

January
2016
Edition

cattails

collected
works
of
UHTS

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cattails

January 2016

Principal Editor's Prelude

Dear Friends, welcome to the January 2016 edition of *cattails*. You will notice that our Webmaster peterB has made quite a few really nice tweaks to this presentation, and all the work chosen by our Editors, again we consider to be of the very finest quality.

For 2016, and due to the volume of submissions, publishing works by our UHTS members will be our priority, so if you've not joined yet, please consider this as there are no obligations, it's free, and there are no fees to enter our 3 yearly contests either. As our esteemed President Michael McClintock has mentioned before "the UHTS is a worldwide family", and as we begin this new year—our society is 535 members strong.

We are especially proud of the fact that our qualified and respected Editors are known for answering your submissions in a timely and polite fashion. Sometimes they workshop and/or offer suggestions (while never rewriting a submission) in order to assist you in fine-tuning your work. We are also pleased to publish accepted submissions in your native language, as well as in English.

Here are some of our criteria for selecting your works for publication:

Editors do not choose any poem or artwork based on it being written or created by a close friend.

We are also extra cautious about any poem written by a poet that we already admire, and will not be fan-editors.

We do not choose any works based on a poet's career, or credentials, as each piece must stand or fall on its own merits.

We pay close attention to the poets and poems that have been underrepresented in the past; meaning editors will carefully look for exceptional poems by women, men, people of different colors, beliefs, and nationalities, old-timers or newbies, young poets, as well as submissions by older poets who haven't been previously applauded.

We don't ask for the opinion of any other human being when choosing works for publication.

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We don't want to fill cattails with poems by experts, and will consider poets whose work is outside of academia, albeit we also don't want to bias ourselves against any submissions because they happen to be written by poetry scholars.

We do not need to know anything about any of the authors beyond what is already known or what is apparent in the submissions themselves. We will do our best to treat every submission like it is a blind submission, even if some famous poet has written it.

Even though we know that these criteria will possibly result in contradictions, conflicts, hypocrisy, and stress, we will all do our very best to ease these situations both for ourselves and other persons involved.

Having said all this, we are pleased to say that cattails is easily viewed not only on your desktop computers, but on all hand-held mobile devices as well for your convenience.

We believe you will enjoy this edition so please if you see something you especially like, definitely let us hear from you, as it makes all the volunteer hours that we all selflessly devote to publishing your work, even more worthwhile!

Thank you for making our cattails publication possible and in this “year of the monkey” may your creative juices continue to flow.

—UHTS cattails principal editor an'ya, USA

cattails

January 2016

Contributors

Thank you again to all 485 poets and artists who contributed to this January 2016 edition of *cattails*. Beginning with this edition, we will not be individually listing contributors' names due to the large volume of works we publish each time.

You will notice that *cattails* is a unique publication insofar as we do not use a standard page number style Contributor's reference.

Over many years in the publishing business, and by following the statistics of our individual page counters, we have determined that most readers go directly to the poets index, then read their own work. By doing so, they frequently by-pass the works of the other poets and artists.

We realize that this is human-nature, but, in *cattails*, we would like to encourage contributors to read everyone's work, not just their own. We believe this is how we expose ourselves to unfamiliar forms, while honing the skills that engage us, while at the same time making new acquaintances.

cattails

January 2016

Haiku

Haiku Introduction

For your convenience, we have created an introduction page to each category that we publish in *cattails*, collected works of the UHTS. We hope that this will clarify for both old-timers and new writers specifically what is expected from submissions. For some of you, we realize that this is redundant but since there are currently so many different schools-of-thought on each of these forms—we offer ours also for your perusal.

Haiku is a succinct write equal to 3 lines (it doesn't matter how that equal is arranged, 1 line, 2 lines, or in 3 lines), but what does matter are the rest of the requirements, which are: that it captures a sensory perceived moment, and contains either a *kigo* (season word) that directly indicates a season, or other words that at least indirectly evoke a feeling of the natural world we live in. It has a 2-punch juxtaposition that equals a *kireji* (cutting word) which creates a conscious pause. Haiku no longer must always conform to the 5,7,5 syllable count; rather it should be somewhat close to a short, long, short rhythm for publication in *cattails*.

Haiku typically contains a setting, subject, verb, plus an “aha” moment, although there are exceptions in “question” and/or “statement” haiku, and haiku “sketches”.

If the haiku is zen-like, it still should be a s, l, s rhythm and should also include the above mentioned, or otherwise possibly be considered incomplete.

Most haiku in English consist of three non-rhymed lines of fewer than seventeen syllables, with the middle line the longest. In Japanese a typical haiku has seventeen “sounds” (*on*) arranged five, seven, and five. (Some translators of Japanese poetry have noted that about twelve syllables in English approximates the duration of seventeen Japanese (*on*).

Haiku have no titles, and metaphors and similes (if used) must be extremely subtle. An in depth discussion of what might be called “deep metaphor” or symbolism in haiku is beyond the range of actual definition. Direct personification in haiku should be avoided, so please keep your haiku as true to the reality of nature as possible. The UHTS does not publish anything that we feel might be offensive to the general public.

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You can submit haiku directly to an'ya at: submittocattails@gmail.com with the subject heading: HAIKU

REMINDER: Please send any/all submissions (within the "body" of an email), with the Subject heading for the appropriate form you are submitting to, in all CAPITAL LETTERS.

You must include your country, full name, and email address to be considered!

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New Years Day
loud geese figure out
their formation

Jeanne Cook
USA

stepping
on their own shadows
spindle-leg birds

Patricia Prime
New Zealand

he tells me
about colorful butterflies—
coming out

Ramona Linke
Germany

cold lakeside
only the sweeping bills
of avocets

Mark Miller
Australia

in the lane
a flock of sheep
part shadows

Bernard Gieske
USA

deep winter
all the playground swings
frozen still

Rachel Sutcliffe
United Kingdom

only the moon **EC**
privy to a possum's
tightrope walk

Madhuri Pillai
Australia

winter wind
a gull launches itself
into its voice

James Chessing
USA

the orchard
uberous with apples
autumn dusk

Anna Cates
USA

fading light . . .
the treetops blossom
with birdsong

Paresh Tiwari
India

Broadway at dusk
rain and neon glaze
the city's streets

William Scott Galasso
USA

waning moon—
thinking of myself
in old age

Juliet Wilson
Scotland

cattails – January 2016

fireflies
my cigar embers
join their ranks

Edward Cody Huddleston
USA

winter twilight
on the memorial wall
an elder's shadow

Chen-ou-Liu
Canada

summer dusk—
a murder of crows
and then just one

Angela Terry
USA

seven degrees **EC**
the audubon clock
sings robin

Phyllis Lee
USA

chrysalis dawn
a butterfly stretches
its world

Shrikaanth Krishnamuthy
United Kingdom

retirement
the mountain cherry
still in bloom

Thomas James Martin
USA

cattails – January 2016

sudden storm—
paddock on paddock
of flattened crops

Marilyn Humbert
Australia

cityscape—
silver threads of moonlight lost
in the neon glare

Mahvash Afzal
India

juice bar
a hummingbird samples
the columbine

Diana Eileen Barbour
USA

humid day
even the dove's call
is sluggish

Terrie Jacks
USA

prison lockdown
a red dragonfly
still at large

Johnny Baranski
USA

rustling
a smidge past dusk
just-a-coot

Neal Whitman
USA

cattails – January 2016

chasing
his mother's call
gosling

Elmedin Kadric
Sweden

spring flooded park—
the mother and ducklings swim
through a playground swing

Laura Lynn Gatzow
USA

evening star
the heron folds her wings
and sleeps

Barbara Tate
USA

gatekeeper—
sheep follow the sound
of a voice

Jesus Chameleon
USA

the red hibiscus
that greeted me this morning—
still here

Ruth Holzer
USA

alone again...
the waves lapping blue
at the shore

Chen-ou Liu
Canada

cattails – January 2016

daytime sky
a half-moon barely seen
among pale clouds

Valentina Ranaldi-Adams
USA

sunlight
through the cedar canopy
kinglets

Joanna M. Weston
Canada

rainforest
exchanging breath
with the pines

Quendryth Young
Australia

one-way street
the fragrance of jasmine
everywhere

Vandana Parashar
India

unlike stars
scattered thoughts of snowflakes
touching ground

Ronald Scully
USA

as I rake
leaves into piles
squirrel chatter

Michele L. Harvey
USA

cattails – January 2016

anvil sparks—
a cluster of children
in a horseshoe

Nola Obee
Canada

an old woman—
warming her bones and applying
*Pferderbalsam**

**camphor horse liniment*

Tatajana Debeljacki
Serbia

piercingly cold
the little girl swaddles
her teddy bear

Emmanuel Jessie Kalusian
Nigeria

long seed pods
hang from the wisteria
the weight of the sun

Johnnie Johnson Hafernik
USA

the boss
stalking the street
a tomcat

Norman Crocker
USA

hour of silence
I catch myself before
scolding the wren

Julie Warther
USA

the thrum
of a hummingbird's wings
first crush

Cyndi Lloyd
USA

discarding books
the room has new guests—
butterflies

John J. Han
USA

holding up
a moon lost in the ruins—
cariatides

Ana Drobot
Romania

cedar windbreak
the scent of Christmas
all year round

Jan Benson
USA

winter stars
what i don't have to see
to believe

Michael Henry Lee
USA

outer suburb **EC**
the length of a dog's
weekday voice

Jan Dobb
Australia

cattails – January 2016

stars falling
from a midnight sky
friends fade away

P. J. Reed
England

star cluster
the white-lipped frog swings
on a twig

Cynthia Rowe
Australia

winter's end
the porch swing's creaks
commence

Elmedin Kadric
Sweden

outdoor concert
the flutist's pages
take to the wind

Brad Bennett
USA

frogs' eyes
in the pawpaw—
housebound child

Marietta Jane McGregor
Australia

abandoned farm
the dandelions make
their own wishes

Gregory Longenecker
USA

dark moon—
an owl's shriek unsettles
a dream

Adjei Agyei-Baah
Ghana

a dark-eyed junco
buffeted by northern gusts—
winter solstice

Theresa A. Cancro
USA

lightning flash
on her black blouse
klieg-bright leaves

Thomas Chockley
USA

morning
the farm cows eat grass
with dew

Rosa Clement
USA

morning inspection
from one flower to another
a butterfly

Kwaku Feni Adow
Ghana

the joint
passed between us—
sultry evening

Ernesto P. Santiago
Philippines

cattails – January 2016

beach nap
a crab digging out
from my shadow

Ramesh Anand
India

a green beetle
crossing her carved initials—
spalted birch

Bill Cooper
USA

frosty morning **EC**
bare roses tinselled
by spiders

Elaine Riddell
New Zealand

pre dawn—
a lone barn cloaked by
the winter storm

Payal A. Agarwal
India

twisted vines
the night curls in
on itself

Jay Friedenberg
USA

thunderstorm
the dogwood petals
one by one

Mark E. Brager
USA

cattails – January 2016

sunlight
circle after circle crossing
the room

Jo Balistreri
USA

saucer-shaped clouds **EC**
hover over the mountain—
I want to believe

Scott Wiggerman
USA

light showers
beneath a giant dome
Leonids

David J. Kelly
Ireland

north wind—
the loose canvas slaps
at day's end

William Seltzer
USA

fireworks
some brighter than others
faces in the crowd

Robert B. McNeill
USA

first spring day...
birdsong unravels
my knitting

Hazel Hall
Australia

cattails – January 2016

from one moon
to another moon—
a frisky frog

Vishnu P. Kapoor
India

my emotions
floating on the surface
water hyacinth

Marilyn Fleming
USA

no way home
over the river
rainbows

Ernest J. Berry
New Zealand

maze drawn in sand
our annual august descent
to the sea to swim

Giselle Maya
France

diagnosis—
through the pane starlings
in bare trees

Mark Miller
Australia

cold front
bar stools filled
with coats

Ben Moeller-Gaa
USA

cattails – January 2016

deep winter freeze
a killdeer's dee-dee-dee
brightens the bleakness

Elizabeth Howard
USA

*jaka umorna**
makes the young girl's tears roll—
raindrops on a leaf

**great fatigue*

Vanessa Raney
Croatia

Autumn leaves
rockin' music:
the red hot rage

Raffael de Gruttola
USA

noisy cicadas
years of silent longing
suddenly released

ayaz daryl nielsen
USA

last breath
the otherness
of twilight

Marianne Paul
Canada

rainbow trout
nipping at the lake's surface
full of stars

Susan Botich
USA

cattails – January 2016

mesmerized
by the river I drift
into zen

Carole Johnston
USA

*Ibadan**
the horizon takes rest
on rusty roofs

**Nigeria's largest city*

Barnabas Ikeoluwa Adeleke
Nigeria

first day of school
wisteria spills over
the brick wall

Agnes Eva Savich
USA

the warm side . . .
a hawk in a pine
turns to dawn

Sandi Pray
USA

ikebana spring—
the student mistakes snowballs
for hydrangeas

Beverly Acuff Momoi
USA

autumn starts
the drifting leaf carves
a helix

Gautam Nadkarni
India

winter—
each day closing in
on itself

Mary Kendall
USA

aftermath
a skunk forages
in fireweed

Debbie Strange
Canada

rain mist
through her bifocals
blue sky

Alegria Imperial
Canada

distant sitar strain—
a floating dandelion
on the April breeze

Sreelatha Nair
India

honeydew
beneath the poplar tree
a dark chrysalis

Michael Smeer
Netherlands

shadowy night...
a lone mopoke calls
from the ghost gums

Barbara A. Taylor
Australia

cattails – January 2016

that kind of day
the difference an inch
of sun makes

Robert Epstein
USA

train the shape of the river

Alan S. Bridges
USA

rust spots bloom
on the forgotten shears
bronze chrysanthemums

Barbara Snow
USA

raindrops sizzle
on the pellet stove pipe—
and an old dog

peterB
USA

long kiss
Jupiter moves closer
to the moon

Myron Lysenko
Australia

weeping willow
he pours champagne
in my wine glass

Jade Pisani
Australia

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an oil lamp
ablaze in the window...
waning moon

Carol Judkins
USA

the spring wind
leaves twisting rapidly
lime, emerald, lime

Richard Kay
England

the pilgrim pauses
for a silent moment...
twilight whispers

Karen O'Leary
USA

in the hills
cattle lowing between
silences

Debbie Strange
Canada

splashing
in the birdbath
April rain

Dave Read
USA

flash fog...
the jacaranda tree
drips blue

Yesha Shah
India

cattails – January 2016

freezing fog...
the slow retreat of
a hawk's cry

Meik Blöttenberger
USA

winter morning—
low sun on Sandymount
casts cockle shadows

Amanda Bell
Ireland

night songs
gathering oneness
a wolf's howl

Kala Ramesh
India

hard freeze—
from a new-born calf
lingering steam

John Wisdom
USA

through a gate
and into the fallow garden—
winter moon

Kevin Valentine
USA

the summer porch—
searching for each other as
I came down she went up

Aju Mukhopadhyay
India

Yellow tulip
the hum of a bee
in its black heart

Carol Purington
USA

monsoon season
memories of the haze
washed away

Christina Sng
Singapore

Pleiades
I disentangle a festoon
of Xmas lights

Rajandeep Garg
India

thick fog...
even your voice, crow
lost to view

Saša Važić
Serbia

December stars
I think of angels dancing
in a velvet sky

Rachel Pond
USA

where fires once raged
the yellow daffodil
just budding

Tyler Pruett
USA

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pumpkin field
smoke from a campfire
greet the fog

*dyniowe pole
dym z ogniska
wita się z mgłą*

*Wiesław Karliński
Poland*

first frost
matching the lake's surface
two swans

*pierwszy przymrozek
stapia się z taflą stawu
para łabędzi*

*Irena Iris Szewczyk
Poland*

fresh snow
around the horse's hooves
white puffs

*świeży śnieg
wokół kopyt konia
białe obłoki*

*Magda Sobieszek
Poland*

cattails – January 2016

haystacks
sun on one and snow
on the other

*stogovi na livadi
sunce s jedne a
bjelina s druge strane*

*Ljubomir Radovančević
Croatia
Tr: D.V.Rozic, Croatia*

steady rain
pitterpattering
loneliness

ನೋನೇಮಳೆ
ಪಟಪಟಿಸುತ್ತಿದೆ
ಒಂಟಿತನ

*Shrikaanth Krishnamurthy
United Kingdom*

Christmas toys
frosted rose hips
in the yard

коледни играчки
заскрежени шипките
в двора

*Gergana Yaninska
Bulgaria*

morning greyness
stopped in a moment
by the sunflower

*szarość poranka
przez chwilę rozjaśniona
słonecznikiem*

*Janina Kowal
Poland*

cranes flocking south—
as black as soot clouds
take them over

*cer golit de cocor—
norii negri
le iau locul*

*Lavana Kray
Romania*

low tide—
the lighthouse's shadow
covered by a wave

*czas odpływu—
cień latarni morskiej
wypełnia fala*

*Zuzanna Truchlewska
Poland*

fallen mulberries
the children and hens both
have purple legs

*zrele murve
djeca i kokoši
ljubičastih nogu*

*Bozena Žernec
Croatia
Tr: D.V. Rožić, Croatia*

cold snap
cherry blossoms fall
with the snow

*köldknäpp
körsbärsblommor faller
med snön*

*Anna Maris
Sweden*

in the puddle
an autumn leaf
and my face

*naj bo luža
jesenji list
i moje lice*

*Dimitrij Škrk
Slovenia*

warm tail-wind
the fishermen float on
a nameless ice floe

сливы у дороги
долетают депестки
к носу щенка

Vitali Khomin
Ukraine

chanting mantras...
she circles round and round
the *tulsi** plant

ਮੰਤਰ ਉਚਾਰਦਿਆਂ...
ਤੁਲਸੀ ਦੇ ਬੂਟੇ ਦੁਆਲੇ
ਉਸਦੀ ਅਖੰਡ ਪਰਿਕਰਮਾ

Sandip Chauhan
USA

**holy basil*

sea foam—
the waves caress
cold cliffs

pjena od mora—
more miluje strasno
hridine hladne

Smajil Durmišević
Bosnia and Herzegovina

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broken pot
the moon's reflection
in spilled tea

*razbijen čajnik
u prolivenom čaju
lice mjeseca*

*Jasna Popović Poje
Croatia
Tr: D. V. Rožić, Croatia*

an earthquake—
in the day care's rubble
a lego tower

*trzęsienie ziemi—
w gruzach przedszkola
wieża z klocków*

*Zuza Truchlewska
Poland*

old house—
ashes in the fireplace
from times past

*stara kuća
pepeo u kaminu
svjedok vremena*

*Marija Maretić
Croatia*

once it rises
the sun will reveal
this dewdrop

*kad se podigne
sunce će otkriti
ovu kap rose*

*Nina Kovavić
Croatia*

snowless winter
the scars in our old
wooden table

*schneeloser Winter
die Narben in unserem
alten Holztisch*

*Eva Limbach
Germany*

go slow signal
yellow leaf lands
on my palm

धीमी गति से संकेत जाना
एक पीले रंग की पत्ती उतरा
मेरी हथेली पर

*Niranjan Navalgund
India*

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return ticket
leaving a sea scent
in the wallet

*bilet powrotny
pozostający zapach morza
w portfelu*

*Marta Chocilowska
Poland*

through a park
first to find snowdrops—
the guide dog

*prosto przez park
pierwszy do przebiśniegów—
pies przewodnik*

*Irena Iris Szewczyk
Poland*

harvest moon—
I count every coin
in my palm

*chingamaasa chandran-
kaivellayile naanayangal
ennunna njan*

*Geethanjali Rajan
India
Tr: Anitha Varma, India*

dead leaves—
my steps reveal what
is buried

мертве лист
моя хода відкриває
те що поховано

Nicholas Klacsanzky
Ukraine

magpie's flight
a broken walnut trundles
from the roof

Prolete suraka.
S krova se skotrlja
slomljeni orah.

Igor Damnjanović
Serbia
Tr: D. V. Rožić, Croatia

ice moon...
a rusty coin between
the beggar's fingers

Ali Znaidi
Tunisia

sighs of nature
the wind blows each tree
into shaplessness

Yuan Changming
Canada

no more sakura—
on a branch only the plume
of a pigeon

cireșul scuturat—
p—eo creangă doar pana
unui porumbel

Steliana Cristina Voicu
Romania

a street player
an empty summer hat
waiting for coins

ulicni svirac—
prazan ljetni sesir
ceka novcice

Marija Pogorilić
Croatia

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**Shivaratri...*

the bael tree is stripped bare
before evening

ਸ਼ਿਵਰਾਤਰੀ...

ਸ਼ਾਮ ਤੱਕ ਨਿਪੱਤਰਾ ਹੋਇਆ

ਵੇਲ ਪੱਤਰ ਦਾ ਚੁੱਖ

Gurbachan Kamal

India

**Hindu festival*

crushed rose...

the faint whiff of everything
we've shared

ਮਸਲਾ ਗੁਲਾਬ...

ਗੁਜ਼ਰੇ ਹੁਏ ਸਾਝੇ ਕਲ ਕੀ
ਭੀਨੀ ਸੀ ਮਹਕ

Garima Behal

India India

morning greyness
stopped in a moment by
the sunflower

*szarość poranka
przez chwilę rozjaśniona
słonecznikiem*

Janina Kowal

Poland

July heat—
refugees and their shadows
chase across fields

*julska žega—
izbeglice i senke im
jure se preko njiva*

*Dragan Ristić
Serbia*

incessant rain...
the farmhand's parrot pecks at
its empty bowl

ਮੂਸਲਾਧਾਰ ਮੀਂਹ . . .
ਖਾਲਮ-ਖਾਲੀ ਠੂਠੇ ਨੂੰ ਠੁੰਗੇ
ਕਿਰਤੀ ਦਾ ਤੋਤਾ

*Gurmukh Bhandohal
Australia
Tr: Sandip Chauhan, USA*

ripening wheat
as far as the eye can see...
easterly wind

ਦੂਰ ਤੱਕ ਵਿਛਿਆ
ਨਿੱਸਰੀ ਕਣਕ ਦਾ ਖੇਤ . . .
ਪੁਰੇ ਦੀ ਰੁਮਕ

*Charan Gill
India
Tr: Sandip Chauhan, USA*

Diwali moon...
sprinkles of fresh paint
on grandma's trunk

ਦਿਵਾਲੀ ਦਾ ਚੰਨ. . .
ਦਾਦੀ ਦੇ ਸੰਦੂਕ ਉਤੇ
ਤਾਜ਼ਾ ਪੇਂਟ ਦੇ ਛਿੱਟੇ

Amanpreet Pannu
India
Tr: Sandip Chauhan, USA

cold mountain—
cows in a meadow
veiled with clouds

ਚਰਾਗਾਹ ਅੰਦਰ
ਬੱਦਲਾਂ ਹੇਠ ਲੁਕੀਆਂ ਗਾਵਾਂ —
ਠੰਢੀ ਪਹਾੜੀ

Jaspreet Parhar
Italy
Tr: Sandip Chauhan, USA

grapes first bloom...
the rusted wire blends
with lush green

ਅੰਗੂਰਾਂ ਤੇ ਪਹਿਲਾ ਖੇੜਾ . . .
ਲਹਿਲਹਾਉਂਦੀ ਹਰਿਆਲੀ 'ਚ ਘੁਲੀ
ਜੰਗਾਲੀ ਤਾਰ

Harvinder Dhaliwal
India
Tr: Sandip Chauhan, USA

summer break...
the scent of fermented flour
on grandma's hands

ਗਰਮੀ ਦੀਆਂ ਛੁੱਟੀਆਂ . . .
ਨਾਨੀ ਦੇ ਹੱਥਾਂ ਉੱਤੇ
ਖਮੀਰੇ ਦੀ ਖੁਸ਼ਬੋ

Dilpreet Chahal
India
Tr: Sandip Chauhan, USA

Editor's Choice Haiku

With so many fine haiku being submitted to *cattails*, it is most difficult to ever choose any one favorite, and I look for haiku that demonstrate particular techniques of writing a fine haiku. Of course poetry of any kind is subjective as are editorial opinions.

only the moon
privy to a possum's
tightrope walk

Madhuri Pillai
Australia

This Editor's Choice haiku by Madhuri Pillai from Australia, although it's on the fringe of personification, does not overstep the boundary. It could have just as easily been written about where I live in the USA (Oregon). Madhuri wrote it because the possums although they hide in trees and on roof tops during the day, usually come out at night and walk the wires strung between poles connecting electricity or telephone cables. Other places have underground cables and wires, but where this author lives in Australia and where I live in Oregon, they are still overhead, which makes for an interesting haiku visual, especially given the moonlight.

—UHTS *cattails* principal editor an'ya, USA

frosty morning
bare roses tinselled
by spiders

Elaine Riddell
New Zealand

Here is another Editor's choice haiku by Elaine Riddell from New Zealand that also might be considered personification if it were not so well-written. An experienced haiku poet like Elaine knows just how to master this technique and it's tricky business. Again the visuals speak for themselves and depict the winter season even though there is mention of "spiders", long-gone spiders that have left behind the tinselled beauty of their webs; an excellent verb choice in this haiku indicative of the season.

—UHTS *cattails* principal editor an'ya, USA

seven degrees
the audubon clock
sings robin

Phyllis Lee
USA

This interesting haiku by Phyllis Lee of the USA goes the other way, with the suggestion of nature qualities attributed to a material manmade object, which makes it quite unique. Once again this kind of write is accomplished by an astute and perceptive person, and shows a commonplace event in nature such as “robin song” in an uncommon way.
—UHTS *cattails* principal editor an’ya, USA

saucer-shaped clouds
hover over the mountains—
I want to believe

Scott Wiggerman
USA

Here is a haiku moment written by Scott Wiggerman that I chose for an Editor’s Choice for its humor, and the author’s ability to include himself while at the same time include readers that also “want to believe”. It qualifies as a statement haiku insofar as lines 1 and 2 are enhanced by line 3, which is a statement that cannot be disputed since this is how the author feels. Scott ties a valid cloud type that we all know exists to a possible theory and long unanswered question for many laymen as well as scholars and scientists. I believe, do you?
—UHTS *cattails* principal editor an’ya, USA

outer suburb
the length of a dog’s
weekday voice

Jan Dobb
Australia

By Jan Dobb of Australia, this Editor's Choice haiku shows us how to "show" and not "tell". The length of a dog's voice being different leads one to assume that it is because the dog's master is not home on weekdays. A strong sound haiku nicely written given the dog two juxtaposed voices, depending on circumstance. Thanks to Jan for submitting this one.

—UHTS *cattails* principal editor an'ya, USA

first spring day
birdsong unravels
my knitting

Hazel Hall
Australia

Another fine haiku by another fine writer from Australia, Hazel Hall. Interesting she uses the words "first" and "spring" in the same line which indicates the "new year" flowing into the "onset of spring", skillfully overlapping the two seasons. Then she reinforces that feeling with yet another kigo "birdsong" and then even goes on to leave us with a perception of declining winter with the word "unravels". At the end a personal touch with Hazel's words "my knitting".

—UHTS *cattails* principal editor an'ya, USA

cattails

January 2016

Haibun

Haibun Introduction

For your convenience, we have created an introduction page to each category that we publish in *cattails*, collected works of the UHTS. We hope that this will clarify for both old-timers and new writers specifically what is expected from submissions. For some of you, we realize that this is redundant but since there are currently so many different schools-of-thought on each of these forms—we offer ours also for your perusal.

Haibun is a Japanese genre that permits an author to express more than haiku via the addition of personal prose. It allows a wider scope of subjects such as nature orientation, literary allusion, intimate story-telling, and so forth. It is a terse, relatively short prose piece in the *haikai* style, usually either including both lightly humorous or more serious elements. The UHTS does not publish anything that we feel might be offensive to the general public.

A haibun usually ends with a haiku, but not always, some haibun start with a haiku. Some longer haibun may contain a few haiku interspersed between sections of prose. We believe that the secret to composing a successful haibun (the type we publish in *cattails*) is the "subtle pairing" rather than a "direct match" of the haiku with prose while linking and shifting, similar to the way each verse in a renku leaps away.

Haibun range from well under 100 to over 300 words. In haibun the connections between the prose and any included haiku should not be immediately obvious, and the haiku should deepen and enhance the tone, or take the work in a new direction, recasting the meaning of the foregoing prose, much as a stanza in a linked-verse poem revises the meaning of the previous verse.

You can submit haibun directly to Sonam Chhoki at: allthingshaibun@gmail.com

When submitting, please title your haibun with your name and country on the next two lines, and feel free to send a translation of your haibun. If you don't translate all the text, feel free to just translate the haiku.

REMINDER: Please send any/all other submissions (within the "body" of an email), with the Subject heading for the appropriate form you are submitting to, in all CAPITAL LETTERS

Outback Intruders

Marilyn Humbert

Australia

Late afternoon we pull over on the narrow gravel shoulder where small pebbles have been pushed and banked by road-trains for a cup of thermos tea and biscuits. We are the only travellers on this section of road. The dust shroud from our vehicle nudges the depthless blue sky.

Sun scorches the parched earth and mirage masks the landscape in a surreal veil. The loneliness of sparse scrawny trees, withered grain-beards and patches of shrivelled grass dotting the red soil.

roadside stop—
earthbound rainbows*
pecking seeds

* *Lorikeets or Lories*

Silence

Thomas James Martin

USA

It's the silence I have learned to love. Sunrise on a nesting gull or a marsh wren's call to its mate, the moment the tides shift from ebb to flow.

To the consternation of my doctor and relatives, as I grow older I hear and see so much better . . .

light on the river
alone with birches and willows
and my breath song

Inhabiting the Margins

Jim Davis, Jr.

USA

He came home from work to find the swatches of color on the nursery wall had been turned into a mural. He sighed and went to the kitchen to make some soup. The newspaper headline confirms that the new detective is dead and no one's yet been apprehended. His wife takes the bus home. The bus is running late. The gas lamps on the porch are dull. Birds trill in the distance. He wakes when she closes the bedroom door. Pale light through the window.

her breasts
full in his hands...
harvest moon

When she left the house she was wearing a man's white dress shirt, unbuttoned, purple cotton panties. There were good times, now and then. She thought herself brave for her willingness to try new foods. He thought her salad dressing was so good she should bottle it - the one with mustard and papaya seeds – I'm serious, he said. You're a fool, she teased. They sat beside each other and their arms touched, dark and warm from the early summer. They tried their best to smile. In that moment, a poem was born.

leaf shadows the shadow she leaves

Her hips buck twice, his toes clench and the dogs of the neighborhood begin to bark. That was the last time. The mural in the nursery is a dream. A little leather notepad with names, addresses, times, and doodles from long phone calls, has washed up on the riverbank.

autumn chill
opening the door
to her absence

The movers come and load the mattress into the truck. They all wear red bandanas.

Like the Western Heroes Do* EC

Mike Montreuil
Canada

Only an occasional leaf blows along the sidewalk. Morning approaches and the odd kitchen light is on in some of the houses in the street. It's here that he begins his day with a coffee and a wish for a time when he could make a difference.

riding
into the sunset—
memories

Her hair is dishevelled, like those of the man still snoring upstairs. Daylight arrives too quickly. There is nothing to say while dreams slowly fade into nothingness.

riding
into the sunset—
dust rising

Grey building with artificial lights and droning machinery await them. Just an hour away is still an eternity from their seats on the transit bus. Meaningless tasks completed, his mind turns to escape. He wonders if she has the same wishes. If only he knew her name, and not just the smile she gives on the bus.

riding
into the sunset—
heroine at his side

The working day done, he turns off his computer and leaves his cubicle without saying goodbye. Without a word, she grabs her purse and slowly walks to the bus stop. From his seat he can see the emptiness in her eyes.

riding off
into the sunset—
he takes her hand

**Title from the song "Miracles Out of Nowhere" by Kansas. Written by Kerry Livgren.*

Unarticulated for Nadia

Chen-ou Liu

Canada

"We talked a lot, but he seldom listened; then I would get angry." A faint smell of whiskey on her breath.

She continues to talk openly about her life. The sun's rays come through the cafe window on the side of her face. I notice a tiny bruise below her left eye.

"During the last months of our life together, we whipped each other; we thought we were talking—but, we whipped each other on our mouths; one word, one crack of the whip after the other."

She pauses for a moment, then says in a matter-of-fact tone, "Now, I like old men, but they sometimes talk a little too much."

in the middle
of an awkward silence...
robin song

What the Birds Know

Anna Cates

USA

Ten years ago on a hot summer afternoon I went swimming at the Caesar Creek State Park, southwestern Ohio. It was teeming with people. I slipped into the water and dog-paddled beyond the buoys to escape the crowd.

Soon, the shrill notes of a policeman's whistle sounded above the swimmers' chatter. I turned. He motioned me out of the water. Whatever could the problem be? But he seemed insistent. I crept back. Every head was staring my way. There was an eerie silence on the beach.

As I stood on the sand, dripping and dumbfounded, the policeman told me that not long before, a teenage boy had swum beyond the buoys and had been struck by a speeding motorboat. The local authorities were enforcing boundaries...

Today, a bald head glides farther and farther from shore.

the gulls cry—
a swimmer bobs
in deep water

Starry

Thomas James Martin

USA

Her name was Lisa and she was a blonde-haired girl, but her friends called her Starry because she was so into astronomy! She built her own telescope at 12, a humble 6 inch reflector. But she did spend hours grinding the mirror to perfection!

She scoffed at classmates who couldn't even remember the names of all nine planets. Mars, Jupiter and Saturn were her distant friends.

hours in the cold
watching red Mars until dew
fogged the telescope

She checked book after book on astronomy out from the high school library. Unfortunately, by the ninth grade she grew less interested in the stars and more interested in boys.

Eventually, she just took college astronomy electives and finished college with honors, but with dreams forgotten. Yet, I always remember her and her stars...

lifetime
as an English teacher
doodling stars on essays

Japanese sojourn

Jesus Chameleon

USA

Spring and my story unfolded that year in university back in the 80's. A UOG class was on study-tour of Kinki. Just for the Easter break. Touring involved bicycling around town and studying about major museums, temples, and world-famous sites in Nara and Kyoto. Our small class of students stayed at one of the area motels. Neat little places that were immaculately clean. Flying from the Marianas to Japan how funny how it was to be in the tropics, one moment and in the temperate, the next! The Marianas was humid while Japan was wintry.

In Japan I was nauseated by carbon monoxide gas from countless car emissions. It made me feel winded and weak. What might have been for me during that spring study-tour of Nara and Kyoto, I'm not certain. In retrospect, becoming an expert in area studies was not for me. You see, I planned to major in Asian Studies later on. This might have been good training ground for graduate studies. I needed to learn Japanese language and learn it fast. At the time, my specific interests fell in a gray area between East Asian foreign policy and Japanese studies.

The Orient will be always a part of my life. The experience was not the heaven I dreamed it would be. The air and noise pollutions were overwhelming and unnerving. The people, though, were great—always very helpful.

misty spring day...
cherry blossoms fall
on tame deer

air pollution—
tofu float to the top
of miso soup

attentive students—
deer gambol
beneath apple trees

old notes remain
lasting inspiration for
haibun

SPRING

Dimitrij Škrk, Slovenia

Translated: Đurđa Vukelić Rožić, Croatia

I know, when you open your palms again, I will search for you within me in fragrant colours of passion.

amidst spring grasses

I inhale your body—

butterfly in flight

Vem, znova razpreš dlani, in tedaj te poiščem v sebi; v dišečih barvah strasti.

v pomladnih travah

vdihujem tvoje telo—

metulja v letu

Parlor Games

Gregory Longenecker

USA

Twenty years after World War II, I was on military leave in Japan. It was obvious how much the Japanese had come back after the war as I toured Tokyo with its new buildings, neon lights and electronic stores. I was in awe of the Shinjiku district with its shopping stores and nightlife; even the subway seemed new and bright. But there were still signs of a country recovering from the devastation of war.

hoping
for a new life...
pachinko parlor*

**Pachinko parlors are similar to slot machine casinos where people receive chits which are redeemable for prizes such as kitchen items, small electronic devices, etc.*

The Rules of Blackjack **EC**

Gabriel Patterson

USA

After nine years in the gaming industry, I still enjoy teaching new dealers how to deal Blackjack. At first, their heads and hands try to grasp the subtleties of standard rules: hit on soft 17, stand on hard 17, check 10's vertically, check Aces horizontally.

As years go by, they begin to feel the malaise of the cards. Forever staggered upon each other, they hum an autonomous soliloquy. There is no deviation in them, just pips rotting inside sweat-edged rectangles. They are cold, unbiased, mathematical. For example, 666 is not the devil's number, it is 18.

street lights triggered
just the road-kill wings
of a sparrow

The Pain of Release

Brijesh Raj

India

I visit my high school buddy Rizvan's mother who is very ill. Her eyes brim with tears as she says, 'I am fasting throughout this Ramadan. The doctors have said I have few months left. As Allah wills!' Her words rush out between short raspy in-takes of breath. The pallor of her hollowed cheeks make her smile seem bleak. The hands that plied us with mouth-watering carrot *halwa* and the choicest of lamb kebab and *biryani*, now shake holding a cup of tea.

It gives you time to prepare—Pulmonary Fibrosis. Progressively scarred, inelastic lungs make each breath a conscious effort, each coughing episode painful and exhausting. Until you crave release.

autumn rain
still warm the white sheet
drawn over her face

'You say your mother had the same malady. You're a doctor, tell me what can I expect?' she asks.

'The end is painless,' I try to assure her. How can I explain that the excess carbon dioxide in the blood affects the brain, renders the patient unconscious and eventually causes cardiac failure?

'Be brave. Relax and let go,' I say, trying to keep the flutter out of my voice.

quiet road
the grating scrape
of dried leaves

Worms Cry

Pat Geyer

USA

Across the field birds sing. The wind changes. Conversing together they feed.

rice sparrows...
picking the bones
of autumn

The footpath, which I take is narrow. It follows the bend of the field in an elegant line. A place to root
my words however inadequate.

passing
through this whittled landscape...
my words carve no form

Fossil Collecting

Gregory Longenecker

USA

When I was 11 or so, I began taking long, solitary hikes in the Southern California hills where I lived. I'd
take off for hours exploring the deer paths, oak groves and sagebrush of the area. I was especially taken
with the cliffs formed of shale and loved to crack open the clay-like rocks hoping to find the remains of
ancient mollusks and fish.

fossil collecting
separating the past
from my future

The Keeper EC

Glenn Coats

USA

There are four in the boat, three adults and my son who can't stand still. He is all over the place, bow to stern, ducking under lines, standing on seats, not fishing very much. My son opens tackle boxes, rifles through lures, holds them up to see how they work. "This one is a mouse," he says. "Do fish eat mice?"

In one of the boxes, he finds a black rubber worm with golden flecks. "Put it on your hook and give it a go," a friend suggests, hoping the boy will focus on one thing. My son fastens the worm to his hook, drops it into the deepest part of the cove with no weight where it bobs just under the surface.

Moments later, my son's pole is bent and a fish is pulling him down through all of our lines. Everyone reels in to give him space. "It's too big," he cries out. "I can't do it." I steady the pole as the boy reels in a little at a time until the fish is close enough to net.

The smallmouth bass is weighed in at the marina. Photographs of the boy and his fish are taken and one of them will hang on the wall. No one has seen a bass of such size in a long time. "Don't tell anyone where you caught it," I say. "The lake will be packed tomorrow."

That night, we sit down for dinner at a restaurant in Chaffey's Locks, one by one, villagers come over to meet the child who caught the fish. His nose and ears are bright red from the sun. "I hear you caught it over in Clear," a gentleman says. "And to think it went for a bit of rubber worm—sparkles and all."

shooting stars
the clink of marbles
in a pocket

a promise
to throw them back
shooting stars

Practicing Piano

Thomas James Martin

USA

My brother, Kim, had great hands for playing the piano. With one hand he had a spread of more than octave. Almost every afternoon, I overheard him practice easy tunes at first, like 'Carry me Back to Old Virginia' or a simplified version of Beethoven's 'Ode to Joy.'

As he progressed to more complicated pieces, I slowly became aware that although technically outstanding, he had no true feel for the music! He just practiced out of duty to our mother rather any real love.

sunlit window
scales when he wanted
to be playing baseball

Heartwood

Ray Rasmussen

Canada

Morning, editing a haibun journal, reading submissions, sorting the wheat from the chaff, dealing with guilt of saying "no" to some, "yes" to others.

Who, as editor, wants to be the one to say "no" to those who have taken the time to shape a haibun and send it off to a stranger in an email filled with hope? To cope with my angst, I first ask the question: Is this good enough? And, if not, How can I help it along? My email, also filled with hope, is that the "needs some work" writers will find my suggestions useful and won't be discouraged.

Around noon, mentally fatigued, there's a welcome escape to harvesting firewood for the coming winter—a kind of physical editing: trees selected, felled with the chainsaw and cut into rounds, axe plied and the pieces stacked to dry. The stacks are comprised of species—maple, birch, hemlock, beech, pine, cherry—each with its own unique approach to finding a share of soil for roots to gather water and nutrients, and, if successful, its place in the upper canopy for its leaves to gather sunlight.

Now evening, I add pieces of wood, each with its different weight to the fire, each contributing warmth and light to an evening's reading.

the taste of
a tawny madeira—
heartwood

Rambunctious

Giselle Maya

France

That rascal Tora kept me awake until midnight! Just after the rain he took off 'like a shot off a shovel' and would not come home when called. Tora is a seven-month old kitten who is beginning to explore the world. He does not give a whit when I call him home, he keeps hiding under cars in front of the town hall and makes the acquaintance of all sorts of unsavory characters.

At last I fell asleep for a while after calling from my high window so that the whole valley could hear and my throat was slightly sore. To no avail. Precisely at midnight I woke to the village bell, rose and called again into the long, dark valley. I searched down the lane and saw his slender tiger form slink upward towards the house.

I ran two flights downstairs to open the front door and welcomed him like my own dear prodigal son, fed him and went back into dreams of cars driving over the meadows of my land! What were they doing there? I wanted to call out and chase them away.

In the morning Tora lay stretched on my yoga mat in the sun, pleased with his shenanigans, head thrown back, striped stomach in full view meeting my eyes with a slight grin.

even the moon
came closer when I whispered
through wind-bent cedars

Reparation

Carol Judkins

USA

The hospice nurse completes her assessment, reiterates that it is okay to use the painkillers liberally. Mother again resists, is emphatic that she has business to do before she dies and needs a clear head. Never one to be direct, she has admonitions for each of us. She knows just where the fractures are, how they came to be, and how intractable some are. She knows more than we think.

rose garden
all of the weeds pulled
out of the beds

Growing up as the oldest of five, I was Chief Helper while she dealt with overwhelming responsibilities. I don't have special moments with her to report, and found refuge as a daddy's girl. My clearest memory is of Mother holding a baby on her hip, stirring the soup, asking me impatiently "What do you want?" Hard to answer that in a quick sentence.

As we sit together, she whispers, "when you were born, it was just you and me... just us for those eighteen months. I know you can't remember that time". Tears now, from both of us.

snow moon—
the sweetness
of ice wine

The Swan

Amanda Bell

Ireland

My neighbourhood is suspended like a hammock over the River Swan, all seventeen kilometers of whose convoluted course have been culverted and converted into storm drains and sewers. Walking past the Swan Centre, Swan Leisure, Swan Cinema, Swanville Place, it is possible to remain completely unaware of the river network weaving its way mere feet beneath us. But sometimes the river will reveal itself, by sudden subsidence, or geysers of drain water erupting up through shores.

home from work—
welcoming committee
of floating chairs

The main branch of the Swan rises near Kimmage Manor, and flows past Hazelbrook Farm, site of the original HB Ice-cream, and the former home of Miss North, the well-known water-diviner.

twitching branches—
the weight of catkins
in the breeze

As it makes its way towards the sea the Swan is joined by four contributing branches, whose names are redolent of local history: the Roundtown Stream, the Blackberry Brook, Bloody Fields Water, and Baggotrath Brook. All five branches discharge into the Dodder Estuary near Ringsend. It may be that the river was named for swans nesting along the sloblands here before the land was reclaimed from the sea.

tidal water
feathered with grey light—
cygnets hatching

Reading Basho in Hawaii

Peggy Heinrich

USA

On the island of O'ahu sits a replica of a Buddhist temple in Uji, Japan. We cross the curved wooden bridge with its bright red railings.

clear blue sky—
setting loose the hanging log
the big gong sings

We make an offering and enter.

candles and incense
a monk sweeps up ashes
the Buddha's silence

A pair of peacocks strut in the courtyard. A boy pours fish food into the pool of fat koi. The gong resounds. I think about starting a travel journal.

city girl
finding myself in a world
of mountains and water

Everything Beautiful EC

Claire Rosilda Norman
England

In the alluvial beds of the proto-Thames, a few flint blades, a few bones. A sub-specie of homo sapiens.
It's winter, the sky, a clear, pure blue. Ecclesiastes says that God put eternity into our hearts. Is this what
it feels?

early grave
so many ways
to be human

Who Can You Trust?

Peggy Heinrich
USA

So often I imagine a face to go with a voice on the telephone or radio only to discover, from a photo or
public appearance, how far off I am. No way does this person belong with that sexy voice. What puzzles
me most of all is why this upsets me?

rainy summer
plans and ideas like the earth
turn to mush

Stray feathers

Yesha Shah

India

Ever since we moved to this new house over a year ago, a dozen feral pigeons flock to my balcony daily. I place two earthen bowls brimming with water on the extended parapet. At times, I scatter some grains and observe them in close proximity. Their pink—red feet are in stark contrast to their gray bodies. I note the magenta-green iridescence of their neck barbules and the amber rim around their eyes. They cock their heads and watch me scribble away in my poetry notebook. Now they don't flutter away when my rambunctious kids wreak havoc or mind the blaring television.

Frolicking and canoodling, sometimes they spill water from the earthen bowls. The dust and their droppings splatter the pristine marble—tiled verandah of the house on the floor below. I often get an earful. Still I refill the bowls the first thing next morning.

Can these pigeons be my long lost loved ones who come here to catch a glimpse of me?

spring rain...

the song of the sea

in a hawker's call

One Elm Among Many

Maggie Kennedy

USA

My mother walks towards the men with a pitcher of lemonade. I watch from my bedroom window on the second floor. My sisters and I are stuck inside with chicken pox. We are past the worst but still contagious, mother says.

My younger sisters argue over a board game. I scratch but I only get itchier the more I scratch. I cannot see my mother's face. But I know she is smiling because the men are smiling back at her.

The men are here to cut down the mammoth tree that shades our backyard. When I crane my neck to see the top of the tree, I get dizzy. That's how tall it is.

I had never really thought much about the tree until my mother told us it was dying. She spoke in the hushed tone she uses to deliver serious news. "Dutch elm disease," she explained. "It's killing all the elm trees around here."

For the next several weeks, the elm comes up in conversations as if it is part of the family. "Remember the boomerang that got caught in its branches..." "... And the elm threw it back in the spring."

"Remember when Charlie cat disappeared overnight and we looked and looked? "Then we heard him meowing in the elm!" "Remember the hawk that lived in the elm that winter..." "Don't forget the mouse squirming in its beak." "It won't be the same without the elm." "It will be really hot in the summer without the elm." "I love the elm."

One day, before the chickenpox forced us inside, my sisters and I are playing beneath the elm when I get the idea to hug it. I imagine the three of us holding hands to form a rope, and how we will wrap ourselves around the trunk. Even then, we would come up short, leaving a swatch of the elm untouched. That's how thick it is.

It feels good to be close to the elm. The bark is rough but soft at the same time. The moss that crawls up the trunk tickles. The elm smells like the crook of my elbow after I have stayed outside from morning till dusk rolling in the grass, chasing butterflies, kicking cans, racing, laughing and screaming with joy.

I decide to keep the idea to myself. I don't want to be a "tree-hugging hippie," who I gather is someone who is lazy, wears brightly colored, unclean clothes, and never grows up. This is clear to me from the reactions of adults when they watch the news about Vietnam or when we drive past the hippies in the local park and when the neighbor's son runs away to Canada.

Now though I wish that we had hugged the elm. My mother pours the men lemonade and they all laugh.
I dig my face into my arm and smell only the calamine lotion my mother has rubbed all over me. I start
to scratch faster and deeper until I draw blood.

orange tags on
some trees but not others—
then they are gone

Re-reading the Past

Claire Rosilda Norman
England

My grandma said her parents died young and she grew up in a children's home. It was in a pleasant,
leafy suburb of London. She died long before the advent of the Internet. How was she to know how easy
it would become to lay out the skeletons of the past.

dark of the moon
I add a little glitter
to the snowflakes

Effigy of a Graffiti Savant

Gabriel Patterson

USA

On a recent visit to my hometown of Denver, I was reminded of my friend Sike. In 1994, Sike had spray-painted his name onto every billboard and highrise in the city. One such building—the Checker Auto Parts Store—infamously donned Sike's name above its logo, which stood at least 30 feet in the air. How he got up there was anyone's guess, but I do know that since the beginnings of graffiti, these artists rival dare devil and stunt doubles, risking limb, even their own lives for their passion. Sike mounted billboards, eluded security watchmen and ultimately reveled in the darkness of a bridge underbelly. His death-defying scribes were both unapologetic and breathtaking.

thinning alley
backs pressed against dumpster
for a better view

Checker Auto Parts sat at the intersection of 38th Avenue and Federal Blvd. That is where my dad and I were halted by a red light driving back from McDonald's early one evening. We both spotted Sike's insignia. I mentioned to my dad I knew the kid that had notoriously tagged his name above the Checker's sign and that I went to school with him. My father then asked me his name. In condescending fashion I replied, "Sike." Unfazed, my dad waited a few seconds, then said, "No, what's his real name, I want to turn him in to Crime Stoppers and collect the \$1,000 reward."

At the time, graffiti became more prevalent on the North Side of Denver. To counteract, the city created the Crime Stoppers program where tips leading to the arrest of vandals destroying public property would result in a hefty payday to informants. The city figured it would dole out less money in finders' fees than paying repair crews who worked tirelessly around the clock, cleansing the cityscape with monotone paint.

Krylon cans—
the shakes and sprays
of street Picassos

Dad kept a stash of change under the slip mat in his work truck just for slot machines and had a penchant for Central City, the old mining town rejuvenated by gaming. Dad planned to bankroll the reward money into a bigger jackpot, parlaying my loyalty into gambler's paradise.

Sike never knew how easily he could have been brought to justice. Dad wasn't joking. Needless to say I didn't budge. I felt a loyalty to my youth and to our generation. Sike was a real-life Spiderman and played the double personality better—or worse— than Peter Parker. While most of us were filling out FASFA forms and narrowing down college choices, Sike was barely surviving in school, trying to make a name for himself the only way he could. Created in obscurity, Sike's murals were masterpieces of sub-culture, gaining notoriety with each new creation. Every now and then, a local business would donate a wall for the bombers to practice their art legally but they were few and far between. We wannabe scholars secretly lived through Sike's lawlessness and mischief, appreciating both his art and his commitment to the cult lifestyle. It was our duty to champion his craft and maintain his enigma.

hack job—
an anonymous tip
from Anonymous

Moksha*

Angelee Deodhar

India

White waters of the Alakananda and Bhagirathi mingle, rushing over, under and around rocks through underground caverns, disappearing to reappear once again far from where they began. The ashram is close to the Ganga, which can be crossed at this point as the water is slow moving, to go to a small shrine on the other side.

A swollen ankle does not allow me down that rocky slope to bathe in the holy waters... the only journey I will make to the holiest of rivers will be my last, when my ashes mix with the elements. My adventurous friends bring me flowers found growing in the rocky river bed, almost springing from the stones. They are tiny, in hues of blue, dusky grey, lilac, white, yellow and pink with the mild musky fragrance of wildflowers.

satsang questions—
the little girl's bald doll
has all the answers

**Moksha in Hinduism is emancipation, liberation or release. It connotes freedom from saṃsāra, the cycle of death and rebirth. Satsang in Indian philosophy means sharing the "highest truth."*

The short straw

Paresh Tiwari

India

I have decided to build my house with postcards. From countries far away and times long forgotten. In the fowl-scratch of friends lost in the debris of the past.

There are postcards of deserts and mountains. Of lakes that gurgle cobalt and trees that bloom scarlet. Of dogs that pant happily and cats that play with wool-balls. Of birds caught in a time warp; forever flying into the clouds and of castles kissing the flat orange disc of sun.

In this house of mine, I will have three windows, each opening out to the shooting stars we once wished upon.

onset of winter. . .
with the divorce papers
we split memories

Learning To Sing

Joan Grisetti

USA

Surprisingly, I learned a number of French songs while living in Sasebo, from my Norwegian friend Grace. She taught me “Alouette”, “Frere Jacques” and “Ma Tante and Mon Oncle”. Through these simple songs, I learned words for body parts and common household items. When we tried to put Japanese lyrics to the same tunes, we broke down in laughter. Short blond curls bobbing into long brown braids in our version of cultural exchange.

stillness in the forest
a thrush trills
and a sparrow sings

Editor's Choice Haibun

Everything Beautiful

Claire Rosilda Norman

England

In the alluvial beds of the proto-Thames, a few flint blades, a few bones. A sub-specie of Homo sapiens. It's winter, the sky, a clear, pure blue. Ecclesiastes says that God put eternity into our hearts. Is this what it feels?

early grave
so many ways
to be human

Claire Rosilda Norman brings together the fragmentary and the archaic into a more contemporary sensibility. Under a cloudless winter sky (the sky with its allusions of the heavenly realm) the historic remnants of the Thames, are laid bare to a contemporary poet. Although the poet's focus is much more on the archaeological and historical significance of the Thames, one cannot help but find a thread through literary and artistic representations like Eliot's 'The Waste Land', Wordsworth's sonnet, 'Composed upon Westminster Bridge' and the paintings of Monet and Turner.

—UHTS *cattails* Haibun Editor Sonam Chhoki, Bhutan

The Rules of Blackjack

Gabriel Patterson

USA

After nine years in the gaming industry, I still enjoy teaching new dealers how to deal Blackjack. At first, their heads and hands try to grasp the subtleties of standard rules: hit on soft 17, stand on hard 17, check 10's vertically, check Aces horizontally.

As years go by, they begin to feel the malaise of the cards. Forever staggered upon each other, they hum an autonomous soliloquy. There is no deviation in them, just pips rotting inside sweat-edged rectangles. They are cold, unbiased, mathematical. For example, 666 is not the devil's number, it is 18.

street lights triggered
just the road-kill wings
of a sparrow

I am struck by Gabriel Patterson's unusual metaphor of the card game as mediation between rule and chance that also expresses the art of poetry as a chance, contemporary experience that can be transmuted into a literary form. His use of a matter-of-fact language and tone matches his motif perfectly.

—UHTS *cattails* Haibun Editor Sonam Chhoki, Bhutan

Like the Western Heroes Do*

Mike Montreuil

Canada

Only an occasional leaf blows along the sidewalk. Morning approaches and the odd kitchen light is on in some of the houses in the street. It's here that he begins his day with a coffee and a wish for a time when he could make a difference.

riding
into the sunset—
memories

Her hair is dishevelled, like those of the man still snoring upstairs. Daylight arrives too quickly. There is nothing to say while dreams slowly fade into nothingness.

riding
into the sunset—
dust rising

Grey building with artificial lights and droning machinery await them. Just an hour away is still an eternity from their seats on the transit bus. Meaningless tasks completed, his mind turns to escape. He also wonders if she has the same wishes. If only he knew her name, and not just the smile she gives on the bus.

riding
into the sunset—
heroine at his side

The working day done, he turns off his computer and leaves his cubicle without saying goodbye. Without a word, she grabs her purse and slowly walks to the bus stop. From his seat he can see the look of emptiness in her eyes.

riding off
into the sunset—
he takes her hand

**Title from the song "Miracles Out of Nowhere" by Kansas. Written by Kerry Livgren.*

Mike Montreuil's distillation of the contemporary human condition in this haibun is compelling. The prose passages describe the daily routine of two nameless characters, who go about their lives automaton-like. The casual details of their lives underline their emotional and social isolation. The refrain-like haiku intersperses the narrative of their mundane everyday. Its repetitious presence has a jingle-like effect that brings out the deep pathos of the unspoken thoughts and longings.

If Issa were living in contemporary times I imagine he would have written a haibun like this.

—UHTS *cattails* Haibun Editor Sonam Chhoki, Bhutan

The Keeper

Glenn Coats

USA

There are four in the boat, three adults and my son who can't stand still. He is all over the place, bow to stern, ducking under lines, standing on seats, not fishing very much. My son opens tackle boxes, rifles through lures, holds them up to see how they work. "This one is a mouse," he says. "Do fish eat mice?"

In one of the boxes, he finds a black rubber worm with golden flecks. "Put it on your hook and give it a go," a friend suggests, hoping the boy will focus on one thing. My son fastens the worm to his hook, drops it into the deepest part of the cove with no weight where it bobs just under the surface.

Moments later, my son's pole is bent and a fish is pulling him down through all of our lines. Everyone reels in to give him space. "It's too big," he cries out. "I can't do it." I steady the pole as the boy reels in a little at a time until the fish is close enough to net.

The smallmouth bass is weighed in at the marina. Photographs of the boy and his fish are taken and one of them will hang on the wall. No one has seen a bass of such size in a long time. "Don't tell anyone where you caught it," I say. "The lake will be packed tomorrow."

That night, we sit down for dinner at a restaurant in Chaffey's Locks, one by one, villagers come over to meet the child who caught the fish. His nose and ears are bright red from the sun. "I hear you caught it over in Clear," a gentleman says. "And to think it went for a bit of rubber worn—sparkles and all."

shooting stars
the clink of marbles
in a pocket

a promise
to throw them back
shooting stars

Glenn Coat's account of a fishing trip with his son, drew in an ignoramus of all things fishing, like myself. An adept writer of the form, he uses descriptions and dialogue effectively - from the initial 'restlessness' of the young boy, to his questioning "Do fish eat mice?" to catching a fish that becomes the talk of the village. The reader feels as if one were present at the scene. The two capping haiku have a wonderful mirroring effect, the 'shooting stars' seen in both the lake and the sky.

—UHTS *cattails* Haibun Editor Sonam Chhoki, Bhutan

cattails

January 2016

Haiga and Tankart

Haiga and Tankart Introduction

For your convenience, we have created introduction pages to each category that we publish in *cattails*, collected works of the UHTS. We hope that this will clarify for both old-timers and new writers specifically what is expected from submissions. For some of you, we realize that this is redundant but since there are currently so many different schools-of-thought on each of these forms—we offer ours also for your perusal.

Haiga (which translates to haiku painting), is traditionally a combination of 3 art forms i.e. brushwork, haiku, and calligraphy. Typically the brushwork is not a direct match to the haiku, however it is often in juxtaposition (or directly aside) the moment. For other types of contemporary haiga such as photographs, "sometimes" direct matches to the picture are acceptable for publication in *cattails*.

In modern times, this form is ranging from everything to photographs with computer fonts to multi-media and its ilk. Although not considered as true haiga by some, these forms are gaining in popularity.

Tankart is a made-up modern day term for a combination of tanka and artwork. It follows the same guidelines as haiga, although there is no formal Japanese word for "tanka painting" as haiga is for "haiku painting."

The UHTS does not publish anything that we feel might be offensive to the general public.

You can submit Haiga or Tankart submissions and questions directly to Elizabeth McFarland at: haigahouse@gmail.com with either the subject heading "HAIGA" or "TANKART".

REMINDER: Please send any/all submissions as an attachment (*not embedded within the "body" of an email*), with the Subject heading for the form you are submitting to, in all CAPITAL LETTERS.

You must include your country, full name, and email address to be considered!

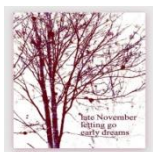
Steliana Voicu, Romania



Debbie Strange, Canada



Adelaide B Shaw, USA



*Shrikaanth Krishnamurthy,
United Kingdom*



Kathy Cotton, USA



Marianne Paul, Canada



Adelaide Shaw, USA



Haiku: Naman Ahluwalia, USA

Paunjabi Translation:

Sandip Chauhan, USA

*Artwork: Jagjeet Ahluwalia,
USA*



**Anjali Mundra—"salutation (benediction
or offering)"*

Joann Grisetti, USA



Maria Tomczak, Poland



Lavana Kray, Romania



poetry: Magda Sobieszek, Poland

artwork: Maria Tomczak, Poland



*Đurđica Vukelić-Rožić,
Croatia*



poetry: Radka Mindova, Bulgaria

artwork: Ivaylo Dobrev, Bulgaria



poetry: Sandip Chauhan, USA

artwork: Anish George, Bora Bora

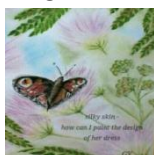


*poetry: Jesus Chameleon,
USA*

*artwork: Pablo San Blaz,
USA*



Gergana Yaninska, Bulgaria



Cynthia Rowe, Australia

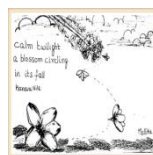


*Shrikaanth Krishnamurthy,
United Kingdom*

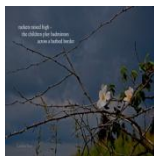


*poetry: Ramesh Anand,
(Kanavu Nila), India*

artwork: Mallika Chari, India



Lavana Kray, Romania



cattails – January 2016

Stjepan Rožić, Croatia



Pat Geyer, USA

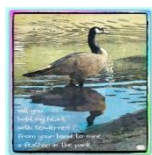


poetry: Marta Chocilowska, Poland

artwork: Grazyna Steranko, Poland



Christine L. Villa, USA



pora deszczowa

w bukiecie panny młodej

kiełkuje ziarno

David J. Kelly, Ireland

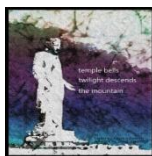


Kathy Cotton, USA



poetry: Kevin Valentine, USA

artwork: Steve Velentine, USA



Debbie Strange, Canada



poetry: Ken Sawitri, Indonesia

artwork; Jimat Achmadi, Indonesia



poetry: an'ya, USA

artwork: Ed Baker, USA



Nina Kovacic, Croatia



Mary Kendall, USA



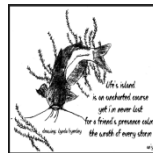
Jimat Achmadi, Indonesia



grasshopper chirping
as the wall paint fades
a message is sent

POETRY: an'ya, USA

artwork: Lynda Byerley, USA



Kevin Valentine, USA



Barbara Kaufman, USA



Christine L. Villa, USA



Marianne Paul, Canada



poetry: an'ya, USA

artwork: Shannon Humphrey, USA



Sreelatha Nair, India

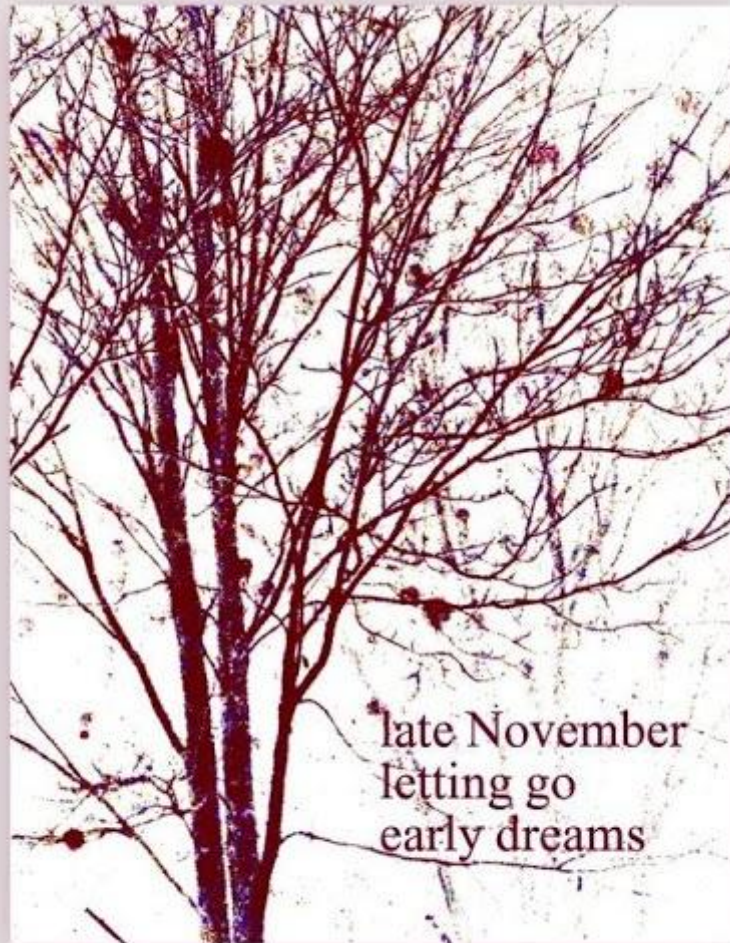




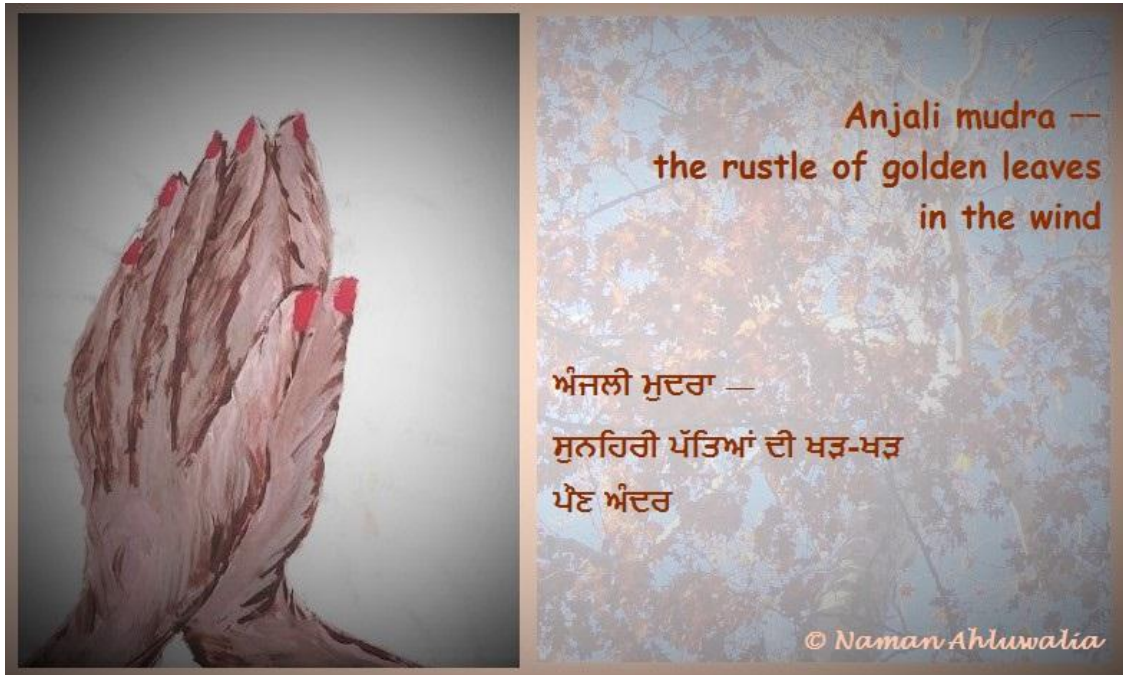
equinox –
sisters sharing
the watercolors

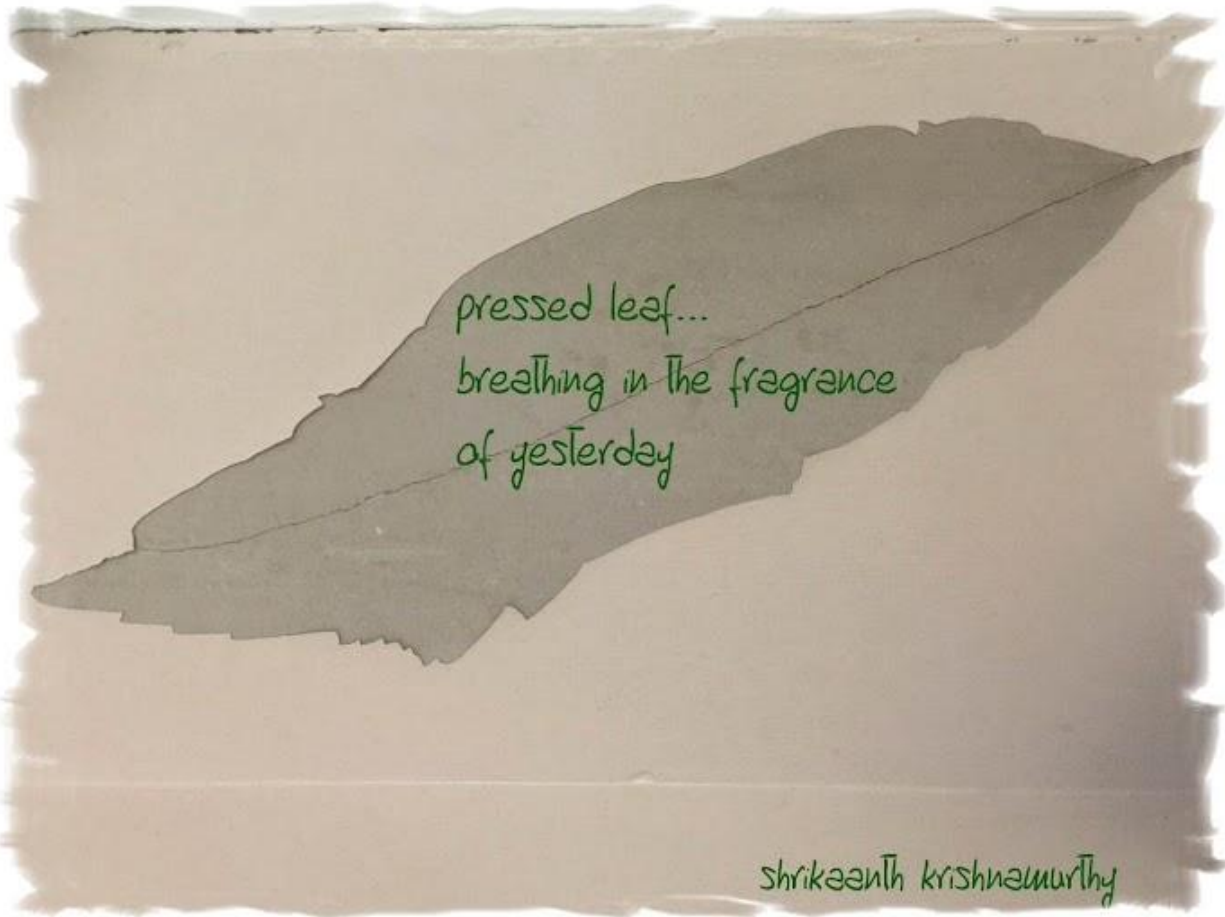






Adelaide B. Shaw





pressed leaf...
breathing in the fragrance
of yesterday

shrikanth krishnamurthy





one snowflake
turns into an entire
use of time

JGrisetti






Thinking about
everything I lost
and gained
a song from my childhood
in a foreign tongue



haiku: Magda Sobieszek
artwork: Maria Tomczak

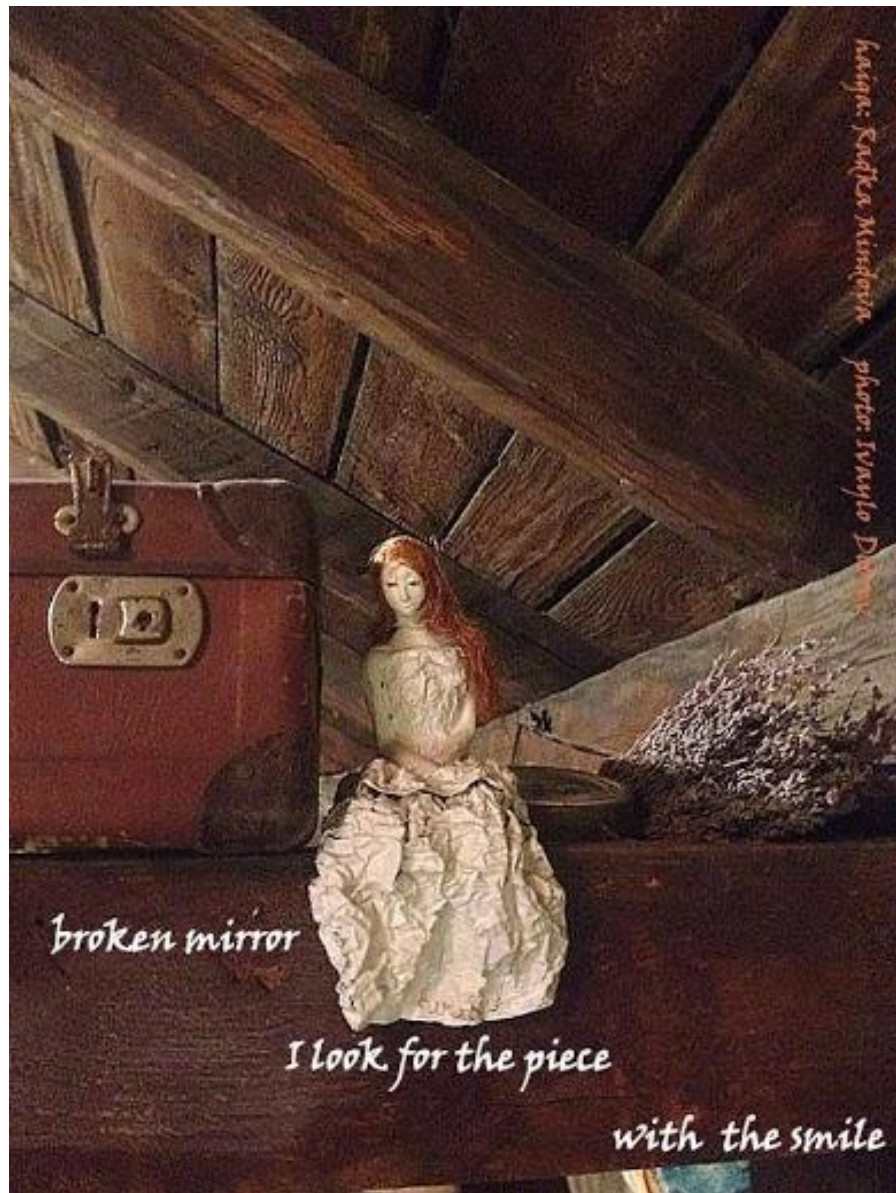


your gaze
in the glass of water
a drop of ink



evening walk
sudden barking makes me
an impressionist

Haiku and photo by Đurđa Vučković Režić





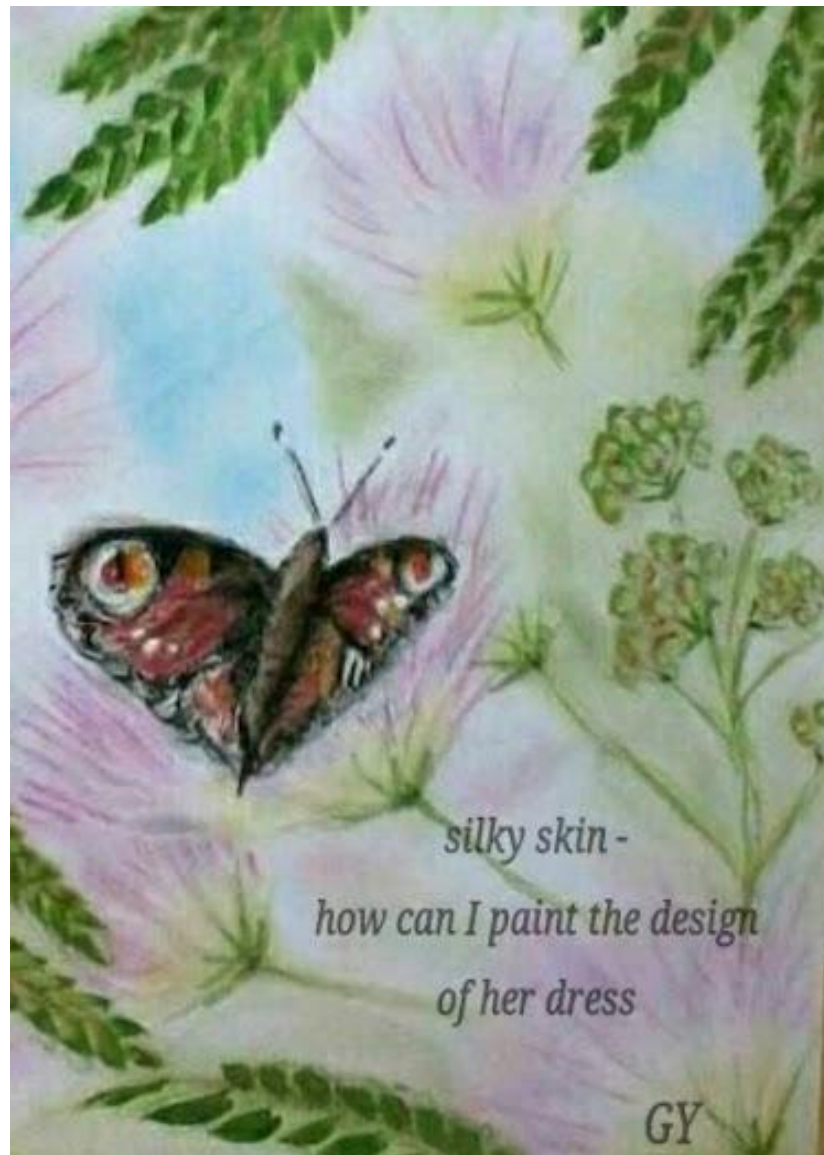
ਪਤਝੜ ਦਾ ਘੁਸਮੁਸਾ –
ਮੇਰੇ ਖੀਸੇ ਵਿਚ ਘਰ ਦੀ
ਇੱਕ-ਦੱਲੀ ਟਿਕਟ

*autumn twilight –
a one way ticket home
in my pocket*

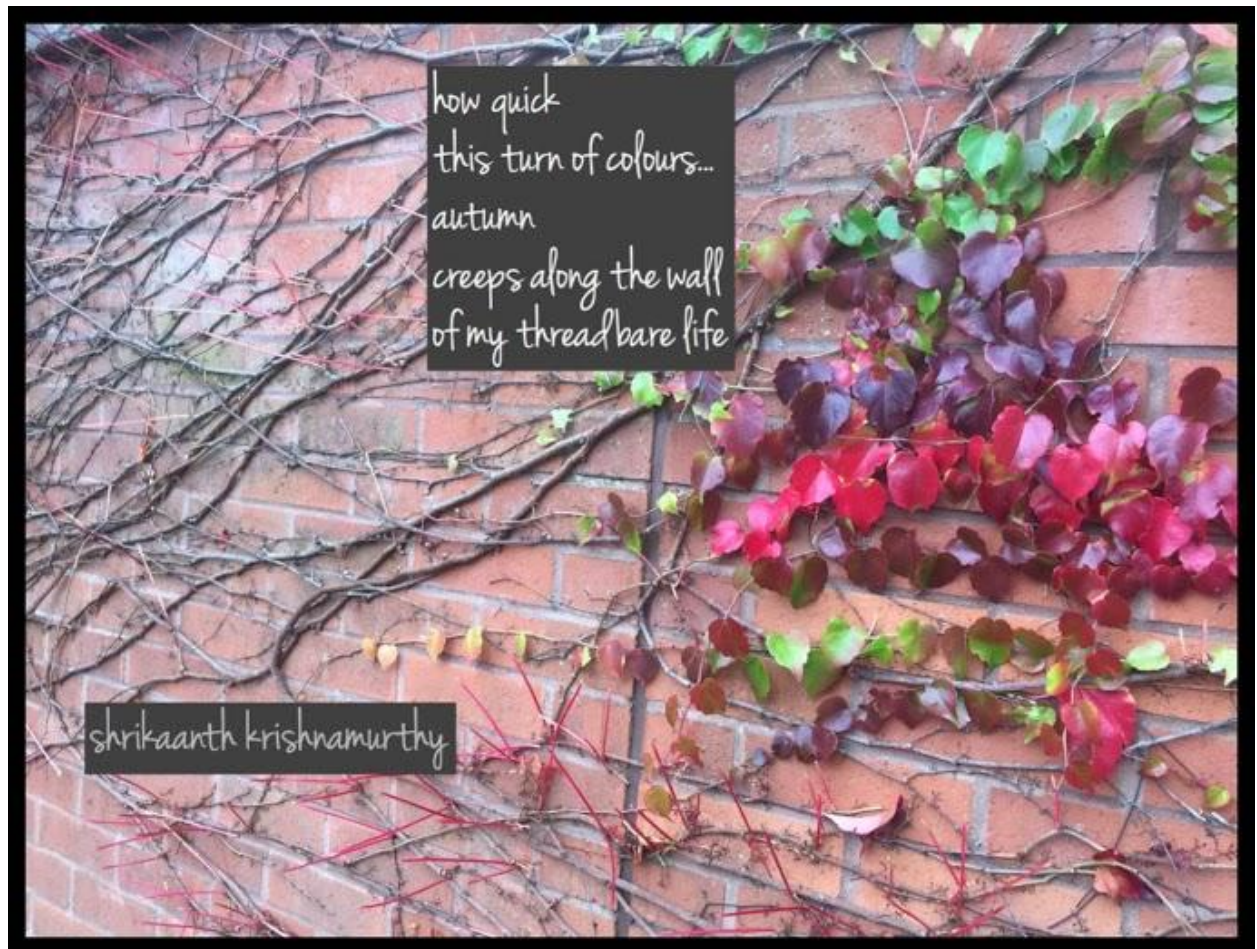


haiku: Jesus
Chameleon
image: Pablo
San Blas

presence--
baby gecko balances
on an angel





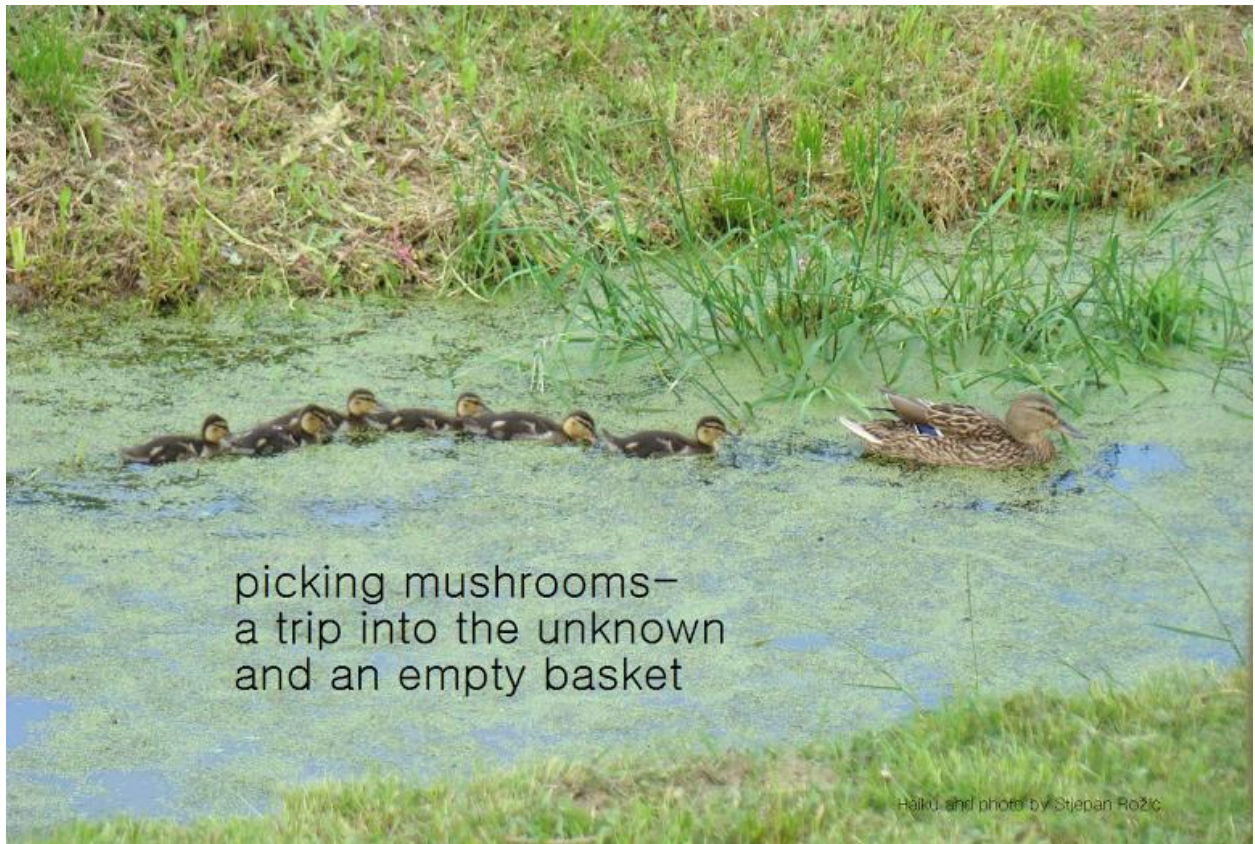






rackets raised high -
the children play badminton
across a barbed border

Lavana Kray



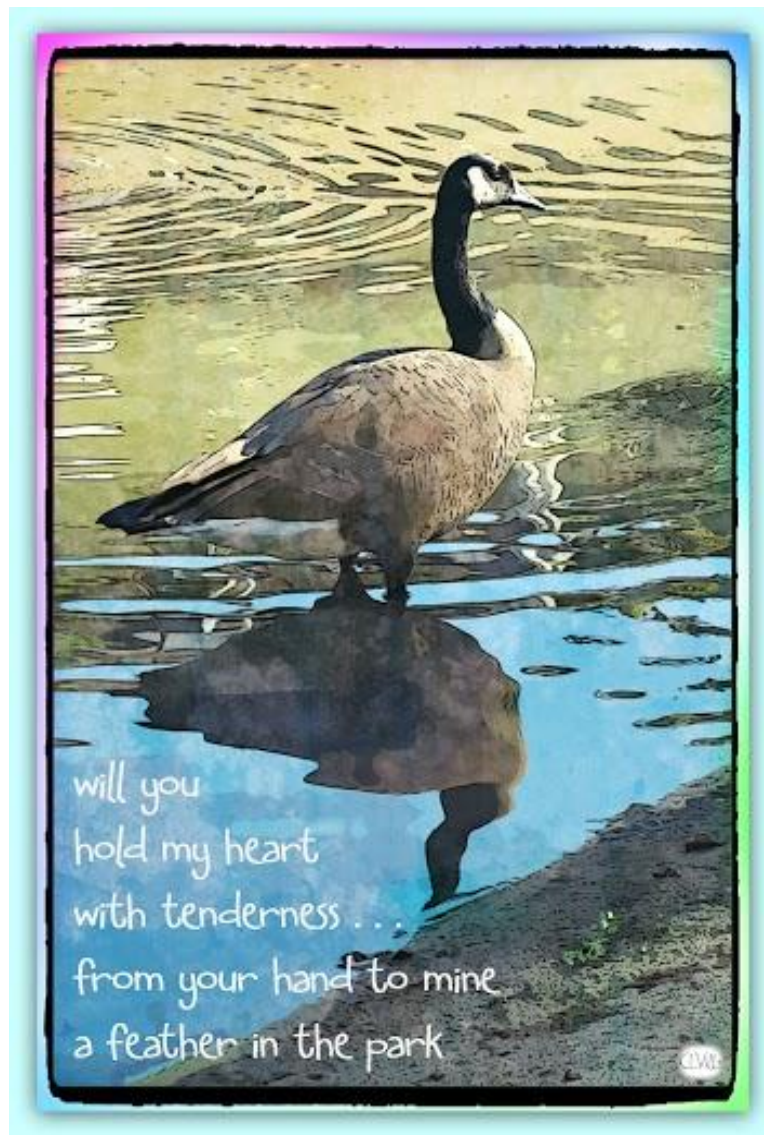
Haiku and photo by Stepan Rožić

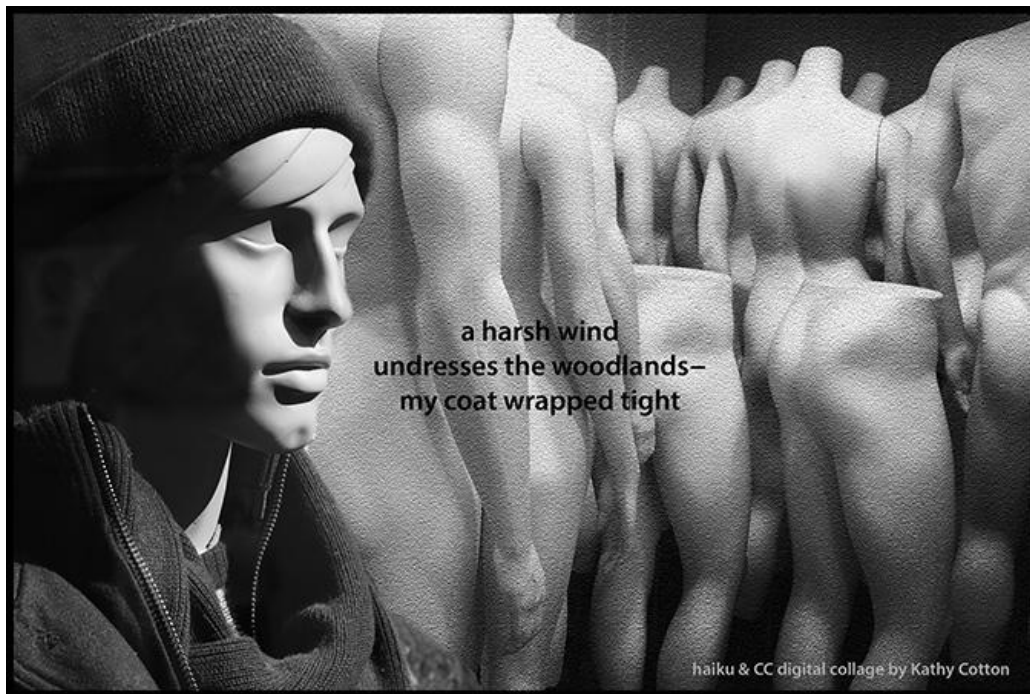




rainy season
in the bride's bouquet
a seed sprouts

haiku Marta Chocilowska
art Grazyna Steranko

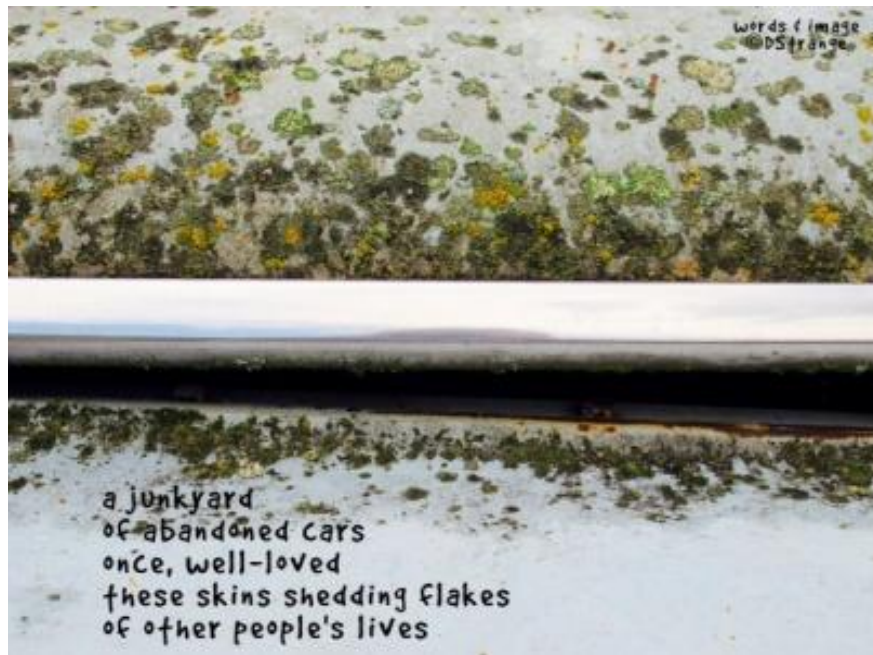


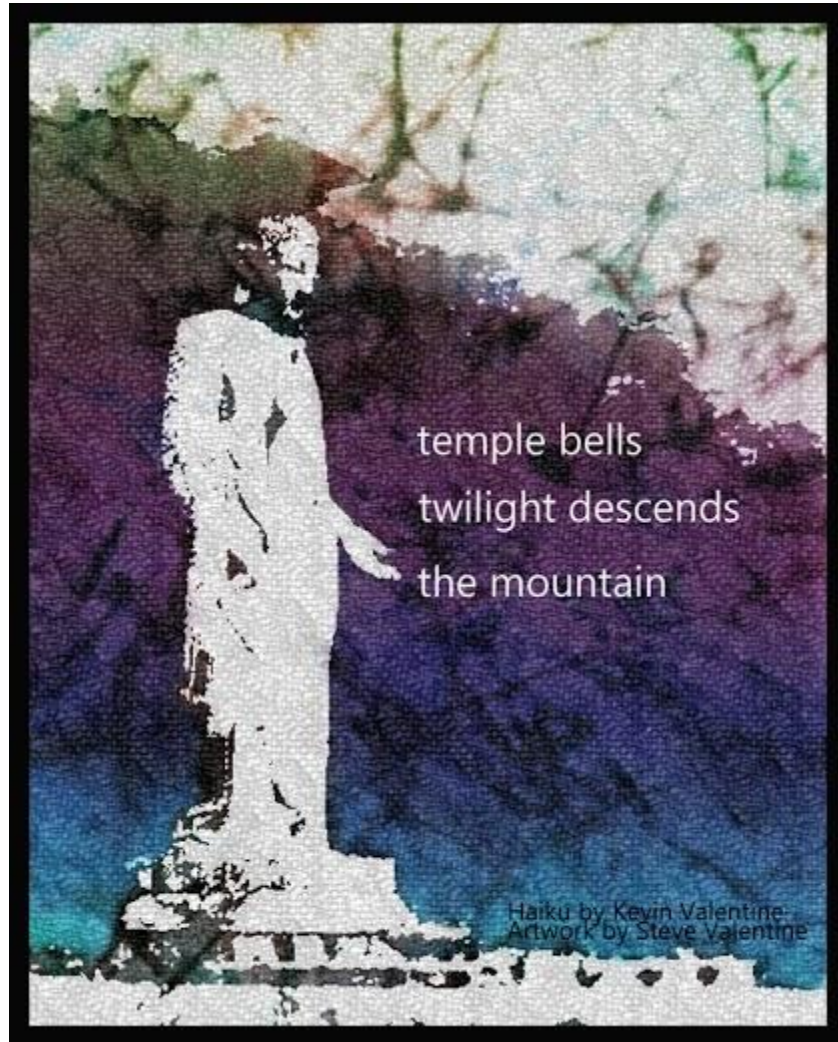


a harsh wind
undresses the woodlands—
my coat wrapped tight

haiku & CC digital collage by Kathy Cotton

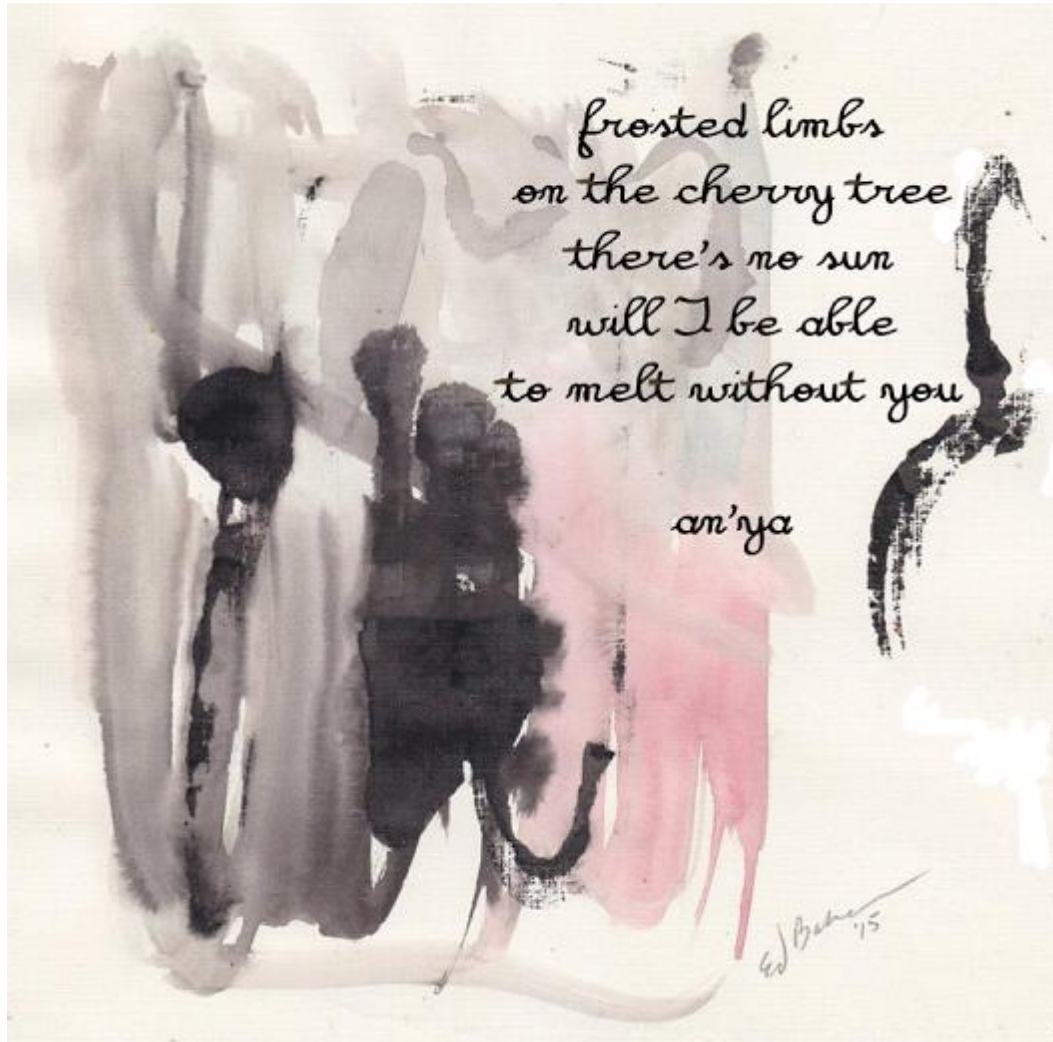






temple bells
twilight descends
the mountain

Haiku by Kevin Valentine
Artwork by Steve Valentine

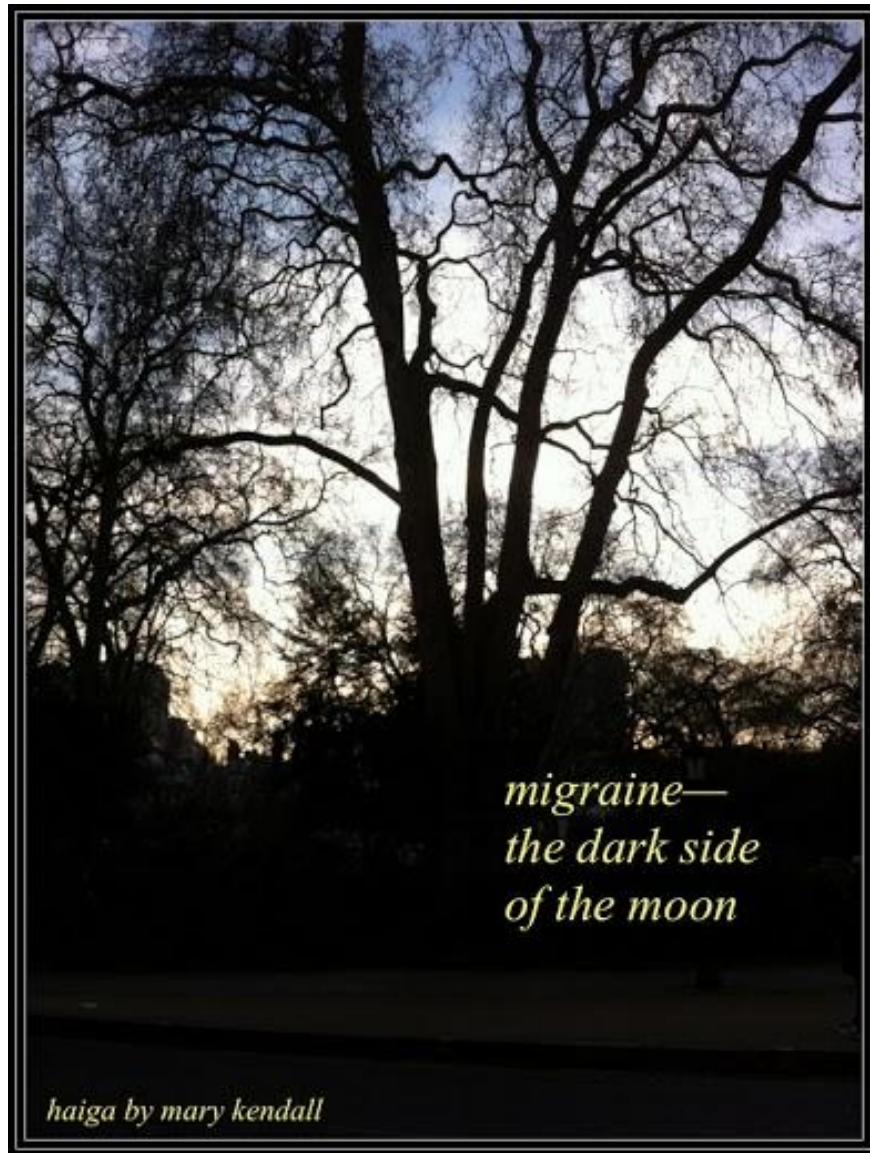


cloudy spring
soundlessly the sun
budding in white

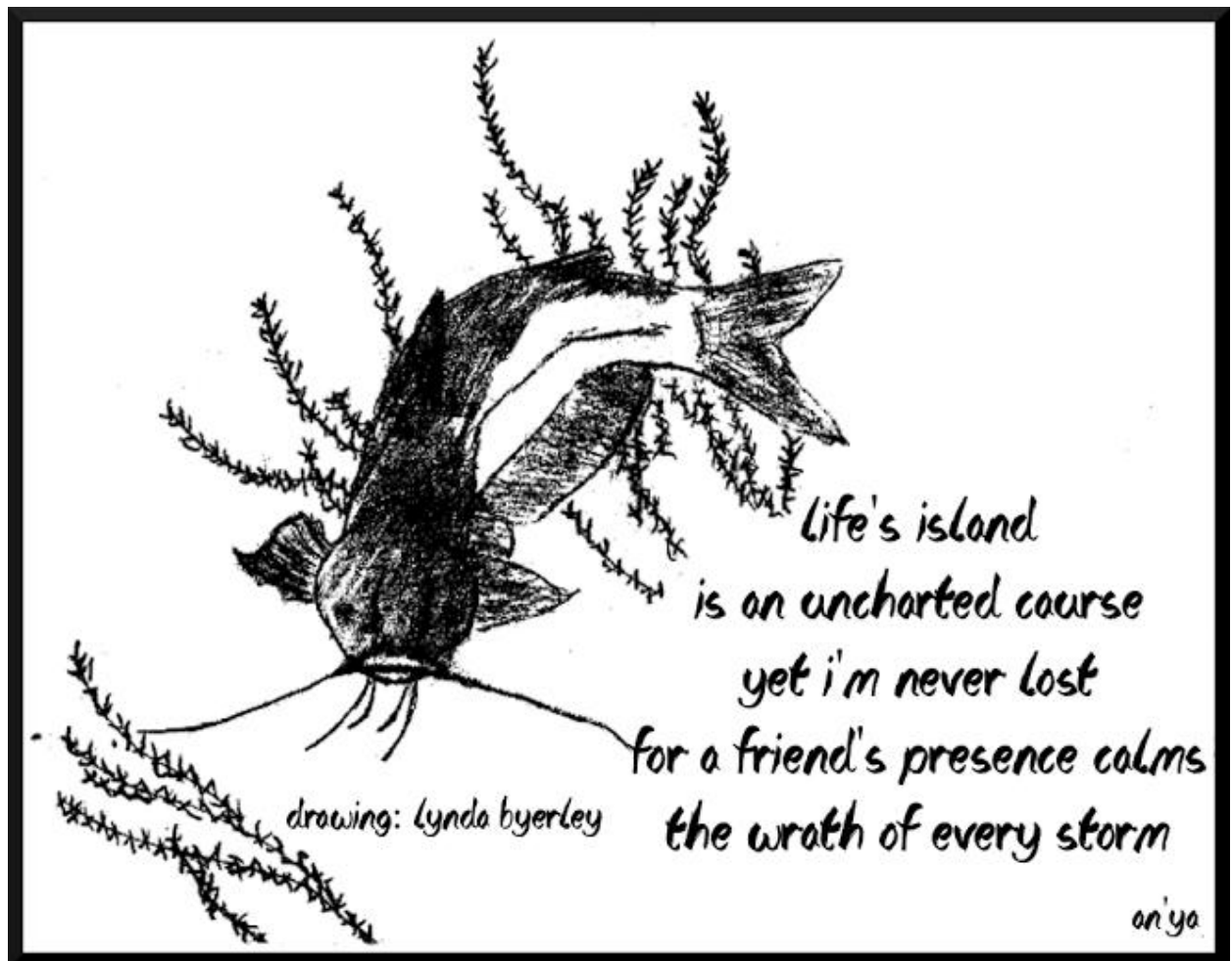
haiga Ken Sawitri photograph Jimat Achmadi

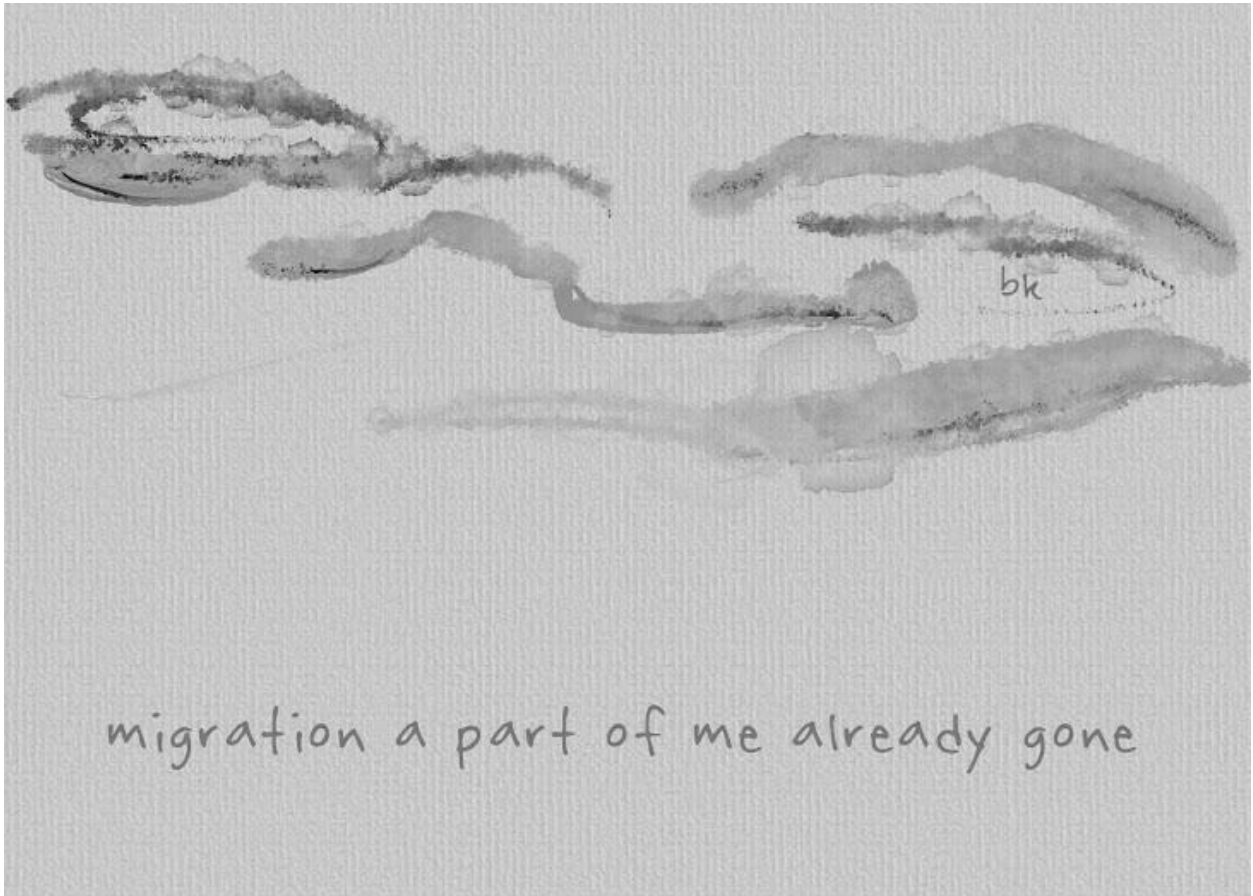








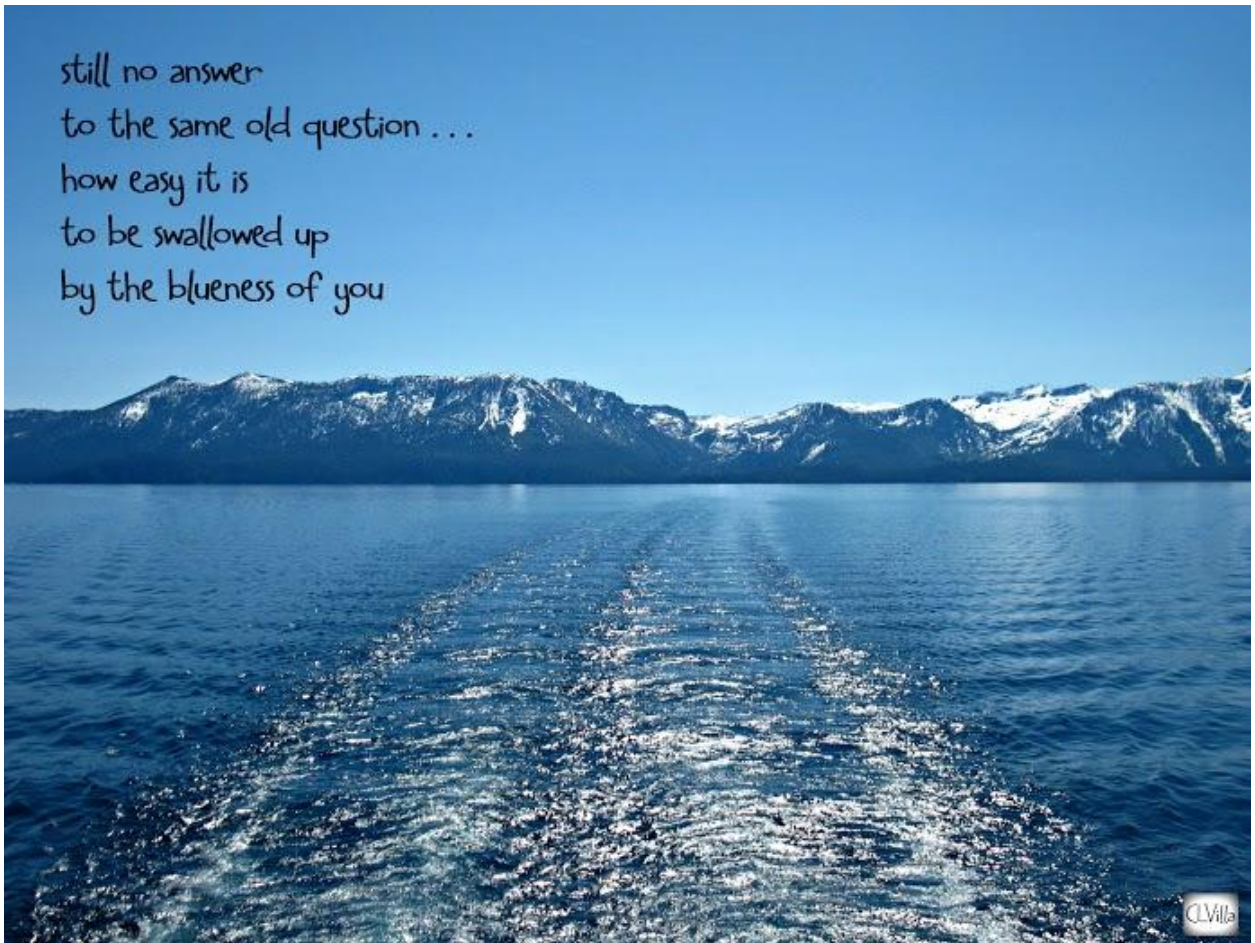








still no answer
to the same old question ...
how easy it is
to be swallowed up
by the blueness of you





Shcelatha nair

*scudding clouds
this time
i let go*

Dear diary:
separate entries about

lust and love

although they're written
with equal gusto

an'ya



Shannon Thompson

cattails

January 2016

Senryu

Introduction

For your convenience, we have created an introduction page to each category that we publish in *cattails*, collected works of the UHTS. We hope that this will clarify for both old-timers and new writers specifically what is expected from submissions. For some of you, we realize that this is redundant but since there are currently so many different schools-of-thought on each of these forms—we offer ours also for your perusal.

Senryu is a cousin to haiku, however its mood is more humorous, mocking, ironic, cynical, satirical, or sarcastic, plus senryu does not necessarily require a season word or that 2-punch juxtaposition. Haiku focuses more on nature-nature and senryu is more about human nature, (however having said this—but not to mislead you,) both haiku and senryu can focus on people, so it's attitude that determines which is which. Haiku honors its subjects, whereas senryu makes fun of, or scorns human folly. The UHTS does not publish anything we feel that might be offensive to the general public.

A senryu may or may not contain a season word or a grammatical break, although it should stick to a short, long, short, (or close to it) rhythm for publication in *cattails*. Some Japanese senryu seem more like aphorisms, and some (but not all) modern senryu in both Japanese and English avoid humor and are more serious. There are also "borderline haiku/senryu", which may seem like one or the other, depending on how the reader interprets them. Many so-called "haiku" are really senryu, so it is up to the poet and editor to decide...

You can submit senryu directly to Sonam Chhoki at: allthingshaibun@gmail.com with the subject heading: SENRYU

REMINDER: Please send any/all *other* submissions (within the "body" of an email), with the Subject heading for the appropriate form you are submitting to, in all CAPITAL LETTERS to: submittocattails@gmail.com

You must include your country, full name, and email address to be considered!

cattails – January 2016

seven year itch
I loosen my grip
on the kite

Vandana Parashar
India

saddest eyes
a squirrel looking
through our back window

David Flynn
USA

weathered hands
their gleaming scars
small rainbows

ayaz daryl nielsen
USA

windstorm
suddenly a new view
from my window

Bernard Gieske
USA

father and son
the drive to boarding school
in silence

Neal Whitman
USA

broken glass
counting the many shards
before punishment

Jesus Chameleon
USA

cattails – January 2016

next stop **EC**
the children's laughter
too gets off

Rachel Sutcliffe
United Kingdom

Walmart sales
Duck Dynasty t-shirts
sewn in a sweat shop

Anna Cates
USA

Goodwill donation:
brand new copies of my first
and only chapbook

Chen-ou Liu
Canada

a single black lamb
the truth behind
Mother Goose

Angela Terry
USA

both young and poor
so my friend is pawning
his own heart

Vasile Moldovan
Romania

noisy crowd
a welcome breeze
draws me away

Bernard Gieske
USA

dustbin
still in full bloom
plastic roses

Thomas James Martin
USA

autumn rain . . .
the old woman talks
to her wallpaper

Anna Cates
USA

abandoned dreams . . .
the dry wilderness
of an empty field

Akriti Bhatia
India

after the storm
silvered in moonlight
lovers lane

Bernard Gieske
USA

hand bells...
the call of the ley
resonating

Jesus Chameleon
USA

dancing with shadows...
50-year-plus
college reunion

Angela Terry
USA

cattails – January 2016

Sunday morning
the drunk neighbor nods
to my snowman

Chen-ou Liu
Canada

cold silence...
the baby sleeps
without lullaby

Vandana Parashar
India

Timex Sinclair 1000
my first computer
had 8 k of RAM

David Flynn
USA

an owl calls
my name, another answers
woodland grace

ayaz daryl nielsen
USA

lo, my luck in love:
each ladybird flying
in different direction

Vasile Moldovan
Romania

after Christmas
only the tree
looking slimmer

Rachel Sutcliffe
United Kingdom

cattails – January 2016

winter night—
a spectre of home
in the lavish house

Mahvash Afzal
India

eye of the storm
a pause
in the shouting match

Diana Eileen Barbour
USA

travel cup lids
circling the globe
one sip at a time

Terrie Jacks
USA

meditation class
one eye on the monk
the other on the clock

Madhuri Pillai
Australia

winter dusk
a streak of light
in the sick room

Akriti Bhatia
India

sniffing the breeze
my dog and I wander three streets
grilled sirloin kabobs

Neal Whitman
USA

Windows10!
When I check
to update 8

Jesus Chameleon
USA

magpies congregate
in leafless cottonwoods
bedtime story hour

Nola Obee
Canada

weekend silence
cold sheets, unused pillow
his side of the bed

Barbara Tate
USA

autumn sunset
the Love Boat's
final voyage

Johnny Baranski
USA

family attic
I step back down
from childhood

Rachel Sutcliffe
United Kingdom

from the pink mouth **EC**
of a shell
sand

Ruth Holzer
USA

a legend
in their own minds
politicians

Norman Crocker
USA

snow blindness—
letting autocorrect
write my poem

Julie Warther
USA

performance over—
my white silk uniform
limp on a hanger

Ruth Holzer
USA

the ocean roar
drowns them out
refugees

Johnny Baranski
USA

fairy floss...
drawn to the scent
of dung

Quendryth Young
Australia

steady spring rain
the notary embosses
my living will

Mark E. Brager
USA

cattails – January 2016

first snowfall
anticipating tonight
tomorrow's delays

Diana Eileen Barbour
USA

Pilates session...
stretching also
my resolve

Terrie Jacks
USA

my laugh
I remind myself
of mother

Madhuri Pillai
Australia

acacia shade
I try not to
explode again

Robert Epstein
USA

Santa's Village
twinkle lights sparkling
through the razor wire

Michael Henry Lee
USA

road sign
on a sharp curve—
Jesus Saves

Johnny Baranski
USA (For Carole)

cattails – January 2016

another mass
praying they won't find
another mass

David Kelly
Ireland

butterfly season
my reluctance to offer
flowers in temple

Rajandeep Garg
India

mountain road
the sun swerves
side to side

Quendryth Young
Australia

after a day
of being tourists
Japanese baseball

Johnnie Johnson Hafernik
USA

morning poem
I scrape the bottom
of the pot

Nola Obee
Canada

shakuhachi—
the first note
the hardest

Ruth Holzer
USA

school reunion
the thread between friends
wears thin

Madhuri Pillai
Australia

rising early
to find the bathroom empty—
Easter morning

Julie Warther
USA

daylight savings end
if only I could turn back time
more than one hour

Diana Eileen Barbour
USA

appointments desk—
a senior moment
forgetting my age

Terrie Jacks
USA

stereo on full
trying to drown
the noise within

Mahvash Afzal
India

morning after...
opening the door
to the winter wind

Barbara Tate
USA

cattails – January 2016

the lights dim
this tale of bloody revenge
rated PG

Michael Henry Lee
USA

dozing on a bus
the head of a passenger
comes for a kiss

Adjei Agyei-Baah
Ghana

barricaded
with a spider web
path in the woods

Rajandeep Garg
India

carer's leave—
my neighbour polishes
her front door

Cynthia Rowe
Australia

sign language **EC**
a swallowtail follows
her hands

Theresa A. Cancro
USA

New Year's Day—
fresh sheets
on the hospice bed

Mark E. Brager
USA

cattails – January 2016

park ranger
how he digs himself into
a whole conversation

Robert Epstein
USA

bare noon
the biryani wallah's
huge belly

Ramesh Anand
India

tick check
the old dog wriggles
his thanks

Marietta McGregor
Australia

digging into
some green pea soup
garden cafe

Brad Bennett
USA

Starbucks at dusk
the man in Armani
reads No Logo

Chen-ou Liu
Canada

happy hour
another summer
trickles by

Ernest J. Berry
New Zealand

cattails – January 2016

another cold gust
an oysterman re-peppers
the stew

Bill Cooper
USA

wishing
on a harvest moon
the farmer hunched over

Cynthia Rowe
Australia

leaving home
Mom gives me her
old frying pan

Gregory Longenecker
USA

empty train—
the clatter of silverware
the only conversation

Theresa A. Cancro
USA

funeral home
I take a wrapped mint
on my way out

Brad Bennett
USA

dried flowers...
still using the same
file photo

Julie Warther
USA

results of a poll
on attitudes toward refugees
1938

Bill Cooper
USA

61
easier now to climb
the oak of my dreams

Robert Epstein
USA

fitness center
the trainer envies
my height

Ramesh Anand
India

tv news shot—
cherry petals fall on the unindicted
co-conspirators

William Seltzer
USA

departure gaits
spoken and unspoken
farewells

David Kelly
Ireland

support group
favorite shirt, comfortable shoes,
her hands on mine

ayaz daryl nielsen
USA

cattails – January 2016

in our silence not even the sound of rain

Mark E. Brager

USA

midnight sun
will you miss me
when I'm gone

Debbie Strange

Canada

argument over—
at the bottom of the bag
potato chip crumbs

Theresa A. Cancro

USA

cloudless sky
the volunteer lighthouse keeper
blasts his foghorn

Cynthia Rowe

Australia

oak gall **EC**
the new tenants
in our old house

Gregory Longenecker

USA

scratching for a living paydirt

David Kelly

Ireland

cattails – January 2016

50th reunion
the backrest elm
still fits

Bill Cooper
U.S.A

a pause
in my dream—
mosquito bite

Adjei Agyei-Baah
Ghana

free trade...
on my compost tomatoes
a handful of flowers

Marietta McGregor
Australia

morning sparrow song
yes, it does feel like
a good beginning

ayaz daryl nielsen
USA

first school day...
the wagtail's turn
for show and tell

Hazel Hall
Australia

Valentine's Day
the florist is selling
Venus fly traps

Marianne Paul
Canada

raked into letters L O V E on the lawn

Jennifer Thiermann

USA

sanding
the knots that tie him
to his job

Hazel Hall

Australia

black Friday—
the vultures circle
round and round

Mary Kendall

USA

Chinese New Year—
the dragon's tail takes
a bathroom break

Theresa A. Cancro

USA

down the stairs
pearls from her necklace
pass each other

Nina Kovačić

Croatia

bagpipes skirl
across the prairie
Dad goes home

Debbie Strange

Canada

cattails – January 2016

curtain folds
she flicks away
a secret

Alegria Imperial
Canada

midlife crisis—
the janitor buys
a smoking jacket

Kevin Valentine
USA

lecture on Freud—
obsessed with the swell
of her hips

Gautam Nadkarni
India

whirlwind suddenly the playground

ayaz daryl nielsen
USA

crowded train
out of her jeans
a new tattoo

Sreelatha Nair
India

lecture hall
the changing viewpoint
of the fly

Agnes Eva Savich
USA

cattails – January 2016

on Fujisan's trail
thrilled bird watchers
digitize a pheasant

Barbara A. Taylor
Australia

lazy noon—
the vendor's hand fan
matches her walk

Sreelatha Nair
India

a naked truth
mom's breast
in baby's hand

Alegria Imperial
Canada

guests at home **EC**
the boy's chest swells with pride
pronouncing angioplasty

Gautam Nadkarni
India

dusty sky
refugees make kites
from plastic bags

Debbie Strange
Canada

Normandy
the blood below
this white sand

Agnes Eva Savich
USA

cattails – January 2016

first sunrise
my neighbour's farting tractor!

Barbara A. Taylor
Australia

midday heat—
sunbathers silly-dance
into the sea

Kevin Valentine
USA

kitty party
I help myself to scoops
of spicy gossip

Gautam Nadkarni
India

first hair cut...
nonstop bawling over
future losses

Alegria Imperial
Canada

farm life
each animal
in its own cage

život na farmi
svaka životinja
u svom kavezu

Đurđa Vukelić Rožić
Croatia

village library— **EC**
women bring cakes
for the librarian

selska knjižnica
žene donose kolače
knjižničarki

Đurđa Vukelić Rožić
Croatia

late autumn
the playground becomes
a runway for crows

Pozna jesen.
Igralište postaje
pista za vrane.

Zoran Doderović
Serbia

village feast
first of all the roosters
celebrate the dawn

Seoska slava.
Pre svih zoru
slave petlovi.

Zoran Doderović
Serbia

sunday mass
the wall of a rural tavern
overcrowded with bikes

Nedeljna misa.
Zid seoske krčme
zatrpan biciklima.

Zoran Doderović
Serbia

Winter is coming,
Europe doubts, people wait
in dread and yearning

zima dolazi,
Europa sumnja, ljudi čekaju
u strahu i čežnji

Smajil Durmišević
Bosnia and Herzegovina

Givatayim is awake
strips of plastic and iron
at sunrise

בזריחה וברזל פלסטיק רצועות - ערה גבעתיים

Arik Benedek chaviv
Tr: Shir Benedek chaviv, Israel

Tu b'Shevat
on the long white table
winter has come

בשבט ו"ט סדר
בא החרף לבן ארוך שולחן על

Arik Benedek chaviv
Tr: Shir Benedek chaviv, Israel

Editor's Choice Senryu

village library—
women bring cakes
for the librarian

selska knjižnica
žene donose kolače
knjižničarki

Đurđa Vukelić Rožić, Croatia

This senryu by Đurđa Vukelić Rožić opens a window to the unexpected scenario of the librarian being feted with cakes by women in the village. The poet leaves us enough room to picture a range of possibilities. Are the women wooing an eligible bachelor? Or are the women moved to feed a hapless, single man, whose immersion in the library leaves little time for much else? Besides, might there not be a hint of competition among the women? Such imaginings underline the humor in the poem.

—UHTS *cattails* Senryu Editor Sonam Chhoki, Bhutan

next stop
the children's laughter
too gets off

Rachel Sutcliffe, United Kingdom

Rachel Sutcliffe's poem opens in *medias res*. The poet is already on a journey (one imagines on a bus or even a train) when she draws the reader in with the striking imagery of 'the children's laughter' getting down at the stop. The wistful note in the poet's observation lingers with the reader.

—UHTS *cattails* Senryu Editor Sonam Chhoki, Bhutan

from the pink mouth
of a shell
sand

Ruth Holzer, USA

The opening imagery of ‘pink mouth’ is sensuous and suggests associations of abundance and overflowing. But the detail ‘sand’ in L3 evokes dust, grit and barrenness. The contiguity of such disparate images gives Ruth Holzer’s poem its disquieting power and impact.

—UHTS *cattails* Senryu Editor Sonam Chhoki, Bhutan

sign language—
a swallowtail follows
her hands

Theresa A. Cancro, USA

The synchronicity in the movement of the ‘swallowtail’ and the woman’s hands imparts a lightness of touch and a delicate beauty to Theresa A. Cancro’s senryu, making it a deeply moving poem.

—UHTS *cattails* Senryu Editor Sonam Chhoki, Bhutan

oak gall
the new tenants
in our old house

Gregory Longenecker, USA

Once the reader grasps what ‘oak gall’ is, the nuances in Gregory Longenecker’s poem fall into place brilliantly. I read this poem quite a few times struck by its wry humor.

—UHTS *cattails* Senryu Editor Sonam Chhoki, Bhutan

guests at home
the boy's chest swells with pride
pronouncing angioplasty

Gautam Nadkarni, India

Finally, we are in the presence of a poet, who has made the senryu form his own. In this poem, the terrible significance of the boy's pride for the family is delivered with adeptness, which reminds me of the old Japanese senryu masterpieces like the following poem:

'as he enters the house
a whiff of murder—
the quack doctor'

Anonymous

—UHTS *cattails* Senryu Editor Sonam Chhoki, Bhutan

cattails

January 2016

Tanka

Tanka Introduction

For your convenience, we have created introduction pages to each category that we publish in *cattails*, collected works of the UHTS. We hope that this will clarify for both old-timers and new writers specifically as there are so many different schools-of-thought on each of these forms. We offer ours also for your perusal.

Tanka, meaning "short song" is the modern day term for waka which means "Japanese song", the traditional form of lyric court poetry which has been composed in Japan for over 1300 years. It was originally intended to be chanted aloud to musical accompaniment.

Tanka is a non-rhymed nature/human nature based melodic poem given its rhythm by writing to a pattern of short/long/short/long/long with varying breath pauses being made when read aloud. Rhythmically this s/l/s/l/l combines unevenness with alternation, thus providing a natural balance to offset its inherent fluidity. This rhythm or something close to it is acceptable for publication in *cattails*.

Notwithstanding, the difference in Japanese on and English syllables, the lyrical rhythm and songlike quality of a tanka whether written in either language are achieved from the top down. Beginning with line 1 and building tension with each line until reaching a climax in line 5—(one of three longest lines out of a 5 line short/long/short/long/long pattern), that needs to be the most significant and impactful line overall. The pathos of existence concept is frequently a key element in all Japanese poetry, but particularly in tanka. This form continues to be used primarily to convey personal emotion. However, in addition there exists an equally valid style of tanka that are simply "word paintings" or sketches from nature and/or life.

The ancient aesthetics that define and characterize traditional Japanese tanka can be used to provide concrete credentials for contemporary tanka if the poet has knowledge of the original constructing of those tanka.

There are a set of cultural values put in place by the poets of Japan, acceptable concepts which portray certain subtle principles of court poetry, (having been in place for over a thousand years), that are

essential to know regardless the particulars of tanka conception that one comes to practice and the format they ultimately choose to follow.

The UHTS does not publish anything we feel might be offensive to the general public.

You can submit tanka directly to an'ya at: submittocattails@gmail.com with the subject heading: TANKA

REMINDER: Please send any/all other submissions (within the "body" of an email), with the Subject heading for the appropriate form you are submitting to, in all CAPITAL LETTERS.

You must include your country, full name, and email address to be considered!

the sun settles
into the night's womb
will i too
wake up tomorrow
bright and cheerful

Shrikaanth Krishnamurthy
United Kingdom

edges worn
in the old notebook
beside his bed
where he wrote the date
she said she would return

Kathy Kituai
Australia

one note sung
by the blackbird breaks
our silence
its voice from a cabbage tree
unfurling against the sky

Patricia Prime
New Zealand

when brown apples fell **EC**
mother returned to the sky
without makeup
leaving me her recipes...
now I'll fish for everyone

Jesus Chameleon
USA

the old home
creaking in autumn wind
echoes
of buried whispers ricochet
behind every footstep

Pris Campbell
USA

turbulent flight
I relax my sore eyes
bounce on clouds
dreaming of discovering
the mysteries of creation

Charlotte Digregorio
USA

camp smoke
by a fish's splash
a leaf falling
one lonely September
beside the still lake

Anna Cates
USA

after dark,
the beach-wet pebbles
she gave me
kept snug in my pocket
until our next meeting

John Wisdom
USA

all that we once
desired in each other
finding you
in the half-life
of a full moon's song

Paresh Tiwari
India

in Japanese
a compliment . . . later
a lesson
on using chopsticks
I blush every time

Johnnie Johnson Hafernik
USA

reading journal
after journal of my
teenage years...
cherry blossoms
tossed in the wind
Cyndi Lloyd
USA

a singing bowl
moving lightly as music
down the dark hall
I pause to run my fingers
around your familiar edge

Marietta Jane McGregor
Australia

a poplar tree
damaged in the ice storm
I see how
its branches have grown
to fill the empty spaces

Thelma Mariano
Canada

beside this
glowing hearth the year
ends here
you gently place your lips
on mine that are waiting

ayaz daryl nielsen
USA

during this night
I tossed and you turned
restlessly
all the while a full moon
was playing with the tides

Bernard Gieske
USA

I remember now:
the vodka on your breath
made me dizzy
but I grasped your sleeve
as if clinging to a lifeboat

Chen-ou Liu
Canada

he flees
in the pale moon's
shadow...
her bitter words
snapping his heels

Marilyn Humbert
Australia

shaken
by a mid-October
swirling wind
the bitter beauty
of rust-colored trees

Kenneth Slaughter
USA

rainbow clouds
around the moon
the promise
to be by my side
whenever I grieve

Christine L. villa
USA

feeling
so insignificant
on this ship
upon this ocean
who will note my passing

Keitha Keyes
Australia

cattails – January 2016

when you see
someone you love
dying...
stay until the sky
turns a crimson gold

Anne Curran
New Zealand

the hummingbird
its sudden emerald flash
echoes in my heart
I wish to hold this joy
even in winter's cold glare

Thomas James Martin
USA

bedtime
an owl prompts memories
of childhood
a 9 o'clock whistle
once made my head nod

Terrie Jacks
USA

Manos Island **EC**
Christmas Island
Nauru
I am completely alone here
with no-one to even hear my voice

Sandra Renew
Australia

the dry ache **EC**
of a long goodbye
how do we
reach the other side
with the bridge washed out

Debbie Strange
Canada

a duck pops up
where it didn't dive
surprising
how far you can travel
once you take the plunge

Jan Dobb
Australia

drizzling rain
all the day long
I await
the twilight sunshine
to paint my lost rainbow

Pravat Kumar Padhy
India

I weep for
the child we never had
behind drawn blinds
and in this sadness
the call of a night bird

Thomas James Martin
USA

what is it
I thought to find in you...
wind bows
the meadow grasses
each and every one

Michele L. Harvey
USA

autumn here
leaves begin to fall—
in her closet
the unsent letters
to a dead poet

Ernesto P. Santiago
Philippines

swamp-sickness
seeps through reclaimed land
the delta
where I first heard
the cuckoo cry cuckoo

Ruth Holzer
USA

a walking stick
sidestepping the twig—
all eyes on her
stilettos strutting
down cobblestone streets

Marilyn Fleming
USA

cattails – January 2016

open window—
ruby red and orange
color lilies
the winds of change
ruffling my hair

Anne Curran
New Zealand

early frost
frames a flower...
this portrait
eternally frozen
in the forever of time

Pat Geyer
USA

thousands of years
for the ancient yew tree
to sprout berries—
telling myself it's not too late
to discover who I am

Marianne Paul
Canada

I do not know
your name
blossom
yet you trumpet
from every lip

Haiku Jezebel
USA

Whether made
of bamboo or ivory
Chinese chop sticks
must function together
to taste all the dishes

Yuan Changming
Canada

on the cake
small indentations
where cherries lay...
slowly and bit by bit
he eats her life away

Hazel Hall
Australia

where will you
travel this year to keep dams
from being built
the blue dragonfly by an iris
remains content where it is

Giselle Maya
France

how you heave up **EC**
to the height of my eyes
pull up this darkness
and serve me tender dawn
O Sea, I want to know

Alegria Imperial
Canada

chased away
by a gang of crows
the red-tailed hawk—
being different
is never easy

Mary Kendall
USA

the empty nest
outside my window
on move-in day
another fledgling
flies out of my dream

Mary Davila
USA

how does one
measure time by this slope
of unchanging *tsen-den**
I still want to hide-and-seek
in their fragrant shadow

Sonam Chhoki, Bhutan

**Tsen-den: cypressus tortulosa, national tree of Bhutan*

a flash flood
drowns our hometown
once again
traveling back to a day
i rode on dad's shoulders

Ramesh anand
India

whoo whoo whoo
the low-flying owl lands
in a hollow oak
its four wide-eyed chicks
waiting for their supper

Elizabeth Howard
USA

in my room
a window seat for reading
and moon gazing
watching in furtive silence
the lonely dome of night

Carole Johnston
USA

Cooler air
as the moon rises
I wrap myself
in the pale-green serape
you always meant to give me

Carol Purington
USA

nursing my cold
on this foggy December
morning...
I remember to make
some space for boredom

Cynthia Crumrine
USA

first light
unaware of my presence
a fantail
dances from branch to branch
its tail catching the sun

Elaine Riddell
New Zealand

the scent of coffee
warms the cold corners
of a kitchen
I drink it black now
without compromise

Janet Butler
USA

we dally
for everything is as
it should be
a cloud swollen with rain
and you under my roof

an'ya
USA

long after
I have flown as ashes
would you caress
the pressed rose petals
in my poetry pages

Yesha Shah
India

ink blotches **EC**
splattered on a page—
making sense
of what you said
what you left unsaid

Shrikaanth Krishnamurthy
United Kingdom

an enchanted
summer evening—
the stardust
on butterfly wings
glows in the moonlight

noapte de vară
fermecată—
praful de stea de pe
aripile unui fluture
lucind în raza lunii

Steliana Cristina Voicu
Romania

primroses
at that time there were many
promises
a light spring breeze today
yet my heart is heavy

jagorčevina—
tada padoše mnoga
obećanja
blagi prolećni lahor
i danas mi steže srce

Dragan Ristić
Serbia

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so many things
I would have changed yet
raw winds blow—
those years of gnarled knots
in the ancient oak

John Wisdom
USA

watching in awe
the lights refract around
an olive tree...
what a bliss to find
refuge in each gaze!

Ali Znaidi
Tunisia

so much sense
in the clouds scattering
& regrouping
no matter which way—
and here my thoughts...

ಮೋಡಂಗ
ಚದರಿ ಶೇರಿಯು
ಅಡ್ಡರ್ಥು—
ಇನ್ನಂಗಿಂದೆ
ಆಲೋಚನೆಹ

mōḍanga
cadari śēriyu
athnarthu—
inningende
ālōcaneha

Shrikaanth Krishnamurthy
United Kingdom

Editor's Choice Tanka

how you heave up
to the height of my eyes
pull up this darkness
and serve me tender dawn
O Sea, I want to know

Alegria Imperial
Canada

Whoever might say that tanka isn't "poetic", hasn't read this one by Alegria Imperial from Canada. As an Editor's Choice, I selected it because Alegria's words build from line 1 to a crescendo in line 5. This is comparable to the technique an experienced singer uses from a slow quiet start to a grand finale at song's end. Alegria's tanka is filled with *yūgen*, a Japanese word pertaining to a profound awareness of the universe which evokes feelings that are inexplicably deep and too mysterious for words.

—UHTS *cattails* tanka editor an'ya, USA

Manos Island
Christmas Island
Nauru
I am completely alone here
with no-one to even hear my voice

Sandra Renew
Australia

For another Editor's Choice is this unique tanka by Sandra Renew from Australia which is also very Japanese to my thinking. *Sabi* is a poetic ideal in this tanka, the juxtaposition is triple-fold, and the last two lines are the longest and most important overall. Upon reading this work, it is easy to be overwhelmed by the same loneliness and solitude that the author must have felt when she composed it; nice write Sandra and thank you for sharing it with our readers.

—UHTS *cattails* tanka editor an'ya, USA

ink blotches
splattered on a page—
making sense
of what you said
what you left unsaid

This Editor's Choice tanka is by Shrikaanth Krishnamurthy who lives in the United Kingdom. He is our *Seedpods* Editor, and although we are not eligible to submit for the UHTS contests, our editors and board members are free to contribute to *cattails*. Shrikaanth's tanka presents with very strong juxtaposition. What might make sense to one person in "ink blotches" doesn't necessarily say the same thing to another person, perhaps rather like interpreting love. This tanka makes a statement in lines 1 and 2 combined, then a nice turn after that which flows on smoothly through lines 3, 4, and 5. What I personally liked most about this one is the naturalness and modesty of the write insofar as it not being not overdone or unnecessarily embellished.

—UHTS *cattails* tanka editor an'ya, USA

the dry ache
of a long goodbye
how do we
reach the other side
with the bridge washed out

Debbie Strange
Canada

This Editor's Choice is by Debbie Strange from Canada, and it demonstrates a songlike rhythm which is pleasing to the ear and desirable in the tanka form. However I chose it not only for the melody but for its content and its juxtaposition as well. Representative of an aching heart after a long goodbye, we are left to wonder how to reach the other side with the bridge washed out. Metaphoric in its content, leaves a reader to believe in that old saying that "love always finds a way"

—UHTS *cattails* tanka editor an'ya, USA

when brown apples fell
mother returned to the sky
without makeup
leaving me her recipes...
now I'll fish for everyone

Jesus Chameleon
USA

This Editor's Choice is by Jesus Chameleon from the Mariana Islands. Upon reading his opening line, I was interested in this tanka as firstly it set up the season so vividly—that certain period in late autumn when the apples turn brown and drop off the tree. Line 2 extended my interest even more with the metaphorically poetic phrase "mother returned to the sky". By the time I reached line 3, it was a definite EC and Jesus had now become a wordsmith to my mind with his phrase "without makeup" that so uniquely depicted the naturalness of death. Then after all this, in the final lines, he utilizes a device known as the "tanka twist" used by experienced poets, which takes readers to a whole new place giving them pause-for-thought. A well written tanka by this author.

—UHTS *cattails* tanka editor an'ya, USA

cattails

January 2016 Youth Corner

Welcome to the January 2016 edition of *cattails* collected works of the UHTS Youth Corner. Tom Painting sent several haiku written by his eighth-grade students in the school where he teaches. Two sisters, Saron Tariku and Betty Tariku, attended my haiku workshop on Saturday 7th November, 2015, at Hornsey Children's Library, Haringey Park, London.

flower garden
a lady claps her hands
without knowing

Betty Tariku (9 yrs)
United Kingdom

The Tejas Award (Tejas in Sanskrit means "fire" and/or "brilliance") goes to Betty Tariku for her quick grasp of the nuances of this 400-year-old art form from Japan in a brief 90-minute workshop! Betty wrote this haiku at the end of the workshop. I took time to warm up to her line 3, but she convinced us that many a time we do clap, not "knowing" why we are clapping. An involuntary action! She said she wanted to retain Ls 2 & 3 as is. Betty even helped her mother write her first haiku!

Enjoy this collection of 19 haiku specially brought to you from around the world.

Editor's Choice 1:

a small light
glinting in the dark
a shadow

Pruthvi Shrikaanth (9 years)
United Kingdom

I met young Pruthvi in London, during the British Haiku Society's Winter Gathering. This little fellow sat through the entire day's meeting and even wrote a haiku when we were all asked to write one!

In this haiku, I find the pivot arresting and also the kire [the cut] very evident at the end of the L2. It is amazing how kids at such tender age understand this two-image structure and use it so well.

Editor's Choice 2:

skyscrapers tilt
as the plane takes off . . .
orange sky

crowded city—
a lone creeper bursts through
the concrete wall

Tanvi Shah (18 years)
India

Tanvi Shah is a student at Symbiosis School for Liberal Arts and had chosen haiku as one of her electives. A very intense person and a lover of words, Tanvi shows great promise. She understands the importance of image in haiku and strives to get these nuances into her haiku, most often successfully!

Editor's Choice 3:

gushing waterfall
a strange silence shuts
the world

dying chants
the pine cricket
isn't heard

Pranav Chheda (18 years)
India

Pranav, another student from the Symbiosis School for Liberal Arts, who opted for haiku, is a sensitive and a very sincere student, who loves to dabble with words. He is creative and daring—a very important requisite to effective story telling.

Honourable Mentions (in no particular order):

evening walk—
with each step his shadow
overlaps mine

Dhruvi Lakhani (18 yrs)
India

the sudden
screech of a car . . .
a scream

Saron Tariku (11 yrs)
United Kingdom

setting sun
the scarecrow whistles
in the wind

Cole McCord (14 yrs)
USA

glass of whisky
frost bitten fingers writing
thank you notes

Azade Aria (18 yrs)
India

withered field
her wrinkled hands
wait by the porch

Naihan Nath (18 yrs)
India

cattails – January 2016

skipping stones
tiny tadpoles disperse
like fireworks

Bhumika Pravin (18 yrs)
India

bound diary . . .
what secrets do
you hold?

Naiima Paul (14 yrs)
USA

setting sun—
the sound of prayer
breaks the silence

Rohan Das (18 yrs)
India

noisy roads . . .
the east wind keeps flowing
in the church

Palvi Angne (18 yrs)
India

silent stars
the nurse wakes me
up for my medicines

Suren Rana (18 yrs)
India

rocks . . .
the water glides
down the river

Hunter Collins (14 yrs)
USA

cattails – January 2016

heat at zenith—
I see the drought
in a child's eyes

Dhruvi Lakhani (18 yrs)
India

shower steam
my off-key notes bounce
on the tiled walls

Taylor Clay (14 yrs)
USA

UHTS cattails Youth Corner Editor Kala Ramesh, India

cattails

January 2016
Contest Winners



2015 Samurai Haibun Contest Results

Judge's Commentary

In my first year of judging this competition, I feel privileged to read the works of poets from around the globe. The range of themes tackled by the poets, reflected in the winning entries, clearly shows that the haibun form is alive and flourishing.

*As I read and re-read the entries, I was drawn to the haibun, which had a strength of integrity, not in the sense: 'Can this be true?' but rather in the realization: 'How well the poet has expressed a universal truth!' Andy Burkhart's haibun, 'BURIED TREASURE' which has won the **First Place**, has this quality. To quote from his haibun:*

'It's late in the evening and Mom's funeral is over. It's just Dad, me and my two brothers at the house now. ...' Burkhart uses an informal and intimate tone to create, what Paul Astor, the American crime writer calls, 'a place ... where ... strangers can meet on terms of absolute intimacy.' I felt drawn into the room where the poet and his brothers look at old photographs and share memories. The poignant words of one of the brothers, 'Mom would know' make tangible their grief for their mother and the void she leaves. Such understated economy of expression makes the haibun moving and deeply resonating.

In herbal lore, mint is associated with memory and the haiku turns on this significance to evoke a sense of how feelings and thoughts are triggered by things around us.

—UHTS Samurai Haibun Contest Judge Sonam Chhoki, Bhutan

First Place

BURIED TREASURE

Andy Burkhart

USA

It's late in the evening and Mom's funeral is over. It's just Dad, me and my two brothers at the house now. Exhausted, Dad has fallen asleep in his recliner. My brothers and I go upstairs and start digging around in a room full of Mom's stuff. In a box, under some papers, we find a small, hard-sided case full of pictures. The more recent ones are at the top and we each take a few and start looking through them. Each succeeding photo takes us deeper into the night and further into the past. We talk about them all and as we quietly reminisce it's as if we've fallen under some kind of spell and we can't stop. There are pictures of us as kids, of Mom, Dad, grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins, the kids next door, a dog named Chopper, and our youngest brother who died nearly 35 years ago at the age of 15. One of the last pictures is the oldest. It is a good photo (for being so old) of a young girl of about two or three. There is nothing on the front or back of the photo to indicate who it is or when it was taken. We know it's not Mom and we pass it around and talk about who it might be. I think it is Granny, our maternal grandmother, and we talk about it some more until one of my brothers says, "Mom would know", and the spell is broken.

mid-summer sun
the smell of wild mint
in her garden

***For second place,** I returned to Marietta Jane McGregor's haibun several times and felt it deserving of an accolade for her treatment of an unusual topic. It is replete with a wealth of information about the appearance of the Huon pines, their primeval woodland habitation and the differences between the male and female trees. To this are added not only the botanical but also the historical significance of the trees and how people have used its wood for a range of purposes. I found the details of the convict loggers operating in the area in the 1830s particularly fascinating. The poet creates an awe-inspiring atmosphere of this wilderness redolent of Tolkien's landscape. : "...Beside the lake sprawls a distinctive stand of gnarled trees covering a hectare (2.5 acres). Tangled grey trunks stippled with peridot-green moss writhe like mythical serpents. ..."*

It also brought to my mind a local belief in Bhutan that a landscape is densely packed with gods, demons and spirits. The haiku imparts an element of surprise in that it is slightly at a tangent to the prose.

If I may make a small point, I feel that the richness of the haibun prose passages would have been enhanced by the use of a few more haiku—either embedded in the narrative or capping it. The lone haiku does not bear the full weight of the wonderfully detailed prose.

—UHTS Samurai Haibun Contest Judge Sonam Chhoki, Bhutan

Second Place

The Ten Millennium Tree

Marietta Jane McGregor

Australia

Mt Read is surrounded by high-country woodland in the wettest part of Tasmania. More than three metres of rain fall on this place every year and, at an altitude of 1000 metres, it is cold enough for frequent winter snow. Crowding the margins of a small glacial lake is ancient forest, a relic of Gondwanaland, with 1000-year-old celery top pines *Phyllocladus asplenifolius*, endemic deciduous beech *Nothofagus gunnii*, and creeping pine *Microcachrys tetragona*. The feeling of this strange botanical world is primordial, a dark kingdom fit for trolls or dragons.

Beside the lake sprawls a distinctive stand of gnarled trees covering a hectare (2.5 acres). Tangled grey trunks stippled with peridot-green moss writhe like mythical serpents. Over the years, bowed and almost snapped by the weight of snow and alpine wind blasts a branch touches earth, sends down roots and throws out new upright stems which slowly mature into adult trees. These trees are male specimens of *Lagarostrobos franklinii*, or huon pine, a member of the Podocarpaceae family endemic to Tasmania, which is a dioecious species, bearing male (pollen) and female (seed) cones on different plants.

Huon pines are slow-growing, adding barely millimetres of growth each year. The timber is pale yellow, close-grained and almost free of knots with only tiny dark whorls visible in the satiny surface. Beloved by cabinet-makers and boat builders, huon pine contains a natural preservative, methyl eugenol, which gives the wood a characteristic aroma that persists for many years after milling. A gentle rub on the inside of an old box releases an unmistakable, delicately-sweet and haunting fragrance. Tree-ring studies of the Mt Read huon pine stand date the oldest trunk at around 3,000 years. Only California's Great Basin bristlecone pine, 'Methuselah', has been verified to be older.

Botanists now believe the venerable Mt Read huon pines to be unique survivors. The remarkable fact is that they are genetically-identical males, part of a natural vegetative clone which thrived here for at least 10,500 years. What evidence is there that this clone has persisted for over ten millenia? Fossil pollen grains recovered in sediment from the lake have yielded a carbon date of 10,500 years. No female huon pines (distinguishable from their berry-like mature seed cones, tinted bright red by anthocyanin pigments*) grow at Mt Read, and there are no other living huon pines within 20 kilometres.

The Mt Read clone has been accorded the highest conservation value. But it has not always been so. From the first convict loggers in the 1830s who were forced to cut pines and float rafts of the buoyant green sawlogs down the Gordon River to the Sarah Island prison settlement in Macquarie Harbour,

indiscriminate felling and burning by possum hunters has taken a heavy toll of accessible stands of huon pine.

Many hectares of burnt-out forest scar Tasmania's south-west. Timber-getting and bush fires that rip through the wilderness unchecked remain the huon pine's greatest threat. Fewer than 105 square kilometres (26,000 acres) of natural forest containing this species remain. Habitat shrinkage caused by climate change looms as a possible future threat. The patch of trees at Mt Read guards its priceless key to the resilience of nature.

death notice
holding the box
in both hands

*The writer made a comparative study of anthocyanin pigments in the Podocarpaceae for part of her honours thesis at the University of Tasmania, and also undertook palynological studies of post-Pleistocene glacier lake deposits in the south-western Tasmanian wilderness.

*In this **third place** haibun, Anna Cates creates a sense of the absurd and the picturesque seamlessly. : "A national park, yet I'm the only one here. It's almost too cold to swim. . . ."*

She leaves enough room for the reader to imagine the scenario. I especially like how deftly she paints a whole scenario with just-so details.

In her haiku, the stork 'probing' the waters seems to mirror the poet's own hesitance. This enhances the way the haiku links and shifts with the prose.

—UHTS Samurai Haibun Contest Judge Sonam Chhoki, Bhutan

Third Place

COWAN LAKE

Anna Cates

USA

A national park, yet I'm the only one here. It's almost too cold to swim. I stand thigh deep in the water, debating my next move: dive in or retreat?

September sunset
a stork probes
shallow waves

Amidst unceasing news of overwhelming number of people fleeing the conflict-torn regions in the Middle East, Chen-ou Liu's Honorable Mention haibun is both timely and compassionate in his presentation of a young girl's plight. The poet's imagery of a 'wisp of cloud' is laden with significance. It evokes poignantly the fragility of Arzu's hope for a safe return to her native land and also works as a 'beacon' of light in the otherwise drab and desperate tents-filled camp. What I find particularly powerful is how Chen-ou turns on its head, the largely negative media representations of how refugees threaten the civilizations of the host countries in which they seek asylum. There is quiet dignity in both Arzu and her teacher who holds out the promise of a return to their homeland.

—UHTS Samurai Haibun Contest Judge Sonam Chhoki, Bhutan

Honorable Mention

A Home Away from Home

Chen-ou Liu

Canada

where the sky
meets the winter desert...
refugee tents

Arzu walks out of the tent to meet her friends, waiting in line with hundreds of others for water distribution. A wisp of cloud drifts by. It reminds her of the camp teacher's departing words, "Those puffy, sheep-like clouds you're looking at come from Syria. You will all return home one day, I promise."

Note: For future reference in the year 2016, our three contests are:

aha (Annual Hortensia Anderson) Awards for Haiku/Senryu; Judge: b'oki, USA The Fleeting Words Tanka Competition; Judge: an'ya, USA Samurai Haibun Contest; Judge: Sonam Chhoki, Bhutan

cattails

January 2016

Pen this Painting



For this haiga by one of our resident artists and haiga editor, Elizabeth McFarland; visit her Ark and Apple page, we have a winner from Australia.

Congratulations to Keitha Keyes, who without any mention of the tree in this stunning wintry traditional sumi-e, manages to convey a feeling of deepest winter with her reference to fading colors and hibernation. Metaphorically, hibernation not only of colors in winter but also of "love" (for the "time being") that is. Perhaps with the spring season, love will return as well.

—*cattails* principal editor an'ya, USA

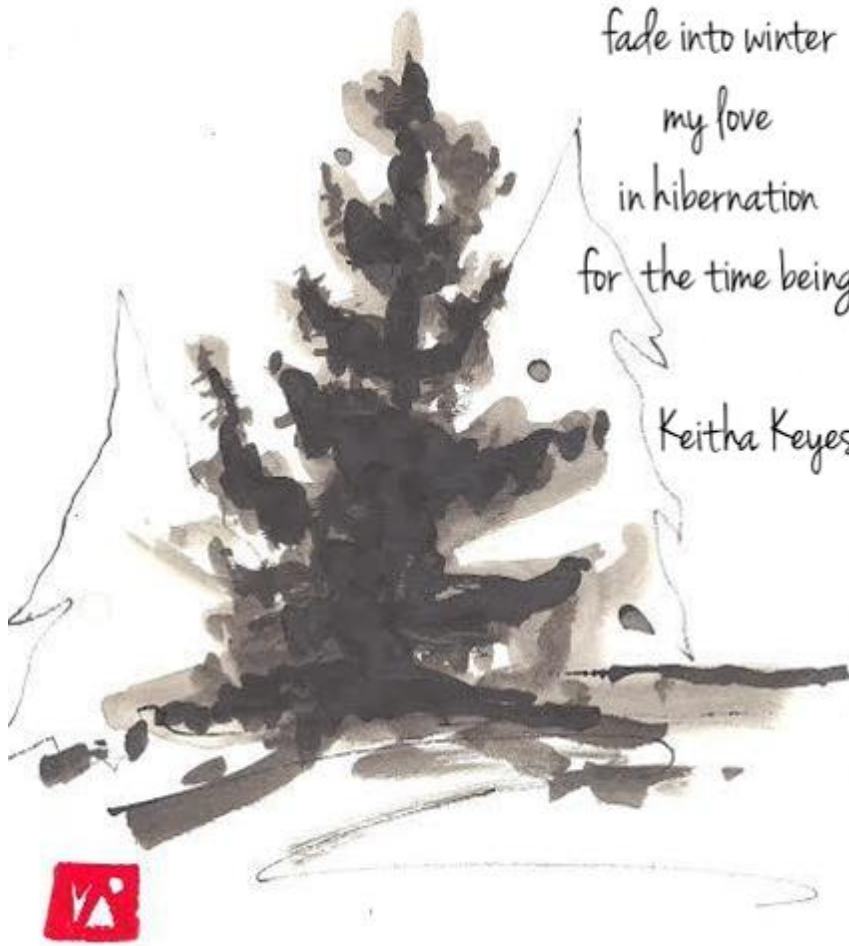


For our next Pen this Painting, here is another exquisite sumi-e by another of our UHTS resident artists, Cindy Lommasson; visit her Lotus Blossom Art Studio. Let's see what kind of work our UHTS members can come up with to accompany this lovely painting; the final collaboration will be published in our May 2016 edition of *cattails*, After February 15th, 2016 please submit your haiku senryu or tanka to: submittocattails@gmail.com with the subject heading PEN THIS PAINTING before our deadline of 15 April, 2016. Shortly after it closes the winner (ONLY) will be notified.

—*cattails* principal editor an'ya, USA

colours
fade into winter
my love
in hibernation
for the time being

Keitha Keyes





cattails

January 2016
Book Reviews

Books sent in for review must have a publish date within 18 months of the submission date.

If you would like to have your (haiku, haibun or senryu) book reviewed, please send it to the UHTS Book Reviewer:

UHTS/Barbara Snow
278 Hambletonian Drive
Eugene, Oregon
USA 97401

Please send tanka, tankart and haiga books to:

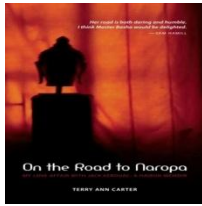
UHTS/an'ya
48081 Singletary Drive
Oakridge, Oregon
USA 97463

REMINDER: You must include your country, full name, and email address to be considered!

For years I helped select books for the collection of a busy public library. My knowledge of this process has strongly informed the following reviews...that and a general reader approach. I read each of these books several times, gave myself some time to creatively digest them, and then returned for another reading.

I am always astonished and delighted to hear of different interpretations of my haiku. Our own poems sometimes tell us things we didn't know (to paraphrase Madeline L'Engle). Dear poets, if I tell you something of your poetry that astonishes, I hope it also delights.

—UHTS Book Reviewer Barbara Snow, USA



Title: *On the Road to Naropa: My Love Affair with Jack Kerouac: A Haibun Memoir*

Author: Terry Ann Carter

Dimensions: 5 ½ inches X 8 inches

Construction: Soft perfectbound

Total page count: 77

Publishers: inkling press

Publish Date: © 2015

Language: English

ISBN: 978-1-928147-24-4

Price: \$15.00 + \$5.00 S/H

Ordering: Inkling Press, P.O. Box 52014, Edmonton, AB T6G 2T5 Canada

<https://www.inklingpress.ca>

Terry Ann Carter's *On the Road to Naropa* is so strongly linear that it gave me the cozy feeling of being on a train-tour through her life. As she sits beside me, she tells me via each haibun about the scenes that flash past the window of time. She boldly titles each haibun with a year's date from birth, "1946," to recent times, "2013" at Naropa (the Buddhist-inspired University at Boulder, Colorado, USA).

In her preface Terry Ann explains the title of her haibun autobiography and her fascination with Kerouac. One might then be tempted to compare her life to the frenzy of his...wrong! I came to realize it was the contrast that gave this memoir its color. Hers is a life nudged this direction and that by an extended, loving family, its joys, sorrows, and needs, successes and failures. I dare say she has travelled more miles over this globe than Kerouac, following a logic and contentment unfamiliar to him, but more akin to his endearing Japhy. She, savoring each moment. He, consumed by "what's next, what's next." Her Road seems all the richer for it.

The most touching haibun, for me, is the personal failure Terry Ann felt in trying to forgive herself in "1996", which is followed by the emotional roller-coaster ride in the tanka sequence "The Music from Your Mouth." They belong together.

The four tanka sequences that are dropped in among the haibun are surprising little jewels.

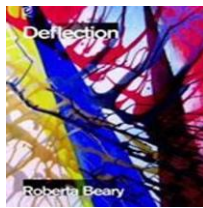
I especially love the one titled “Duet” in which she invokes the memory of her mother into her solitary kitchen to prepare a Christmas tea (to the soundtrack of “The Flower Duet” from Lakme). Here is the final tanka:

in my mother’s apron
I hum along
with the famous sopranos
flour dusting my arms
white jasmine—the snow

In *On the Road to Naropa* writing teachers will find a strong model for teaching memoir writing (especially those teachers who guide sessions at senior centers).

I recommend this book for purchase.

—UHTS *cattails* Book Reviewer Barbara Snow, USA



Title: *Deflections*

Author: Roberta Beary

Dimensions: 5 ½ inches X 8 ½ inches

Construction: Perfect bound

Total page count: 25

Publishers: Accents Publishing

Publish Date: © 2015

Language: English

ISBN: 978-1-936628-33-9

Price: \$8.00

Ordering: available at Amazon.com

<https://www.accents-publishing.com>

Deflections, Roberta Beary’s slim but punchy, raw poetry collection, is about loss. Sixteen haibun and nine haiku sequences explore the loss of: patience, her father, time, innocence, focus, opportunities, young love, caring, a child’s identity and her mother. But it is the slow loss of her mother over months,

weeks, days, moments (the loss that keeps on living, that time has not healed) that she returns to again and again.

A variety of techniques are used both in her haibun (from free verse to journal entry) and the haiku sequences (various configurations of one and three line verses). I am haunted by the last haiku in the title sequence, *Deflection*:

birdsong
of vocal dystonia—
tea for one

It describes to painful perfection the near loss of voice through wrenching wails of grief...to that point where there are only squeaks, peeps, and whistles escaping through one's vocal chords. Beary's collection is capped by the ambiguous haibun "What Remains." Does it incorporate enough information from previous content to assume we know what she is telling us? I thought, "Oh, no! Does this mean what I think it does?" I turned the page for some finality...a blank page...the end. But isn't that the point? Life and death, here and gone.

A small mystery: why are the poems arranged alphabetically by title? Can't be coincidence. This sliver of a volume packs a wallop punch beyond just the poetry shelves; I would also bring it to the attention of grief counselors. I recommend the purchase of this book.

—UHTS *cattails* Book Reviewer Barbara Snow, USA



Title: *THE TANKA JOURNAL*

Author: The Japan Tanka Poets' Society members

Edited: Aya Yuhki, Japan

Construction: Stapled soft cover

Dimensions: 8 inches x 5 3/4 inches

Total Page Count: 32 pages

Publisher: NIHON KAJIN CLUB Japan

Publish Date: 2015 No. 47

Languages: English/Japanese

ISBN-10: ISSN 0918-7707

Price: ¥500 + S/H

Ordering: email ayayu-ki@sc4.so-net.ne.jp

Aya Yuhki, 2-5-7-601, Motoazabu, Minato,

Tokyo, 106-0046 Japan

Before reviewing *THE TANKA JOURNAL*, a little history:

"NIHON KAJIN CLUB or THE JAPAN TANKA POETS' SOCIETY, is the largest nationwide organization of tanka poets in Japan with a membership of about 5,000. It publishes, together with (*Wind*), *THE TANKA JOURNAL* twice yearly, as a rule, to provide an international forum for presenting tanka poems and related essays in various languages."

The Editor and one of the Translators who does such a fine job for *THE TANKA JOURNAL*, is Aya Yuhki a long and well established tanka poet herself that I have always personally admired, both as a poet and a person.

Here are some examples of what is published (keeping in mind that sometimes the rhythm of s/l/s/l/l may vary with translations):

would that I could hear
a lion roar!
the cherry tree in white
doesn't stir
under the light of evening clouds

Mizuho Ota

Translation: Fumiko Tanihara

crossing the Usui pass
in furious snow,
it is getting dark—
now, I am moving
with a genuine man's heart

Takashi Okai (from Milkyway Garden)

Translation: Aya Yuhki

under scorched sky
with evening glow,
what a stillness
of the lake
just about to freeze!

Akahiko Shimaki

Translation: Hiroshi Furugohri

A Journeyman
Andrew Howe & Marilyn Humbert

foresore
I walk my path
a journeyman
five lines chiselled
no words mastered

noted
in 'the book of days'
his progress—
arcing through darkness
a shooting star

poised
on a stepping stone
midstream
cupped hands cradle
dawn's touched waters

I float
rising and falling
with sun-dappled swells
the shore recedes
in the distance

caressed
hot water steeps
...a teacher
smiles at sunset
slurping cha from an empty cup

From Time to Time
Aiko Fukazawa

“We heard it before”
I was told gently
and how
my young friends
are so warm-hearted

There may be
something wrong with my health
although I would not
like to tell it
since the New Year has begun

Occasionally at midnight
I find a slug
in my kitchen
and I say to it
“We live our own lives”

on windy night
is Izu
I saw Orion
twinkling clearly
in the sky

A monk from overseas
in yellow robes
aimed his camera
at the flower garden
of the Red Brick Warehouse

—UHTS *cattails* Book Reviewer an'ya, USA



Title: *Landmarks: A Haibun Collection*
Author: Ray Rasmussen
Dimensions: 6 inches X 9 inches
Construction: Soft perfectbound
Total page count: 109
Publishers: Haibun Bookshelf Publishing
Publish Date: 2015
Language: English
ISBN: 978-0-9946138-0-0
Price: \$8.50
Ordering: Amazon.com
<http://www.raysweb.net/hbp>

Landmarks by Ray Rasmussen is a haibun collection of unvarnished masculinity covering a fifteen year period of writing and a lifetime observed in the rearview mirror. His haibun convince me that I'm watching it happen. It is the mark of a master raconteur to spin tales so convincingly. I never once doubted the truth and honesty of his haibun even after his free admission of embellishment.

Count me as a woman who likes the manly style and variety of his haibun. Subjects range from trips into the canyon lands of Utah, to bicycle riding, waiting in the ER, senior-style dating, dieting, childhood escapades, etc. Some begin with introductory quotations by famous people. One contains four haiku by Basho, by four different translators. His use of dialogue in many is natural and pleasant to read. His many varieties of humor made a hit with me.

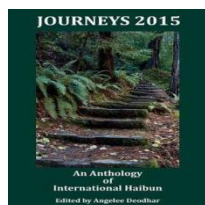
The addition of his essay: "Modern English-Language Haibun" and "Writing Haibun: One Writer's Approach" from an interview with Jeffrey Woodward, editor of *Haibun Today* are generous gifts in this volume. Both elevate this book's value beyond its superb entertainment.

Rasmussen's admonitions that haibun is storytelling resonates with me, having studied, practiced, and promoted that art myself. It is his understanding of it that makes his haibun so accessible to readers and listeners alike. I would confidently give *Landmarks* to my daughter and her husband who like to read aloud to each other at night.

In the interview, Rasmussen notes a concern of Billy Collins... that poets seem to write just for other poets instead of the general public. I think Ray Rasmussen must be haibun's greatest ambassador to the general public. I give Landmarks a thumbs-up for purchase.

Congratulations also on choosing a very readable font, a generous eye-friendly layout, and a lovely intriguing cover photo (by the author).

—UHTS *cattails* Book Reviewer Barbara Snow, USA



Title: *Journeys 2015*

Edited: Angelee Deodhar

Dimensions: 6 inches X 9 inches

Construction: Soft perfectbound

Total page count: 257

Publishers: CreateSpace, an Amazon.com Company

Publish Date: 2015

Language: English

ISBN: 978-1-5153-5987-6

Price: \$20.00

Ordering: at Amazon

angeleedeodhar@gmail.com

An anthology/reference book! Following up on *Journeys* published in 2014, which was released last year (I have not read it), editor Angelee Deodhar continues with her goal of establishing a yearly anthology series for haibun. An additional twenty-five haibun authors from the English-speaking world were invited to send a dozen of their published haibun from which she chose five for inclusion in this volume. *Journeys 2015* also provides early examples of six haibun pioneers from the 1960s through to the 1990s when it began to gain a growing notice.

Bob Lucky provides "*Introduction to Journeys 2015: A Mix of the Old and the New.*" Ray Rasmussen's essay "*English Language Haibun: A Brief History*" helps orient the reader (and writers) in this new (or rediscovered) genre. He also writes the introduction to "Section One: Early Adaptors." Each of the

twenty-five contemporary writers is introduced with a brief biography, followed by their work. Glenn G. Coats contributes an "Afterword." The generosity of these haibun writers make it obvious they want this anthology venture to work. And if my reading enjoyment is any measure, it does. Such a variety of styles and subjects from these international writers! Even the variety within each individual writer is amazing. One can hardly resist the thought, "Hey, maybe I might try writing a haibun." That would surely grant editor Deodhar's "fond wish that the Journeys series will inspire new poets, and will promote a deeper understanding among the world's diverse cultures."

Actually, reading *Journeys 2015* made me want to go back and reread Basho's *Journey to the Interior*. I commend Angelee Deodhar's enormous energy and dedication to a very worthwhile project and suggest you buy this fascinating compilation.

—UHTS *cattails* Book Reviewer Barbara Snow, USA



Title: *The Gifts of Nature*

Author: Vasa Mihailović, USA

Dimensions: 5 1/2 inches X 8 1/2 inches

Construction: Soft Perfectbound

Total page count: 38

Publishers: The Serbian Classics Press, New York

Publish Date: 2015

Language: Serbian (Cyrilic)

ISBN: 978-0-9834736-4

Price: Contact Publisher

Ordering: www.serbianclassics.com



In memoriam

Dr. Vasa Mihailović, August 12, 1926 - November 21, 2015

Bright yellow, like the reflection of sunlight upon the sunflowers' face, is the newest gift of Vasa Mihailović to us, his faithful readers. This time it is a book of haiku poetry: slender verses in a slender book, like a young pine tree aspiring to reach the depths with its roots and heights with the crown of its branches as one of the nature's gifts in itself. It is filled with wisdom and beauty as Mihailović magnificently puts it together. The ancient Greek concept of *kalokagathia*, good and beautiful, united, is naturally characteristic of his entire opus. The title of this book is "*The Gifts of Nature*." Yes, all around the author and in him too are gifts of nature and he celebrates the beauty and wisdom of nature, its creator, love and positive energy that inspire us for noble actions and deeds, our memories that nurture our emotional and spiritual hunger. There are three chapters of the book: nature's gifts, those who love us and our memories of the life and all it gave us.

The lean, precise and sharp observations leave plenty of white space in this book, like the time and place for silent meditation. That poetry is like the best music. It enters our mind, heart and soul directly and we want to bask in its warmth quietly like watching the sunset with someone we love and need no words to feel the connection and pleasure coming from the same source.

Vasa's books:

He has published ten books of poems with prose, three of short stories, and three of haiku, apart from numerous articles, reviews and other essays. He has translated Petar Petrović Njegosh's *Mountain's Wreath* and Jovan Duchić's *Blue Legends*. He has received prestigious international awards for his dedicated work in the Serbian culture and international cultural bridges. Yet, he is the man who, when asked why he writes, simply answered: "To justify my existence".

Enjoy some of nature's and Vasa's gifts, translated by Mirjana N. Radovanov Matarić, USA:

thirty books left
for posterity
that's his life

through the window
a sunny day
I bathe in it

sunny morning
the waves roll
kissing the shore

after surgery
doctor washes his hands
and dark thoughts

I look
a white hospital
hides black death

I open the book
where I stopped
don't remember when

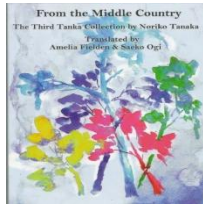
wet shoes
walk
a mark stays

poet awakes
writes down his dream
hands trembling

one more day
what's left
calendar waits not

the deaf listen
to Beethoven's concerto
playing in vain

—UHTS *cattails* Guest Book Reviewer Mirjana N. Radovanov Matarić, USA



Title: *From the Middle Country The Third Tanka Collection*

Author: Noriko Tanaka

Translators: Amelia Fielden & Saeko Ogi

Dimensions: 5 inches x 8 inches

Construction: Soft perfectbound

Total page count: 62

Publisher: GINNINDERRA PRESS, Australia

Publish date: 2015

Language: English

ISBN: 978-1-74027-908-6

Price/Ordering: www.ginninderrapress.com.au

From the Middle Country, Noriko Tanaka's third tanka collection, translated by Amelia Fielden and Saeko Ogi from Australia, contains tanka as colorful as the brush painting of flowers that graces its cover, although I find no mention of the artist.

The Foreword eloquently written, as usual, by Michael McClintock lends high praise to Noriko, as does the back cover blurb written by Dr. Carol Hayes of the Australian National University.

The Afterword is written by this author herself who says it all in one short paragraph followed by a tanka (keeping in mind that translations into English do not always follow a set tanka rhythm):

"I have still not seen Heaven. Perhaps that patch of blue sky between floating clouds might be Heaven. But I have not been there yet. For human beings there is something called 'one's lot'; and I have a sense there is some kind of world we must not see."

that patch of blue sky
between floating clouds--
I do not know
what lies
beyond these

Noriko Tanaka is a prestigious writer whose has four tanka collections to her credit:

Doorway to the Sky

Breast Clouds

Moon Forest Armada

From the Middle Country

as well as numerous books of essays, and awards such as the Nakajo Fumiko prize for tanka, and a special award from the Kinki block of the Japan Tanka Poets' Society for her excellent tanka collection. Norkio lectures at Kinki University and Setsunan University, and belongs to many literary societies, and is a selector for the Honganji Shimpo Tanka club. My personal favorite in this collection of tanka entitled *From the Middle Country* is in Chapter I which is called "From the Ocean Country: Blue Times":
Songs at the Bottom of the Sea

signs of the witching hour
approaching:
in the tank, the tails
of giant salamanders
are growing longer

scattered like
petals from flowers, the red
of swamp crabs
crawling along

slowly wriggling
their bodies,
a school
of minnows goes by
in front of me

moon jellies,
oh, how chilly must be
bottom of the water—
when I
think of you

their sleep
is as dismal as death—
in the march water
are floating
sea-otters

from beyond
aviary hedge
comes a voice saying
'I shall meet you again
in the next world'

'toads
are poisonous, so
I detest them,'
said eyes in the depths
of spectacles

ear pressed to a hole
in the wall, I can hear
now and then
the sea, among the voices
in the neighboring room

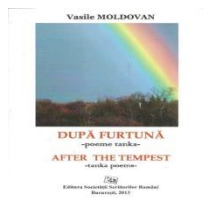
swimming behind
the school of fish,
a single fish
is tangled in foam and
the white shadow of death

as many hairs
as kernels
on corn cobs,
as many lives
as there are deaths

this town has sunk
into the evening bloom—
I am
like a black fish
swimming along

I hope this review gives scope to the variety of Noriko's tanka and insight into the mindset of her writing.

—UHTS *cattails* Book Reviewer an'ya, USA



Title: *După Furtună (AFTER THE TEMPEST)*

Author: Vasile MOLDOVAN, Romania

Consilier editorial: George Ursa

Dimensions: 5 ½ inches X 8 inches

Construction: Soft perfectbound

Total page count: 99

Publisher: *Editura Societății Scriitorilor-Români*

Language: English and Romanian

ISBN: 978-606-8412-08-5

Price/Ordering: elisavaros@yahoo.com

By Vasile MOLDOVAN, an exceptional book of tanka poems, entitled BOOK *După Furtună (AFTER THE TEMPEST)*, which has Romanian versions and English translations that adhere to quite a respectable tanka rhythm. What I firstly liked about Vasile's work is that his tanka are more nature-oriented than most tanka nowadays and it's very refreshing to read tanka that are not diary style, or always into self.

His book begins with a Chapter called "AWAKENING OF SPRING"; there were very many that I personally enjoyed, but to quote a few:

Nothing at all
over the grassland...
Except that
fluff of dandelion
in the mercy of the wind

A broken flower
the last nectar is sweeter
than anything...
wings of a bee find
again the balance

Only a breath of wind
and the buds open up
one by one...
as though somebody
had called the reveille

The second Chapter is called “Summer Heat”, and also I found more favorites that I give you here, but here are a couple:

After lightning
profound silence
and the blaze
burns the forest from
one end to the other

In summer heat
no trill of bird
no child voice...
deafening silences
tingle in our ears

The rest of the Chapters in *După Furtună* did not follow the seasons, rather they are called:

AFTER THE TEMPEST
THE CALL OF SEA
DEAFENING SILENCES
WAVES OF LIFE
IN TWILIGHT

Occasionally in translation an article is left out, but overlooking this, the tanka in each of these Chapters are equally inspiring and I can't remember when I've personally admired so many in one book by one author:

Maybe this is
the first celestial sign
after the tempest:
enemy camps
united by rainbow

After the rain
explosion of irises...
Maybe the heaven
descended among flowers
because it is so much peace?

Old harbor
no one comes anymore
no one leaves
only the merciless wind
and these whirling waves

Having presented examples of nature-based tanka by this author, I leave this review with a couple of my favorite ones by Vasile on the subject of love that are representative of his romantic soul and proof of his diversity in the tanka genre:

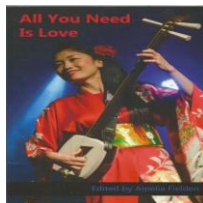
Fire pyres
the eyes of my sweetheart
burn my body...
I sit in her shadow
to cool my soul

First love
the morning mist rises
to the sky...
but torrid afternoon
it seems has no end

Since you left
I can't say again
your name...
I will live my solitude
in a death-like sentence

I highly recommend Vasile's book and suggest that you also read and use it for reference in your own tanka writing.

—UHTS *cattails* Tanka Book Reviewer an'ya, USA



Title: *All You Need Is Love*

Authors: 62 Australian Poets

Editor: Amelia Fielden, Australia

Dimensions: 5 inches x 8 inches

Construction: Soft Perfectbound

Total page count: 62

Publisher: GINNINDERRA PRESS

Publish date: 2015

Language: English

ISBN: 978-1-74027-918-5

Price/Ordering: www.ginninderrapress.com.au

All You Need Is Love, is an anthology of tanka on the Love of Life with contributions from 62 Australian Poets, edited by Amelia Fielden who does so much for her fellow Australian poets, as well as poets in the US and Japan.

From it's lovely cover image of a lovely lady by 'pling: Noriko Tadano performing in 'Noriko and George' (George Kamikawa and Noriko Tadano) at the Nara Candle Festival, 26 October, 2013...all the way to its end, this book is a fine read. It has two to three tanka per page so there are many more than just 62.

When Amelia put out her call to submit tanka on the theme of love, she emphasised what she had in mind was tanka which would interpret the word in its broadest sense according to and reflecting each poet's "love of life..."

My very favorite tanka begins the book, as perhaps it might have been Amelia's favorite as well. Written by a well known woman poet Saeko Ogi, who is also a translator:

so much
to live for, she says
and shows me
the pot, its sweet pea seeds
soaking in the autumn rain

However there are many more excellent tanka by female poets included in *All You Need Is Love*, so many that it is difficult to choose just a few for examples. Thus, and since women outnumber the male tanka writers by far in this book, from this point on I am going to share tanka by the men with you as I found each one to be quite heartfelt and touching:

indulge me
as I re-order my past
and find you there—
if suddenly I should wake
just hold my hand in the present

Christopher Dorman

my brother rings
from five hundred miles away
in a storm
close to tears he asks
where will I sleep tonight

David Gilbey

approaching
headlights in the mist
dip over the hill
raising my hopes
it might be you

Simon Hanson

seeing in colours
radiant from a simple smile
ever since that first kiss
an angel on the earth
a friend to lie beside

James Holcombe

children's fingers
pollinate orchid to bean
vanilla...
taste of love
scent of sophistication

Andrew Howe

dappled sunlight
under the plane tree
suddenly he's fine
and the future quivers
in his dimpled smile

Gerry Jacobson

your kiss
was it offered or taken?
—passion flowed
for a brief moment
the fruit tasted divine

Ken Sherrin

from peak to peak
each topped with a rosy tor,
my thirst for love
drives me across the downey plain
to drink at the mossy spring

Rupert Summerson

the scrimshaw
of those who have never
been to sea...
men who can tattoo
'I love you" to the bone

David Terelinck

we dined
beside the Opera House
the Bridge
and the harbour lights--
saw only each other

Michael Thorley

winter moon
one night shy of full...
that blink
of hesitation
before her reassurance

Rodney Williams

flying visit
grandmother is smitten
with baby,
her dark curls
her connecting smile

Paul Williamson

Thank you to all the Australian tanka writers who shared their work in *All you Need is Love*.
—UHTS *cattails* Tanka Book Reviewer an'ya, USA



Title: *Pogled na Otrantsko vrata*

(*A Gaze at the Strait of Otranto*)

Author/Translator: Đurđa Vukelić Rozić

English sub-editor: Elizabeth Harrison-Paj

Illustrations/Cover design: Dejan Lekić

Dimensions: 4 inches x 5 ¾ inches

Construction: Soft perfectbound

Total page count: 104

Publisher: Đurđa Vukelić Rozić

Publish date: 2015

Printer: Graphprint d. o. o., Croatia

Languages: Croatian and English

ISBN: 978-953-57651-5-8

Price/Ordering: dvrozic@optinet.hr

A tanka book entitled *A Gaze at the Strait of Otranto* by Đurda Vukelić Rozić, is a delight. Both in her native Croatian and in English; this author is known for her translating abilities. One tanka per page with a decorative divider between the languages, and also Tanka Sequences at the back.

It is thrilling to see this form on the rise in the Balkan countries, as the haiku there has always been exceptionally notable, and I am sure tanka will follow suit. This book is straightforward with no Introduction, Preface or notes—it is simply good poetry by Đurda and a few scattered black and white nicely presented illustrations by Dejan Lekić who was born in Montenegro; lives and creates in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Here are the tanka I found especially to my liking, starting with one about the author's beloved auntie whom she dedicated this to:

a notebook
with poems by my auntie
never published
the words of all her loves
reside in my heart now

I would like to hug
the sweet smell of the sea
high on a cliff
our gazes follow islands
drowning in their own mist

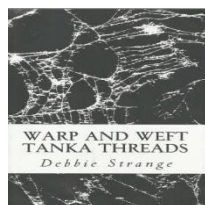
strong wind
carrying unrepeatable
grains of sand
my memories hidden
in the dunes of time

autumn afterglow
I stop at the cemetery
my late neighbor
was buried in my dress
she loved on me

my dreams are true
meadows with bluebells
and his embrace
longing with patience
brought a faithful love

Thank you to Đurda for this small (dimensioned), but big in heart tanka publication, *Pogled na Otrantsko vrata*.

—UHTS *cattails* Tanka Book Reviewer an'ya, USA



Title: *WARP AND WEFT TANKA THREADS*
Author/Cover Artist: Debbie Strange, Canada
Dimensions: 8 inches x 9 inches
Construction: Soft perfectbound
Total page count: 85
Publisher: Keibooks, USA
Publish date: 2015
Language: English
ISBN: 9781512361124
Price/Ordering: AtlasPoetica.org

WARP AND WEFT TANKA THREADS is a unique presentation insofar as it's author Debbie Strange from Canada, explains in her Author's Note in-part:

“Each triptych in this tanka collection contains poems taken from different publications, but sharing a common thread.”

In addition, M. Kei writes from the back cover blurb of this book in-part, as being:

“Primal poetry with a pagan heart” *Warp and Weft* by Debbie Strange weaves tanka into short threads of three each, each triptych building into larger sequence that tells the story of a poet with a raven’s eye.”

Already I was intrigued and not to be disappointed. Starting with the cover art “A Spider’s Loom” which is by the author herself, and in keeping with her triptych theme. The two that I enjoyed the most mentioned “father and mother”:

a prairie Gael
she sets sail
through oceans of grain
anchored to her father
trailing fingers in his wake
untangling beards of barley

waltzing
on the rotting dance floor
our father built
in the ash grove he planted
between rows of aching years

on father’s coffin
the cowboy hat and polished boots
of a prairie Gael
the skirling pipes
that sing him home

motherstone

she calls us in
we press our noses
against wet glass
as tumbleweeds turn cartwheels
in the yellow bruise of sky

in the nursing home
parchment skin cradles brittle bones
a blue labyrinth
inked on mother's handscape
time's trembling calligraphy

sister roses
heads drooping
thorn-pricked
these petals of memory
dappling the motherstone

and a few more of my favorites for your enjoyment too:

snowbound
the way snow
covers fallen leaves
this need
to make order
out of our chaos

the glow
of candled sea ice
at sundown
snowflakes melting
on our lashes

snowbound
we sip Darjeeling
and dream
of growing marigolds
in monsoon rain
undone:

after the storm
you gathered shreds
of the garden
my bleeding heart
in the small of your hand

shearing back
the forget-me-nots
we planted
beside the sun dial
time and I stand still

gardening
in the hat you gave me
I am undone
by faded ribbons
and the scent of lilies

turning season

winter winds
play an aeolian harp
of barbed wire
a lone coyote and I howl
at the long night moon

lying in sage
on limestone cliffs
sunning myself
with ribbon snakes
emerging from hibernation

mercurial wind
in this turning season
my body
a weather vane tilting
in a new direction

What a riveting book of tanka this is indeed, much to my liking as I am sure it will be to all of those who have the privilege to read it.

—UHTS *cattails* Tanka Book Reviewer an'ya, USA



Title: *RED POPPIES (CRVENI MAKОВI)*

Author: Smajil Durmišević, Bosnia and Herzegovina

Dimensions: 6 inches x 8 inches

Computer Processing: Smajil Durmišević

Book Cover: Ferida Abdagić

Drawings: Alija Kulenović

Language Editor/Proofreader for Bosnian: Željko Grahovac

Language Editor/Proof-editor for English: Elizabeth Harrison-Paj

English Translation: Đurda Vukelić Rožić, Croatia

French Translations of verses: Ivana Demić

Language Editor/Proof-editor for French: Adriana Katavić

German Translation of verses: Dragan J. Ristić

Language Editor/Proof-editor for German: Claudie Brefer

Reviewers: Dr. sc. Ljubomir Radovančević, Željko Grahovac, Dušan Mijajlović Adski, and Bojan

Bogdanović Construction: Hardback

Total page count: 262

Publisher/Printer: "Meligrafprint" d.o.o Zenica

Publish date: 2015

Language: English, Bosnian, French and German

ISBN: 978-9958-677-21-2

COBISS.BH-ID 22208518

Price/Ordering: AtlasPoetica.org

RED POPPIES (CRVENI MAKОВI) by Smajil Durmišević, a well known, popular, and respected author from Bosnia and Herzegovina, embodies the very heart of his homeland and souls of his countrymen.

You can see by the credits above that many people (other well known authors and scholars) all went into the making of *RED POPPIES*, ie: translators and proofreaders for each language, artists, reviewers (who wrote the Foreword and Afterword), and so forth.

RED POPPIES is Smajil's fifth published book of haiku and there are 200 verses included in it. I find his works to be quite personal which allows me insight into the Bosnian lifestyle as it exists of poetry and within beauty of thought.

in the cherry's shade
fragrance, coffee and the chatting—
old homeland

summer heat:
people and bees drink and pray
by the water

Bosnian village:
an old man in his garden
picks up fallen flowers

in my homeland—
you can hear the murmur of life
in the moonlight

Winter—in the fog
Bosnia, a poet and
a single drake

This author for all his scholarly and professional education, many special accolades by his peers, numerous awards and multiple contests he has garnered to his credit, somehow manages to remain humble in his haiku writing.

It is easy to realize almost immediately if you appreciate haiku as an international language, that every entry in this publication is straight from Smajil's wide-open heart:

autumn rain:
washes dry grain ears
and an old tombstone

fourth of March
how patient is the Creator—
primroses still in flower

monument in the grass
and up there a mother stork
feeding her babes

and do these examples not typify the moments of every haiku poet who perceives nature no matter where they live and write:

a cheerful boy—
angling, with his fishing rod
he touches the moon

in the gentle shade
of a large oak—grows
the strength of a dandelion

in the breath of the wind
secret messages arriving—
known to the buds

It is a privilege for me to review this book by such an astute author who is able to include “self” into his moments in a way that not many haiku poets successfully accomplish, some are quite like the haiku of Issa:

fragrance of a rose
in someone’s else’s garden—I sob
both sad and happy

I asked a big
forest ant on my hand:
how are you, my cousin?

amazed I noticed
our golden buttercup growing
on a hard trodden path

golden primrose,
on your slender waist
I left my gaze

in the shade of pine
I met a last year's acquaintance—
the blue butterfly

surprised passers-by:
on a stroll through the town—
I greet a linden tree

Having quoted some of my personal favorites, here are a few of my husband Petar's favorites as well,
for we both have read Smaliji's book *RED POPPIES* and consider this a co-review:

rainy morning—
fragrance of last night's dreams
over a sultry city

the beauty of the Eternal
I can see clearly—in the trail
of a mountain wolf

sky and sea—
rushing through the blueness
her feet

the breeze of spring
pushed a primrose tenderly
to touch the violet

I sat in the forest—
while an ant passed by
wordless

These are but a few of the unique works of Smajil Durmišević, a prolific writer, enthusiast poet, and high-spirited Bosnian soul...

—UHTS *cattails* Book Reviewer, an'ya and PeterB, USA

cattails

January 2016
Featured Poet

My Journey

Gavin Austin, Australia



I am both surprised and honoured to be the featured poet for this edition of *cattails*. There are many people that have assisted me on my writing journey; from my first attempts at free verse poetry and prose to the subsequent discovery of haiku and its related forms.

Australian author Jack Radley, the great uncle of a friend, first caused me to become serious about writing. Encouraging me to write short fiction and poetry, Jack was delighted when I began to have success in competitions, or work was accepted for publication. However, Jack's honest critique of my prose was that I tended to overwrite. In his words, he sometimes had to 'move the furniture to see the room'. Years later he admitted to having worried that he had been too hard on me. I assured him he had been tough but fair, and that I had taken heart from his continued encouragement. He remained a dear friend and mentor up until his death in 2008. To this day I miss him terribly.

In 2000 I enrolled in a creative writing course with Australian writer, Kate Walker, who has also been an influence with my writing. Always generous with her time and writing advice, Kate has become a valued friend and remains an inspiration to me. Like Jack, Kate was honest yet nurturing as she pushed me for improvement.

My interest in Japanese-form poetry was piqued several years ago by a chance meeting with Beverley George. Beverley had judged the poetry section of the Manly Arts Festival Literary Competition and I attended the Presentation evening to accept an award. At the time, I wrote short fiction and free verse

poetry; both of which I still write today. It was this meeting with Beverley, and the shared ferry ride back to Circular Quay, that Beverley sat with me and urged me to consider writing haiku and tanka as it would be helpful for all genres of writing.

How true those words proved to be, and how helpful that tip from Beverley has been. Finding the focus of haiku has indeed helped, particularly when writing prose, to write more efficiently and directly, without the distraction of superfluous wordage.

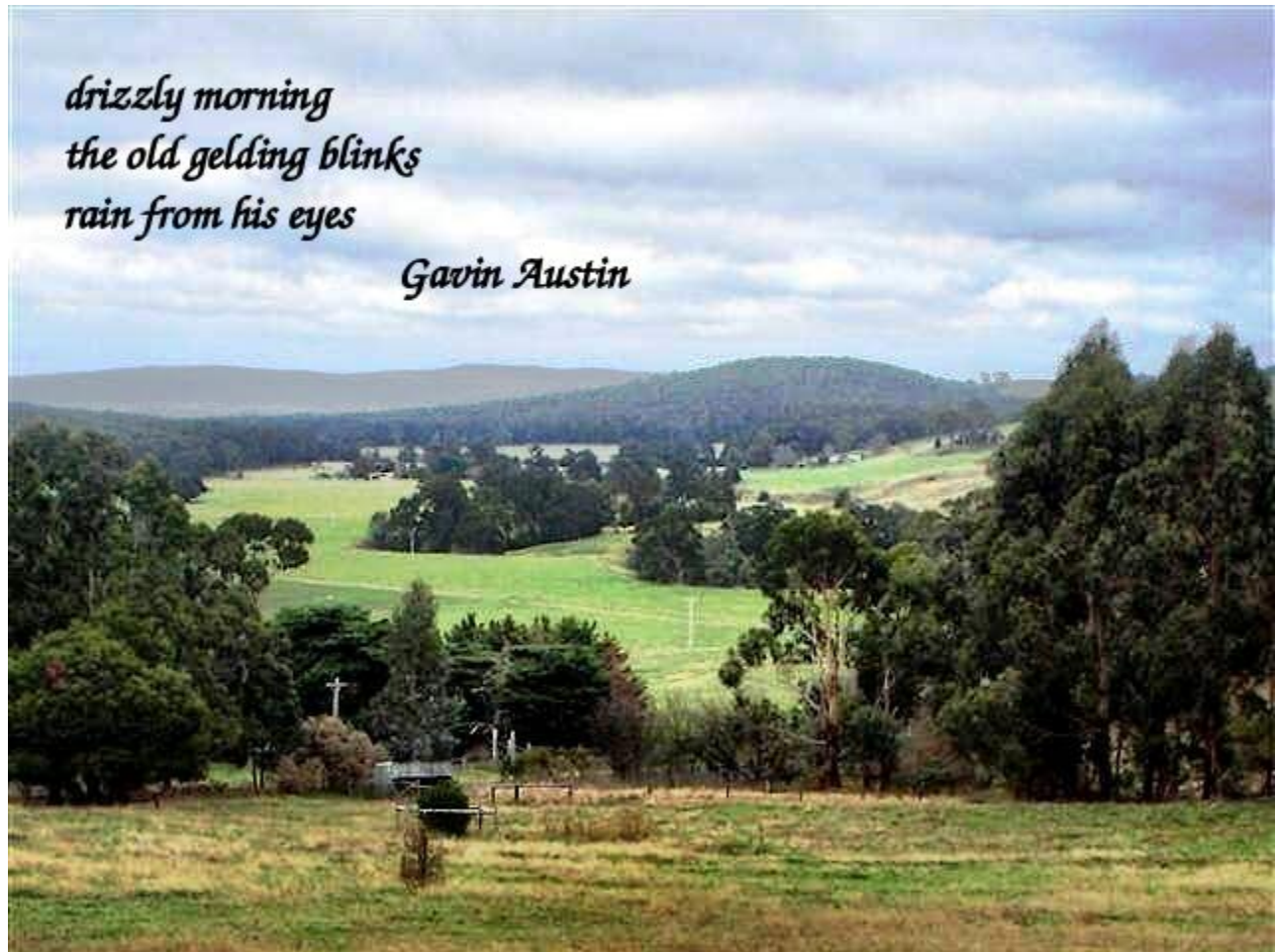
I was drawn into the allure of haiku initially, followed by tanka. It is the precision and discipline of Japanese-form poetry I appreciate. The ability to say so much with an economy of words, and what is left off the page is for the reader to colour between the lines and interpret. It has been said before but this seemingly simple form of poetry is difficult to write or, at least, write well. And with tanka, I am always amazed five short lines can have the ability to tell an entire story.

At the time of our meeting, Beverley edited the print journal *Yellow Moon* and I began to attempt the different genres of writing published within its pages; haiku being among them. I was thrilled when my submitted work began to be accepted for publication. I should mention here that it has been some of the talented 'leading ladies' of Antipodean Japanese-form poetry that have helped to shape my writing.

I submitted work to the haiku pages of the Australian journal, *FreeXpresSion*. Quendryth Young was the editor, and it was through her kindness and assistance that I persevered with writing haiku. Quendryth's guidance in those early days has been much appreciated and I remain an admirer of her work. Cynthia Rowe took over the editorship of *Haiku Xpressions* from Quendryth, and Cynthia was also most helpful and encouraging. We were members of the Bondi Writers at the time, and it was Cynthia who suggested it might be time to try writing tanka.

My first tanka attempts were sent, in 2010, to Beverley George, editor of *Eucalypt – A Tanka Journal*. One tanka from this first submission was accepted for publication and proved to be all the reinforcement I needed to continue. Lorin Ford offered a suggestion or two early on when I first sent haiku to *Notes from the Gean*. Lorin is now the haiku editor and managing editor of the on-line journal *A Hundred Gourds*. 'Across the ditch', Patricia Prime, co-editor with Margaret Beverland of the print journal *Kokako*, also remains incredibly supportive. I am struck by the generosity and willingness to share knowledge and expertise; I owe a great deal of gratitude to Beverley, Quendryth, Cynthia, Lorin and Patricia.

My early childhood was influenced greatly by my maternal grandfather. Grandad was a born storyteller. My earliest memories are of sitting on his knee and listening to stories. He did not read bedtime tales but created his own, complete with my friends and pets as characters. I demanded more and he always fulfilled my request with stories that were never exactly the same. Grandad owned property in the picturesque region of South-East Gippsland in Victoria, Australia.



He was a grazier; raising sheep and beef cattle. I attribute to him my love and respect of nature and animals; particularly horses. I was about three years of age when he sat me on his old palomino mare and my lifelong love of horses was born. Instilling in me a love of nature, Grandad pointed out the everyday splendour about us. We took time to observe the changing colours of a sunset, the mist in the treetops, and the sunlight on distant blue hills: the extraordinary in the ordinary. I am so pleased I learned to appreciate this simple beauty; it is something I hold in these more troubled times with the atrocities being carried out in this modern world.

In primary school I was often asked to read my work to the class, and in secondary school my poetry usually made it into the Year Book. Later, when my work first found publication, people often commented on it being 'dark'. I imagine that is due to losing, in my early life, so many people close to me. I write about what moves me and I am willing to tackle some of life's difficult topics: death and grieving, child abuse, domestic violence, drug addiction, homelessness, and organ donation. What a

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perplexing contrast to the observation of nature's wonder, and trying to capture that moment within seventeen syllables. Perhaps there is a pursuit of childhood magic within the confronting complexities of adulthood?

Living in urban Sydney and with the pressures of contemporary life, I am pleased to have a place of escape. My friends own a small acreage at Kurrajong, approximately ninety minutes from Sydney's centre. The rolling green hills and misty ranges evoke the memories of my childhood home. There are horses and goats and it is an idyllic setting for writing. I always relish the opportunity to spend a few days there with earth beneath my feet rather than concrete; the sound of birds and the smell of eucalypts replacing traffic noise and exhaust fumes. A country interlude always stirs the spirit.

The past few years have proven to be fruitful for I have found publication in several international journals: *Shamrock*, *Chrysanthemum*, *A Hundred Gourds*, *Presence*, *The Heron's Nest*, *50 Haikus*, *Three Line Poetry*, and *cattails*. I am most appreciative of the dedicated editors, along with those of the Australian and New Zealand publications, for continuing to produce journals keeping poetry alive, and thereby giving poets a vehicle for expression. These editors are remarkable in their commitment to haiku and its related forms.

Thank you to an'ya, whose writing I greatly revere, and who issued this invitation to be the poet in profile for this edition of *cattails*. I am most grateful for the opportunity.

—Gavin Austin, Elizabeth Bay, Sydney, Australia

the still bay
pitted by morning rain
cry of a gull

lamp-lit marina
reflections on the bay
fracture and mend

rainforest gully
beads of rain glisten
on gumleaf tips

winter twilight
an orange cloud cresting
the ranges

late storm
the broad puddle
holding stars

pier shadows
dappling the seaweed
a school of fish

highway bridge
upside down willows
in the river

drizzly morning
the old gelding blinks
rain from his eyes

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windswept cove
the gull's wings lifting
above a wave

eucalypt leaves
blanched by moonlight
a motionless owl

forked lightning
rips up the night sky ...
could it be you
who is controlling this
extraordinary light show?

news I dreaded
arrived this afternoon
how special
that last text has become
... your final words to me

feathered cloud
reflections on the harbour
grow restless

river bank
the old dog sniffing
shadows

in the frosty field
an old mare's head raises
to her called name
while you talk of leaving
and distant green pastures

our friendship
more than stories or books
now you go ahead
having quietly turned
the last page of your own

cAt taLes cartoon

UHTS Resident Cartoonist

Paresh Tiwari, India



cattails

January 2016

Spotlight

Presenting

Maria Tomczak, Poland



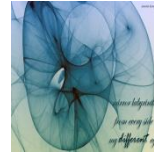
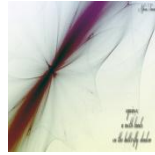
Maria Tomczak is a haiku poet and artist from Opole, in southwestern Poland. As a teenager she was interested in manga and anime and in natural way it expanded to fascination with the Japanese culture in a wide range, especially literature and history.

The first haiku she read was Buson's "dead wife's comb" in 2002. She hadn't understood it full potential then but she liked the form that can express lots of emotions and thoughts using so little words. Today, she values haiku most of all that can touch the soul even more than many longer poems. For her, haiku is a sketch, a piece of the universe and the rest depends on reader imagination. The universality of a poem is combined with the reader's own life experiences.

Maria loves to share with the people a piece of her own world that becomes a foundation for the images in their minds, and the understatement in haiku gives her as a poet and reader the great creative power. Maria is also an author of many haiga that she creates mainly with her own artworks. Her works were published in journals like *Frogpond*, *Modern Haiku*, *cattails*, *The Heron's Nest*, *The Mainichi*, *A Hundred Gourds*, *Creatrix*, *World Haiku Review*, *Wild Plum* and many more.

Recently she has joined the team of the *Wild Plum* - a haiku journal as haiga editor. For her it is quite a challenge but also a great opportunity to see so many interesting, multicultural haiga form people around the world.

cattails – January 2016





sunrise
I watch my shadow
stretching itself



*yoga class -
wind behind the window
bends mimosa twigs*



winter field
the flock of crows blurs
into twilight

*distant thunder
the tranquility
of the koi*



cattails – January 2016

empty park
another leaf loses
its tree

fading daylight
my shadow embraces
everything around

mountain trek
the stream cooling
our shadows

open window
from the nearby bakery
a night shift smell

gossamer thread
I contemplate the strength
of my feelings

the silence
of those ancient woods
deep down
in the mountain stream
shadows of our shadows

crescendo
sounds of horse hooves tread
the summer wind

the weight
of Indian summer—
ripening garden

rush hour
the speed of
a falling leaf

lullaby
a wild wind swings
the cattails

cascades
calla lilies spill the smell
of rain

always beyond
the circle of her bedside lamp
darkness
but on the hospice wall
she sees a painted sunrise

