddenly each day seemed bejeweled, often at the oddest moments. The way the screen was ripped in a filthy gas station restroom suddenly mirrored some aspect of your life, and was beautiful. Or hilarious. Rick [Roth] (who took up the challenge the second he heard about it) described it best, 'It changed my life.'

I would be hard pressed to find a better description of the importance of writing haiku, or any type of poetry for that matter.

After this introduction, however, the haiku are a disappointment. Jack Kerouac is the major influence, and the fingerprints of the Beat poets are everywhere. The haiku are personal, slangy, and chatty. They are often funny (one poem reads, in full, "HAIKU. / gesundheit"), but just as often repetitive or pointless. The lives that they document are filled with alcohol, drugs, random sexual encounters, barstool philosophizing and, not surprisingly in light of this, outbursts of despair. Although most of these authors make their living from writing screenplays or song lyrics, I could not find one arresting or precise word or phrase in the collection. Instead, most of the haiku look like this:

stoned	billboard photos
I'm sorry	of unbearable beauty and
the mind goes to love	sorrow, in b/w no words.

As fun as it may have been to receive these haiku in the mail, they should have been edited for publication by becoming more coherent and concise.

If reading the names "Kerouac" or "Ginsberg" is enough to make you excited, or if you like your poetry unpolished and raw, then *The Haiku Year* is for you. Otherwise, this book will be interesting only as a testament to the enchantment of writing poetry, no matter what its quality.



Wakan, Naomi Beth *The Haiku Bag* (Qualicum Beach, B.C., Canada: Lightsmith Publishing, 1999). 109 pages. 4.25" x 5.5" perfect bound. \$10.95 Canadian.

To begin with the obvious: *The Haiku Bag* lives up to its title. This book is nothing if not a grab bag of writings connected to haiku. Within its 109 pages are an introduction to the form, a thumbnail sketch of its history in Japan, hints on writing haiku in English, an essay on "Why I Love Haiku," a bibliography, and a great number of haiku grouped around

the seasons. Some readers may be familiar with Naomi Beth Wakan's earlier book *Haiku—one breath poetry*, which introduces the form to children: this work seems to be written for both children and adults and is also an introduction to the form.

Since the haiku has not yet been accepted by mainstream publishers, any work that tries to promote and explain it to a wider audience should be applauded. But for those who want to give *The Haiku Bag* as a gift or to use it as their own introduction, a few biases should be noted. Wakan takes a Zen approach to haiku, in which the poetry becomes a vehicle for a “temporary enlightenment in which we see into the life of things”—a statement by R. H. Blyth that Wakan cites. Wakan quotes heavily from Blyth and the Zen master D. T. Suzuki to proclaim that a haiku is a mystical insight into the here and now which cannot be rationally analyzed. The only problem with this belief is that it is not true. Many Japanese *haijin* have little or no connection to Zen, some of the greatest haiku treat imaginary events or broader social themes, and many major haiku poets, including Basho and Shiki, have offered rational criticism of individual haiku. There is nothing wrong with believing what Wakan does, but this approach should not be presented as a necessary one.

As for the haiku, they struck me as being rather slight. They fall into three main categories, those that delight in seeing animals act like people, those in which the author expresses her love of nature in no uncertain terms, and those that paint a pretty picture whose significance was far too subtle for me to puzzle out. An example of each:

Robins	Two eagles	White gulls
Singing about their	On one tree...	Wet green sea-weed
Real-estate	Summer bonus	Summer-tide

For the uninitiated, *The Haiku Bag* will serve as an enjoyable introduction to haiku, but one which should be supplemented by other works.

Edward Zuk

What We Know

Okada, Ritsuo *Over the Wave: Selected Haiku of Ritsuo Okada* (From Here Press, POBox 2740, Santa Fe NM 87504, 2001). Edited/translated by Tadashi Kondo & William J. Higginson. ISBN 0-89120-102-5. 70 pp., 8.5" x 5.5", perfect softbound. \$12. Available from the publisher.

"Haiku is the poetry of experience. The poetry that you leave behind is a record of your life experiences."

Ishihara Yatsuka (Okada's haiku master)

Over the Wave, Okada's first collection of haiku in English, reads like a map, drawn for an insightful friend, through the author's international and internal journeys. Okada participates in the history of places by recording local moments, combining social and personal experience.

Okada worked in Europe as a top representative in a major Japanese company for decades, and he also accompanied his haiku master Ishihara on poetic journeys. Ishihara's haiku-related excursions led the two over the globe, from Greece to the Imperial Palace to Lake Michigan, with Okada recording these experiences in a journal. But these travels aren't merely geographical: his haiku not only video-tape the physiography of places like Arlington National Cemetery, Amsterdam, and Carbondale, Illinois, they also render the spirit of place through reverberating juxtaposition of sensory information. Consider, for instance, the following:

floating lanterns
huddle together and go
over a wave-crest

The poem's images (the lanterns and the wave) offer meaning in the context of place (Japan during the Bon Festival), much like traditional haiku. However, Okada's personal presentation (diction, syntax, and subject matter) throughout *Over the Wave* makes each experience, each poem, individual. People yearn for intimacy even in death, the haiku implies, and the joint crossing-over makes the journey bearable.

J. Marcus Weekley

Suppressed Memories

Berry, Ernest J. *forgotten war, a Korean war sequence*. Additional material by Jerry Kilbride. (Post Pressed, Flaxton, Australia, 2000) Revised 2nd printing. \$14U.S. ppd. from the author at Box 272 Picton, New Zealand.

A reprint of a great haiku selection, Berry's *A Korean War* sequence. In my estimation this poetry rivals the best of World War I, and it's supplemented by some of the finest writing about war that I've ever read. Berry is today one of the world's renowned haiku poets and a distinguished citizen of New Zealand. In the dedication our attention is drawn to the appealing photo of a little Korean orphaned girl, with this haiku:

waif
the eyes
ask why

The sections are "Prelude", "War", "Peace" and "Revisit".

To countless children and young men, war is hideously merciless. The poet Wilfred Owen wrote: "None will break ranks, though nations trek from progress".¹ We are so inured to the phrase "eternal moment" in commentary on haiku, we begin to lose sight of its true meaning. The eternal moments in this book can help to erase all the "bulldozing" callousness that removes our war monuments and the memory of the countless young men who sacrificed their lives. In this collection, the haiku themselves, the photographs and art work, give a surprising immediacy to these Korean war years. However pruned the haiku, there is no resultant shallowness. The following selections—all from Part 2, "War"—are not exceptional in the constant impact of Berry's work on reader sensitivity; the reader is enabled to feel at one with the soldiers, the helpless villagers, the "deflowered" flowers of Korea, the refugees and orphans, all the pathetic "debris" left behind in modern warfare's ruthless ravage, so indelibly depicted in this unforgettable account:

little beggar
wants a few cents
for his sister

incoming shell
leaving the brothel
disembodied screams

first dry night
the land-mine crater
full of moon

winter sun
a napalm victim
sizzles

Morning is late this morning gunsmoke

liberated village
the survivor holds out
his severed hand

dying communist
in his pocket
christ crucified

Berry writes: “—day-by-day we harden to the unthinkable . . . all our ingrained civil, moral, legal values are reversed. From this day forth it shall be heroic and laudable to: kill and be killed, maim and be maimed, cheat and be cheated, swindle, lie, steal, deceive and terrorise, in fact all behaviours of the criminally insane now become attributes”. How very fortunate for those of us who have the opportunity of seeing Berry’s work that he was able to view the conflict from the perspective of a “doc” in a mobile medical unit.

At the end we are presented with Jerry Kilbride’s profoundly felt haibun, “Losing Private Sutherland”: “a body riddled with bullets as it is washed away in the flashing rampage of a Korean river . . .” His best buddy. In Proverbs we read that wine is a mocker. In our time, war is the great mocker. How many of us in this brave new world know that in the old Korea the poet was the honoured citizen of every village?²

H. F. Noyes

1. “Strange Meeting”

2. Younghill Kang, *The Grass Roof*

Mayhem and Lunacy

SENRYU Magazine by Alan Pizzarelli, (River Willow Publications, 2001), 52 pp., 5.25" x 8.5", saddlestapled, softbound. \$10 from the author at 118 Schley Street, Garfield, NJ 07026.

In stenciled red and neat black ink on a clean white glossy cover we read "SENRYU Magazine" and to one side and beneath a small postage stamp sized sign that says "Out to Lunch". When I first took this production out of its envelope (having forgotten I had ordered anything of the kind), I looked at it with excitement and thought, "My God, at last! Haiku's wiry, humorous and ironic little cousin, senryu, has it's own magazine!" I wondered how I had evidently missed the chance to try submitting for the first issue, cursing my evil fate as an urban recluse. It was another full minute before I realized that I had been had—and not for the first time—by Alan Pizzarelli, a poet I feared, rumored to live in New Jersey, a place I despised.

But how appropriate that *SENRYU Magazine* should be a spoof, not a magazine at all, but the work of one mad "editor-and-chief", writing under dozens of pseudonyms and monikers, such beauties as these:

sunrise
in the quaint little village
the cry of a lunatic
Doty Batts

"I'm serious!"
he shouts
wearing a pinwheel hat
Scoval Landis III

72

This marvelous book is about the world of haiku as much as it is the first *tour de force* in senryu poetry to appear in the English language. Pizzarelli offers over 130 poems, together with supporting and related spoofs of reader letters, translations, book reviews (e.g., *The Monkey's Underwear* by Bob. T. White), a books received list, contest announcements and results, a haibun ("Train Bound for Nogo" by Ozaki Sake), a section of unadulterated senryu, and a section of parodies of well-known haiku, wonderfully screwed-up. Three examples of these latter:

Lily:
out of the water—
out of her suit
Vic Bardilio

turning to wave
goodbye to her
i walk off the precipice
Latvia Swift

my husband ducks the lamp
i throw
Venus Mons

The humor ranges from the droll and laughably lugubrious through puns, lampoons, parodies, sly nose-pulling, to the completely idiotic, farcical, gross, and slapstick sight-gag. The satire is rich but never mean—this work comes from the pen of one who loves his subject, and knows how to torture it and yet keep it alive. I particularly find much to praise in two excruciatingly hilarious sequences, the first titled “The Battle of Kyushi” which skewers the Japanese slash-and-run samurai film genre, and the other “Mangu Ga Abakwa: Wizard of the Tribal King” by Shaka Fabooty, which exquisitely mocks, among other things, the typical National Geographic or PBS-broadcast documentary and its unctuous voyeurism of native ways, complete with a merciless rendering in translation of the native tongue.

The good news is clear: *SENRYU Magazine* is the single most important collection of authentic American senryu published to date, anywhere, by anyone. The bad news is that we don't get to read a new issue with each season—this is it, dammit. May the mayhem and lunacy Pizzarelli has created here haunt him for the rest of his days.

—Michael McClintock

BOOKS RECEIVED

Saracevic, Edin *Bonbon na dezju (Candy in the Rain)* (Haiku Balkan, 2001). 48 pp., 5.25" x 8", perfect softbound. Enquiries to the publisher at Janeza Puharja 6, 4000 Kranj, Slovenia. *This volume, more than any other to date, is the most "western" book of haiku to emerge from the Balkans, in terms of poems, poetics, translations, book design—everything—raising several interesting questions, which this volume does not answer. . .*

Spring Street Haiku Group *The Pianist's Nose* (self-published, 2001). 28 pp., 4.25" x 5.5", stapled soft-bound. \$4 from Bruce Kennedy, 62 Sterling Place, Brooklyn NY 11217. *It is hard to believe that the Spring Street group has been producing these wonderful little volumes for nine years. This one follows its predecessors in containing the strongest material from a year of the group's workshops, and is likewise a cogent argument for the health of contemporary American haiku. And, as are its predecessors, strongly recommended.*

Yoshino, Yoshiko *budding sakura* (Deep North Press, 2610 Central Park Avenue, Evanston IL 60201, 2000). Translated by Jack Stamm. ISBN 1-929116-04-7. 40 pp., 5.25" x 5.25", custom paper binding, tinted paper, colored endpapers, dust wrapper. \$10 from the publisher, checks payable to Charles Trumbull.

An important first book of haiku translated into English by one of the doyennes of Japanese haiku, the estimable Ms. Yoshino, who has been present during many, if not most, of the important changes in haiku in the twentieth century in Japan. Beautifully designed, laid out, and produced, a wonderful small volume.

Hunsinger, Danny *Innuendo* (self-published, Columbus OH 2001). No ISBN. 24 pp., 4.125" x 8.5", saddle-stapled softbound. No price listed. Inquire with the poet at 854 Palmer Road, Grandview Heights, OH 43212.

A short selection of modern haikai, with a contemporary edginess and weirdness of content, indicating an enquiring mind who knows the form and is seeking to expand it. An interesting and recommended volume.

O'Connor, John S. *room full of chairs: haiku* (Deep North Press, 2610 Central Park Avenue, Evanston IL 60201, 2001). ISBN 1-929116-05-5. 64 pp., 6" x 7.5", perfect soft-bound. \$10 from the publisher.

This first collection includes not only its fine poems but also a dozen linoleum-block prints by as many artists from the Chicago Laboratory School. An interesting and varied volume.

Winke, Jeffrey *What's Not There: Selected Haiku of Jeffrey Winke* (Deep North Press, 2610 Central Park Avenue, Evanston IL 60201, 2001). ISBN 1-929116-07-1. 88 pp., 5.5" x 8.5", perfect softbound. \$12 from the publisher.

As this is the first of a projected series of Selected Haiku volumes from the publisher, the choice of fellow midwesterner Winke as lead-off man is appropriate, and sets the tone for things to come. The sampling gives a sense of the poet's full range, and the design and typography show the work to good effect.

Wahlert High School Creative Writing Students, *911: haiku sequence in response to September 11, 2001* (Wahlert High School, 2001). No ISBN. 36 pp., 4" x 3.5", saddle-stapled softbound. Available from Barbara Ressler, 2337 Carter Road, Dubuque IA 52001-2909.

These emotionally charged poems by 14 high school writers are an early response to the infamous WTC actions, and form both a specific and a general reaction to our nation's travails, seen from a young and personal perspective.

Lobaito, Charles *E=Eternity* (1st Books Library, 2001). ISBN 0-75964-071-8. 108 pp., 5" x 8", perfect soft-bound. \$10 from the publisher at <www.1stbooks.com>.

A section of this book is given over to "a radical form of the contemporary haiku that associates itself within itself a textured flow." In the epigrammatic and hortatory tradition of haiku.

Coates, Deborah *Cat Haiku* (Century, London 2001). ISBN 0-7126-79537. 192 pp., 5" x 6", hardbound. £6.99 from the publisher at <www.randomhouse.co.uk>.

Over 150 poems which purport to be the thoughts of cats expressed in 17 syllables. Cute, and intended as a giftable book, but not doing the literary haiku movement any favors.

INSA

News

The HSA Merit Book Awards 2000

The purpose of the Haiku Society of America's annual Merit Book Awards is to recognize the best haiku and related books published in a given year. Every year sees an exciting batch of individual collections, anthologies, translations, critical studies, and innovative forms. We had the privilege of reviewing 35 books published in 2000; each one of them has many features worthy of commendation. We congratulate all the authors and wish them well in future publications. Here's how we made our decisions. First, we independently read the many fine volumes without sharing our impressions. Then we made a preliminary list of the eight or nine books we separately evaluated as outstanding and emailed the list to each other. To our surprise and delight, with few exceptions, our lists were identical. In the last phase of judging, we discussed the merits of each book and moved to our final selections. In judging each book, we looked for overall consistency in the high quality of the poems, a pleasing design appropriate to the text, and an original contribution to our common endeavor of writing haiku and its related forms. We are pleased to make the following awards and special category honorable mentions and encourage the HSA membership to support the winning authors and publishers by buying and reading these books.

77

First Place: *to find the words* (Haiku Society of America Northwest Region Members' Anthology). Editors: Connie Hutchison, Christopher Herold, Mary Fran Meer. Design: Francine Porad, Robert Major, Peggy Olafson, Dean Summers. Typography: Peggy Olafson. Art: Francine Porad. \$11 from Connie Hutchison, 13909 94th Avenue NE, Kirkland WA 98034-1877.

As Connie Hutchison indicates in her Foreword, "this anthology was truly a collaboration" and its overall excellence attests to that fine working together. The poems have been

sequenced as linked verse (*haikai*), so although the list of poets is alphabetical, the poems have been placed in an order which enhances their juxtapositions. Each right hand page contains a single poem, so the book can be read through as a continuous body of work. On the left hand pages, the brief biography of each poet appears. The book's design is perfect in its size (5.5" x 7.25") and the placement of text, its typeface, its Larroque Mouchette covers, its Thai lace paper end-sheets, its handsewn three-hole bindings. Dedicated to Francine Porad, whose energetic ink drawings begin and end the text, to find the words is a tribute to her wonderful contributions and her most important role in the haiku community.

Second Place: *A Path in the Garden* by Christopher Herold. Foreword by John Stevenson. Watercolors by Ruth Yarrow. Katsura Press, P.O. Box 275, Lake Oswego, OR 97034. \$14.95.

Herold's haiku, written during 30 years of practice as poet, gardener, and Zen practitioner, reflect consummate artistry. With extraordinary spareness, simplicity, and beauty of language, he captures the eternal in the quotidian. These haiku are intimate, yet universal. We accompany Herold at a leisurely pace on the path he creates within and without the walls of his gardens. Ruth Yarrow's glowing watercolors of the gate bring us in and then lead us out. We are grateful, as John Stevenson eloquently writes in the foreword, to have accepted Herold's invitation into the garden and eager for a return visit.

first light—
the deep print of a sole
among crocuses

Third Place: *forgotten war: a korean war haiku sequence* by ernest berry with jerry kilbride. Postpressed flaxton, Box 272, Picton, New Zealand. \$11.99 US postpaid.

"[P]enned after many years of trying to forget," this memoir,

loosely in the form of a haibun, contains not only Ernest Berry's prose, haiku and senryu, but also his brush drawings, photographs of himself then and now, and of soldiers and children from wartime Korea. The sequence takes the author from young recruit eager to do battle, to horror-struck warrior, to reflective return visitor many years later. Often ironic, his poems have a powerful emotional range: sorrow, anger, bitter humor, bewilderment, helpless grief. In the midst of human catastrophe, he remains mindful of the natural world.

line of refugees
the smallest child
carries a centipede

79

At the end of the text are haiku and a haibun, "Losing Private Sutherland," contributed by Jerry Kilbride who also served in the Korean War.

Special Category Honorable Mention for Haiga: *Echoes in Sand—haiga* Drawings by Wilfred Croteau. Haiku by Raffael de Gruttola. Foreword and Japanese translations by Shokan Tadashi Kondo. Printed by Deo Tomas for piXeLaRt Press, Upton, MA. First edition limited to 50 copies on archival Concorde paper with the artists' signatures on each print.

This exquisite portfolio is the result of a six year collaboration between Croteau and de Gruttola. Each haiga is printed on a separate sheet which is suitable for framing, and each haiku's position in relation to the art work is an important component in creating the overall visual image. Deo Tomas' printing has faithfully captured the subtle tonalities of the brush strokes and wash. In his foreword, Tadashi Kondo describes this work as a "unique contribution to the noble spirit of uniting East and West." Usually drawing in haiga is representational, but here it is abstract. "Even though the picture is abstract," says Kondo, "the poem-picture relationship does suggest a correspondence which advances a new approach in the understanding of the haiga art."

Special Category Honorable Mention for Criticism *In Due Season: A discussion of the role of kigo in English-language haiku* (Acorn Supplement #1) A. C. Missias, editor. redfox press, P.O. Box 186, Philadelphia, PA 19105, \$6.00.

This first in a series of biannual critical supplements to the journal *Acorn* focuses on the subject of kigo. Five nationally and internationally-acclaimed poets, critics, and editors (Jim Kacian, Dhugal Lindsay, Jane Reichhold, Charles Trumbull, and Michael Dylan Welch) offer thought-provoking and contradictory essays, each carefully researched and documented. Kigo: what is one? how to use one? do we need one? promises to be a hotly debated topic at many future HSA meetings, and this small volume gives all of us lots to think about as we write our own haiku.

Special Category Honorable Mention for Tanka: *Early Indigo* by Cherie Hunter Day. Snapshot Press, PO Box 132, Crosby, Liverpool, L23 8XS England. \$13.00.

Awarded first prize in the Snapshots Collection Competition of 1999, this is the first book-length collection of tanka by Cherie Hunter Day, prize-winning author of both tanka and haiku. As the author writes in her preface, "This poetic form seems to be the perfect literary medium with which to convey the connection between nature and my interior landscape. It permits a focus on a moment in time—a moment of depth and clarity." Her tanka effectively communicate that connection with enormous emotional power.

years later
in the middle of the hallway
the smell of daffodills
during her last illness
the room filled with such yellow

Special Category Honorable Mention for Haiku Novel:
Haiku Guy by David Lanoue. Soffietto Editions. Red Moon Press, P.O. Box 2461, Winchester, VA 22604-1661. \$14.95.

David Lanoue breaks new ground with the first novel whose subject is the writing of haiku. The novel blends the story of Buck-Teeth, a fictitious student of Cup-of-Tea (Issa), who travels between 18th-century Edo and contemporary New Orleans on his journey to become a poet. Lanoue skillfully weaves lessons on haiku into this humorous and original story. We laughed and marveled at this witty, imaginative, and instructive text.

Special Category Honorable Mention for First Book of Poetry: *Light on the Mountain: Mt. Tamalpais—a poet's view* by Laurie W. Stoelting. Illustrated by Kay F. Anderson, Eric and Laurie Stoelting. Published by Field Trips, printed on a Windmill at Swamp Press. Sewing by Smyth. Text paper acid-free, recycled Genesis; cover and flyleaf Crushed Leaf. Available for \$15.00 postpaid from the author at 303 Holly Street, Mill Valley, CA 94941. Profits from the sale of this book will be donated to support the preservation of the historic West Point Inn on Mt. Tamalpais.

This book is profoundly about place. The author, a frequent walker of Mt. Tamalpais, has included an index of the location for each haiku and indicated if it were a trail road or a fire road. Stoelting's keen awareness of her surroundings and her intimacy with them shine in the poems. The larger resonances of our lives are not lost on her either.

the single rivulet
how slowly a pond
lets go



Pamela Miller Ness & Karen Klein, *Judges*

The Harold G. Henderson Haiku Competition 2001

First Place (\$150)

Kathy Lippard Cobb, Bradenton FL

broken easel—
the front yard blue
with wildflowers

An author's skill with craft and subject does not by itself determine the power of a haiku. Rather, the richness of a poem is revealed through a partnership between reader and author, as the reader's intuition comes into play. "broken easel" is a haiku that immediately invites such a partnership with vivid, concrete imagery. The visual accessibility stirs the discerning reader's imagination. The two judges were drawn to this haiku, each of us independently making an emotional connection to the author's experience.

One reader might imagine feeling a bit down on a chilly day, walking past a house where bare spots and peeling paint dot the clapboards. A broken easel and scraps of paper litter the scraggly lawn. Perhaps the owner has been ill or away for a long while. While the reader is pondering the owner's circumstances (and his own), the sun breaks through shifting clouds. Then for the first time he notices—blue wildflowers! Beauty springs from a neglected yard gone wild, and with it the unexpected reminder that even as one season of growth ends, another one begins.

Another reader may imagine the author thrilling to the unexpected sight of a yard filled with bright wildflowers, eager to reproduce their glory with a brush. Where another person might reach for a camera, this artist squeezes paints from tubes. But her easel is broken—how will she manage without it? One thing is sure: she will put those wonderful blues onto canvas.

The poem's concision enhances its loveliness and strength; every word is essential. The wildflowers also serve as the kigo. For some, their color may connote a feeling of melancholy;

for others, the primary “blue” may suggest purity. Taken at face value, the broken easel and the overgrown yard are two unrelated things that imply neglect; however, the poem resonates on more than one level. The poet has skillfully combined these images to spark a sudden awareness of beauty, and a sense of surprise and wonder. (FG & YC)

Second Place (\$50)

Linda Jeannette Ward, Coinjock NC

heat waves—
the hitchhiker shifts her child
to the other hip

I see it as I have hundreds of times, the bright, shimmering mirage that hovers in the distance above a highway. The impression is always the same: relentless heat. To anyone walking on that road, the air feels heavy and close. Each time a car whooshes past, each time the breeze dies or a cloud leaves the sun, smothering waves of heat envelop the pedestrian. To travel in such temperatures is a struggle, and much more so if the person is bearing a physical weight—even the beloved burden of one’s own child.

Showing simply and clearly what he or she sees, the poet presents a classically formatted haiku and, without using words of emotion, arouses feelings through sparse, concrete imagery. Visualizing a mother and child alone on the road, at the mercy of the weather and the drivers that speed by, the percipient reader will make an emotional connection to the hitchhiker and the weight of her burden. The haiku evokes for this reader a sense of resignation, if not despair; of utter tiredness, but also of determination. The transitive verb “shifts” illustrates the woman’s fatigue while suggesting perseverance and inner strength. Rather than setting the child down to ease her aching hip and arms, the mother instead shifts her burden to the other side.

“Shift”, used here in one context, also implies something else: providing for one’s own needs, shifting for one’s self. One could view the woman’s action as a metaphor for courage. While another reader may imagine a different

background, my intuition tells me the traveler has hitchhiked before, has been in need and on her own too many times. But when dealt another round of bad luck, instead of giving up (or giving up her child), she shifts her position and prepares to face hard times. Rich with aura and multiple levels of interpretation, this poem elicited strong, empathic responses from each of the judges. (FG)

Second Place (\$50)

Leatrice Lifshitz, Pomona NY

land's end—
sand in every bite
of my apple

A remarkable haiku indeed! In three short lines, the poet has captured the delicate balance of evocativeness and concreteness. On the surface level, the poem brings to mind the coast of Maine or any other rocky coast. One could imagine that at the end of a long journey, while biting on an apple, a hiker is rewarded with the sight and sound of seagulls riding the wind, but not all is well at the water's edge: Under a turquoise sky, storm clouds are brewing over the horizon. The author's skillful juxtaposition of "end" and "apple" sharpens the contrast between the jaggedness of the rocky coast and the roundness of the apple, and without overt sentimentality, the use of "sand in every bite" deepens the sense of tension in the haiku.

84 Beneath the surface, the poem evokes the bittersweet sense of labored success. One may be saddened by the realization that a long courtship does not necessarily guarantee a good catch, and another may bemoan the fact that after a long climb up the corporate ladder, the job may not be worth the effort. The interpretations are many for this multifaceted gem. There is no despair; just a sense of inevitability. There is no shouting, but the whisper of fatalism is clear enough to be heard. Is suffering inherent in life? Does happiness come from desiring nothing? The judges may never have the answers, but they both made strong connections to this remarkable, thought-provoking poem. (YC)

Third Place (\$50)

W. F. Owen, Antelope CA

Indian summer
a fish slips through
the gill net

This is a pleasant setting, the period in late autumn when Mother Nature teases us with a few balmy days, just before winter moves in. "Indian summer" is a strong kigo that sets a soft mood, preceding the quick pace of the second and third lines. The author employs sound to create tension: the slow, smooth rhythm of the first line is followed by the abrupt pattern of seven monosyllabic words composing the subject and action. The rapid assonance of "fish", "slips" and "gill" heightens the sense of immediacy.

The poet's concise imagery evokes a keen awareness of the changing seasons. With skillful juxtaposition, there comes a suggestion of yearning for that which is lost. Just as the fish slips through the net, the season—and time itself—slip irrevocably away. Each of the judges made an emotional connection to the poem's mood, and found meaning on more than one level. (FG)

Honorable Mention

(alphabetical order by author)

her 18th birthday—
for the first time she notices
my silences

Jeanne Emrich
Bloomington MN

spring sunshine
the climbing ivy
filled with sparrows

A. C. Missias
Philadelphia PA

As judges we had the monumental task of selecting only a very few haiku from so many compelling poems. As we read and carefully considered each entry, we felt deeply honored to have the privilege of this responsibility. We returned many times to six special haiku, and these six became our final selections. Each of the winning haiku evoked emotion and allowed us to feel a connection with the poet.

Ferris Gilli & Yu Chang, Judges

The Gerald Brady Memorial Senryu Competition 2001

First Place (\$150)

Billie Wilson, Juneau, AK

freezing wind—
the body builder pumps gas
in a muscle shirt

An exceptional senryu for the times, this moment is charged with high satire and the height of vanity. We can see the body builder strut and swagger, in love with himself. He pumps gas, he pumps iron, he pumps himself up with self-importance. His brain is not one of his bigger muscles. We know he's freezing, he knows he's freezing, but he has too much invested in the body not to show it off to anyone willing to be impressed. Observers are more likely to notice the inflated gas prices and his inflated ego instead. This scene is saturated with the incongruity of things.

Second Place (\$100)

W. F. Owen, Antelope, CA

werewolf movie
at the commercial
letting the dog out

86

This strange, quirky senryu combines commonplace ingredients to produce a bizarre moment, especially as it turns from line 2 into the final surprise—and the payoff of a knowing laugh or smile for the reader. If you let yourself into this one, you too may feel your skin crawl as the owner lets the dog out into a night definitely darker than before. Or is a full moon rising? What is real and what imagined? This moment emits an eerie sensation, a Halloween feel, a touch of fear and even foreboding. Will the viewer be able to focus on the movie again, or the dog, in quite the same way?

Third Place (\$50) Janeth H. Ewald, Saint Helena, CA

winter rain
holding the umbrella
over the dachshund—pissing

The impact of this moment is delivered largely through the discrepancy of the scene. At face value this is ludicrous, suggesting that the pet has trained the owner, that things are a little mixed up in the whole scheme of things. Yet, perhaps you're willing to endure discomfort and possible sickness so your dog is comfortable while doing its duty. If this is a common scene for you, you may not find the role reversal odd at all. But the picture seems even funnier because the dog is a dachshund, a "weiner dog", with that comical low-slung look. The vulgarity? Right out of the pages of senryu history.

87

Honorable Mentions (Alphabetical by Author)

Greeba Brydges-Jones, Christchurch, NZ

birthmark removed
she saves up
for a blue tattoo

Far below skin deep, this senryu goes to the heart of who we are and what we're willing to pay to be that way. It resonates with questions of appearance and reality, dissatisfaction with our selves, the hunger to be beautiful and "cool", and the fascination with becoming someone new. This woman endures a double pain to remake herself. Is this an impulsive decision she'll regret? Will she be disillusioned to find that her new look doesn't necessarily change her life? This coming-of-age senryu seems sadly human, colored with an indigo mood.

Richard Burri, Los Angeles, CA

Denver McDonald's . . .
The specials on the window
Paint out the mountain

A mile high in the Rockies, arguably one of the most breathtaking locations in the world, the view is obscured by ads for breakfast sandwiches, burgers and fries. This is life out of balance, displaying literally the gap between the way things are and the way they ought to be. The sense of place and awe and wonder seems lost to the fast-food lifestyle in this senryu about what we see, how we see, and what we fail to see. What's really special? In this place, we can't see the mountains for the Mickey-Ds.

Carlos Colón, Shreveport, LA

late February
a statue of Houdini
encased in ice

The great escape artist is trapped and can't escape. This senryu is a magical act of observation or imagination. Either way, it's real-seeming and has the "stink of truth" about it. It's also thick with the irony of circumstance. To recognize that Houdini is already stiff and lifeless in the statue that keeps him locked in memory is one thing. To see the double shackling that the layer of ice creates is to feel an added indignity or an ironic touch of humor. Magic!

Garry Gay, Santa Rosa, CA

88

30-year reunion
he still
hits on her

Some guys just never give up. This one may be making a fool of himself once more. The colloquial expression of line 3 feels almost literal, suggesting that she still finds the impact of his forced attention unwelcome and unpleasant. He comes off as something of a creep, a jerk who's desperately on the make, still horny after all these years. The scene is tinged with a sad-funny irony, and would be almost poignant if 30 years had weakened her resistance and made her still vulnerable in some way to his undesired come-ons.

Barry George, Philadelphia, PA

snow buntings—
his new bride
waits in the car

Picture this (as the senryu does so remarkably): you're just married, maybe on the way to the honeymoon. Your new husband pulls the car over, gets out, leaves you sitting there, and takes off after some birds. Do you have new questions about the relationship? Puzzle over his priorities? Do you suspect the marriage may already be in trouble, and wonder what you've gotten yourself into? Are you shocked, hurt, confused, angry? It could be a cold trip the rest of the way. Did somebody say honeymoon? Still, perhaps there is great warmth for the man who finds all of nature, as embodied in a pair of snow buntings, something of a marvel.

89

W. F. Owen, Antelope, CA

prostate exam
the doctor and I
trade jabs

It's a nervous, edgy place, a doctor's office where a prostate exam is about to happen. You could cut through the anxiety with a scalpel. What better way to break the tension than with humor—metaphorically trading jabs. The senryu depends on the just-right pun of the last line to carry a great deal of its emotional thrust. This piece has about as much subtlety and impact as the exam itself, and the fact that prostate cancer is the #2 killer of American males only deepens and darkens the crude humor here.

R. A. Stefanac, Pittsburgh, PA

nude ballet
the composer adds
extra notes

We've caught the composer (presumably male) right at the moment of realization: If you're going to write a nude ballet, why not prolong the enjoyment? He may be grinning as he visualizes the result of his work. Is he a lecher, a womanizer, or merely an artist in love with the beauty of dance? It's funny to consider this on or at any stage—the imagining, the note-adding, the performance. So much artistic revision calls for cutting; here we have a slight twist on the show biz maxim, "Always leave them wanting more." More leaps, more pirouettes, more pliés, please.

Some Remarks and Observations on the Entries

Thank you to the Haiku Society of America and to John Stevenson for entrusting us with the honor of judging the 2001 Brady Contest. And thank you to the entrants for letting us read and enjoy the 574 senryu that mirror our humanity, reflecting our greed, pride, fear, vanity, self-absorption, tenderness, rebelliousness, passions and playfulness. Here are moments filled with humor and humanity, with some of the foibles, egotism, shortcomings, illusions, idiosyncrasies and incongruities of life exposed for us to see.

In some of these senryu we can see parts of ourselves; in others, we don't really want to. Yet, whether we giggle or snicker, harrumph or guffaw, sneer or belly laugh, or just shake our heads in amazement and disbelief, we glimpse vivid, real behavior that reveals a rich cross-section of the human condition, and we remember how absurd or poignant or ridiculous—literally laughable—life can be. But we'd better not be too smug, too far above it all. We too may be the subject of someone's senryu.

A competition like this does not allow the luxury of an approach like Raymond Roseliep's—to let others determine whether his work was haiku or senryu. Nor is it possible to heed the penciled proclamation R.H. Blyth found in his copy of *How to Write Senryu*: "Senryu are not to be read twice, no matter how good they may be." In fact, we read the entries many times, giving each our most careful attention, our fullest consideration. Each one offered a unique slice of

life. The best of them were vivid, striking images, “moments of psychological insight into the life of human beings,” to borrow Blyth’s phrase. These engaging poems caught and held our attention again and again. They had layers and depth, resonance and staying power. They spoke to us and enlarged our understanding of the human condition. They are our winners. Congratulations to their authors.

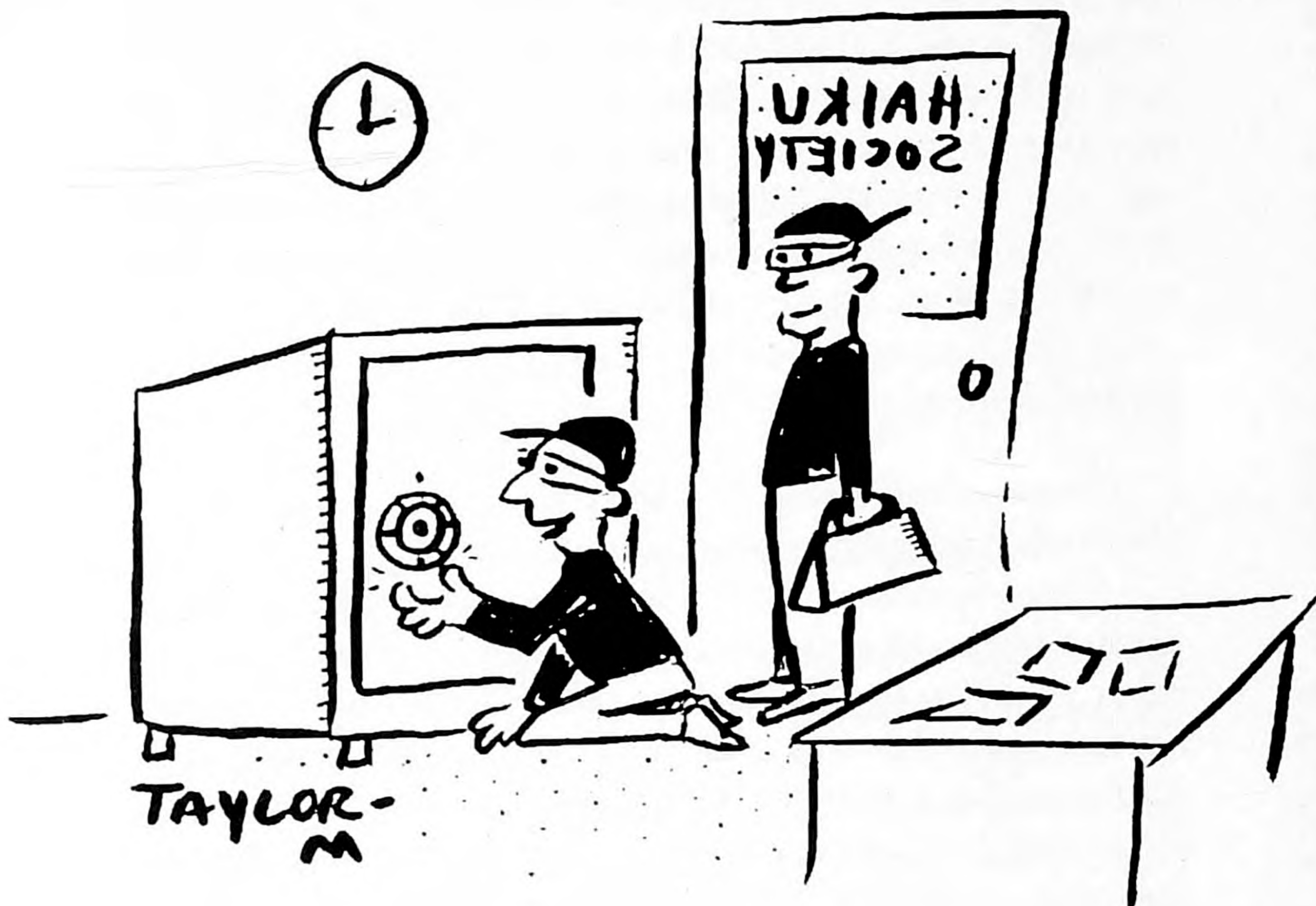
Judges’ Notes

There are many ways to read a senryu. Our commentaries offer only a handful of possibilities.

After choosing our winners, we recognized a similar pattern in many of their first lines. But they won for their other qualities, and we have no fixed ideas of how a senryu should begin. You will probably notice the nature images in several of these senryu. We agreed that such imagery was important background for the close-up focus on human behavior in the foreground, and we believe these poems demonstrate true senryu impulse and spirit as surely as those without nature references.

Finally, a hundred judges, a hundred results. Would you have chosen different senryu from the 574 entries? Probably. All of us have unique funny bones, crazy bones, tastes and passionate preferences. We hope you’ll spend some time with these ten fine senryu and grow to appreciate them as we have. Please read them more than once. Feel free to disagree. Even pull out one of your own and give it a prize, if you’d like. But above all, write your life in senryu. And then, if you’re inclined to follow the wonderfully ambiguous advice of poet William Stafford, “Find an editor worthy of your work.”

Barbara Ressler & Bill Pauly, *Judges*



"JUST AS I EXPECTED - '5-7-5'"

92

Erratum from FPXXIV:3

after new paint—
shadow of the coat hook
on the bedroom door

Harry Bose

Index of Contributors

- Addiss, Stephen...6
aksnes, odd g...25
Anderson, Kay F...81
an'ya...6
Aoyagi, Fay...96
Athey, David...20
- Bakeman, Karl...9
Barnhill, David Landis...24, 44
Barry, Jack...31
Batz, Gretchen Graft...32
Beary, Roberta...15, 16
Berry, Ernest J...70, 78
Blyth, R. H...68
Bose, Harry...92
Bostian, Patricia...29
Bowes, Harold...6
Brydges-Jones, Greeba...87
Brzakovic, Branislav...12
Burri, Richard...87
Byrd, Darrell...19
- Cadnum, Michael...10
Carley, John Edmund...11
Carter, R. P...23
Ceraso, Michael...39
Chang, Yu...32, 82
Coates, Deborah...75
Cobb, Kathy Lippard...21, 82
Colòn, Carlos...88
Connor, Pamela...25
Croteau, Wilfred...79
Cullen, William Jr...24
Currier, Joyce Walker...29
- Davidson, Anne LB...25
Day, Cherie Hunter...80
de Gruttola, Raffael...36, 79, 95
Devlin, D. B...19
Dolphy, Steve...30
Donleycott, Connie...19, 21
Doughty, Del...45
Douthat, Charles...28
Dunphy, John J...27, 43
- Emrich, Jeanne...85
Epstein, Robert...6, 96
- Estevez, Efren...24
Etter, Carrie...27
Evans, Michael L...22
Evetts, Dee...14, 17, 27, 29, 36
Ewald, Janeth...8, 87
- Fessler, Michael...31
Figgins, Ross...7
Forrester, Stanford M...11
Fox, Matt...21
Frampton, Alice...11, 14, 15, 30
- Gallagher, D. Claire...15, 31, 33, 35
Galmitz, Jack...9
Gay, Garry...88
George, Barry...11, 89
Gibson, Robert...7, 24
Gilli, Ferris...24, 82
Gilroy, Tom...66
Ginsberg, Allen...67
Gorman, LeRoy...22, 28
Gonzales, Merrill Ann...8
Gourlay, Caroline...32
Grace, Anna...66
Gutman, Max...28
- Hall, Carolyn...30, 40
Hardenbrook, Yvonne...27
Hazen, Elizabeth...41
Herold, Christopher...77, 78
Holroyd, Don...33
Howard, Elizabeth...32
Hunsinger, Danny...74
Hutchison, Connie...77
- Iddon, Jon...5
Imakado, Yoko...12
- Kacian, Jim...3, 80
Kang, Younghill...71
Kent, Susan J...21
Kerouac, Jack...67
Ketchek, Michael...8
Kilbride, Jerry...71, 79
Klein, Karen...77
Klontz, Joann...27
Kondo, Shokan Tadashi...79

Laliberte-Carey, Lori...30
Lanoue, David...81
LaVallée, Susan Marie...18
Lifshitz, Leatrice...84
Lilly, Rebecca...13
Lindsay, Dhugal...80
Lippy, Burnell...11, 20
Lobaito, Charles...75
Louvière, Matthew...63

m., paul...7, 13
Mainone, Robert...7
Major, Robert...77
Malito, Giovanni...21, 22
Markowski, Ed...25, 33
Martin, Douglas A...66
Matsumoto, Valerie...5
McClintock, Michael...42, 72
McCullough, Dan...23
McKay, Jim...66
Meer, Mary Fran...77
Missias, A. C...7, 13, 80, 85
Moore, Lenard D...20
Mountain, Marlene...44

Ness, Pamela...77
Nielsen, Ayaz Daryl...28
Noyes, H. F...70

O'Connor, John...13, 75
Okada, Ritsuo...36
Olafson, Peggy...77
Olson, Marian...36
Ortiz, Victor...22
Owen, W. F...8, 13, 43, 85, 86, 89
Owen, Wilfred...70

Painting, Tom...9, 15, 32
Partridge, Brent...19, 60
Patchel, Christopher...18, 28
Paulson, James...65
Pauly, Bill...86
Philips, Grant Lee...66
Pizzarelli, Alan...72
Porad, Francine...77
Poulin, Robert Henry...31

Reichhold, Jane...14, 80
Ressler, Barbara...75, 86
Rielly, Edward J...23

Robeck, Linda...29
Rohrig, Carolyne...5, 40
Romano, Emily...5, 23
Ross, Bruce...10, 18
Roth, Rick...66
Rowland, Philip...12, 18, 47

Sandbach, John...31
Saracevic, Edin...74
Scott, Robert...72
Shigemoto, Yasuhiko...20
Singh, Pariksith...29, 33
Spiess, Robert...10, 64
Stafford, William...91
Stamm, Jack...74
Steel, Lynne...9
Stefanac, R A...12, 89
Stevenson, John...15, 30, 33, 78
Steyn, Maria...25
Stipe, Michael...66
Stoelting, Eric...81
Stoelting, Laurie G...81
Story, Ebba...35
Summers, Dean...77
Suzuki, D. T...68

Tarquino, Rick...12
Tasnier, Maurice...18
Taylor, Mike...92
Tico, Tom...23
Trumbull, Charles...80

Verhart, Max...6

Wakan, Naomi...67
Ward, Linda Jeannette...10, 83
Watsky, Paul...8
Weekley, J. Marcus...69
Welch, Michael Dylan...80
Wicker, Nina...10
Williams, Peter...9, 19
Wilson, Billie...86
Winke, Jeff...75

Yarrow, Ruth...78
Yoshino, Yoshiko...74

Zackowitz, Cindy...20
Zuk, Edward...63

THE HAIKU SOCIETY OF AMERICA

Treasurer's Report (3rd Quarter—July 1-September 30, 2001)

Income

Balance	17,201.39
Membership Dues	1,781.00
Contributions	50.00
Contest Fees	1,672.00
Educational Packets	547.00
Miscellaneous	25.00

Total Income **21,276.39**

Expenses

HSA General Account	
Postage:	720.60
Copy/Printing	19.10
Supplies	169.90
Awards	100.00
Education Packets	885.59
Miscellaneous	6.53

Newsletter Account	
Printing	1,665.00
Postage & Miscellaneous	240.00

Frogpond Account	
Printing	3,708.70
Postage	854.84
Payment for Haiku	200.00
Supplies	6.05

Total Expenses **8,576.31**

Balance **\$12,700.08**

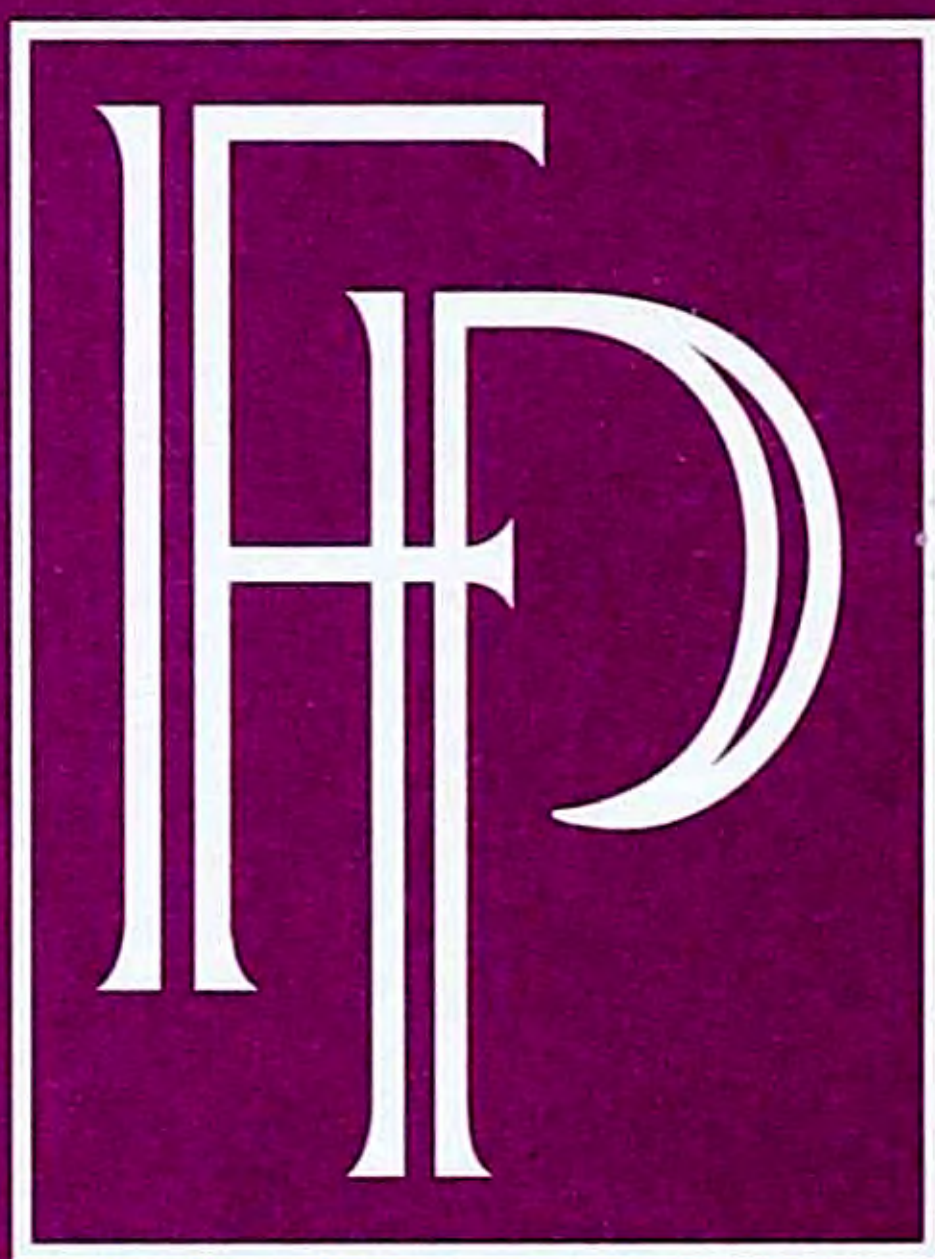
Respectfully submitted
Raffael DeGruttola, Treasurer

Museum of Haiku Literature Award

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

*Independence Day—
I let him touch
a little bit of me*

Fay Aoyagi



haiku
in pencil
faded

Robert Epstein

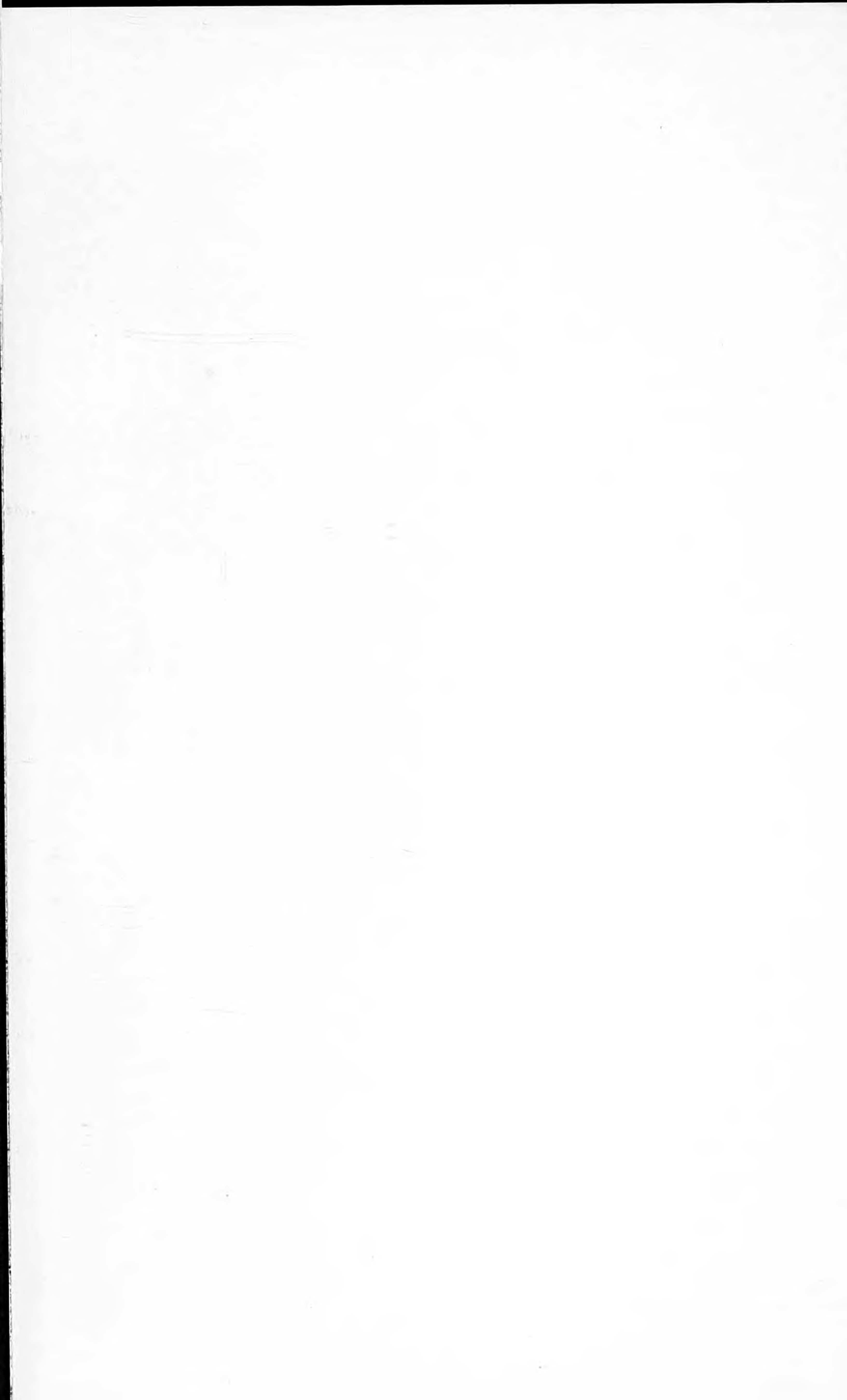


TABLE OF CONTENTS

Editor's Message	3	<i>Jim Kacian</i>
Haiku	4	<i>various</i>
"The Conscious Eye"	14	<i>Dee Evetts</i>
Haiku	18	<i>various</i>
Senryu	26	<i>various</i>
Linked Forms	34	<i>Story/Gallagher; de Gruttola/ Olson/Evetts; Ceraso; Hall/ Rohrig; Hazen; McClintock; Dunphy; Owen; Mountain; Barnhill; Doughty</i>
Essays	46	<i>Rowland; Partridge</i>
Books & Reviews	62	<i>Zuk; Weekley; Noyes; McClintock</i>
HSA News	76	<i>Ness/Klein; Gilli/ Chang; Ressler/Pauly</i>
Index	93	