

May
2016
Edition

cattails

collected
works
of
UHTS

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Principal Editor's Prelude

As the UHTS continues to steadily and rapidly expand, we now realize that the workload needs to be shared, and communications should be streamlined. Thus, beginning with our next submission period which opens on 15 June @ 00:01 GMT for the September 2016 *cattails*, here is the new Editorial structure and email addresses for submitting your works:

Managing Tanka Editor/Principal Editor: an'ya, USA
submittocattails+TANKA@gmail.com with the subject heading: TANKA

Managing Haiku Editor: Sonam Chhoki, Bhutan
submittocattails+HAIKU.com with the subject heading: HAIKU

Managing Senryu Editor: Shrikaanth Krishnamurthy, United Kingdom
submittocattails+SENRUYU@gmail.com with the subject heading: SENRYU

Managing Haiga/Tankart Editor: an'ya, USA
submittocattails+HAIGA/TANKART@gmail.com with the subject heading: HAIGA/TANKART

Pen this Painting Judge, an'ya USA
submittocattails+PENTHIS@gmail.com with the subject heading: PEN

Managing Haibun Editor: Sonam Chhoki, Bhutan
submittocattails+HAIBUN@gmail.com with the subject heading: HAIBUN

Managing Youth Corner Editor: Kala Ramesh, India
submittocattails+YOUTH@gmail.com with the subject heading: YOUTH

Webmaster/Publisher/Seedpods e-News Bulletin: PeterB, USA
submittocattails+TECH@gmail.com with the subject heading: TECH

UHTS Secretary: Carol MacRury, USA
submittocattails+JOIN@gmail.com with the subject heading: JOIN

UHTS Book Compiler: Barbara Snow, USA
submittocattails+BOOK@gmail.com with the subject heading: BOOK

Please note these two very important changes effective immediately:

cattails will not be publishing book reviews in the next edition. However, Barbara snow is staying on as Book Compiler, as we are converting to a single page of "book release/ordering information" (for UHTS members only); see the submission guidelines and/or the book review intro page for more information.

Meanwhile, this edition is full of examples that our editors feel are the finest of Japanese short forms on the Internet, and we hope you enjoy *cattails* as much as we enjoy putting it together for you.

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

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cattails

**May 2016
Contributors**

Thank you again to all poets and artists who contributed to this May 2016 edition of *cattails*. 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

May 2016

Haiku

Haiku Introduction

For your convenience, we have created an introduction page to define the haiku 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 here 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.

We encourage you to send a translation of your haiku in "your" native language.

REMINDER: Please send any/all haiku submissions (within the "body" of an email), with the Subject heading of HAIKU in all caps. You can submit haiku to Sonam at: submittocattails+HAIKU@gmail.com during the "open for submissions periods of:

January Edition Opens October 15 to the Deadline: Midnight GMT December 15 . . .
Publication Target Date: January 15.

May Edition Opens February 15 to the Deadline: Midnight GMT April 15 . . .
Publication Target Date: May 15.

September Edition Opens June 15 to the Deadline: Midnight GMT August 15. . .
Publication Target Date: September 15.

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

last snow **EC**
a beginning in the end
first blossom

David J. Kelly
Ireland

midday lull—
the palm leaf's slight swing
hints of a breeze

Somali K. Chakrabarti
India

shadows spreading
but sun hampers them down
toward the west

Tatjana Debeljački
Serbia

cemetery snow—
the symmetry undone
by a fox

Stephen Toft
United Kingdom

honeysuckle wind
the distance of first love
never too far

Kevin Valentine
USA

muddy jeans
the pasture speckled
with crocuses

Debbie Strange
Canada

crisp morning...
sun rays fill my room
with wren song

Vandana Parashar
India

twilight stars...
only the echo
of passing geese

Mark E. Brager
USA

starry night—
I trace the constellations
on his skin

Diksha Sharma
India

dusk
the old gate sags into
its shadow

Ben Moeller-Gaa
USA

deep twilight
the blackness of white
cherry blossoms

Emmanuel Jessie Kalusian
Nigeria

in the garden
a perfect pumpkin—
blood moon

Barbara Tate
USA

Christmas—
before everything else
the morning star

Robert McNeill
USA

sizzling summer day
under the tree a shadow
not wanting to leave

Bernard Gieske
USA

first reading
I curse my horoscope's
predictions

Barbara A. Taylor
Australia

wintertime
the red bird remains
its only guest

Jesus Chameleon
USA

bellbird song **EC**
from the highest branch
a winding road

Leonie Bingham
Australia

these starry skies
no comparison to
your shining eyes

Shinlynn Kuo
USA

the fading
white of an egret
—sunset clouds

Rajan Garg
India

after my dog's death
the breeze in the field
carries her bark

Charlotte Digregorio
USA

seagulls tumbling
inside a cross-wind
scattered clouds

Marietta McGregor
Australia

winter chill
insomnia turns memories
into poems

Melissa Patterson
USA

snow moon
a soft sifting
through the pines

Susan Mallernee
USA

disused yard...
the bramble burgeoning
with birdsong

Shrikaanth Krishnamurthy
United Kingdom

breezeless day
the pier stretches
into the clouds

Ramesh Anand
India

a hummingbird
siphons the sugar water
...whir of wings

William Scott Galasso
USA

Solstice
the sunstruck red
of unpicked apples

Carol Purington
USA

winter twilight...
the shadow of a headstone
mingles with mine

Chen-ou-liu
Canada

an icy blue sky
clear to the horizon
my calendar empty

Adelaide B. Shaw
USA

bare trees
the hour before
their buds stir

Jill Lange
USA

lost on
the cover of Walden
an ant

Chris Gusak
USA

barbed wire checkpoint
at the contested border
freefalling leaves

John Hawkhead
United Kingdom

sunlit branches
plums among the shadows
staining the ground

Gavin Austin
Australia

in and out
of the rusted shed
moonshine

Ben Moeller-Gaa
USA

nightfall
through thick fog
the foghorn

Jill Lange
USA

the underdog
another fallen branch
at my doorstep

Jade Pisani
Australia

jazz
on the radio
stormy weather

Dan Curtis
Canada

spring snow
the pear blossoms
even whiter

John J. Han
USA

arms akimbo
she scolds the mockingbird...
her wrinkled face

Carole Johnston
USA

sunlit downspout
the spider's web captures
a rainbow

Joe McKeon
USA

October morning **EC**
each rock holds the river
back a little

Agnes Eva Savich
USA

dirty pond...
a pink lotus
above it all

Shrikaanth Krishnamurthy
United Kingdom

two crows pass
beneath the waning moon
winter twilight

Jeanne Cook
USA

my brother's last call
small talk about the weather
and fallen apples

Thom Norgang
USA

the horizon
unspooling a highway
journey inland

Jan Dobb
Australia

summer twilight
washing over me
with no regrets

Angela Terry
USA

circling a field **EC**
the graceful wingbeats
of vultures

Sandi Pray
USA

swamp cypress
a strangler fig thickens
near the beehive

Bill Cooper
USA

spring heat—
the imprint of grass
in her thighs

Paul Chambers
Wales

hoop pine
a web wraps up
old needles

Quendryth Young
Australia

moon glow
the length of footprints
at low tide

Lamart Cooper
USA

snow moon
rounding out
the OM

Michael Henry Lee
USA

a pine tip
scrawled across the moon
placid ocean

Nathalie Buckland
Australia

whether to plant
vegetables or flowers there—
this inner world

John Martone
USA

old tenement
the wisteria climbs
all three flights

Michele L. Harvey
USA

summer afternoon
slaps of jumping rope echo
on the playground

Melissa Patterson
USA

autumn sky
a plane and a bird become
equal in size

Valentina Ranaldi-Adams
USA

a distant whistle
in the hilly woodland
traces of redbuds

Barbara Snow
USA

night breeze
a black swan descends
on the moon

Elmedin Kadrić
Sweden

far away—
the echoes bridge
our closeness

Pravat Kumar Padhy
India

February
the curl of a yew
heavy with snow

Brad Bennett
USA

still night
moonlight dapples the darkness
of a rockpool

Gavin Austin
Australia

the space **EC**
between finger and ring—
spring breeze

Ruth Holzer
USA

midnight moon...
my daughter's key turns
in the lock

Chen-ou Liu
Canada

spring cuttings
fall's spiky stems striving
to be green

Frances Jones
USA

clearing sky
moonlight brightens
the shallows

Simon Hanson
Australia

honeysuckle gone
clearcut above the river
one bright buttercup

Travis Poling
USA

mountain lake
the pull of oars
on starlight

Dave Read
Canada

the same seashore—
winter waves unveil
old memories

Luisa Santoro
Italy

grief—
even the moon
is waning

Mary Kendall
USA

toward shore...
the pink moon sailing
backwards

Archana Kapoor Nagpal
India

river walk—
wildfowl pairing
in the empties

Amanda Bell
Ireland

duskfall
we trail our fingers
through stars

Debbie Strange
Canada

in the mail
a maple leaf arrives
north wind

Johnnie Johnson Hafernik
USA

a heron's cry
echoing through the woods
autumn morning

Payal A. Agarwal
India

now and again **EC**
around the trunk a flash
of woodpecker

Marianne Paul
Canada

church window
in the distant sunlight
monarch wings

Nancy Rapp
USA

first time out
a bat figure-eights above
the kayak

Julie Warther
USA

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hitching a ride
from canopy to forest
butterflies

Beverly Acuff Momoi
USA

graveside ritual
a white butterfly provides
what light there is

Sylvia Forges-Ryan
USA

still air
meadow and woods
only the rain moves

Aron Rothstein
USA

bush walk
in meandering silence
an occasional trill

Madhuri Pillai
Australia

a lotus leaf
floats above the koi
muddied water

Tyson West
USA

the distance
between raindrops
and splashing

Terrie Jacks
USA

city park—
down a sliding board
the first raindrops

Dragan Ristić
Serbia

sickle moon...
from its thin curve the last
cherry blossom falls

Cherese Renee' Cobb
USA

abandoned cat...
the return of springtime
for a homeless man

Hazel Hall
USA

dust and ash
in our native land
it remains

Kashmiri lal chawla
India

before coffee
this ache and joy
in the dawn

Meik Blöttenberger
USA

a slow river
bends into twilight...
summer's end

Mark E. Brager
USA

cloud patterns
the sky at twilight
dotted with bats

Kwaku Feni Adow
Ghana

income tax time
all the unraked leaves
scattered underfoot

Cyndi Lloyd
USA

my kite sails
where I can't go...
lost love

Karen O'Leary
USA

daylight stroll...
the dewy caress
of wildflowers

Samantha Sirimanne Hyde
Australia

seventy springs—
still worried about
dying young

Leslie Bamford
Canada

false spring
a bottle fly buzzing
in fits and starts

Joyce Lorensen
USA

freshwater pond
my feet being cleansed
by moonlit fishes

Ramesh Anand
India

solar eclipse
a cloud of bats rises
up from the well

Devin Harrison
Canada

receding waters
pieces of mountains pause
in my front yard

Aron Rothstein
USA

the urgency
of new love everywhere
dandelions

Amelia Cotter
USA

complex birdsong
a soothing call drowned out
by city noise

Andrew
United Kingdom

snow geese
swaddled in clouds
a winter moon

Thomas James Martin
USA

filling the birdbath—
a rust-colored toad washes
out of the overflow

Elizabeth Howard
USA

city park—
down a sliding board
the first raindrops

Dragan Ristić
Serbia

no turning back
on the steep shale path
summit fever

Tim Gardiner
England

sudden storm **EC**
leaving the castle ruins
on the beach

nagły sztorm
zostawia ruiny zamku
na plaży

Irena Iris Szewczyk
Poland

above the dovecote
a chattering of birds
scatter into sky

nad gołębnikiem
szczebioczące ptaki
rozsypane po niebie

Azi Kuder
Poland

evening meal
a network of aromas
from neighbors' kitchens

*anwumere aduane ya
nkwan hwam di afra firi
m'afipamfoɔ mukaase*

*Adjei Agyei-Baah
Ghana*

a new nest
beside the airport—
swallow wings

*un cuib nou lângă aeropor—
aripi de rândunică*

*Capotă Daniela Lăcrămioara
Romania*

starlit night
in the ancient fountain
copper coins

*gwiaździsta noc
w zabytkowej fontannie
miedziaki*

*Marta Chocilowska
Poland*

lover's quarrel
more stormy clouds come
with every word

*kłótnia kochanków
coraz więcej burzowych chmur
z każdym słowem*

*Zuzanna Truchlewska
Poland*

early dusk...
an upside down maple leaf
full of the day's rain

*ранні сутінки...
перевернутий кленовий лист
повен денного дощу*

*Nicholas Klacsanzky
Ukraine*

mountain night **EC**
the headlights carve
a sky road

山夜车灯照
天路却雕通

*David He
China*

a silent moment
just long enough to hear
the rainsong

*minuta ciszy
wystarczy by usłyszeć
śpiew deszczu*

*Maria Tomczak
Poland*

returning home—
a little bit of Greece
flavours my shirt

*drumul spre casă—
pe tricoul meu un pic
din aromele Greciei*

*Steliana Cristina Voicu
Romania*

where the ice
enchained a river's banks—
leafing willows

*tamo gdje je led
okivao obale—
vrba pušta list*

*Božidar Škobić "Čika Boško"
Bosnia and Herzegovina*

nobody cares
about the clamour of crows—
early spring light

*niemand schert sich
um das Zetern der Krähen—
erstes Frühlingslicht*

*Eva Limbach
Germany*

tea picking
the taste of the sunset
ripens in my mouth

*çay toplama
damağımda olgunlaşıyor
günbatımının tadı*

*Guliz Vural
Turkey*

sprouting beans
on the first leaf couple
a baby slug

*niče grah
na prvim listićima
beba puž*

*Đurđa Vukelić-Rožić
Croatia*

morning sun...
a flutter of wings
among birch leaves

朝阳...
翅膀拍振
在桦叶之中

David He
China

night pond—
the Big Dipper full
of leaves

staw nocą—
Wielki Wóz pełen
liści

Zuzanna Truchlewska
Poland

black sky—
the sickle moon gives
it a prick

cer negru—
secera lunii
îl înțepă

Lavana Kray
Romania

a blackout—
walkers on the strand
are statues

*nestanak struje—
šetači na čas
statue*

*Dubravka Borić
Croatia
Tr: Đurđa Vukelić-Rožić
Croatia*

thunder
the cat continues
her nap

*tonnerre
la chatte continue
sa sieste*

雷
猫继续
它的小睡

Tr: Christina Sng, Singapore

Indian summer
alone I trim the roses
my mum planted

*циганско лято
сама подрязвам розите
които мама засади*

*Diana Teneva
Bulgaria*

he knows by heart
all the constellations—
old homeless man

Ξέρει απ' έξω
όλους τους αστερισμούς—
γέρος άστεγος

Vassilis Comporozos
Greece

half moon
we eat the last
of the oranges

半月
剩下的橘子
我们全部吃完

demi-lune
nous mangeons la dernière
des oranges

Christina Sng, Singapore
Tr: Helena Chua, Singapore
French Tr: Carine Biancardini, France

peace conference
the snow whiter
than doves

конференция за мир
снегът по-бял
от гълъбите

Gergana Yaninska
Bulgaria

happy mind-set
my dialogue with the stars
at midnight

与群星对话
我心欢畅
夜未央

Yunsheng Jiang
China

the spring...
so many freckles
with your smile

ладья...
много ходов
что и как

Gennady Nov
Russia

sunset
a figure on the bench
turns toward the sun

u smiraj dana
figura na klupi
okreće se suncu

Nina Kovacić, Croatia
Tr: Đurđa Vukelić-Rožić, Croatia

first of spring
I stick my tongue out
to the rain

първа пролет...
изплезвам език
към дъжда

Maya Lyubenova
Bulgaria

sicilian spring—
flowering opuntia
awaits the first bee

sycylijska wiosna—
kwitnąca opuncja
oczekuje pierwszej pszczoły

Wiesław Karliński
Poland

spring morn
the river sparkles
with silver tones

frühlingsmorgen
der fluss erglänzt
in silbertönen

Helga Stania
Switzerland

southbound
in the driving mirror
my empty sky

*südwärts
im Rückspiegel
mein leerer Himmel*

*Eva Limbach
Germany*

in the arms
of playful lovers
spring blossoms

*u zagrljaju
zaigranih ljubavnika
proljeće cvate*

*Ljubica Šporčić, Croatia
Tr: Đurđa Vukelić-Rožić, Croatia*

wild carnation—
the poet orders
another round

*wilde Nelken
der Dichter bestellt
eine weitere Runde*

*Roberta Beary
Ireland/USA*

green salad
the waiter asks
what is lettuce

*grüner Salat
der Kellner fragt
was ist Kopfsalat*

*Rob Scott
Australia/Sweden*

beef tartar
I listen to
an unknown Haijin

*Beefsteak—Tatar
ich lausche
einem unbekanntem Haijin*

*Ralf Bröker
Germany*

empty beer glass
I ask where
was I

*leeres Bierglas
ich frage
wo war ich*

*J. Brian Robertson
Canada*

nordic jazz light dark beer

Nordic Jazz Licht dunkles Bier

Iliyana Stoyanova

UK/Bulgaria

talk of billing
barlights shimmer
in her wine glass

*Diskussion über die Rechnung
Thekenlichter schimmern
in ihrem Weinglas*

Bob Moyer

USA

Editor's Choice Haiku

I have enjoyed being haiku editor for *cattails* immensely and found it most difficult to select Editor's Choice every time from so many excellent submissions. Beginning with the September edition of *cattails* (as mentioned in my Editor's Prelude), your haiku submissions will be in the very capable and competent hands of Sonam Chhoki who will take over the role of "Managing Haiku Editor", as well as continue on as Haibun Editor. Please see the Editor's prelude for details on "where" to email your next haiku submissions, (as well as the other forms). Meanwhile, here are my choices for this May edition of *cattails*.

last snow
a beginning in the end
first blossom

David J. Kelly
Ireland

An Editor's choice by David J. Kelly from Ireland that interestingly and nicely overlaps the seasons which is very difficult to accomplish in such a way that one season isn't more important than the other. This is because David's middle line allows the "last snow" to flow into the "first blossom", and the seasons meld together, to become one in the same. A skillful write by this author where we are able to enjoy both beginning and end and two seasons equally at once.

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

bellbird song
from the highest branch
a winding road

Leonie Bingham
Australia

*This Editor's Choice multi-sense haiku written by Leonie Bingham from Australia is quite fetching. It not only allows us to hear the "bellbird song", but it let's us see "a winding road" from the bird's perspective, through that bellbird's eyes. A well written unusual moment and thanks to Leonie for submitting it to *cattails*.*

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

midday shower
a cow's hoofprint quenches
the dove's thirst

Barnabas Adeleke

West Africa

Yet another well-written haiku by this West African author, Barnabas Adeleke who has such a gift for presenting his moments in uncommon ways. Firstly, we see, hear, and feel the "midday shower" in line one. Line 2 and 3 give us the uncommon part of this haiku as we not only see the cow's hoofprint, but we realize that there's a dove drinking from the indent it has made. Excellent work.

—UHTS cattails principal editor an'ya, USA

the space
between finger and ring—
spring breeze

Ruth Holzer

USA

Now speaking of unique moments, is this EC haiku by a well known author, Ruth Holzer from the USA. Feeling that "spring breeze" flow through "the space between finger and ring", strikes me as a super-sensitive presentation. This is from an experienced haijin who obviously is deeply rooted in the little nuances of nature.

—UHTS cattails principal editor an'ya, USA

now and again
around the trunk a flash
of woodpecker

Marianne Paul

Canada

A simple and realistic EC haiku moment by Marianne Paul from Canada that depicts a scene many of us have seen at one time or another, however this author has written it down for us. Upon reading Marianne's haiku, I found myself actually "waiting" to see that woodpecker come around that trunk again; a write that lingers in the mind long after reading it.

—UHTS cattails principal editor an'ya, USA

circling a field
the graceful wingbeats
of vultures

Sandi Pray

USA

This Editor's Choice haiku by Sandi Pray from the USA, contains a concept that I personally believe in as a person, a poet, and an editor . . . that poetry is "beauty of thought" When we hear the phrase "vultures circling a field", we immediately think of the reason they are circling . . . something has died. However there is so much more in this haiku . . . there is grace in the vultures' wingbeats, and I appreciate that this author has written about the beauty instead of death.

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

October morning
each rock holds the river
back a little

Agnes Eva Savich

USA

Here is an Editor's Choice haiku composed by Agnes Eva Savich from the USA, that gives the reader great visuals of every rock in the river, and it's purpose, ecologically speaking. Many of us are rock hounds and suiseki (a sculptural art form) is especially popular in Japan. Serious collectors and those who respect nature take many rocks home, but return the rest in order to keep the flow of the river as it should be.

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

mountain night
the headlights carve
a sky road

山夜车灯照
天路却雕通

David He

China

In this EC haiku by David He from China, the visuals speak for themselves. Mountain haiku are tricky to get right, but David has done it in this one. Incorporating anything modern into an ancient form is also tricky, but he has skillfully combined the headlights of a vehicle and a highway with the night sky and leaves us with that image, which at the end is what we remember of this author's haiku.

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

sudden storm
leaving the castle ruins
on the beach

*nagły sztorm
zostawia ruiny zamku
na plaży*

*Irena Iris Szewczyk
Poland*

This Editor's choice haiku by Irena Iris Szewczyk is something I personally have seen many times before having grown up in a beach community. I love the way Irena has given the sand castle a concrete structure without personification. It's also metaphorical insofar as how easily and quickly our own lives can crumble if we are unaware of a "sudden storm". The moment continues as perhaps we can all rebuild the castles in our lives.

—UHTS cattails principal editor an'ya, USA

cattails

May 2016

Haibun

Haibun Introduction

For your convenience, we have created an introduction page to Haibun 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.

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

REMINDER: Please send any/all haibun submissions (within the "body" of an email), with the Subject heading of HAIBUN in all caps. You can submit haibun to Sonam at: submittocattails+HAIBUN@gmail.com during the "open for submissions periods of:

cattails - May 2016

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January 17th

Angelee Deodhar

India

Almost five years today, we celebrated our last wedding anniversary, the 30th. It was I who blew out the single candle. You were too weak from chemo to do much except take a small bite of the cake. The card and flowers you asked the children to get me were the last I received from you. Four months later you were gone.

Each anniversary we would plant a sapling. Our leafless ginkgo tree now has tight pink-tipped buds. As I write, I stroke its gold-green leaves pressed in my diary. A Luna moth* strums gently on the screen door.
night vigil—
patterned on the floor
broken wings

**Luna moths represent rebirth, renewal of body and spirit, regeneration and may even symbolize the soul itself. Luna moths are beautiful in appearance and have docile personalities. Their physical beauty and charm make these large moths symbols of reflection, nourishment and life.*

Soon to be

Thomas Chockley
USA

new snow
a shimmer of moonlight
on the roof

Her hair stray wisps curling in Einstein locks, fingers not quite thin, words bright laughter, smile not yet clever. Her eyes 13 candle flames.

Years of Silence

Chen-ou Liu
Canada

a new moon—
mother's letter heavy
with voices from the past

In the bottom drawer of the desk, there is my childhood photo with tanned brown edges. I am five or six years old, clinging to mother's left leg. She leans towards the front door with two suitcases in hand. I don't remember who took the photo. I don't want to remember.

Witching Hour **EC**

Marilyn Humbert

Australia

It is a still, clear mid-summer night. The wind hides behind the jagged teeth of the escarpment. Intoxicating wattle scent hangs about the campsite. Nocturnal creatures rustle with curiosity. Wombats nose through dry grass, echidnas snuffle and roos scratch leaf litter for green shoots and wait with *bunyip** and *mimis*** for the gathering. The temperature drops as night wears on and the moon rides to its highest point. Ghost gum shadows stretch longer and longer near the billabong in the forest clearing.

dingoes bay
through black glass
shards of stars

outback night
*Wongan**** dancing
in the spotlight

**bunyip: Aboriginal mythical creature*

***mimis: fairies from aboriginal folk lore*

****Wongan (singular and plural): Aboriginal ancestor spirits from the Dreamtime*

A Perfect Night

Thomas James Martin

USA

We were all set to go camping that weekend but for various reasons, I forgot the tent pegs, which we discovered only after we started into the mountains. With much quarreling, we continued driving but all the campsites were full.

moon shadows
lengthening mountain road
into the night

Finally, we discovered a primitive site on the Metolius River that was perfect! No need to pitch the tent. We lay under the stars that warm night.

summer night
the stars and crickets
sing us to sleep

An acorn for me

Bill Gottlieb

USA

A little girl falls from the sky in a twisting spin, squeals, squeals where you once sat, swinging slowly, smiling nicely, talking to me about the time you tried to fly away, a small body abound in October under a robust oak, your big friend whispering you high to his sphere, you, soaring, falling, falling like a spill of glee in the thrilling air.

Do you like the swing? I shout out the window, like a barker for the pleasures of our yard—my yard—happy to see her happy, a new animal romping in autumn. Yes, she yells.

I remember a day you felt oppressed, hopeless, cancer spreading like yellow among the green, and we took a slow walk around the block in the early evening—when a friend's little girl, playing outside, saw you and asked her mom if you could have one of her paintings, a fervent purple outline of a heart with a green handprint in it. You felt mysteriously loved, eased, relieved; an abiding large guardian had breathed on the scene, and you could breathe. Green and purple is my new color scheme, you told me, smiling like a child.

She skips down the slope to the porch, to the door. I open it for her. She offers me an acorn—her found art, a prodigious teardrop in a tiny cup. I hold it in my hand, which the heart sustains, which can grasp an eager season and let go.

that acorn woodpecker acts like he owns
my
birdfeeder

Imprint of Love **EC**

Susan Beall Summers

USA

I remove my wedding ring to lotion hands, which suddenly feel and look so crepey. When did this happen? Distracted, I leave it behind. Like a tongue worrying the hole left by a lost tooth, my thumb reaches for the missing jewelry.

I'm left with a cheater's mark—that telltale indentation that comes from wearing a band through weight gain, pregnancy puffiness, and now aging skin. It's like the imprint of a wire that's grown into a tree trunk. The tree keeps growing around it. A larger diamond soon replaces the one of my sworn vows.

rings of an oak
the summer we carved
our initials

Cape Fear

Thomas James Martin

USA

I did not have much of a thing with mosquitoes. That is until one summer when we visited a famous plantation home on the Cape Fear River near Wilmington, North Carolina. We were especially excited to view Orton Plantation's extensive flower gardens.

But, even though we had used repellent, as soon as we all climbed out of the car we were attacked by black clouds of the insects. We ran back to the car with my young nephew crying and screaming, "We're not going to ever come back here, are we?" And, yes, we never returned again!

shorebirds
sunglow off
Cape Fear

The Grass Nest Maker

Giselle Maya

France

A great lady, the Tiger Cat, Anise, had fine manners and sharp intelligence. During the canicule 'dog days' in Provence, she went to the uncultivated land, where the grass is never cut and is full of wild flowers. She carefully chose a spot. What criteria she used I do not know. At first I saw her flatten out the spot by walking in circles, then, with her body movements, slowly she wove a nest for herself. It was in full shade. When it was all done she curled up inside in a turban-like shape and took a nap. She stayed there until the evening when the heat abated, then she came out to stretch, take a drink of water from the spring and then it was time for a hunt. Moles, mice and insects were abundant.

The summer abode created in this ingenious manner from grass was made in different locations on my land, always distant from where people might pass. It also served as an observation point, a lookout for creatures and other cats that might approach.

so far

this summer moon

a small voice calls me

PUB SPRITE

Dr Brijesh Raj

India

It is a special occasion, my fortieth, and I'll be darned if I spend it turning in early after yet another episode of (Dr) House. Instead I sit under the pub's dim lights listening to its shadowy disc jockey and two-piece band. Gradually, the senses numb and inner bowstrings loosen. I stare into my sangria and lose myself to the percussion beats seamlessly woven into the DJ's retro. The girl drummer's attention alternates between projecting funny clips on a patch of the pub ceiling, drumming and staring into her lead drummer's eyes. I can almost feel Cupid's needle-sharp tooth marks on her neck. Drummer boy smiles back, climbs atop a floor speaker and does some clever stuff waving his curls about. He is very good. For just one moment I wish I were him.

All around me there are flashes of white and bronze. Women in short somethings moving to the heartbeat of the high hat cymbals. Marionette-men in black with gym toned bodies. I sight a fair Mona Liza, watching motionless from atop a barstool. She hasn't spoken all evening to her cell phone-addicted escort. My gaze moves on to the head banger with the Navajo hairdo and pinpoint pupils, and to the too-old-too-soon blouse and skirt shaking a tired leg on the floor. Both trying to catch somebody's eye. I watch through a red haze, the bittersweet moods of yuppies and the carefully hidden anxieties of dancing teen-waifs. Are they my own reflections?

fault lines—
her love traced
across my brow

First full moon of spring

Jesus Chameleon

USA

First full moon of spring in the tropical sky is a spectacular sight. Clouds shaped like a star ship appear to land. I wonder what if this full moon was flaming red hot with magma-like molten rocks and volatile gases flowing from a volcano. The image dazzles and inspires.

strawberry popcorn—
red kernels form
the shape of a heart

December 14, 2012 EC

Frank J. Tassone

USA

It's 9:30 in the morning. I take a knee to answer Day Shawn's question. My co-teacher finishes her lecture about women reformers. Felicia arrives late and settles into her seat up front. Meanwhile, a gunman shatters the window of a first-grade classroom, enters, and opens fire.

morning chill
blood splattered on
picture books

Noon. Each surviving child holds the shoulder of the child in front. Their eyes are closed, even outside. All my department colleagues and I can do is stare at the live feed. Verna alone has the decency to cry.

cloudless sky
sneakers stepping beside
unseen bodies

"Almost 5:00. I come empty-handed to Dad's grave." Weekend traffic builds on the adjoining I-287. An elderly man wearing an American Legion jacket stares at a headstone decorated by a single wreath. I kneel and touch the salmon-colored granite. Feel the imprint of his name. The sun shines from just above the tree line. I have already seen too much death today. But here I am, remembering one more.

murder of crows
a final flight over
the bare Maples

Passing through

Hazel Hall

Australia

In the wall of our third floor hotel bathroom is an oblong hole a little smaller than a shoe box. Through it cold air blows over our ablutions. A pigeon has set up house on a ledge outside the bedroom.

Sometimes we hear strange rustlings and scratchings. Now and then she flutters into the bathroom to drink from one of the receptacles. We wonder whether to plug up the hole with a cushion from the rooftop garden, but never do. After all, we're just passing through. She'll be there long after we leave Delhi to fly back to Oz.

air con box . . .

the nest of fledglings

think it's spring

If Las Vegas Billboards Could Talk . . .

Gabriel Patterson

USA

Donnie and Marie Osmond, who fittingly share the facade of the Flamingo casino, would probably advise you to switch out the egg shell-colored lanyard of your oversized slushy drink for a brighter neon tone to better coordinate with your outfit. Meanwhile Carrot Top, who laughingly absorbs the billboard hovering above the Luxor pool, would work bottles of suntan lotion into his renowned prop routine to perform a hilarious public service announcement warning you from the deadly rays emanating from desert sun. Next, a giant yellow arrow would point you to an In-N-Out hamburger stand, because they proudly employ the most amazing teenagers in America, who will recite back your order complete with secret menu items, substitutions and a shake—all from memory—in one long-winded breath.

from the cancer walk
to breast augmentation—
digital billboard

BESIDE THE LAKE

Anna Cates

USA

As a child, I was once given the chore of drowning sickly kittens. As instructed, I placed them in a burlap bag weighted by a rock. I carried the bag up the hill, kittens mewling and squirming in their unwanted confinement, all the way to the forest—then on through the trees to the shore of China Lake. I threw the bag into the water then watched the air bubbles surface then die as I stood by the sad, moon-tossed waves.

evergreen scents
smoothed by the waves
a cat skull

A Game of Catch

Dave Read

Canada

A little boy played alone in the park. He was tossing a ball over the swing set and trying to catch it on other side. This was no small task. The boy was slow, and nervous about running into a swing. After several missed attempts, he nearly made a catch. Although the ball bounced out of his hand, the boy smiled. "Next time," he vowed snatching it from the grass.

high noon
he tucks away
his shadows

Starry, Starry Night

Marietta Jane McGregor

Australia

Night falls and candles flicker, chasing soot shadows over cooling stone. Under the shade of the pale-green plane trees, cafés colonize the squares, their tables crammed with people, paella and wine. Bottles of pastis circulate. I slosh anise over ice and sip its pearly opalescence, murmuring à votre santé as I clink glasses ith a stranger.

day lost in moth hours twinned stars

The Café Terrace on the Place du Forum, immortalized by Van Gogh in cadmium yellow and indigo, pumps with dancers day and night, its bare boards juddering to loud pop music. When he painted The Night Café, Vincent told his brother Theo he ‘tried to express the idea that the café is a place where one can ruin oneself, go mad, or commit a crime’. My fingers tighten on the stem of a goblet of vin rouge. Vincent, you tortured, wonderful fool, so easy to go crazy here.

faintly from a tomb the scent of irises

The Marathon

Co-Authored/Prepared by:

Đurđa Vukelić-Rožić, Croatia

Beth McFarland, Germany

We're on a trip through the villages of the Moslavina Mountain towards a natural spring where we can collect water for free. I am astonished by the images I see from the car. People are having their afternoon coffee in flowering yards and blooming orchards. Hens are following a young woman with laundry in a pink basket towards the clothes line; a toddler and a dog tag along too. A cat is sunbathing on the fence pole and children are trying their endurance on their bikes and rollerblades on an empty road under the watchful eye of an old man. The school bus is returning pupils from the school; two grandpas stand talking at the gates, waiting for the children with such broad smiles. An old woman is picking lettuce in her garden, wearing a glistening white apron, letting the world and all its satellites in space know how proudly she cooks for her family.

This beautiful hilly area was the bottom of the Pannonia Sea millions of years ago. I know that for certain for, when I was about eight years old, my father dug a draw well in our yard in a town nearby, and in the soil taken up to the surface, I found seashells. My biology professor talked to the whole class for an hour about those shells of mine. You don't forget things like that.

At the end of the village, behind several curves and a hill or two, we arrive at the spring. Close to the source, I take a short walk while my husband fetches some water. Lying on the forest road there are thousands of catkins. My first reaction is not to step on them, but to read their shapes and save them; so I photograph them. In an instance, a whole new alphabet spreads out in front of me.

seeds and shells—
nature rearranges
her alphabet

Trepidation

Gabriel Patterson

USA

Exiting the freeway into North Las Vegas, the shade created by the bridge provides refuge from the still blazing rush hour sun. Idling behind a red arrow, the underpinnings reveal four aligned pillars, all of which display the warning, "State Property, No Trespassing," spray-painted in black stencil font. Flowing down from the freeway is a fanciful design of virgin white and red lava rocks. A man appears from behind one of the pillars and begins separating the rocks with his feet. Red dust rises from his kicks.

panhandling
eyes locked on anything
but his cardboard

INDIAN SUMMER

Adelaide B. Shaw

USA

There is a lot of country in the country. Meadows and farms. vineyards and orchards. My head swivels. Left, right. Up the brightly colored hills and down the roads. In the car's wake, leaves swirl. Ponds and lakes offer up clear reflections. A mélange of colors and odors—manure, hay, wood smoke. Today is different from yesterday, as tomorrow will be different from today.

news of her death

colors drain

from the tree

Editor's Choice Haibun

When faced with the task of converting his numerous “dog-eared and closely written notebooks” into a book, Patrick Leigh Fermor, the British grand master of travelogue, said, ‘All of Greece is absorbing and rewarding...’ My problem too is how to wrest into a few words, the haibun I have chosen to represent the “absorbing and rewarding” submissions in this issue?

—UHTS *cattails* Haibun Editor Sonam Chhoki, Bhutan

Witching Hour

Marilyn Humbert

Australia

It is a still, clear mid-summer night. The wind hides behind the jagged teeth of the escarpment. Intoxicating wattle scent hangs about the campsite. Nocturnal creatures rustle with curiosity. Wombats nose through dry grass, echidnas snuffle and roos scratch leaf litter for green shoots and wait with *bunyip** and *mimis*** for the gathering. The temperature drops as night wears on and the moon rides to its highest point. Ghost gum shadows stretch longer and longer near the billabong in the forest clearing.

dingoes bay
through black glass
shards of stars

outback night
*Wongan**** dancing
in the spotlight

**bunyip*: Aboriginal mythical creature

***mimis*: fairies from aboriginal folk lore

****Wongan* (singular and plural): Aboriginal ancestor spirits from the Dreamtime

Marilyn Humbert's haibun presents us a veritable feast of the senses: the sound of the “nocturnal creatures”, the scent of wattle blooms and the play of light and shadow in the forest. She creates a magical landscape interwoven with aboriginal myths and traditions. It imparts a sense of sacredness of the place, which was particularly resonant for me because in Bhutanese local traditions too, the land is imbued with sacred presence, both benevolent and terrifying. The two capping haiku enhance the wild and sacred power of the landscape.

—UHTS *cattails* Haibun Editor Sonam Chhoki, Bhutan

Imprint of Love

Susan Beall Summers

USA

I remove my wedding ring to lotion hands, which suddenly feel and look so crepey. When did this happen? Distracted, I leave it behind. Like a tongue worrying the hole left by a lost tooth, my thumb reaches for the missing jewelry. I'm left with a cheater's mark—that telltale indentation that comes from wearing a band through weight gain, pregnancy puffiness, and now aging skin. It's like the imprint of a wire that's grown into a tree trunk. The tree keeps growing around it. A larger diamond soon replaces the one of my sworn vows.

rings of an oak
the summer we carved
our initials

This haibun by Susan Beall Summers is a reflection on love and possession. It is about traces left by things no longer there. The understated language underlines the poignancy of the piece. The rings of the oak in the haiku are an analogy of the wedding ring and works well as a metaphor of the poet's sense of loss.
—UHTS *cattails* Haibun Editor Sonam Chhoki, Bhutan

December 14, 2012

Frank J. Tassone

USA

It's 9:30 in the morning. I take a knee to answer Day Shawn's question. My co-teacher finishes her lecture about women reformers. Felicia arrives late and settles into her seat up front. Meanwhile, a gunman shatters the window of a first-grade classroom, enters, and opens fire.

morning chill
blood splattered on
picture books

Noon. Each surviving child holds the shoulder of the child in front. Their eyes are closed, even outside. All my department colleagues and I can do is stare at the live feed. Verna alone has the decency to cry.

cloudless sky
sneakers stepping beside
unseen bodies

Almost 5:00. I come empty-handed to Dad's grave at four in the afternoon. Weekend traffic builds on the adjoining I-287. An elderly man wearing an American Legion jacket stares at a headstone decorated by a single wreath. I kneel and touch the salmon-colored granite. Feel the imprint of his name. The sun shines from just above the tree line. I have already seen too much death today. But here I am, remembering one more.

murder of crows
a final flight over
the bare Maples

Finally, Frank J. Tassone's powerful haibun is about how commonplace and immediate images of death have become. The writer, a teacher, going through everyday tasks is confronted with the "live feed" mass shooting of children. This triggers a thread of association with the death of his own his father and is echoed in the ex-serviceman he sees at the cemetery. The first two haiku accent the poet's thoughts on the horror and violence of death and the final haiku is almost like a mirror of the unspeakable assault on our hopes and sense of security and continuity.

—UHTS *cattails* Haibun Editor Sonam Chhoki, Bhutan

cattails

May 2016

Haiga and Tankart

Haiga and Tankart Introduction

For your convenience, we have created introduction pages to HAIGA/TANKART 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.

We encourage you to send a translation of your HAIGA/TANKART in "your" native language.

SUBMISSIONS: Haiga, and/or Tankart (or photographs) should be sent "ONLY" in .JPG .GIF or .PNG format, and "ONLY" as an attachment!, Do NOT send .JPG/.PNG/GIF files in the "body" of an email ! (Do not send .PDF files or anything snail mail). Do not send work in smaller than 400 pixels W x 400 pixels H in size, OR, larger than (950 pixels WIDE x 650 pixels), 350 dpi is the (MINIMUM QUALITY); for both black and white or color.

Your imbedded English **OR** Native Language Haiku or Tanka verse should be embedded ("not" separated),"in" the Haiga Tankart artwork, with an English translation version sent separately. The font style must be "simple" -"easily and swiftly readable" (please refrain from overly fancy, unreadable tiny font styles and sizes) use a minimum of a #12 font size in a color that does not blend in with the artwork,

both, the artwork and the poetry must be identified as to its creator, and country of origin. You are encouraged to also send a Native language printable version in the email, along with your Artwork. (You must have permission to use any artwork from the artwork creator !)

REMINDER: Please send any/all HAIGA/TANKART submissions (as an attachment), to Managing Haiga/Tankart Editor: an'ya, USA
submittocattails+HAIGA/TANKART@gmail.com with the subject heading: HAIGA/TANKART

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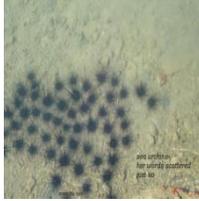
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Publication Target Date: September 15.

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

Haiku: *Kevin Valentine, USA*
 Photo: *Steve Valentine, USA*



Sreelatha Nair, India



Lavana Kray, Romania



Shrikaanth Krishnamurthy, United Kingdom



Mary Kendall, USA



Mary Kendall, USA



Haiku: *Wieslaw Karlinski, Poland* Photo: *Sajotha Karunaratne, Australia*
 Art: *Jaroslaw Modzelewski, Poland*



Haiku: *Samantha Sirimanne Hyde, Australia*



Maria Tomczak, Poland



the boat is waiting—
 one obol is the price
 of a single ticket

Kevin Valentine, USA EC



John Hawkhead, United Kingdom



Haiku: *Valentina Randal-Adams, USA*
 Photo: *A.D. Adams, USA*



Shrikaanth Krishnamurthy, United Kingdom



David Kelly, Ireland



Steliana Voicu, Romania



spunând rămas bun— *
în urma lui ploaia
ruinând tradafirii
*in memoriam of my uncle,
Costel Dumitrescu

an'ya, USA



Gergana Yaninska, Bulgaria



Haiku: Ken Sawitri, Indonesia
Art: Jimat Achmadi, Indonesia



Marianne Paul, Canada



Debbie Strange, Canada



Adelaide B. Shaw, USA



Božidar Škobić, Bosnia-Herzegovina



a winter day
New Year's fireworks
under the clouds

zimski dan
novogodišnji vatromet
pod oblacima

Cynthia Rowe, Australia



Azi Kuder, Poland



Sreelatha Nair, India



Marianne Paul, Canada



Đurđa Vukelić-Rožić, Croatia



David Kelly, Ireland



Haiku: Radka Mindova, Bulgaria
Art: Daniela Targova, Bulgaria



cattails - May 2016

Haiku: Nika, Canada

Photo: Jim McKinniss, USA

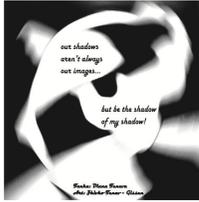


Debbie Strange, Canada



Haiku: Diana Teneva, Bulgaria

Art: Zhivko Tenev-Gissen, Bulgaria



Đurđa Vukelić-Rožić, Croatia



Haiku: Jesus Chameleon, USA

Art: Pablo SanBlaz, Spain



Haiku: Gabriel Sawicki, Poland

Art: Nayane, Poland







*sea urchins-
her words scattered
just so*

sreelatha nair

no more storms –
I christen the remaining boat
with my own name



Lavana Kray

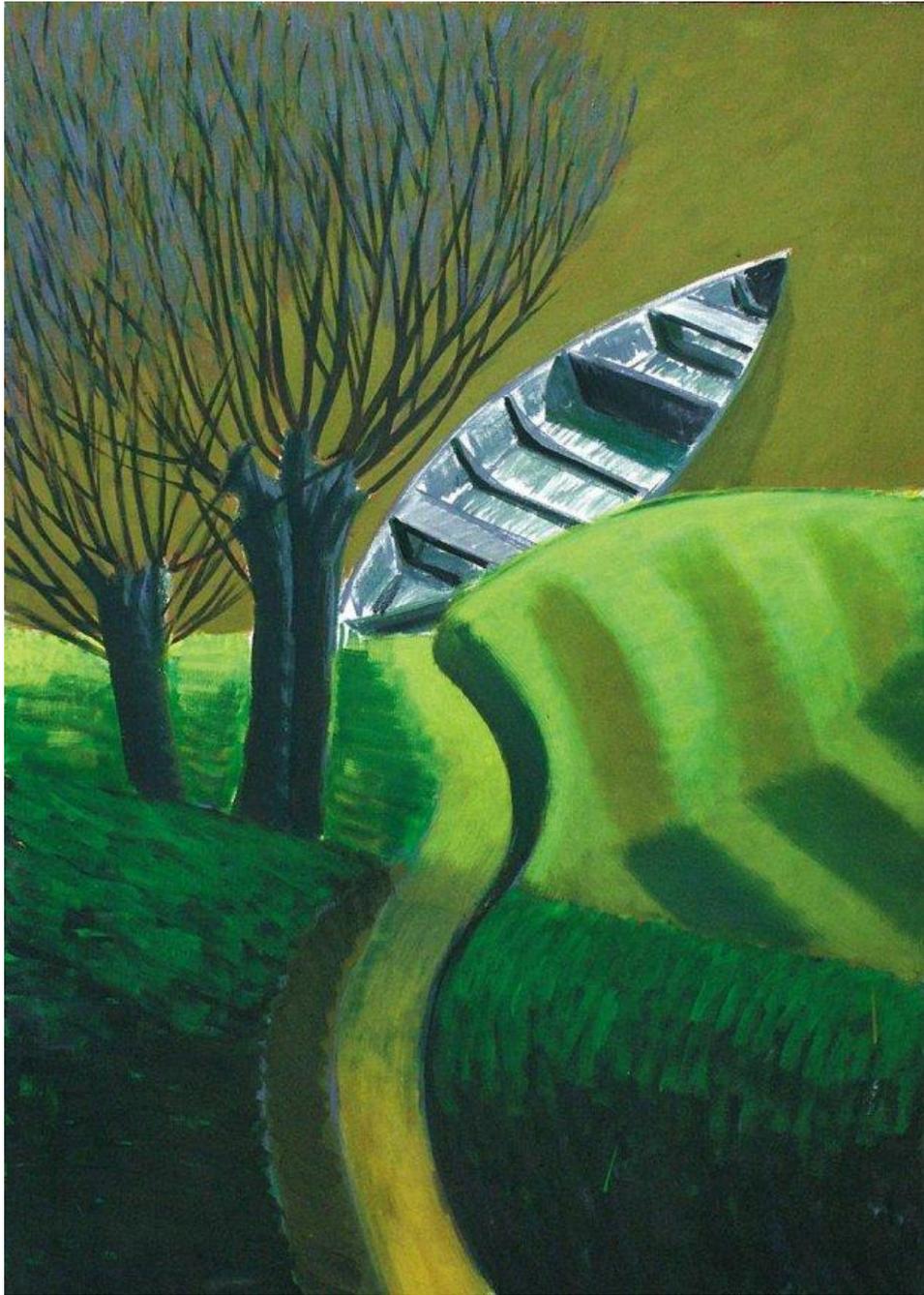


shrikaanth

Easter parade...
my baby's hat brimming
with Spring kigo



Mary Kendall



the boat is waiting—
one obol is the price
of a single ticket

*silver morning -
the difficulty
in letting go*



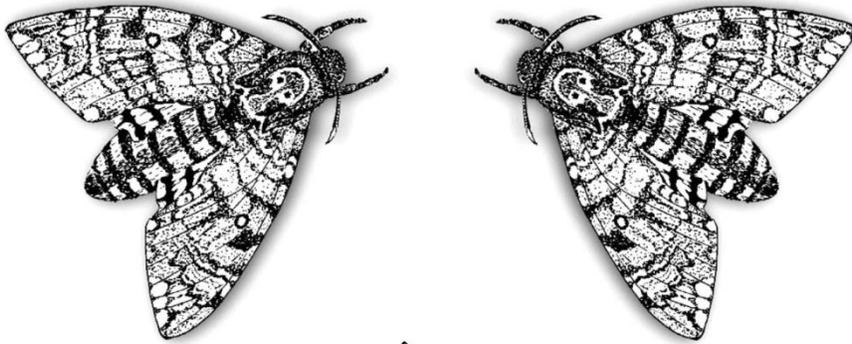
ssh

photo: Sajotha Karunaratne

winter draughts



through grandmother's house



rustling paper



nightingale--

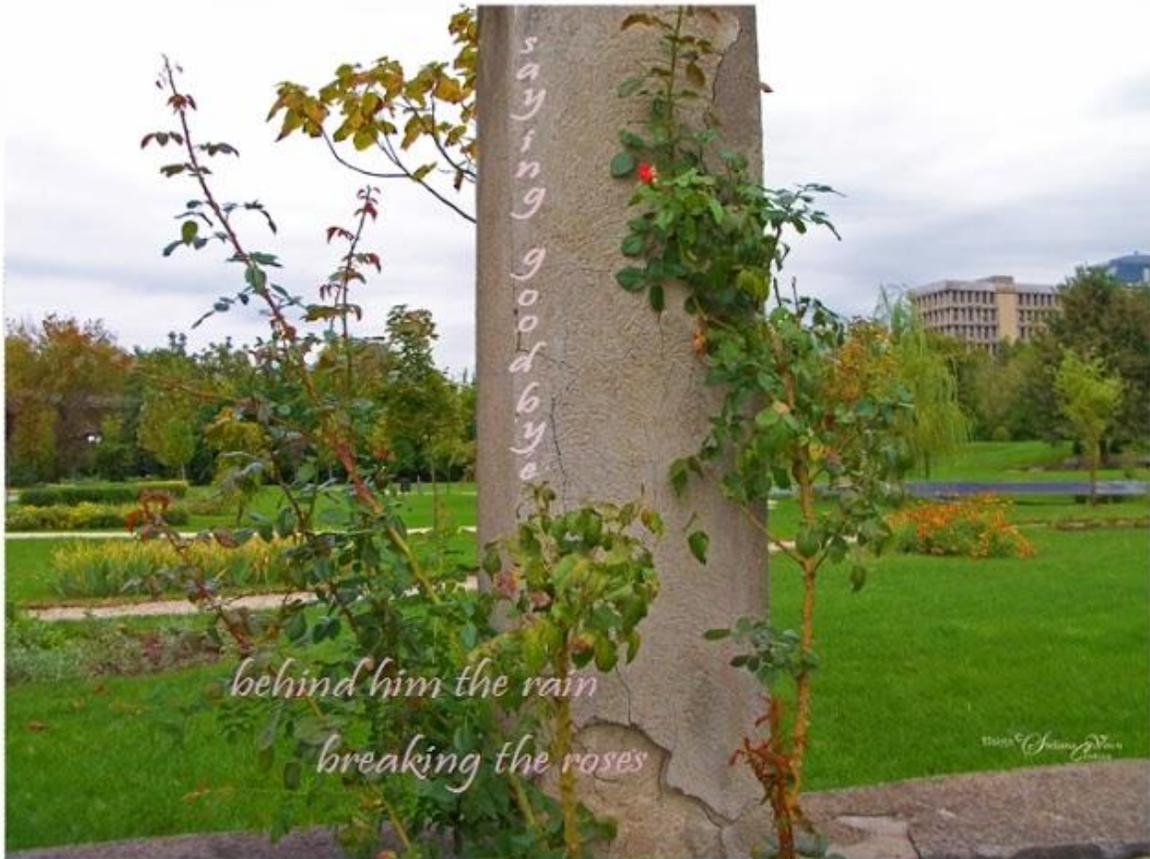
a sprinkle

in each note



Kevin Valentine



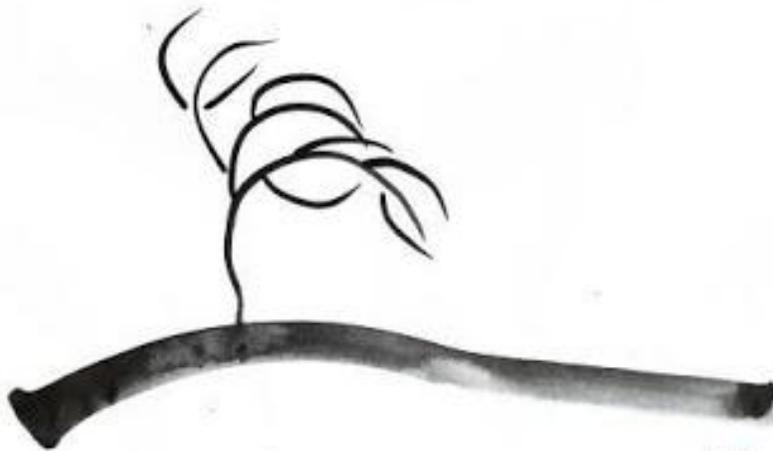




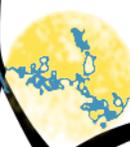
rip current—
just a few steps
before light

shrikaanth

*heat from the oven
in grandma's hair
the smell of bread*



between



waiting for you
to come up the garden path
this spring evening
even torrid rain cannot
quench my anticipation



between waiting
and watching the garden path
this perfection
even spring blossoms cannot
compare to burgeoning love



watching you go
slowly down the garden path
this spring dawnlight
even blushing sun cannot
take away my loneliness

an'ya









Adelaide B. Shaw

will I ever know them
the nooks and crannies
of your life?



light breeze
the desire of my skin
for touch

martina pau



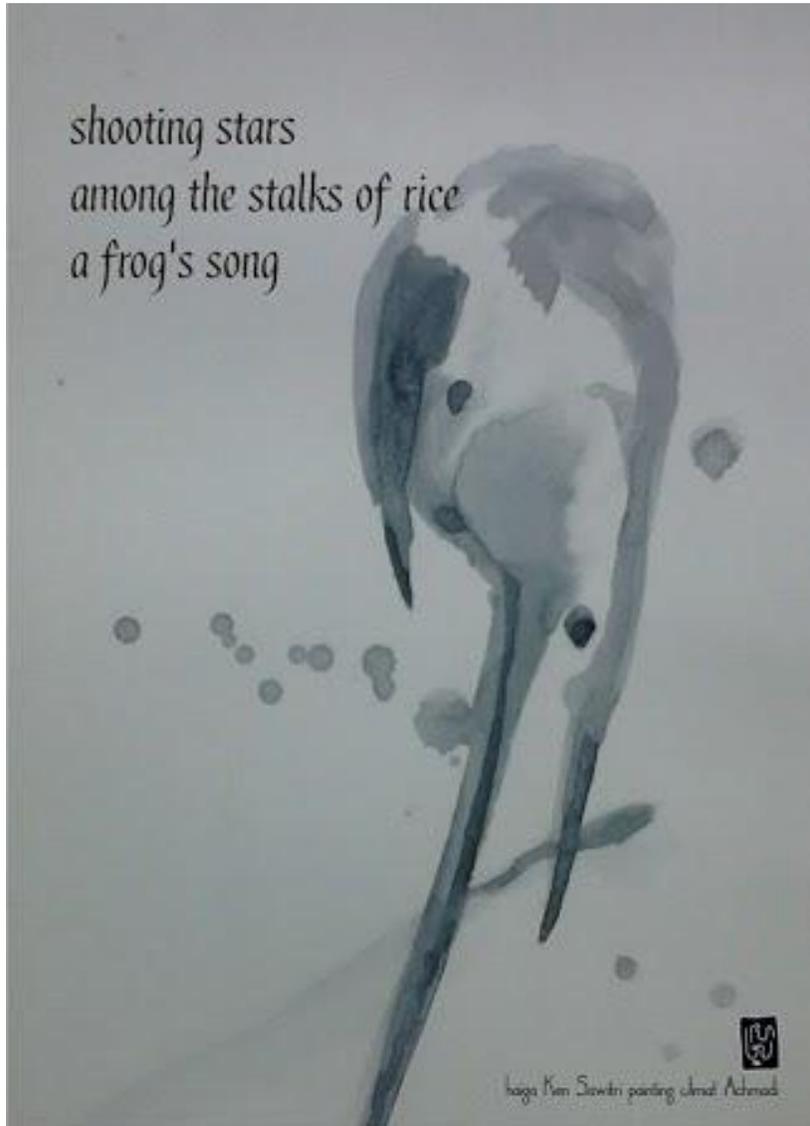


*a winter day
New Year's fireworks
under the clouds*

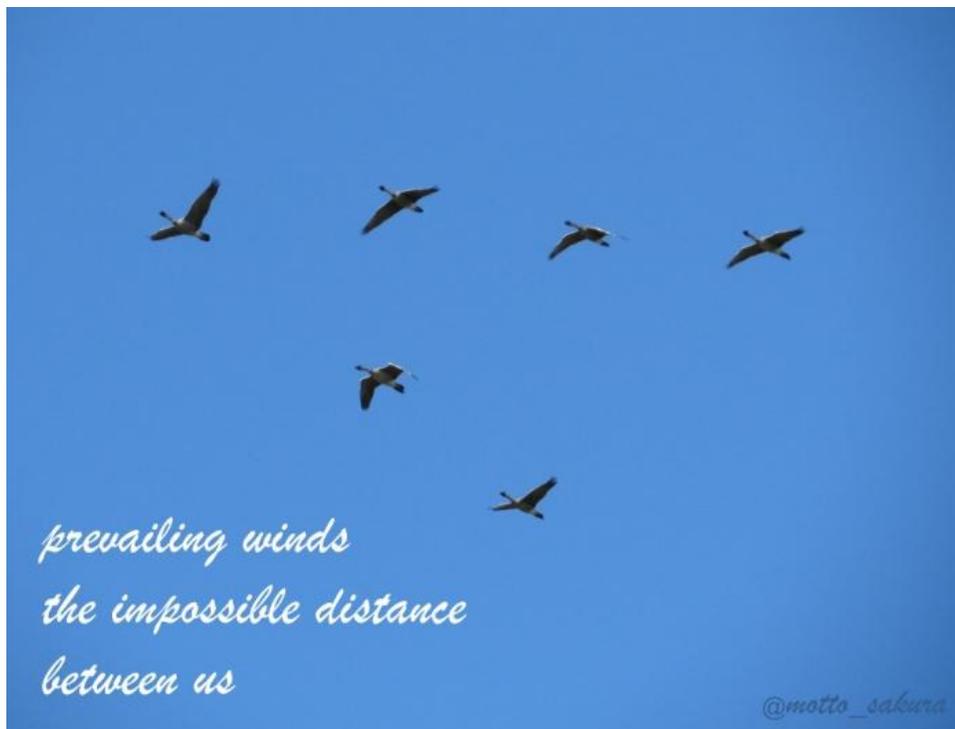
Haiku and photo by Božidar Škobić

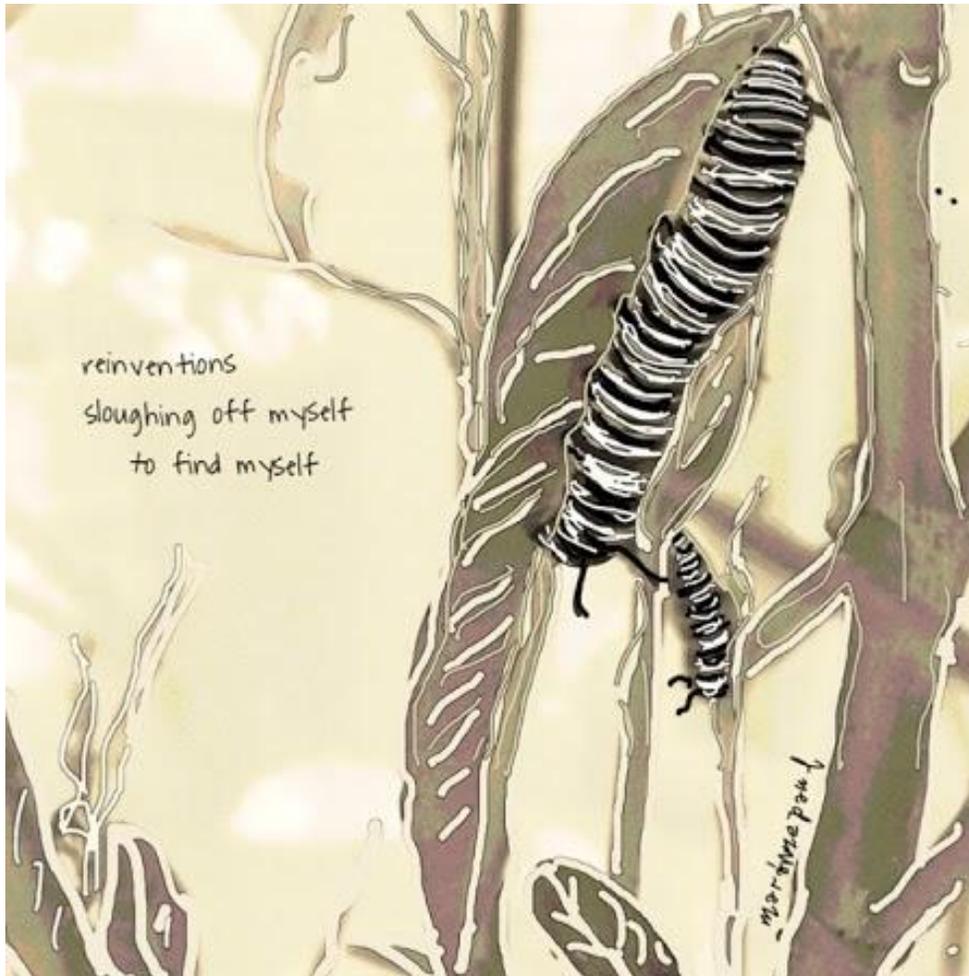


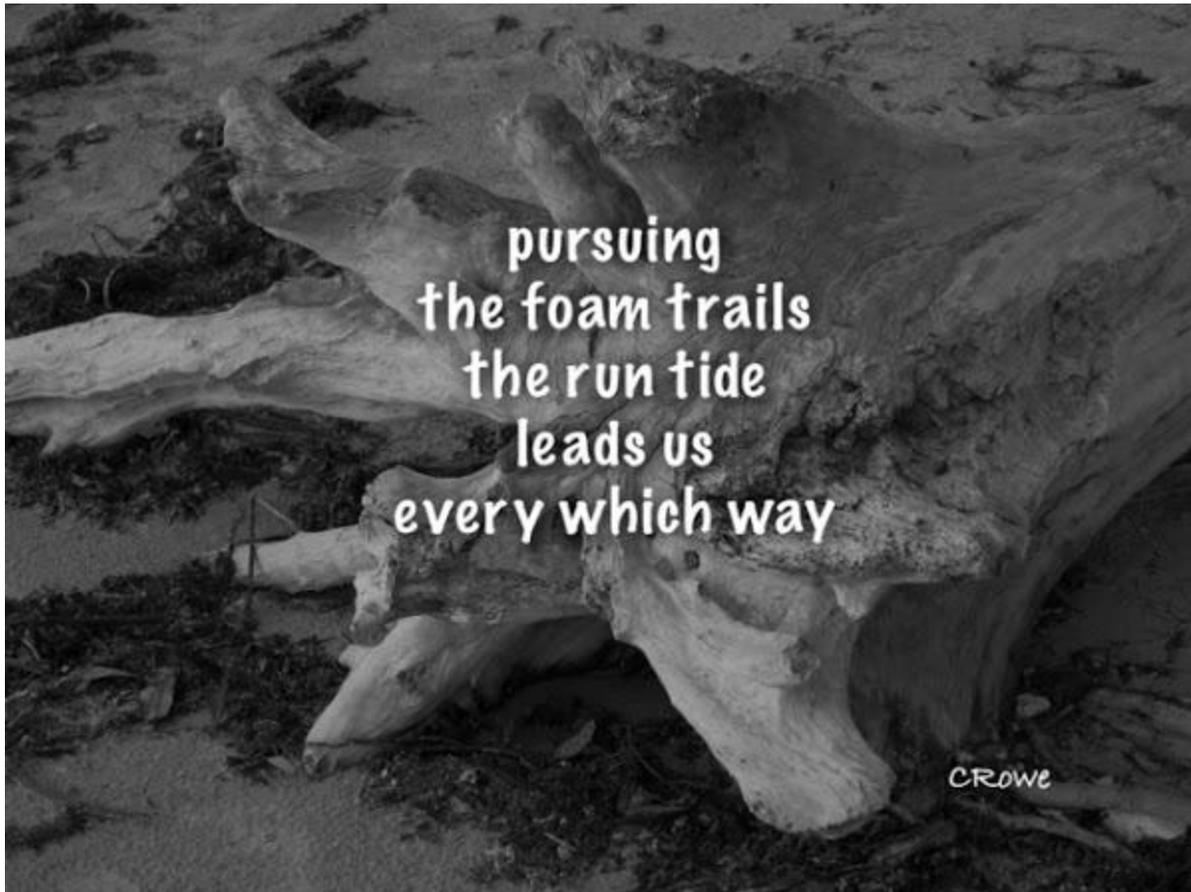
shooting stars
among the stalks of rice
a frog's song



haga Kim Siewiti painting ulmat Achmad









old letters -
the same even handwriting
year after year

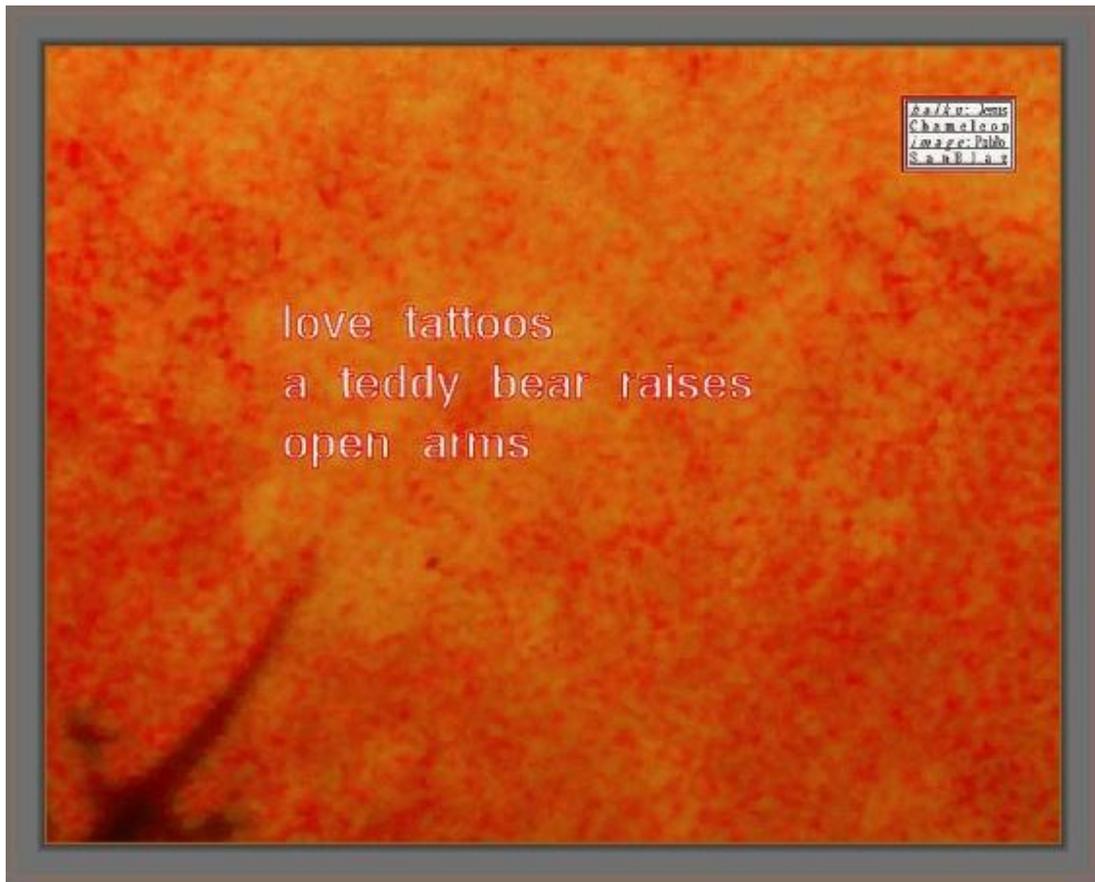
haiga: Radka Míndova photo: Daniela Targova

*the long wait
between trains -
plum blossom*



*photo by Jim McKinniss
haiku by Nika*









gabriel sawicki

there are times
when I don't know much
about girls-
what do they mean
those sparks in your eyes?



artwork by Nayane

cattails

May 2016

Senryu

Senryu Introduction

For your convenience, we have created an introduction page to senryu 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...

We encourage you to send a translation of your senryu in "your" native language.

REMINDER: Please send any/all senryu submissions (within the "body" of an email), with the Subject heading of SENRYU in all caps. You can submit senryu to Shrikraanth at: submittocattails+SENRYU@gmail.com during the "open for submissions" periods of:

January Edition Opens October 15 to the Deadline: Midnight GMT December 15 . . .

Publication Target Date: January 15.

cattails - May 2016

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Publication Target Date: September 15.

clouds scud
past the super moon
...our tiff forgotten

Cynthia Rowe
Australia

the vastness of dusk...
dawn seems
light years away

Jesus Chameleon
USA

checking my watch
I clip the two grey hairs
from my beard

Chris Gusek
USA

stage casting
an obituarist steps
into a coffin

Chen-ou Liu
Canada

setting sun
light dims over the years
yet my wrinkles glow

Celestine Nudanu
Ghana

another grey day
only raindrops
ride the carousel

Rachel Sutcliffe
United Kingdom

death poem
putting it in my will
to be sure it's read

Adelaide B. Shaw
USA

Little League
sparrows cast shadows
in the outfield

Barbara Tate
USA

squatters' rights
fox squirrels spiral up
a winter tree

Thomas Chockley
USA

the old jalopy
lapped again
dragonfly

Johnny Baranski
USA

slow morning
keeping its own time
dripping faucet

Bernard Gieske
USA

the Queen of the Blues*
was rushed to the hospital
more sad songs to come

David Flynn
USA

**Marion James, the American Queen of the blues
singer and songwriter died on 31st December 2015;
she was considered Nashville's "Queen of the Blues.*

transformation
outside the old grey prison
parked limousines

Barbara A. Taylor
Australia

two hours too late—
finally coming up with
the perfect retort

Angela Terry
USA

Monday morning
the baker's daughter hides
her black eye

Barbara A. Taylor
Australia

the holes she leaves
my mental monolog
at the grave

Thomas Chockley
USA

gay couple
in their closet
a skeleton

Chen-ou Liu
Canada

mindfulness
the art of treading
on thin ice

Rachel Sutcliffe
United Kingdom

standing on the cliff
the gentle pull of gravity
to be a bird

Bernard Gieske
USA

Valentine's Day...
chocolates shaped
as broken hearts

Jesus Chameleon
USA

another dark evening
all we can't say
in music

Perry L. Powell
USA

a can opener's whir
from someplace secret
the cat appears

Adelaide B. Shaw
USA

no hitter
the pitcher's cheek swollen
with bubblegum

Johnny Baranski
USA

the honk
of a magpie goose
...X-ray clear

Cynthia Rowe
Australia

front row seats
under an oak tree—
autumn ballet

Keitha Keyes
Australia

first day of school...
I cry louder
than my daughter

Vandana Parashar
India

I don't know
but I've been told...
that wild flower's name

Brad Bennett
USA

themed dinner—
we each come as our favorite
selfie on a stick

Angela Terry
USA

cattails - May 2016

the dog's bed
littered with tissue debris
sun-stream morning

Leonie Bingham
Australia

adjoining driveway
two widowers
nothing to say

Perry L. Powell
USA

winter solstice
cherries are still in bloom
in his schizophrenic mind

Gabriel Sawicki
Poland

contour map...
the mountain range
of your smile

David J. Kelly
Ireland

newborncolorsjustcolorscolorsnow

Thomas Chockley
USA

nothing to be done
says the doctor
in the dream

Ruth Holzer
USA

flint corn **EC**
how quickly
they forget

Michael Henry Lee
USA

flat light
on the lake—
Siri still trying to help

Angela Terry
USA

off season sale...
I spend four thousand
to save five hundred

Vandana Parashar
India

a heavy frost
the black and white of it
on the barbershop floor

Robert B. McNeill
USA

flashlight tag
by the dark pond—
the bullfrog's it

Brad Bennett
USA

talk-back radio...
cloudless sky woven
with contrails

Leonie Bingham
Australia

fallen angel cake
eating it contentedly
a fallen angel

David J. Kelly
Ireland

healthy dinner
my son tries the Matrix trick
with his spoon

Gabriel Sawicki
Poland

a tin of sardines—
their little heads all cut off
fortunately

Ruth Holzer
USA

diamond wedding
holding each other's hand
more tightly

Quendryth Young
Australia

teen sobs a bay oyster dripping mud

Bill Cooper
USA

airport farewell
the awkward silence
after the siblings hug

Madhuri Pillai
Australia

overweight
man's first day gym
sweating trainer

Ramesh Anand
India

electronic ballot
pressing harder
than I need to

Julie Warther
USA

Perseid showers
rock stars explode
on stage

Barbara Snow
USA

winter solstice
the glass begins
to fill again

Valentina Ranaldi-Adams
USA

hum of bees
the men's section
of the church choir

Kwaku Feni Adow
Ghana

roller derby
three ants rounding
an upturned acorn cap

Bill Cooper
USA

they fight to keep
minimum wage minimum—
I think of Basho's cormorants

Keith Woodruff
USA

decrecendo
the melody caught
in my head

Quendryth Young
Australia

first crocus...
where the snow angel
bled out

Robert B. McNeill
USA

on the move
asylum seekers in boats
on their mobiles

Keitha Keyes
Australia

sleepless night
caught between her snore
and my toothache

Adjei Agyei-Baah
Ghana

old diaries—
the faded handwriting
of strangers

Ruth Holzer
USA

raising the glass
to my father's lips...
glint of sunlight

Mark E. Brager
USA

mountain sunset...
the thesaurus
lets me down

Brad Bennett
USA

after divorce
I finger the cracks
in my tongue

Ramesh Anand
India

light rail commute
heavy cream written
on her cup

Lamart Cooper
USA

new gym instructor
he hides his shyness
with tattoos

Madhuri Pillai
Australia

Brontosaurus...
the half life
of my education

Julie Warther
USA

cattails - May 2016

house of mirrors
all the possible mes'
suddenly visible

Susan Burch
USA

white knuckles
and terrified screams
amusement park

Dottie Piet
USA

visiting rights
some silences are louder
than others

Debbie Strange
Canada

winter sun-
now across the street
this morning's beggar

heatwave hydroplaning on hot sand

Gabriel Patterson
USA

sound of a bodhran **EC**
on an empty pizza box
summer rain

Dottie Piet
USA

garden thief...
squirreling away
my ripe tomatoes

Mary Kendall
USA

her lily hand
I chose to greet
with my fingertips

Adjei Agyei-Baah
Ghana

museum shop
the toddler's action figure
in a Degas pose

Lamart Cooper
USA

Maundy Thursday
her hairdresser offers
a free pedicure

Julie Warther
USA

on fence posts
the exclamation marks
of raptors

Debbie Strange
Canada

breakaway—
a soccer mom
tailgates time

Gabriel Patterson
USA

last monsoon rain
my mailbox collapses
on its own

Rajandeep Garg
India

desert highway
stacks of native blankets
MADE IN CHINA

Mark E. Brager
USA

black pudding on brown bread—
two daughters of the house
harmonise a song

Maeve O'Sullivan
Ireland

mink
the Dalai Lama says you could be
wearing your mother

Robert Epstein
USA

sitting at the lights
—bronze dragonfly doesn't wait
for green

Duncan Richardson
Australia

free clinic at pet store...
by end of the line
everyone has fleas

Jill Lange
USA

sultry afternoon
clouds piled on clouds piled on clouds
unwashed dishes

Johnnie Johnson Hafernik
USA

The old cemetery—
on the tallest marker
a nest with blue eggs

Carol Purington
USA

late-night wine bar—
the unsold books
heavy on my shoulders

Maeve O'Sullivan
Ireland

how sociable **EC**
she becomes alongside
her oboe

Robert Epstein
USA

clifftop
Lifeline notice
leans on a fence

Duncan Richardson
Australia

chopping firewood
a shadow
where the axe falls

Mark E. Brager
USA

cold drink
at 3am
a shooting star

Agnes Eva Savich
USA

overgrown rail tracks...
no longer certain
which way to turn

Marietta Jane McGregor
Australia

field goal—
the deaf boy's arms
shout "yes!"

Theresa A. Cancro
USA

bird nest soup
the delicate flavor
of her company

Kevin Valentine
USA

so fine
behind the display glass
years of dust

Shrikanth Krishnamurthy
United Kingdom

sun motes...
our early morning
pillow talk

Theresa A. Cancro
USA

slowly, quietly
weaving around lily pads
in my canoe

Jill Lange
USA

a cold case
our hope lingers
ten winters

Debbie Strange
Canada

the russet red
of a pegged-out fox skin
his lasting regrets

Marietta Jane McGregor
Australia

so many lay-offs...
my future shapes up nicely
in the coffee grounds

Shrikaanth Krishnamurthy
United Kingdom

mountain chalet
fly on the window
higher than peaks

Duncan Richardson
Australia

drifting canoe **EC**
moonlit dogwoods make me forget
the star-filled sky

Kevin Valentine
USA

the curve
of his shoulder...
morning light

Agnes Eva Savich
USA

cemetery nearby—
running a limited special
BOGO*

**Buy one, get one free*

Mary Kendall
USA

March sunset
one poem closer
to my demise

Robert Epstein
USA

With the pennies
she offers me a shy smile
the young sales clerk

Carol Purington
USA

a majestic corpse—
the largest elephant
felled by poachers

Emily Jo Scalzo
USA

all day long
our neighbor's leaf blower...
the cicada from he**

Robert B. McNeill
USA

neighbor's crying baby—
I get up and make
a cup of warm milk

Keith Woodruff
USA

spirit of Tamir
waits still for equality
in Cleveland

Emily Jo Scalzo
USA

church pew **EC**
kneeling into
someone's fart

Susan Burch
USA

first cry...
I too am born
a mother

Agnes Eva Savich
USA

autumn chill
a creak of hangers
in the charity shop

Marietta Jane McGregor
Australia

a craggy moon
sits on the mountain—
seven-year-itch

Kevin Valentine
USA

chin hair—
a dandelion missed
by the mower

Theresa A. Cancro
USA

after the funeral...
the pointillism of moonlight
on your side

Rajandeep Garg
India

desert rose
an old cowboy composes
his first haiku

Kevin Valentine
USA

formaldehyde...
the young scientist ponders
wormholes

Anna Cates
USA

lowered into the earthworms' revenge

Robert Epstein
USA

morning after **EC**
I rub a cut onion
on the icy windshield

Cynthia Rowe
Australia

a tomcat—
king of our cul d'sac
whips the dogs

Norman Crocker
USA

Sunday school
he swats a fly
with the Bible

Chen-ou Liu
Canada

earbuds off
she looks up in surprise, , ,
stars

Thomas James Martin
USA

opening the shed
the rust
on your wheelchair

Rachel Sutcliffe
United Kingdom

chemo journey
unpacked in my bag
pregnancy test

chemioterapia
nieopakowany w mojej torbie
test ciążowy

Magda Sobieszek
Poland

antiques roadshow
the burden of things
kept

Quendryth Young
Australia

hot summer noon
even crickets are snoozing
in the yard

*ljetno podne
i cvrčci drijemaju
u dvorištu*

*Nina Kovačić, Croatia
Tr: Đurđa Vukelić Rožić,
Croatia*

at the beach
some children play with sand
some are toys of the waves

*na plaži
neka djeca igraju se pijeskom
s nekima se igraju valovi*

*Đurđa Vukelić Rožić
Croatia*

women's sanctuary— **EC**
now, even the flies want to
enter the kitchen

!ممنوع آشد پزخانه به ورود
اندلخت سر
مگسها

*Hatef Asadollahi
Iran*

chirping crickets
at the garden party
unwanted courtship

*cykanie świerszczy
na przyjęciu w ogrodzie
niechciane zaloty*

*Magda Sobieszek
Poland*

February night
in fresh concrete
the cat's paw steps

*noć u veljači
u svježem betonu
mačji tragovi*

*Nina Kovačić, Croatia
Tr: Đurđa Vukelić Rožić,
Croatia*

space debris worry...
today I got lost in
an earthly town

*svemirsko smeće...
zabrinuta, izgubih se
u zemaljskom gradiću*

*Đurđa Vukelić Rožić
Croatia*

Editor's Choice Senryu

A work of art, including writing, exists first in the imagination of its creator. The fundamental question that reader asks is: "What is this about?" Attempting to answer this question about James Joyce's masterpiece, *Finnegans Wake*, Samuel Beckett said, "It is not about something. It is that something itself." And so it is with these poems. Each is a microcosm of the universal experience of life.

This last year it has been a privilege to receive and read the senryu from around the world. I leave it in the capable hands of Shrikaanth Krishnamurthy, who I am certain will make his own mark as the new senryu editor.

—UHTS *cattails* Senryu Editor Sonam Chhoki, Bhutan

sound of a bodhran
on an empty pizza box
summer rain

Dottie Piet, USA

In Dottie Piet's senryu an accidental conjunction of the weather and the detritus of contemporary life (empty pizza box) encapsulates nostalgia for a Celtic tradition. When read out aloud the poem has a wonderful cadence like the beat of the bodhran itself, one imagines.

—UHTS *cattails* Senryu Editor Sonam Chhoki, Bhutan

church pew—
kneeling into
someone's fart

Susan Burch, USA

The "church pew" immediately conjures people dressed in their best outfit gathered for a solemn event—a wedding, Christening/Baptism or a memorial. In a startling turn of tone, the detail, "someone's fart" rends the solemnity of the moment. This vibrant force of irreverent laughter makes Susan Burch's poem memorable.

—UHTS *cattails* Senryu Editor Sonam Chhoki, Bhutan

morning after
I rub a cut onion
on the icy windshield

Cynthia Rowe, Australia

Cynthia Rowe's placement of "a cut onion" with "icy windshield" seemingly suggests the mundane act of de-icing but the opening line: "morning after" introduces an undertone of menace, playing on the idea that if one places a cut onion on the windshield and then tries to remove it, the glass shatters. One wonders if the "morning after" alludes to more than inclement weather.

—UHTS *cattails* Senryu Editor Sonam Chhoki, Bhutan

drifting canoe
moonlit dogwoods make me forget
the star-filled sky

Kevin Valentine, USA

This poem is visually rich. Not only do we have an image of the poet in a canoe but we are also allowed a glimpse into the poet's perception of the moment. Kevin Valentine uses the contrast of the earth (water, dogwoods) and the sky (star-filled) well to make physical this epiphany.

—UHTS *cattails* Senryu Editor Sonam Chhoki, Bhutan

flint corn
how quickly
they forget

Michael Henry Lee, US

In just six words Michael Henry Lee packs a wealth of historical and cultural allusions in this senryu. The resonance of "flint corn" ranges from pre-Columbian Native Americans' cultivation of the crop to New England's infamous "Year without a summer" of 1816 to its use as ornamental Thanksgiving decorations in the US. The poem rewards with each reading.

—UHTS *cattails* Senryu Editor Sonam Chhoki, Bhutan

women's sanctuary—
now, even the flies want to
enter the kitchen

Hatef Asadollahi, Iran

!ممنوع آ شد پزخانه به رود
اندلخت سر
مگسها

Here is another powerful poem in which Hatef Asadollahi addresses the demarcation of women's social and private place in Islamic society. The women's "sanctuary" is publicly marked both by the use of the Hidjāb and by the "kitchen". With biting witticism the poet shows how the flies, symbolizing the fanatics, threaten to breach even this limited sphere of the women.

—UHTS *cattails* Senryu Editor Sonam Chhoki, Bhutan

>

how sociable
she becomes alongside
her oboe

Robert Epstein, USA

Finally, the keenness of details in Robert Epstein's poem is striking. Not only is the poet tuned to the music of the performer but also to her personality. He makes palpable the change in her expression and mood as she eases into her performance. There is compassion and affection in this portrait.

—UHTS *cattails* Senryu Editor Sonam Chhoki, Bhutan

cattails

May 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 specifics, since currently 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. We encourage you to send a translation of your tanka in "your" native language.

REMINDER: Please send any/all tanka submissions (within the "body" of an email), with the Subject heading of TANKA in all caps. You can submit tanka to an'ya at: submittocattails+TANKA@gmail.com during the "open for submissions periods of:

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Publication Target Date: January 15.

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September Edition Opens June 15 to the Deadline: Midnight GMT August 15 . . .
Publication Target Date: September 15.

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

dark clouds
passing over dry fields
with just a tease
if I only would have known
how empty your words were

Bernard Gieske
USA

one red apple
clings to a naked branch
winter coming on
long after it's over
still hanging by a thread

Marilyn Fleming
USA

puddles **EC**
reflect this perfect world
a light gust
enough to smear the surface
lift leaves, scatter thoughts

Janet Butler
USA

tell me you
love me more today
than yesterday
and enough to last
for all our tomorrows

Keitha Keyes
Australia

the burden
of this early spring...
tangled strands
of a young widow's hair
fall over her shoulders

Chen-ou Liu
Canada

I see you
work and embrace
garden scents
from the striking peony
to the long-thorned rose

Giselle Maya
France

at her wedding
the synagogue rocked
ready to dance...
sleeves baring skin
with tattooed numbers

Sandra Renew
Australia

wind on the hill
coming from the north
my gift to you
if I had the power
to cool this sultry day

Adelaide B. Shaw
USA

purple smokes
from clouds below clouds above
sprinkling rain
I almost glimpse the rainbow
before it vanishes

Anna Cates
USA

trickling
over stones and moss
the creek sings
goodbye over and over—
the day that you left

Marilyn Humbert
Australia

these silver clouds
hide the flow of my tears
O empty soul
how life's changing scenes
linger to abate this grief

Celestine Nudanu
Ghana

snow glare— **EC**
vying for the lead two
geese waver
one pulling to the right
the other pulling left

Elizabeth Howard
USA

we owe
each other nothing
my lips
keep your kisses but still
we owe each other nothing

River Blue
USA

this old vase
that held our first-grown tulips
now holds
these yellowing oak leaves
and shadows of dusk

Jan Dobb
Australia USA

the sky so sky-blue
in air pure and wholesome
I breathe deeply
to take in these things like
a kite that flies higher still

Jesus Chameleon
USA

there is no way
to live more than one life—
a mockingbird
has chosen the highest peak
to try out his varied tunes

Michele L. Harvey
USA

so like the gifts
we never get to use—
hidden away
in all its mauve splendor:
magnolia tree in bloom

Thelma Mariano
Canada

insomnia—
shadows of the worm moon
in a cloudless sky
embedded memories
shiver in stardust rainbows

Marilyn Ashbaugh
USA

a while ago
I saw her there
once again
the moon behind
ominous black clouds

Muskaan Ahuja
India

tip toeing
through my memory
of you
I long to be the infant
you cradle in the photograph

Madhuri Pillai
Australia

I traced the curves
of her womanhood
with my fingers...
that night and nights after
blurring together

Chen-ou Liu
Canada

Yozakura
all in good time
we find
our shared ancestors
a green lizard greets me...

Giselle Maya
France

the sweeping sea
snatches his footprints
from wet sand—
still he walks beside me
along the shore of memory

Gavin austin
Australia

your hand **EC**
settling easily
into mine
the interlocking fingers
of river and shore

Marianne Paul
Canada

my ill mother
resting on her bed...
quivering
I watch a field rabbit
under the silver pear tree

Anne Curran
New Zealand

apparition
from light-years away
awesome beauty
of an exploding star
a silent scream in the void

Richard St. Clair
USA

setting fire
to these grapevine branches
the seductive
aroma of that bottle
of wine we once shared

Cynthia Rowe
Australia

the door
shuts behind him...
in sunlight
a symphony of butterflies
free on the summer air

Mary Davila
USA

autumn leaves
in the maple grove
there I walk
on the fine line 'tween
grief and happiness

Heiga Stania
Switzerland

moved by love
who will pull the plug on whom
at nightfall
silent crows blot the sky
returning to their secret roost

Ruth Holzer
USA

gull wings
fold the horizon
into sails
will you still meet me
on the farthest shore

Debbie Strange
Canada

tiny things
that bring a flutter...
this fledgling
in your hand, unable
to make the distance

Hazel Hall
Australia

after you
died I fell through
a crack in
the universe
with no way back

Leslie Bamford
Canada

Mid-February
wishing I could turn back time
and love you better
I write a journal entry
to tell you goodbye...again

Melissa Patterson
USA

a cobweb
around our window
I weave
the shroud of your
silence with my sighs

Rajan Garg
India

on the tips
of cherry branches
thin wooden fingers
balance tightly-wound buds
the color of hope

Kat Lehmann
USA

Palmyra temples
they talk about new peace
far from home
we flavor our coffee
with sugar and cardamom

Eva Limbach
Germany

hands and fingers
weaving across the keys
of that sonata
never will I see moonlight
as luminous as her skin

Barbara Snow
USA

with the first few
days of playschool over—
after dinner
my child teaches me
about the winter stars

Ramesh Anand
India

we walk along
a common orbit
of wishful thoughts:
had the end of a road
brought me to its beginning

Arunansu Banerjee
India

giving comments that
no one takes seriously—
another writing group
that leaves me broken glass
instead of a welcome mat

Susan Burch
USA

wrote a book
called *Midnight Butterfly*
in secret code
all my sorrows hidden
inside faerie flowers

Carole Johnston
USA

short green tufts
are all I can see—
crocus blooms
snipped off by wildlife
eager to taste spring

Janet Lynn Davis
USA

inhaling deeply
the exhilarating scent
of these daffodils—
nature's spring palette
awakening my senses

Mary Gunn
Ireland

cattails - May 2016

columbine moon—
layers of yearning
dissolve
like mango sherbet
on a summer's day

Giselle Maya
France

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

Christine L. Villa
USA

talking about
magic to someone dear
in daily life
we watch a flock of snow geese
lift from the pond as one

Thomas James Martin
USA

the primal roar
of a river crashing
down the hills—
every pore in my being
a deep well of desire

Shrikanth Krishnamurthy
United Kingdom

refugees
camping on the outskirts
of the village—
the sound of a violin
moaning at intervals

refugiați
amplasați la marginea
satului—
se aude o vioară
din când în când

Lavana Kray
Romania

if only
we could just travel
back in time
I'd say all the things
I hesitate to tell you now

jeśli
moglibyśmy cofnąć się
w czasie
powiedziałabym to czego
nie chcę powiedzieć teraz

Maria Tomczak
Poland

we met
on the crosswalk...
a kind of
memory about you
from my childhood

*ne-am cunoscut
pe trecerea de pietoni...
un fel de
amintire despre tine
din copilărie*

*Steliana Cristina Voicu
Romania*

the spring thaw
and a time for love
ahead of us
but my expectations
are gone with the stream

*topi se snijeg
vrijeme za ljubav
pred nama
moja iščekivanja odnijele
proljetne vode*

*Đurđa Vukelić-Rožić
Croatia*

refugees
camping on the outskirts
of the village-
the sound of a violin
moaning at intervals

refugiați
amplasați la marginea
satului-
se aude o vioară
din când în când

Lavana Kray
Romania

if only
we could just travel back in time
(to) I'd say all the things
I hesitate to tell you now

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moglibyśmy cofnąć się
w czasie
powiedziałabym to czego
nie chcę powiedzieć teraz

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Croatia*

Editor's Choice Tanka

rain puddles
reflecting this perfect world
a light gust
enough to smear the surface—
lift leaves and scatter my thoughts

Janet Butler
USA

I've selected this tanka composed by Janet Butler from the USA as an Editor's Choice, having enjoyed its content very much. It begins with nature in line 1 via the mention of "rain puddles", switches to Janet's perception or "reflection of this perfect world" in line 2, then reverts back to nature in line 3 when suddenly "a light gust" is just enough to change everything. If we think of this tanka in the style of a waka, metaphorically the situation could be compared to a clandestine relationship, so fragile that it hangs in the balance and any little thing might be enough to reveal its secrets or alter their direction.
—UHTS *cattails* principal editor an'ya, USA

snow glare—
vying for the lead two
geese waver
one pulling to the right
the other pulling left

Elizabeth Howard
USA

For this Editor's Choice, a simple but fine tanka by Elizabeth Howard from the USA. Set against the stark glare of snow, a nature image of two geese vying for the lead, but going different ways; perhaps like two men vying for the love of one woman. Its rhythm is right for the tanka genre, as well as the content. Thanks to Elizabeth for submitting this one.

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

your hand
settling easily
into mine
the interlocking fingers
of river and shore

Marianne Paul
Canada

For this Editor's Choice, a very well-written tanka by Marianne Paul from Canada which creates a crescendo beginning with her human element in lines 1 and 2 which immediately sets the court-poetry mood. Line 3 then twists into line 4 which is another human element, but concludes in line 5 with a juxtaposed nature image. Wonderful write.

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

cattails

May 2016
Youth Corner

**Welcome to the May, 2016 edition
of *cattails* Youth Corner**

On a happy note, I want to share some news with you: following the overwhelming response to the fourth chapter of I Love Reading CBSE-KATHA Initiative, over 600 schools from across India and abroad registered for the programme and over 12,000 students participated, and Katha is all geared up for its mega event - Katha Utsav 2016.

On an even happier note: haiku will be represented in both the regional and the national utsavs this year. Many more children's haiku will be showcased here in the coming issues. Watch for them!

Meanwhile, enjoy this limited collection of haiku specially brought to you in this edition.

The Tejas Award (Tejas in Sanskrit means "fire" and/or "brilliance") goes to Sparsh Agrawal for his beautiful haiku. There is a natural spontaneity in the words and the image here, which is something we as adults keep aiming for. Schools in Delhi begin very early in the morning and this haiku is so true of an Indian city. This student's work was picked from the many haiku written in the workshop that Dr. *Vidur Jyoti* conducted for the Katha Utsav 2015, last December.

Congratulations Sparsh!

sunrise...
all of the world
crowding a road

Sparsh Agrawal (10 yrs)
India

Honourable Mentions (in no particular order)

soaring eagles
this winter afternoon
i wish i had wings

Ceya Davis (14 yrs)
India

new moon...
the garden lights up
with fireflies

Kashish Komal (16 yrs)
India

wind chimes clink...
she smiles at the girl
in the mirror

Spatika S. Gujran (13 yrs)
India

break of dawn...
the rising sun lights up
snowy peaks

Meha Prabhu (13 yrs)
India

dark sky...
on a cobbled street I walk
over moonlight

Wamika Sachdev (16 yrs)
India

spring in the air—
breathing in the pollens
I sneeze endlessly

Sneha Mojumdar (15 yrs)
India

colours flow—
everyone runs escaping
the water balloons

Spatika S. Gujran (13 yrs)
India

Editor's comment:

This last haiku is about the spring festival called 'Holi' celebrated all over North India, where powders in various colours and balloons filled with coloured water are thrown on each other!

—UHTS cattails Youth Corner Editor Kala Ramesh, India

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May 2016 Contest Winners



2016 Hortensia Anderson aha Haiku/Senryu Contest Results

1st Place

autumn love
my heart becomes
a murmuration

Andy Burkhart, USA

Where does this haiku take you? Does it take your heart to a deeply sensual moment in autumn when leaves are falling and two people are falling in love or perhaps making love? Or does it take you to a deeply beautiful and rare orchestration of a flock of starlings before they roost at the end of an autumn day. Such is the beauty of a haiku that can take us to different places.

The author has created almost a full choreography of an Omnimax theatre, full of surround-sound, putting us in the middle of the action with our heart becoming one with a spectacular murmuration. The spontaneous movement of ribbons shapeshifting against a fading sky, weaving through layers of blues gradating into dusk is such a blessed sight to behold. And it is powerful enough to take your breath away, leave you speechless, cause you to pause, to sigh in awe, and move you to tears, just as the power of falling in love or in love-making. We have no choice but to surrender to the deep emotion experienced from both kinds of phenomena.

The act of co-creating with nature and with another human can be this kind of deep, unrooted emotion of love that is a gift from God and the universe. When murmurations separate and come into each other there is that sense of synchronized maneuvers we experience as humans. Each starling is connected to the other, turning in unison. The physics are still a mystery as to what causes the criticality.

Nature has this powerful way of touching the depths of our hearts, to come to us at just the right moment when we need to witness miraculous transformation. We become energized and uplifted, reminded of what we are passionate about. It is very rare when a modern-day poet can skillfully create metaphor in a haiku, although old masters did it frequently with ease. A stunning composition full of senses, pause, comparison, association, very deep mystery and yugen...one that the author is much aware of reminding us we are one consciousness.

—UHTS *cattails* Contest Judge Bette Norcross Wappner (b'oki), USA

2nd Place

salmon run—
the long lost son
returns in an urn

Carl Seguiban, Canada

Life can definitely make us feel like we're swimming upstream. Just as the salmon in this haiku migrating from oceans to rivers, battling rapids and countless obstacles, so is life for us. Salmon use all their energy for the long and rigorous journey before they return to their natal river beds to release eggs and sperm for fertilization. In the rivers of our lives we also experience the cycle of life, from celebrations to challenges that take our life force. We lose loved ones along the way and just as we witness here, sometimes that loved one is a child.

In line two of this haiku we wonder about the journey of this son. How did he become lost and how long was he gone? Did he leave home to fight a personal battle or did he go to war to fight for his country? What were his upstream hardships that caused him to be lost for so long? Notice how the author used alliteration to accentuate the emotions in 'the long lost son'. The pause it causes between the words is long enough for us to feel this emotion yet short enough to carry us to line three where we realize the depth of this haiku and what brought him back to the river. And we wonder if this family had a tradition of going to salmon runs ever since their son was a child and had watched the salmon fight their long way upstream many times before.

Traditionally, after spawning, the salmon die. Their death is important because their bodies deteriorate and contribute nutrients to the rivers, woodlands, wildlife, and ocean. How meaningful yet emotional for

this family to also return their son to contribute his body and life force alongside the salmon's same journey

As a judge, I would have liked seeing the verb, "returns", on the second line but in such a deeply moving haiku as this we experience more than form. We also see the contrast of clear, sparkling waters to black ashes, we hear the rhythm of the river, we feel the harmony of joining human and earth life forces, changing our lives forever.

—UHTS *cattails* Contest Judge Bette Norcross Wappner (b'oki), USA

3rd Place

tall oaks
a first grader whistles
an acorn

Brad Bennett, USA

Here we immediately find ourselves in the midst of these tall oak trees. Are you standing next to them in your backyard, in a park, in a forest, on a farm, or do you see them far away in a distant grove? When we think of them being so tall, we know they're mature and portray a sense of power and wisdom. Being next to trees, we feel grounded as we look up to notice their majestic heights, blowing in the wind.

The second line of this haiku brings our focus down to a specific person, place, and action. As a first grader, we know he or she is with their teacher and classmates. Are they in the school play yard or on a nature walk at a park? Do you remember the freedom you felt as a child when you could just run around, inspect nature and discover new things? The act of whistling is usually the result of feeling happy, maybe skipping along in contentment, recalling a favorite tune, or perhaps trying to get someone's attention.

I love that this brilliant third line completely takes us to a totally unexpected and very unique activity! Were you so caught up in the whistling of a young child that you forgot you were amongst the tall oaks? When people think of oak trees, they almost always think of acorns in autumn. And children take that even further because they have such wonderful imaginations and intuition. They can transform any object into something completely different. As adults, we have been acculturated to where we have lost a lot of our innocence, imagination, and the wild abandonment of being a child.

If you haven't tried for yourself or heard someone whistling on an acorn cap yet, I suggest you give it a whirl or just search the internet for a video of this amazing musical instrument from mother nature. The great composition of this unique haiku is filled with senses of sight, hearing, the smell of an autumn

forest, an excellent pause of nature to human nature, the contrast of the silent forest to the rhythm and echo of the playfulness of our youth, the mystery and yugen we feel from nature and from this three-line poem...the haiku, possessing the power to transmute our minds.

—UHTS *cattails* Contest Judge Bette Norcross Wappner (b'oki), USA

Honorable Mention

mother's dementia
peanut butter and jelly
under polished nails

Elizabeth Moura, USA

In the first line of this touching senryu, right away we are aware of the emotions waiting for us around the corner in the remainder of this poem. Many of us have experienced loved ones or acquaintances with dementia and we know it comes with sadness and daily challenges.

One of the most important day-to-day activities we all take for granted is eating. Yet for someone with dementia and their caregiver it can be frustrating. In the second line of this senryu, the author has created an interesting yet curious moment in time. When we think of peanut butter and jelly we think of it being a child's favorite sandwich. The author gives us that smell of peanuttty deliciousness, taste that sweet grape jelly and feel it oozing all the way down our chin and fingers.

Is the mother making her own sandwich? A food easy enough even a child can make, yet for someone with dementia, she could have started then lost focus and forgotten how. Perhaps just yesterday she was able to engage perfectly in painting her own nails. On the other hand, maybe the mother's mind has reverted to her childhood and her now adult child keeps her mother's nails painted, longing for the way her mother use to be. In trying to figure out the scenario of this senryu, we can possibly feel that merry-go-round of emotions that this disease dishes out to us.

A successful haiku or senryu such as this does not need to be specific. It creates openness for us to create the scene, possibilities, and details. This composition gives us the usual—senses, pause, alliteration of the "p" in contrasting images, emotion...yet in a subtle way I am touched with the difficulty of a caregiver to be able to surrender the frustration while seeing the lightheartedness and endearing love in this touching moment.

—UHTS *cattails* Contest Judge Bette Norcross Wappner (b'oki), USA

Congratulations to all our winners! In memory of our loving friend, hortensia anderson, we appreciate everyone's wonderful submissions which we receive more of each year. With keeping hortensia in mind, I tried to choose haiku she might have also seen and felt such deep quality and beauty. Thank you so much for the opportunity to dive deep into these beautiful works of heart and word. Carry on and keep writing haiku!

Here's a photo of some "hydrangea" flowers that I saw while judging this aha 2016 contest. The name "hortensia" translates to hydrangea and she loved these flowers. So it didn't surprise me that I saw these while we are all honoring and remembering her.

—UHTS *cattails* Contest Judge Bette Norcross Wappner (*b'oki*), USA



Note: For future reference, our three contests are:

May - aha (Annual Hortensia Anderson) Awards for Haiku/Senryu; Judge: *b'oki*, USA

September - Fleeting Words Tanka Competition; Judge: *an'ya*, USA

January - Samurai Haibun Contest; Judge: *Sonam Chhoki*, Bhutan

cattails

May 2016

Pen this Painting



This sumi-e was painted by one of our UHTS resident artists Cindy Lommasson from the USA; visit her Lotus Blossom Art Studio. The winner is Sandi Pray from the USA. With her haiku, Sandi brings out the black and red colors of Cindy's painting without ever mentioning a bird. She also brings out the sense of touch through the ninety degree heat, and gives us a seasonal reference with mention of the berries as well. Excellent "r" sounds with the words "dressed, degrees, berries, and reddening. All this plus juxtaposition with a human element and excellent visuals.

—*cattails* principal editor an'ya, USA

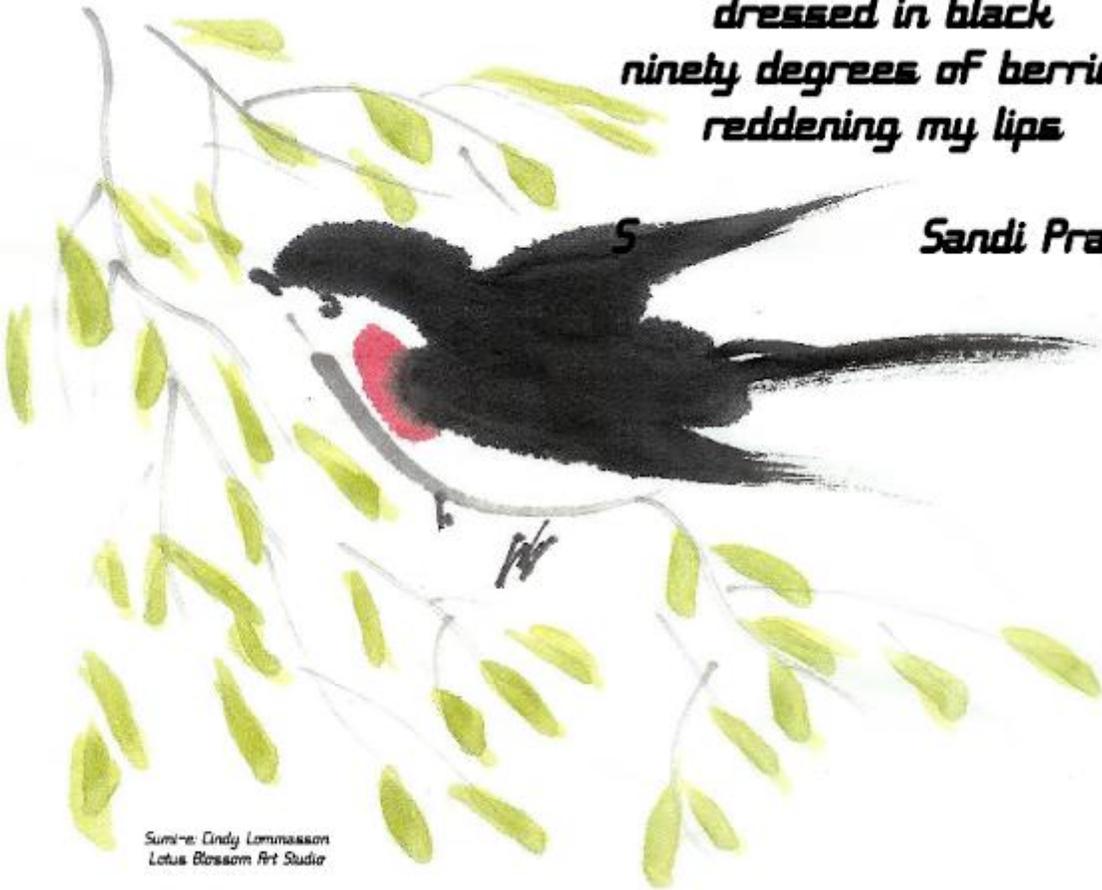


For the next Pen this Painting, this fine artwork by one of our UHTS resident artists Elizabeth McFarland from Germany, who is also our Haiga/Tankart Editor; visit her Ark and Apple page. After July 15, 2016 please submit your haiku, senryu or tanka to: submittocattails+PEN@gmail.com with the subject heading PEN THIS PAINTING before our deadline of 15 August, 2016. Shortly after it closes the winner (ONLY) will be notified., and the final collaboration will be published in our September 2016 edition.

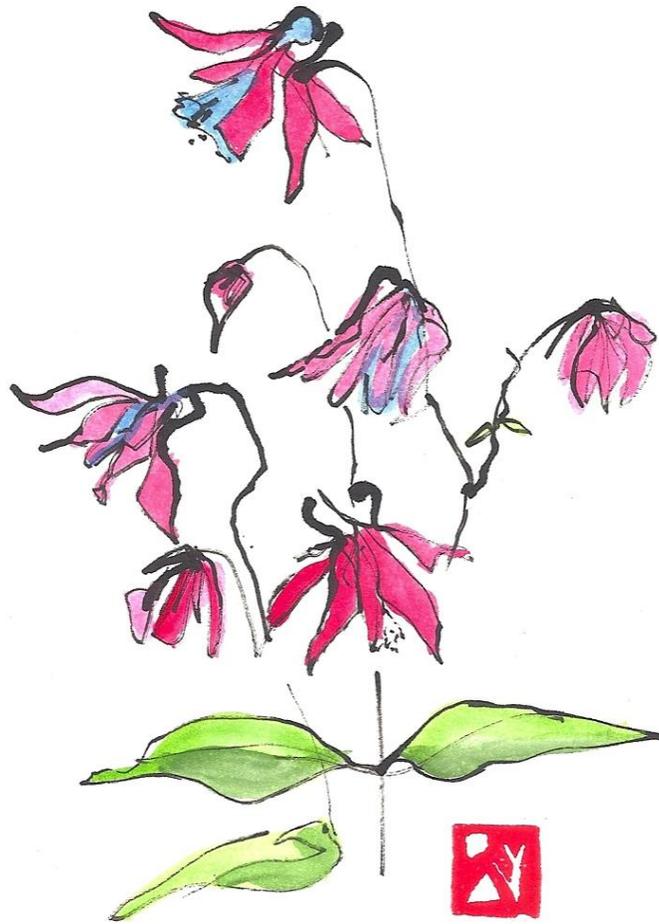
—*cattails* principal editor an'ya, USA

*dressed in black
ninety degrees of berries
reddening my lips*

Sandi Pray



*Sumi-e: Cindy Lemmasson
Lotus Blossom Art Studio*



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**May 2016
Book Reviews**

The next eleven pages are the last formal book reviews *cattails* will present.

However, when our next submission period opens, will gladly accept your information for our new "Book Announcements" page (members books only with a publish date within the previous 12 months).

If you would like *cattails* to announce your book, please send the following information (in the body of an email) to Barbara Snow, our UHTS Book Compiler at: submittocattails+BOOK@gmail.com with the subject heading BOOK, and include the following information:

Title:

Author:

Dimensions: (inches)

Construction:

Publish Date:

Language(s):

ISBN-13:

ISBN-10:

Price (US):

Publisher:

Ordering:

The Trouble with Mona Lisa: A Haibun Collection

Peter Butler, United Kingdom

Dimensions: 8 ½ inch x 5 ¾ inch

Construction: Soft Perfectbound

Total page count: 60

Publisher: Alba Publishing

Publish date: 2015

Language: English

ISBN: 978-1-910185-17-9

Price: £10, €13, \$15 (US)

Contact: www.albapublishing.com

Alba Publishing, PO Box 266, Uxbridge, UB9 5NX, United Kingdom

The Trouble with Mona Lisa is Peter Butler's first book of haibun. After a career in journalism and editing, when he released himself to haibun he brought out his wonderful bag of tricks with language to dazzle us. Such a platter of delicious goodies...40 haibun, mostly less than a page in length. They surprise us with variety: sardonic, touching, and with puckish wit, he takes us frequently on wild spurts of imagination.

The title piece was my favorite through several readings...the cover drawing, by Tom Butler, hints at what's to come: Mona Lisa with her iPod. We meet a contemporary da Vinci struggling to keep his ditzzy model on task.

I was intrigued by the blurb statement that Peter is "a frequent guest on the poetry circuit." Indeed! Try reading these pieces aloud. It quickly becomes evident that some are perfect for such readings. Additionally, reading them aloud reveals the rhyming within his sparkling prose that may not be apparent to the eye. Rhymes come so naturally, most are only obvious through hearing. From "Bert," its last paragraph is an example: (Bert is an old codger, blind, attending night classes.) "At the end of each session, we make space to watch him go. Unseeing but alert, and with a faint smile, Bert heads off from our Host, remembering, some suggest, a good deal more than most." At least eight of his haibun have rhyming within the prose.

My favorites change with each reading. Currently, my favorite is "Have You Noticed?"

"Trees speak with different accents with the wind. Have you noticed? Birdsong comes in different shapes. Water growls when rippling on uneven stones. Car engines pitch an octave higher in the drive. Words, softly spoken, taste of marshmallows. Pedestrian crossings smell of elderly shoes, kids' shirt tails, sweaty collars. Kerbs jolt, fences splinter, cycles skid. The blind see things differently. Have you noticed?"

conversing in sign
the blind men
lean forward.”

Second favorite, is the charming reminiscence “Driving through the fence”—about how, as a child, he drove his Grandpa’s car which was up on blocks due to wartime petrol restrictions. Peter’s imagination, evident at this early age, took him through the fence, across the meadow and off to chase a train. Later, with Grandpa at the wheel, where’s the thrill?

And my third favorite is in the Epilogue (which might be restated as Epic of a Log) an account of how the Welsh sculptor David Nash carved an oak log into a boulder and tumbled it into a river on an epic journey to the sea and onward.... This led me to read more about Nash on the internet.

If I have any criticism it would be that Peter’s haiku are not always easy to decipher. In his “Preface” he quotes Basho’s translator Nobuyuki Yuasa to the effect that the prose and poetry “should illuminate each other like facing mirrors.” Helpful, but I’m not sure that is what he has always done. Still, this book was an absolute joy to read! Buy it!

The author will be donating proceeds from the sales of this book to Brain Tumour Research.

—UHTS *cattails* Book Reviewer Barbara Snow, USA

What Light There Is: Haiku, Senryu, and Tanka
Sylvia Forges-Ryan, USA

Dimensions: 6 ½ inch x 4 ¼ inch

Construction: Soft Perfectbound

Total page count: 104

Publisher: Red Moon Press

Publish Date: 2016

Language: English

ISBN: 978-1-936848-58-4

Price & Ordering: \$17.00 (US)

Red Moon Press

PO Box 2461 Winchester VA 22604-1661 USA

www.redmoonpress.com

What Light There Is by Sylvia Forges-Ryan, internationally known poet in various Japanese forms and a former Frogpond editor offers us 148 poems, haiku and tanka, two per page. Six are transformed into haiga by Ion Codrescu's brush and ink artistry.

Codrescu's paintings head each of the book's six sections relating to light with Sylvia adding intriguing titles and subtitles. These are my favorites from each section:

1) "Natural Light: Scenes in Nature,"

Softly falling rain
a vole's body decomposes
back into life

As if the rain must be tender, gentle on this tiny gray-furred creature—a hushed memorial for such a small, secretive life on its circular journey.

2) "Dappled Light: The Human Scene,"

Divorce proceedings
a slight shift
along the fault lines

I am tempted to chuckle at the fault line shift, a clever matchup of phrases...except divorce is such an earthquake emotionally. A senryu that leaves me teetering in the lurch, hoping for better days when the dust settles.

3) "Forsaking the Light: War and Politics,"

A soldier's headstone
between one date and another
so short a line

That brittle little endash so brutally defining a life!

4) "The Light of Love: Desire and Longing,"

Thinking what a fool
I've been for love
after a long sigh
I again pick up
Madame Bovary

Circular? Inevitable? The power of desire and longing—yes! Are we trapped...mesmerized? And yet we call it love.

5) "While Darkness Falls: Sickness and Loss,"

How do they manage
taking only their shadows
migrating geese

My favorite in the entire collection! It goes into my all-time favorites notebook. So true, pure and simply stated. Here we are with carry-on bags waiting at the luggage carousel, so we can go home to houses and garages spilling over into storage units.

6) "What Light There Is: Letting Go,"

Clearing skies
a hydrangea turns
from mauve to blue

The light shifts as skies clear – the great magician’s brush of light changing the colors in our world...and with a new illumination our life can take on a different color.

Beautiful teamwork, Sylvia and Ion!

With 148 poems, an index would help.
—UHTS *cattails* Book Reviewer Barbara Snow, USA

Dark Maroon Jacket

Joann Grisetti, USA

Dimensions: 6 inches x 9 inches

Construction: Soft Perfectbound

Total Page Count: 76

Publish Date: 2016

Language: English

ISBN-13: 978-1519543288

ISBN-10: 151954328X

Price: \$8.50 (US)

Publisher: DANDELION (an imprint of wildflower poetry press)

Ordering: wildflowerpoetrypress@gmail.com

Joann Grisetti, the author of *Dark Maroon Jacket*, grew up in Sasebo, Japan among other places. She now resides in Florida with her husband and two sons. Joann is the author of several other books as well as this tanka publication which are available at Amazon and Barnes and Noble.

Joann is quite a prolific author, and many of her works in this book are the “diary-style” tanka which reflect her life’s travels, for instance:

as a child
yearly moving homes
and changing friends
weary before grown
mature beyond my wishes

yellow canary
singing through childhood
mornings
left behind the moving van
never a word to explain

Other works in this collection in a chapter entitled “Forte” appear to be reflections of Joann’s career:

the floor manager
approving my display case
nods her head—
a professional nod
but no salary increase

lunch hour
a courtyard fountain
sings in splashes
my mind wandering
the road to the future

The title of this author’s publication comes from this tanka perhaps from Joann’s college days:

dark maroon jacket
meets brown woolen sweater
after class one night
in the hallway
two lives become entangled

dare I...
the girls in her dorm
all know
the minute I decide to call
the minute I back down

Also Included are quite a few marriage tanka which grace the chapter called "mordent":

linen
and lace picot edging
in my sleeve
Grandmother's hankie
old borrowed and blue

three months now
top layer of wedding cake
in mother's freezer
tempting us to taste
our future again

And yes, as you might have guessed it, there's also a chapter devoted to motherhood, and my personal favorite is this one that shows us insight to Joann's sense of humor:

pregnant-
the question now is "why?"
with a boy
and a girl already-
I tell them we want a beagle

This book was an enjoyable read for me, and I leave you with one last tanka about that "dark maroon jacket" in the book entitled *Dark Maroon Jacket*:

his old brown sweater
with a few ragged holes
after years of wear
my maroon jacket
long worn out

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

Answers Instead: a life in haiku

Edward J. Rielly, USA

Dimensions: 9 inch x 6 inch

Construction: Soft Perfectbound

Total page count: 54

Publisher: Encircle Publications, LLC

Publish Date: 2016

Language: English

ISBN: 978-1-893035-29-4

1-893035-29-8

Price & Ordering: \$13.95

<http://encirclepub.com/product/answers-instead>

Encircle Publications, LLC PO Box 187 Farmington, ME USA 04938

Over the past 40 years more than three dozen different haiku publications have selected Ed Rielly's haiku. Some repeatedly, so to say he is well-recognized is an understatement. *Answers Instead* is a mini-autobiography drawn from forty years of his collected haiku.

Mostly arranged five haiku to a page, *Answers Instead* is organized in three sections: "Small Boy at the Fence" (his youth), "Across the Full Moon" (married life, with his family), "Dandelion Puffs" (aging)—these titles are all taken from among his 127 haiku.

Hidden behind Ed's persona as Professor of English, one senses the eyes of an observant country soul, born to poetry. The ambiance of his haiku is rural/small town with many references to family and friends. One even finds Issa and Stevens in the shadows:

only a cricket
a little brown cricket
but I listen

and,

depending so much
on my red wheelbarrow...
bags of wood chips

With his collection recalling the past, it is worth studying how he accomplishes the feat of presenting the past through a present moment:

lilac scent...
where she was,
is

and,

mother's voice
on an old audio tape...
evening snowfall

and,

rereading letters
I cannot answer—
autumn sunset

Aren't these beautifully crafted? There is so much to learn from this technique.

One poem puzzles a bit:

cable car
motionless
over the void

A breathtaking image! It impresses with its singularity. In his brief introduction he says he wanted to give us personally significant experiences. Because it is framed by quiet peers, it stands out...and leaves me hanging over the void. I wanted to know more! What happened?

The way Ed brings the collection to a conclusion, yet full circle, is nicely done. The last haiku:

another birthday—
the road back to childhood
calling me

Thanks, Ed, I'll head back to that "Small Boy at the Fence." A collection worth many rereads.
—UHTS *cattails* Book Reviewer Barbara Snow, USA

Gathering Dusk

Ellen Compton, USA

Dimensions: 7 ¾ inch x 5 inch

Construction: Soft Perfectbound

Total page count: 80

Publishers: Snapshot Press

Publishing date: 2015

Language: English

ISBN: 978-1-903543-33-7

Price: £9.95

Ordering: www.snapshotpress.co.uk

Snapshot Press Orchard House, High Lane, Ormskirk, L40 7LS UK

Ellen Compton's *Gathering Dusk* is an easy on the eye, gentle on the mind, peaceful in the heart first collection, though she has written and published for many years.

The tasteful production by Snapshot Press matches the quiet presence of Ellen's haiku. One haiku, framed in space, per page commands the attention each deserves. Ellen strongly adheres to the use of kigo (Americanized/Westernized). Among her seventy poems only three deviate from traditional three-line form—two two-liners and one vertical arrangement. And that one is very visually appropriate and satisfying:

one
pebble
into
the
stone
soup
winter's
end

A cozy moment from the folktale, told with a storyteller's one-word-at-a-time suspense as the pebble is added to the soup.

Through several readings one becomes aware of a minor motif of the present moment anchored to the past. Over a dozen touch upon death which colors the collection with a bit of melancholy:

fallen leaves—
his hand to hers
the folded flag

and,

a handful of grave soil
mountain pines
catch the wind

and,

whispers of a fragrance
my sister loved—
evening in spring

My very favorite straddles, perhaps, the line between haiku and senryu. It stands out from all others in that I visualize it as an indoor scene:

kaleidoscope
the little sound of a star
shattering

I hear the sound of the colored glass fragments shifting inside the scope as it turns and the star I just saw has disappeared forever...yet, a new one is born. A very magical moment of renewal. This is one I recorded in my notebook of all-time favorites.

Ellen brings us full circle in her collection through her choice of beginning and ending haiku...via repetition in their middle lines: "ripples in the meadow" and "ripple on the meadow pond."

The overall impression from the voice and vision of the poet is of someone who carves time from a busy urban life to seek renewal and solitude in nature. Quiet, reflective haiku of moments in nature, experienced alone, seems the hallmark of Ellen Compton's *Gathering Dusk*.

At the beginning of the book there are "Acknowledgments" and at the end, she shares "Award Credits."
—UHTS *cattails* Book Reviewer Barbara Snow, USA

POD KRILOM RODE
(UNDER THE WING OF A WHITE STORK)
Đurđa Vukelić-Rožić, Croatia

Dimensions: 5 5/8 inch x 4 3/4 inch

Construction: Soft Perfectbound

Total page count: 88

Publisher: *JU Zeleni prsten Zagrebacke zupanije, Samobor*

Publish date: 2016

Language: Croatian and English

ISBN: 978-953-56250-3-2

Price & Ordering: No price given

www.priroda-zagrebacka.hr

This book *UNDER THE WING OF A WHITE STORK* by Đurđa Vukelić-Rožić and the book, (*LOOK THE MAN! Haiku Guide Through Museum*) by Božena Zernec, (in the next review) are to me, in a unique category—books created for specific uses—educational publications as adjuncts to certain localized causes/projects. They feel quite different as compared to purely literary endeavors. I surmise they are assignments, perhaps through personal commitment, or maybe at the request of an organization. They are informative books such as one might find in a gift store of a museum or park. I find it admirable to support such causes, however because of the narrow focus on a subject, the quality of the poetry suffers a straining to achieve a quantity enough for a book length project.

These two books might be described as two very long haiku sequences.

Still, I believe it may be useful for other haikuists to consider whether they might want to bend/lend their talent to favorite causes they may support.

UNDER THE WING OF A WHITE STORK by Đurđa Vukelić-Rožić contains 102 haiku which describe the nature of white storks, their habitat, natural history, relationships with man...and MORE! It is an amazing book for its thorough exploration of a subject. From legend, myth and folklore, biology, geography, archaeology, and more, Đurđa has left no stone unturned to educate and plead the cause for preservation of this great bird and its habitat...all in haiku!

Did you know there is an embroidery stitch named for the stork? Or that our potted geraniums are sometimes called “stork’s bills?” I am in awe of Đurđa’s research and devotion.

In Croatia, and particularly Zagreb County there are sanctuaries for the nesting white storks which are revered and protected along with their wetland habitat. This book supports a project there: 2016 The Year of the Stork.

Durđa did her own translations from Croatian to English. Many lovely pencil/graphite illustrations by Bozena Zernec accompany the haiku. Max Verhart contributes an essay on his stork experience in the Netherlands. Another is by Dr. Jasmina Muzinić, stork researcher and poet. And there are many explanatory notes. So, if you're touring in the area, look for this little book.

A couple of my favorite poems:

a ton of weight
on the centennial roof tiles
three young storks

Who would have guessed you'd have to worry about your roof caving in because of stork nest?

And,

silence in the house
was it the rustle of wings
on the roof

The return of the storks, in migration, seems a bit reminiscent of the tension of listening for the sound of reindeer.

—UHTS *cattails* Book Reviewer Barbara Snow, USA

GLE, COVJEK! Haiku fodic kroz muzej
(LOOK, THE MAN! Haiku Guide through Museum)

Bozena Zernec, Croatia

Dimensions: 7 inch x 5 5/8 inch

Construction: Soft Perfectbound

Total page count: 70

Publisher: *Muzeji Hrvatskog zagorja, Muzej krapinskih neandertalaca*

Publish date: 2016

Language: Croatian and English

ISBN: 978-953-265-134-8

Price & Ordering: unknown,

Ordering: contact publisher

Bozena Zernec's GLE, COVJEK! Haiku fodic kroz muzej

(LOOK, THE MAN! Haiku Guide through Museum) is self-illustrated with pencil sketches, many of which are of stone tool artifacts. It is translated into English by Đurđa Vukelić-Rožić.

Through this haiku guide, we approach the Krapina Neanderthal Museum, enter the passages, observe and participate in the exhibits. We marvel:

An ode to the Hands!

They are shaping tools for themselves
stronger than stone.

And:

Chamois

around the primeval hunter's neck,
a visitor wears a fox fur.

A review by Dubravko Korbus fleshes out what may be by-passed in the spare poems and expands the reader's understanding. A brief biography of the poet is included.

—UHTS *cattails* Book Reviewer Barbara Snow, USA

SPELUNKING THROUGH LIFE

David H. Rosen, USA

Dimensions: 5 ½ inch x 7 ½ inch

Construction: Soft Perfectbound

Total page count: 44

Publisher: Rosenberry books, Resource Publications

Publish Date: 2016

Language: English

ISBN: 978-1-4982-9392-1

Price: \$13.00; web price \$10.40 (US)

Ordering: www.wipfandstock.com

Being an admirer of Santoka, Dr. David Rosen's haiku are stripped to the core. One way of looking at this slim 44 page volume with 28 haiku is as a mini-autobiography in which the doctor shamelessly exposes his soft heart, his soul, and his humor.

The Foreword by Robert Epstein is a thoughtful preparation for your journey into the depths of David's haiku. The minimalist drawings of an Everyman/Pilgrim-style wanderer by Diane Katz charge through the book with a rhythmic impression of "Onward!" Well suited to the title...and quite a satisfying combination of poet and artist!

A life as a physician, psychiatrist, and Jungian analyst surely is a fertile trail to explore, yet it is his own interior journey that David probes in *Spelunking through Life*. Is this title a tongue-in-cheek allusion to Basho's *Narrow Road to the Interior* (Sam Hamill, trans.)?

David dares to begin with absurd humor (attributed to Groucho) followed by the pathos of a dying pet...now you know what you are in for. His subterranean journey is a rich mixture of contrasts--

yoking spirituality with humor and mystery:

Douglas firs at dusk...
going home

hitting us with shock and awe:

Snake...
dead or alive?

expressing gratitude:

Being still...
still being

experiencing the layers of suffering:

Divorce...
peeling an onion

This is a minimalist book with the sparse haiku style of the poet, and the artist's bare-bones sketches. I love minimalism for its challenges and requirement for patience. I returned again and again finding new ways of seeing. Well done!

—UHTS *cattails* Book Reviewer Barbara Snow, USA

(The four Seasons of Four Poets) Colouring in

Amelia Fielden, Australia; Gerry Jacobson, Australia; Genie Nakano, USA; Neal Whitman, USA

Dimensions: 5 inch x 7 inch

Construction: Soft Perfectbound

Cover: Elaine Whitman and 'pling

Total Page Count: 61

Publish Date: 2016

Language: English

ISBN: 978 1 76041 099 5

Price: Unknown

Publisher: GINNINDERRA PRESS, Australia

Ordering: WWW.GINNINDERRAPRESS.COM.AU

With an extensive introduction by Sonja Arntzen, Professor Emerita of Japanese Literature from the University of Toronto, *Colouring in* features four poets, Amelia Fielden and Gerry Jacobson from Australia; Genie Nakano and Neal Whitman from the USA.

The book's cover with 4 different coloured pencils was provided by Neal's wife Elaine and pling; the book is divided into 4 seasons according to colour. In each section, the four authors switch places writing with one another which provides for a very interesting mix of tanka. These tanka are composed in the Japanese poetic practice of linked verse, albeit each tanka is independent and able to stand alone on its own merit.

Even though this is a slim book, it is cram-packed full of linked verses, which are too many to list as examples in this review, so here are just a few of my favourite individual tanka from different titles:

This is the final verse from *Fluttering Gold* and is by Genie Nakano

all the poems
we wrote together
memorized,
we're here now to sing them
as gingkos flutter gold

This tanka is by Amelia Fielden from *Growing Wild*:

a new season
time to spring into action
the evenings
are growing milder,
not so my passion

From the title 'Seasons of Mists and Mellow Fruitfulness' a tanka by Neal Whitman:

words blown apart
by the April breezes
colouring
my tanka in shades
of crimson and gold

And by Gerry Jacobson, this tanka from Bright New Leaves:

monkey's
up the mango tree
revelling
in her morning tea
wearing rainbow colours

All in all, yet another a fine publication orchestrated and edited by Amelia Fielden.
—UHTS *cattails* Tanka Book Reviewer an'ya, USA

Cicada Chant: Collected Haibun and Tanka Prose
Giselle Maya, France

Dimensions: 7 ½ inch x 5 inch
Construction: Soft Perfectbound
Total page count: 78
Publishers: Red Moon Press
Publish Date: 2016
Language: English
Price: \$17.00 (US)
ISBN: 978-1-936848-60-7
Ordering: giselle.maya@orange.fr

Did you ever want to take your cat, find a funky old stone structure in a village in Provence, and live there for a while...just sinking into the landscape? Read *Cicada Chant*—it's the best next-thing-to-it! Via thirty-six haibun and tanka prose within its 78 pages, poet and artist Giselle Maya takes you there.

She introduced me to her neighbors, the wild animals, her little village, her home, and after I walked the land, planted a garden, and gathered herbs and mushrooms with her, I found I had a new friend.

Giselle writes with all her senses and a great imagination. Consider some of her subjects: a dream of wild pigs, sewing on a button, a chestnut door, summer breeze, a lizard, a cherry orchard (cut down). I especially loved her haibun "For the love of Basho" that ponders:

"His indigo-dyed straw sandals, his brushes and papers carried over high mountain passes, struck speechless at the sight of Matsushima, his horse eating wildflowers by the roadside, his perseverance in slowly sculpting his poem tale.

But how did Basho and Sora cook, what did they eat on this long journey?

The moon is prominent by its presence or absence; the finding and not finding of inns for the night; the silence of the temple Eihei-ji. Not a word about wild animals, such as foxes, deer, boar, or perhaps tengu
...

what kind of tea did they drink,

o-kusuri—what medicines did they carry—so many things for the reader to imagine.

a calligraphy
left as a gift by Basho
at a mountain temple

And consider this lovely piece of prose on being a writer (from her haibun "Impatience"):

"to close one's eyes see shape whittle words
let them flow to the hand which takes up a pen makes
marks on paper
the mind stirs takes flight resilient and fluid
housed by bones tendons skin
moves to find ideas insights transformed into words..."

Giselle Maya, after 23 books, still finds new ways to look at her world and work. This book was a joy to read and reread. Since it is so accessible, it is one I will share with gardener friends and others who feel close to the land.

—UHTS *cattails* Tanka Book Reviewer Barbara Snow, USA

Dandelion Seeds

Arvinder Kaur, India

Dimensions: 6 3/4 inch x 4 3/4 inch

Construction:

Total page count: 132

Publisher: Aesthetics Publication, India

Publish date: 2015

Language(s): English & Punjabi

ISBN: 9789383092420

Price/ Ordering: INR 275.00, www.amazon.co.in

or, arvinderk8@gmail.com

My friend Arvinder kindly sent me a copy of *Dandelion Seeds*, which I have read many times and derived great pleasure from. I would like to share my thoughts on the book with you all. That Arvinder is a respected and loved haikin is evident from the many testimonials and endorsements included in this volume of about 130 pages. The cover declares that this is a volume of Arvinder's haiku, senryu and tanka. These are all bilingual, in English and in Punjabi, Arvinder's mother tongue. The two language versions are given side by side, usually two poems to a page, but for the tanka and the two end pages. There are over 160 haiku & senryu (referred to as haiku hereafter), and just eight tanka.

To me, the poems fall into one or more of the following main themes of love, loss, loneliness; memories of childhood & growing up, parents and grandparents; nostalgia; and shasei sketches of course. There is humour and unadulterated joy too. There is often a seamless blending of nature and human nature in many of the verses. In particular, Arvinder's work is replete with seasonal as well as cultural motifs rooted in her Punjabi homeland. That is not to say her work lacks international character. Far from it! She is equally at home in adapting symbols from other lands and cultures too.

Here are some sample haiku which exemplify Arvinder's work and technique. The very first haiku, which likely lent the book its title, sets the tone for what follows.

dandelions...

how i learnt

to let go

A profound truth in a simple, seemingly inconsequential occurrence. A zen moment. If only letting go was that easy!

autumn break—
a maple leaf's turn
on the school swing

This one delivers its punch so beautifully in the last line, in an unobtrusive manner. On the surface, this is a simple image of a school ground during a holiday break. However, this also simultaneously evokes loneliness in me. Is it the word "autumn"? Is it the empty swing? Actually, it does not matter if I cannot figure it out. For I am still left with a deep satisfaction after reading it. While some haiku make a detached observation of loss:

spring leaves—
another vacant seat
on the retirees bench

Others convey a deep anguish from loss:

miscarriage—
she gives the name
to a teddy

Yet others paint a heartwarming picture of play and joy:

upward swing—
braids and giggles
falling backwards

I see a little girl on the swing, possibly being pushed by her dad, throwing her head back and thoroughly enjoying herself. And that makes my heart fill with joy too.

And some about growing up and innocence:

pink pinafore—
the petal count ends at
he loves me not

There are some stunning juxtapositions and veiled metaphors:

shards of clay
fall from the potter's wheel—
final diagnosis

kitchen gossip—
the sound of her knife
on the chopping board

And there is humour in good measure too:

teething pup-
the tattered remains of
The Suitable Boy

There are so many haiku which capture the essence of Indian/Punjabi culture such as these two:

divorce decree—
he removes her bindis
from the bathroom mirror

war news—
mother ties another knot
in her pallu

This one above is one of my favourites. What a beautiful portrayal of fear, hope and resignation to fate in the simple tradition of Indian women tying knots in their pallu as a form of prayer!

There is also honakadori in here, such as the one on Basho's warriors and grasses, which I give below:

battlefield—
a helmet slowly fills
with snowflakes

Amidst a lot of good quality stuff, there is also a smattering of what, in my opinion, are not the best of Arvinder's writing. These are what employ clichéd images, well - worn phrases, or read like cause and effect, or portray something that says nothing more than what is stated:

winter sunset—
more of the night sky
each day

Rakshbandhan—
prayers in a thread
on my brother's wrist

These are few and far between, and are an honest portrayal of the poet's work, that are largely eclipsed by the fine quality in most of the poems presented. There are some haiku in here which seem too close to each other. A more careful selection could have easily avoided this. Here is one such pair:

Rakshbandhan—

an extra dollop of butter
in the dough

homecoming—

another dollop of cream
in the kofta curry

The pictures in the book, all black and white ones of dandelion heads, are lovely. However, a consistent approach to the use of borders when presenting these images would have been desirable. I also note then inconsistent use of kire markers in the book (hyphen, en-dash and the ellipsis). These maybe printing errors. A more careful proofreading could have easily overcome these, and some other errors and typos. In summary, dandelion seeds is an immensely enjoyable volume, presenting the best of Arvinder Kaur's haiku in ample measure. There is a lot of pain and sadness in here. But through all that, what I do clearly sense, quite palpably, is hope, and *joie-de-vivre*:

canopy of stars...

the hum of a lullaby
amidst rubble

I recommend this book.

—UHTS *cattails* Guest Book Reviewer Shrikaanth Krishnamurthy, UK

cattails

May 2016
Featured Poet

My Journey

Theresa A. Cancro, USA



I was extremely honored and truly astonished when an'ya asked if I would consider being the featured poet for the May 2016 issue of *cattails*. I'm thrilled to be included among many talented haiku writers within the pages of this fine journal.

I suppose my exposure to poetry began as a child growing up in the Washington, DC area, when my mother, a journalism major and former school teacher, made sure that I knew how to write a proper sentence. She surrounded me with many books of poetry, both for children and adults, reading and sharing the work of a range of poets on many occasions. She also wrote poetry for me and encouraged me to write my own. Here is one that she wrote down and noted that I composed with her when I was five:

I saw a butterfly
 flutter by,
In the fall.
Or was it a tiny leaf
 I saw?
Or a little flower
 floating on the wind?

I remember that my mother had a few books about haiku with English translations of the masters. Such books were rather rare in those days. I recall being intrigued by the succinct, three-line 5-7-5 format and trying my hand at writing them when I was a teen. After college, I wrote poetry off and on when the mood struck. I didn't pursue publishing any of my writing until relatively recently. In 2012, after the death of a number of family members, including both of my parents, I needed an outlet to cope with my grief. I joined a couple of writing groups and rediscovered that writing poetry came most easily to me. At one meeting, a couple of members read haiku, and I remembered how much I enjoyed composing them. I began to read and study the many haiku sites on the internet and started writing haiku again. I submitted a few the following year, some of which were eventually accepted and published.

I feel lucky to have many life experiences from which to draw and a background in the arts that provides a good basis for a sense of aesthetic. I have always enjoyed drawing with pencil and pastel. In college, I initially pursued a degree in design. Music and dance have permeated my days since childhood. There were piano lessons, chorus practice, and attending concerts during my formative years. I have studied and performed many forms of dance, including ballet, jazz, modern, flamenco, Polynesian, Balinese and various other ethnic dances. As an adult, I studied and performed Balinese music and dance in the Indonesian Embassy's gamelan orchestra. In college, my liberal arts coursework included an internship with the Smithsonian Institution Museum of Natural History, for which I earned an award. My area of concentration included working with Chinese textiles. In recent years, along with my husband, I have pursued the practice and study of taiji, qigong and Chinese philosophy. In addition, I have long been interested in Japanese culture and language. I wrote several papers about Japanese interiors, traditional dress, the tea ceremony and other topics for college courses, and I continue to study the Japanese language as I have time.

As for the natural world, so integral to haiku and related poetry, I have always felt a real closeness to animals and plants. I worked as a volunteer at the National Zoo and later for nearly a decade at Tri-State Bird Rescue and Research in Newark, Delaware, where I spent many hours tending to injured adult and orphaned birds, from hummingbirds to bald eagles. I learned a great deal about many species of birds there. I still watch birds that visit my feeders daily; they often inspire my poetry.

I write haiku nearly every day now. Recently, I began writing tanka, haibun and tanka prose. In the coming months, I hope to hone my skill in writing these other forms. I strive to compose unique verse and read the work of as many other Japanese short-form poets as possible.

I would like to thank the editors of the various haiku, tanka and haibun publications who have so kindly taken the time to consider my work and publish what they feel is worthy. Also, a thank-you to fellow poets and writers of the IWW critique groups who have provided valuable feedback over the past few years. And a note of gratitude to the members of the House of 30 Blue Line poetry forum as well as the AHA haiku forum—all talented writers who continue to provide valuable insight and encourage me to

keep writing and pursuing publication. Before I forget, a big thank-you to my husband, Dominic, for his support and for putting up with my odd writing schedule, which includes many late-night bouts when the muse is active. A very big "thank you" to an'ya for allowing me to feature myself and my writing in such an outstanding publication. I am truly humbled.

Theresa A. Cancro, USA

Unpublished haiku:

summer haze—
monarchs puddle
in the path

February mist—
crocus petals unfold
the snow

clear skies—
the bluebird pair mingles
over a nest box

leaves
mixed with rain
the full tilt of autumn

low sunset—
a short-eared owl ruffles
the corn silk

harvest moon—
a cricket leaves its shadow
under the thatch

afternoon haze—
a cicada shell breaks
shrill sunlight

rain shafts—
a crow's silhouette
in the birch

early autumn—
maple leaves curl
around sunset

the leading edge
of an eagle's wing—
prairie horizon

gathering storm—
a garter snake coils
around elm roots

high sun—
seal pups bob among
white caps

sudden shower—
a hummingbird dips
into the hibiscus

winter sun—
after an ice storm
a chickadee calls

Published haiku and tanka:

blue gentian—
the echo of her heart
murmur

(Modern Haiku, Issue #47.1 Winter-Spring 2016)

waiting...
the space between
bare branches

(A Hundred Gourds, March 2014 (Issue 3:2))

honeysuckle vines—
a hummingbird wrinkles
the air

(A Hundred Gourds, September 2015 (Issue 4:4))

fresh snow
on the palm of my glove
winter sky

(Brass Bell: a haiku journal, December 2014)

a busker's
tin whistle echoes
off the subway walls—
my footfalls merge
with each chipped tile

(American Tanka, Issue 26: close to revelation February 2016)

gibbous moon—
the blur of clay
on a potter's wheel

(tinywords 14.1 May 19, 2014)

curled lily pad—
a water-strider spans
the sun

*(Shamrock Haiku Journal,
October 2015 Issue #32)*

thumb's lunula—
measuring the distance
between stars

*(Presence, #53
October 2015)*

Milky Way—
night-blooming jasmine
empties the darkness

*(Chrysanthemum, Issue 16
October 2014)*

the winter sun
glows through fallow fields—
I fly away
with the snow geese
as they lift off the pond

(Ribbons, Volume 12, No. 1 Winter 2016)

cattails

**May 2016
Spotlight**

Presenting

Rachel Sutcliffe, United Kingdom



I am honoured and very proud to be spotlighted in this issue, especially given the very significant role writing plays in my life. I have suffered from a serious immune disorder for over 15 years, since my early twenties and throughout this time I can honestly say writing has been my therapy, it's kept me from going insane!

As a child I had a great imagination and I loved story writing. I wrote many poems as well as various articles for the local paper. For a while my creative writing took a back seat as I discovered the joys of foreign language learning and went on to complete a Bachelors Honors degree in French and Spanish and spend 2 years teaching abroad. However I remained an avid reader despite not writing as much myself.

Diagnosis of auto immune disease forced a decision to return to England and retrain to achieve Qualified Teacher Status in the UK. My interest in English Language was reawakened by studying for a Post Graduate Certificate of Education and then a Masters degree, both in English.

After finishing my studies my increasingly worsening health led me to really concentrate on my writing again, finding it a great form of therapy and something I could continue to enjoy despite my limitations. I joined a writing group where I was introduced to Japanese short form poetry. Prior to this I had always written longer poems and short stories. However at that time I was encountering cognitive problems and was struggling with my memory and concentration so I was instantly attracted to the shorter forms.

Moreover, on an emotional level, discovering haiku with its links to mindfulness and focus on the present has been exceptionally therapeutic. As I now live with a serious incurable illness, I've become very aware that present moment is the only thing we can guarantee. Haiku fits perfectly with this philosophy of living in and appreciating the present.

I am now an active member of the British Haiku Society and a several online writing groups. My work has appeared in numerous print and online journals and I have created my own website at <http://projectwords11.wordpress.com>.

Writing and being published has given me back a sense of identity, self worth and a whole new career. This sense of achievement and recognition is invaluable. Having had to leave full time employment and a fulfilling career due to my illness, I found I had lost my role in society, who was I now and what was I here for?

So thank you an'ya for asking me to be spotlighted in this *cattails* edition, and thank you fellow poets and readers!

—Rachel, United Kingdom

deep winter
moonlight frozen
in the falls

fallen leaves
the forest deep
in silence

flood tide
covering the sand
with stars

sun at last
each puddle smaller
than the last

failing light
crows sink
into silence

sparrow song
the fresh scent
of morning dew

slow thaw
another cobweb
on the child's bike

shorter days
rain falls
on falling leaves

the tears
on your cheeks
dewdrops on blossom

cattails - May 2016

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Tribute to Ed Baker 1941 - 2016

UHTS Resident/Cover Artist



Ed Baker born April 19, 1941 (on the cusp, last day of Aries/and one day before Taurus*)

Ed ran away with his Stone Girl on March 28, 2016 (just shy of age 75).

From an'ya *cattails* principal editor, USA "this was an "in process" collaboration between Ed and myself scheduled for publication in this edition""



From peterB

As a parent spouse, brother, sister, offspring, friend or associate, do we never really “know” anyone?

Oh, you can chide yourself into believing that you “do”, but human-kind is simply too complicated and vast to ever be fully shared/understood with another . . . for myself, I can posit that in over 70 years, having met only four that came close to my understanding them. Ed Baker “was not” one of those four!

"Our" full exposure to Ed only began back around 1995, but within Ed’s prolific emailings, poetry and artwork barrage over those past 20 years, we filled in many gaps of prior times (1950’s on), including here in the 1970’s Eugene, shared lurid tales and philosophies, and critiqued each other (sometimes mercilessly). But, Ed always shared “all” of this with many . . . by offering up his art, poetry, thinking, opinions and logic (at least I “think” it was logic) asked for or not, all of which swung wildly from brilliant to sincere to sarcastic to bizarre. I believe Ed’s rejection-response genes were missing, and were replaced with "(add in your own idea here)" genes, so having to go into battle with only an idea, he was truly gifted, and driven intellectually.

Many of us who might consider ourselves as “knowing” Ed, or of having been his “friend” will now argue about “who and what” Ed was . . . the man being wildly diverse and therefore appealing in different ways to each of us, and giving everyone varied (sometimes opposing) glimpses of his persona. I personally enjoyed sharing his early-years roadmap of evolvment, our mutual people-exposures, aligned innuendo and overly-critical sarcasms.

Therein was the glitch (and the gem of) Ed Baker . . . many dismissed him as “over-the-top”, possibly damaged, broken, or just plain “nutz” . . . many saw him as only a person to be “tolerated” (which was

OK with Ed, as he did not need or want your confirmations, approvals, or criticisms anyway). Proudly, Ed was “one odd duck” . . . who was surrounded by a flock of other “odd ducks” as card carrying friends and admirers who all accepted him as “Ed”.

Ed belongs to a now-elderly almost-extinct fraternity of artists that evolved out of true American “short” poetry, avant-gard art, and “free subculture” “beat poet” thinking . . . Ed’s unidentifiable mix of “folk-art” (Wandervogel, Bohemian, Beat, Hippie, naive to almost New Age) presentation was omni-apparent in his world of mind-connection and consciousness, nothing Ed created ever matched or “fell-in-line” with established structure, or the supposed “guidelines” of “contemporary”. He will not be mimicked, or replaced, only missed.

Ed and his cohorts (many of whom responded to this tribute) were/are still all special editions of American English evolved verse and poetry stylings that have created this present-day tapestry of work that is “not” mainstream, poetry society driven/influenced, or ego-seeking . . . it is simply “self” (innermost, ferel and pure); we have featured their work for your perusal in many of our publications.

If you have never heard of Ed, or have only seen a “few” of his offerings (he was always the cover-artist for all of our publications) these (live Facebook photos), the live links below, will all share but a very small part of his legacy . . . these are Ed's true epithets, within each site be sure to review the numerous other links that create his oeuvre.

—UHTS Webmaster/ \cattails Publisher, peterB, USA

Ed Baker Website:

Ed Baker Facebook:

Ed Baker Scribd:

<http://feminine-fragrance.blogspot.com/2008/11/creativity-sexuality-there-are-many-ed.html>

<http://www.newmystics.com/lit/EdBaker.html>

<http://jacket2.org/commentary/letters-ed-baker-and-cid-corman-1973%E2%80%931975>

<http://sitwithmoi.blogspot.com/2013/03/5-sketches-by-ed-baker.html>

<http://tobaccoroadpoet.blogspot.com/2008/12/ed-baker-three-questions.html>

<http://lilliputreview.blogspot.com/2010/05/ed-baker-on-albert-huffstickler.html>

http://beardofbees.com/pubs/My_Typewriter_is_Erotic.pdf

http://www.oysterboyreview.org/issue/21/reviews/MartoneJ-Baker.html#.Vw_cLx8zq1s

<http://farfallapress.blogspot.com/2009/02/ed-baker-interview.html>

<http://poetfranksamperi.blogspot.com/2011/05/letter-to-ed-baker-from-cid-corman.html>

<http://www.stridemagazine.co.uk/Stride%20mag%202012/Jan%202012/edBaker.htm>

<http://www.dailyhaiga.org/haiga-archives/?c=baker-ed> http://perpetualbird.blogspot.com/2011/06/on-bakers-stone-girl-e-pic.html#.Vw_j4R8zq1t

<http://www.leafepress.com/litter7/martoneOnBaker/Martone.html>

from John Perlman

The Day Ed Baker Died

late
afternoon
as we headed
north over US 1 an
ambulance barreling
south lights & sirens
flashing blasting Jan
drops her head looks
silently away she lifts
her right hand to her
heart another
person
unknown in
terrible distress

PETITION
—for Ed Baker

ones &
innumerable
departed or lingering ?
as that dry summer our mimosa
was clearly dying almost the human
intensity of a sentence executed in a
frantic profligacy of bloom & unto seed
sprouting in yards in near years after —
here the passages of farflung friends
who once perhaps shook hands shared
whiles wrote elegies to flesh of
meeting & to memory the
husks that do
not root

*until—
unless—*

*as
works
the winds
have spun*

carry on

castaways or

couriers

John Perlman, USA

From Sonam Chhoki

"I am shocked to hear of Ed's passing. He seemed such an integral part of UHTS, with his vivid, life-enhancing artwork for the *cattails*' covers. Deeply saddened by the loss of his artistic genius. When I first joined the UHTS team, he sent me a warm message of welcome privately. I appreciated this as I am hopeless with group emails. I love his wild orchid poems and here's one from me as a small tribute."

rain dark hills
darker still the woods
where wild orchids once grew

Sonam Chhoki, Bhutan

From Marilyn Humbert

glints of colour—
one more stone marker
records a passing

this winter morn
grass bows earthward
heavy with frost—
your reflection
mirrored in my mind

sun shines
through morning mist
reveals
his path edged with thistles
and tiny white daisies

Marilyn Humbert, Australia

From Keith A. Simonds

Ed : Beautiful Artist Kaleidoscopic Eternally Reverred

Gone but still with us
in spirit and love
a haijin par excellence

A bright star
streaks across the horizon
the awakening

From Johnny Baranski

misty moonlight
the words of those
he left behind

Johnny Baranski, USA

From Pat Geyer

enticing call
of the white stag...
tonight
his wild man spirit
gallops away

clematis
flower
still unplucked...
old man's beard
grows long

late freeze
cherry trees weep...
his moon
yet full
shines on

Pat Geyer, USA

From Hazel Hall

wishing
I had known you
this lifetime . . .
a shearwater's flight
over land and ocean

Hazel Hall, Australia

From Dimitrij Škrk

*pod starim hrastom
pomladni veter ziba
prazno gugalnico*

under the old oak
spring wind rocking
the empty swing

Dimitrij Škrk, Slovenia

From Joey Madia

"Ed and I exchanged a lot of memorable letters and emails and packages over the years, but I have written a Tanka about my favorite memory. Last year he sent me his book *Neighbors* before it was published. I offered to write a review, not realizing it was unpublished. Ed LOVED the idea and used the review to find a publisher.

My Friend Ed

We did it backwards
He sent me his book *Neighbors*

Me: Want a review?

Ed: Reviewing the unpublished?

He found a publisher after

Joey Madia, Founding Editor, New Mystics/New Mystics Reviews, USA

From Karen O'Leary, United States

Ed's gallery
of poetry and art
...∞...

Karen O'Leary
United States

From Beth McFarland, Germany



From Shirley A. Plummer

to honor the loss
of a rainbow of talents
tears turn to courage
that can laugh and move forward
to step into vacant space

Shirley A. Plummer, USA

From Nancy P. Davenport

Email Mindfulness Poem for Ed Baker

emails back-and
(the sting of criticism)
-forth
be careful what you ask for
an email with a wash of art
be grateful what you wish for

Poem in Memory of Ed Baker

how can this be?
color
a chaotic rainbow in my life
to white noise

Chapbook Poem Re: Ed Baker

my first chapbook
in color
leads to friendship
in color

Nancy P. Davenport, USA

From Don Wentworth

"Every time it rains, I think of Huff (Albert Huffstickler). Now every time I see the moon, it's Ed. Ed Baker who will be sadly missed by all who knew him and his work."

For Ed...

moon shadow
slipping quietly away
Ed's big grin

spring evening
another dead poet
another full moon

From Nina Kovačić

an unpicked apple
the first snowflake
on its redness

cat graffiti
somebody rolled a tail
by move of the brush

Nina Kovačić, Croatia
(tr: Đurđa Vukelić Rožić, Croatia)

From David Giannini

"missing Ed for sure. I sent some work re: Ed, elsewhere, too, but have this one to share"

SOMEHOW, THE IMPOSSIBLE

To Ed Baker in an email
and now in memoriam

To meet the maze in
the Minotaur and not
the other way 'round, Ed,
is poetry—step up and

step to—collapse
stone walls and

breathe through
your horns!

David Giannini, USA

From Ron Silliman

"Oh I had not heard. I would say that this is terribly sad, except I can hear Ed saying 'of course it's not!'"

Ron Silliman, USA

** you really need to understand Ed's cusp birth-sign and it's nuances and more about him*

<http://allabouttaurus.puzl.com/traits-of-people-at-aries-aurus-cusp>

<http://trustedpsychicmediums.com/aries-star-sign/understanding-aries-aurus-cusp/>

<http://www.tarot.com/astrology/aries-aurus-cusp>

<http://www.alwaysastrology.com/aries-aurus-cusp.html>

<http://cusps.livejournal.com/27821.html>

Thank you to all who participated here, an'ya, PeterB (whazammo), and the UHTS team.

cattails

May 2016

UHTS White Page

Mokichi Saitō: the person, his poetry and aesthetics

by Linda Galloway PhD, USA

Mokichi Saitō (1882-1953) was one of the most outstanding tanka poets of last century. His tanka are prized for their brilliant visual imagery, power, and poignancy. He exceeds in conciseness, diction, specificity in word selection, and nearly magical application of sound and tempo. He published seventeen volumes of poetry. There is little information about him in English, Heinrich's book, *Fragments of Rainbows: The Life and Poetry of Saitō Mokichi* (1983), is out of print. Shinoda's and Goldstein's book, *Red Lights: Selected Tanka and Sequences from Shakkō* (1989), is still available. It is my hope, this small article might be able introduce Mokichi to many interested people and easily by being on line.¹

Mokichi emerged during the Meiji Revolution, when great social and political liberation began. Citizens were permitted to travel abroad. Scholarship from the west on philosophy and thought systems were translated. Western art and literature were widely consumed. Tanka reform mushroomed. Prior to the Meiji Reform, tanka were written in accordance with the thousand year old poetics of the medieval high court (800-1200). Diction was restricted to 2,000 classical high court words which could only be graceful and elegant. Nature images were limited almost exclusively to the botany of high court medieval gardens (cf. Galloway 2015). Mokichi was an active participant in modern Meiji tanka reform.

Mokichi was born in a small rural village and into a prosperous family for his area. He was not a robust child, but was always treated with great affection by his parents. From childhood on he was strongly drawn to nature, a source of solace for him especially in times of stress (Shinoda & Goldstein). His brother remarked how he withdrew into a private solitary world. His feeble constitution showed itself mostly in bed-wetting into adolescence (Heinrich).

As a young teenager he left his parents' home to live with his uncle Kiichi's family in order to attend a pre-college school, not available in his home town nor financially affordable for his parents. At his uncle's home he immediately met his nine-month-old cousin, Teruko, to whom he was betrothed in five years. He caused a great stir for his uncle when it was discovered Mokichi had a significant relationship with the family's woman servant. She was fired, and he never saw her again (Shinoda & Goldstein).

Mokichi was never a very good student and always had to work hard to achieve educational progress (Shinoda & Goldstein). His high school classmates believed he had “no aura of future greatness” (Heinrich). Eventually he was able to pass tests for university entrance. He decided to study medicine, not out of compassion for humanity, but because he wanted to make money. From 1921-1925 he studied psychiatry at European medical schools. Back in Japan he worked in psychiatric hospitals and then inherited ownership of his uncle’s mental hospital in 1928, where he caused significant administrative difficulties due to very poor organizational skills and problems with the police due to escaped patients. His marriage was not a happy one. He lived apart from his wife more than with her. Although medicine was not fulfilling, he practiced psychiatry his whole life (Shinoda & Goldstein).

As a person he was unrefined and dour. His social clumsiness was renowned. For example, he removed his dentures publicly and cleaned them. He was generally regarded as a peasant with rural farm manners. He never adopted sophisticated urban language or life style (Shinoda & Goldstein), and he spoke his countrified language his entire life (Heinrich). With superior colleagues he could don a behavioral mask, although his dress in professional circles could be indecorous. His relations with women were stolid (Shinoda & Goldstein).

Family, friends, and disciples described him as overbearing. One son called him a “fearsome enigma.” He was financially unsophisticated which angered his wife. In spite of the great warmth with which he was raised as a child, he gave little time and attention to his two sons (Shinoda & Goldstein). He was always a great admirer of Hitler and attended Hitler’s famous putsch in Munich where he studied psychiatry for two years. From his journal and his poetry he appears to have been depressed, socially prejudiced, and politically fascist. His adult health was not good. He suffered asthma, epidemic influenza, kidney disease, and tuberculosis (Heinrich).

In his poetry Mokichi appears emotionally labile and depressed. To constructive criticism, he could suffer intense rage or deep devastation. He had a fierce temper that easily flared with disciples, family, and acquaintances. He called himself “misanthropic” and disliked human association “never think I came out / yearning for human beings” (Shinoda & Goldstein). He mulled over his misgivings: “embracing [his] regrets” he went “turning this way and that way”. He could endure life however unfortunate without apparent need for change: “when I shut myself away / I am resigned to / almost anything...” (Heinrich)

Abroad in 1923, Mokichi suffered a nervous breakdown hearing of his father’s death and a large Japanese earthquake. Clinical PTSD, which includes depression, must have been common for Japanese earthquake survivors. Mokichi’s nervous breakdown, however, occurred when he lived in Europe, no where near Japan. His father, friends, and tanka colleagues died. A younger average age of death prevailed in his time. Everyone’s parents died, and most lives were stained with death. Yet his clinical nervous breakdowns and depression seem more extensive than normal for his situation.

Mokichi often thought and wrote of death, and expressed sorrow, sadness and loneliness in his tanka.

in the faint light
of early dawn, I have
thought of death—
that death which brooks
no exceptions

(Heinrich)

I sorrow
because I live;
with this thought
I listen
to the evening rain

(Shinoda & Goldstein)

how lonely it is
to sometimes think
I have managed
to pass
one more day

(Shinoda & Goldstein)

Death is clearly the focus in the first tanka in which he contemplates the consummate character of death. In the second, life is by definition sorrow, and the very traits of the nature around him (cold, dark, rainy, wet) exemplify his own deep existential sorrow. The theme of loneliness in the last tanka appears in his tanka throughout his life

Mokichi did not seek or enjoy social environs. Ever since childhood he was strongly drawn to nature.

avoiding people
I scoop with my hand
this water
flowing from
the snowbound ravine

(Shinoda & Goldstein)

Nature was always a source of solace and communion for him. In his poetry nature became an expression of his deep inner self, the heart of his tanka writing, and central to his aesthetics. At times of stress he turned to nature not human support. He wrote the above tanka after the final rupture with his wife. He scoops up nature's albeit purest water, but also surging and cold like his inner pain.

Mokichi acted elitist and socially prejudiced.

that workingman's wife
on the other side
of the street
sometimes yells
oh so vulgarly!

(Shinoda and Goldstein)

In spite of his own well known boorish and abrasive demeanor, he openly denounced a proletarian woman for her voice and behavior.

Studying psychiatry for two years in Munich, he worried about racial prejudice against himself, but apparently not against other ethnic groups. Without approbation, he quotes the conviction of Herman Göring (commandant of the German air force and the Nazi Storm Troops) that Nazi rule should: "einzig und allein gegen die Berliner Judenregierung wandte". The Nazi party ought "to purely and simply turn against the Jews in the government" (which was then in Berlin) and replace the Jews with exclusively pure Germans.

Politically, Mokichi was a fascist. He remained a strong admirer of Hitler all his life. He supported the German National Socialist (Nazi) agenda, and attended Hitler's massive Munich putsch. In his journal (Wanzentagebuch) he pointed out ideas of putsch speakers that appealed to him. German attendees were urged to keep in mind "... erstens Treue, dann Deutschland, und drittens Bayern" [first loyalty, then Germany and third Bavaria] and later "national und opferwilling" [nationalism and readiness for self-sacrifice].

These ideals of loyalty, devotion to country and self-sacrifice appear in his war tanka. Mokichi, strongly nationalistic, served his country with emotional war poems to encourage popular support for Japanese military actions, such as, the 1937 China War (Heinrich).

kurogane no (6)	let us put on
kabuto kamurite (7)	our helmets of steel
idetatamu (5)	and go forth
ōkimi no tame (7)	in the cause of our sovereign
oya no kuni no tame (8)	in the cause of the fatherland!

obitadashiki (6)	looking on
gunba jōriko no (9)	the legion of chargers
sama o mite (5)	is going ashore
watakushi no atsuki (8)	my own hot tears
namid asekiaezu (8)	flow unrestrained
	(Rabson 1998)

As with most political poetry these tanka are deficient in literary value. (For example, “The Battle Hymn of the Republic” or “Hail Britannia” may be rousing, but not esteemed poetry). The first tanka, military exhortation, is pure propaganda. The second’s repetition of two “streaming” images is cliché (military chargers flowing ashore, tears flowing from eyes). I am not a native speaker of Japanese, but these two tanka heavy with syllables and jingoistic emotion sound clumsy to me.

The second tanka especially contains “broken meter”, hachō, i.e. tanka lines not complying with the usual 5,7,5,7,7 form by including too few or too many sound units. Tsukamoto Kunio remarked that “broken meter” is acceptable, if it “satisfies particular poetic requirement” (Heinrich). The second tanka might be acceptable, if it were of outstanding quality and extra syllables fulfilled a poetic requirement. It is not, and it does not. Mokichi was the ultimate master of word choice. He could easily have found diction to fulfill the conventional syllable number.

Later in the 1940s Mokichi supported jingoist military rule by composing war tanka.

a new word	the “Repulse” went down
“instant sinking”,	in an instant.
radiates	“The Prince of Wales”
deeply within us,	heeled over to the port side
and we cherish it	and fled a short distance
(Rabson)	(Rabson)

The first poem is propaganda urging citizens to identify with the emotional value of the military's new war slogan, "instant sinking". The second tanka about the sinking of British warships reads like a prose narrative.

Donald Keene wrote that among war poets in World War II day, "almost everyone was involved" (1960). Interestingly, unlike most all the other Japanese war poets, Mokichi did not rewrite, destroy or stop publication of any of his war poetry (Rabson). After Japan's defeat, he was heavily criticized by citizens for cooperation with the war and was listed as a "war criminal" by the Japanese Communist Party (Rabson).

Postwar Mokichi reflects remorsefully (Shinoda & Goldstein) upon his own war participation in the famous hima (castor oil) tanka in 1947.

michi no be ni	beside the road
hima no hana saki—	the flowers of the hima plant
tarisho koto	were blossoming:
hani ka tsumi futaki	like my feeling of
hanji nogotoku	of some kind of heavy crime

(Rabson)

(Rabson)

The castor oil plant (hima) is attractive with a central flower ringed by large palmate leaves. It was widely grown during the Pacific War. When the Japanese military ran out of petroleum lubricants, oil pressed from castor seeds was substitute to lubricate military war machines. Castor oil, however, is an inferior product; it gums up quickly and easily (Brady et al. 1997). This undesirable property would require more frequent processing and handling of war equipment. Castor seed also contains a very famous and deadly toxin. Does Mokichi feel his "blossoming" (his war tanka and exhortative war support) like the hima oil was inadequate? Does he feel guilt that his war participation was toxic to Japanese people?

Medicine might have been Mokichi's full time profession, but tanka was his passion. In Shinoda's and Goldstein's excellent biographical introduction, Mokichi began writing tanka late in high school and joined the tanka poets and essayists for the tanka journal, *Araragi*, in 1906. He continued to write tanka and essays for this journal, eventually becoming its publisher.

Mokichi revered Shiki's tanka, especially Bamboo Village. In the beginning Mokichi was a disciple of Sachio Ito, a disciple of Shiki. Sachio also admired Shiki's tanka. *Araragi* was composed mostly of two groups, the young new poets with fresher ideas and the older experienced poets. There was

considerable conflict between the two factions as to the nature of tanka. Initially Sachio and Mokichi worked together, but a rift occurred. Mokichi's tanka reflected personal experience and like Shiki's were realistic in style, whereas Sachio's were abstract and idealist (Shinoda & Goldstein).

Mokichi's aesthetics developed Shiki's notion of shasei. Poets of the period, even Shiki, had numerous descriptions of shasei. For simplicity's sake, I shall use Shiki's shasei to mean an objective, realistic description of life. Further, I employ the word "syllable" for Japanese sound unit and the word "line" instead of "Japanese sound groupings for the ease of newcomers to tanka.

The imminent scholars Shinoda and Goldstein (2011) summarize Mokichi's aesthetics and quote Mokichi's development of realistic description in an Araragi 1911 article: "tanka must be an expression of inner self [sic internal reality]"... "tanka is myself born in the form of a poem". The tanka poet "must penetrate nature in an accurate way [and] penetrate nature deeply". Mokichi creates powerful and poignant images of nature. Ever since childhood Mokichi was strongly drawn to nature.

Mokichi poetic values, "realism, honesty, subjectivity, penetration of nature, and the connection to nature" had their beginnings in his first poetry volume, *Red Lights*. His aesthetics evolved over time. He stressed use of the trivial details about everyday things or events to enhance realism. He insisted that tanka derived from a poet's imagination were second rate and inauthentic, because they were substantially removed from reality.

Until Makoto Shiki's time, much poetry had been imaginary. Shiki, however, taught (especially his new disciples) to write based on observations of real experiences. At the end of his young life shortly before he died of tuberculosis, Shiki began to write in a style he designated makoto. In addition to creating images of external reality, he also wrote about his own inner self (Ueda 1985). In essence shasei applied directly to internal reality. Shiki died too soon to further his thoughts on makoto, "internal shasei" (Ueda 1985).

Mokichi's poetic style extended Shiki's idea of makoto by writing tanka which focused primarily on the poet's internal experience.

I was standing
by the ruins of the fire:
where night fell, and
even prayers failed me, at
the limit of futility

(Heinrich)

Mokichi mentions the natural environment, but the tanka centers on his personal hopelessness, not on the “fire” or “night”.

Realistic description, Mokichi felt, was heightened by trivial and original detail, e.g. “biting a bit of sand in my bowl of rice” or

unnoticed,
how I have aged!
in the dark night
even my buttocks
freeze these days

(Heinrich)

“Freezing buttocks” is a singular and brilliantly clever phrase.

Shinoda and Goldstein report in their historical survey of Mokichi’s work that his tanka became ever more poignant.

I tramp across
the night’s frozen snow, frozen
in the fields within
the city’s shadows, and
my cough reverberates

(Heinrich)

the white blossoms
of the magnolia trees
in twilight:
as though enshrouding
my lamentation

(Heinrich)

in these waters
a deep blue mist
the rain
fell
even before I realized it

(Shinoda & Goldstein)

In spite of some poetic techniques, the first (earliest) poem above reads like a simple prose narrative: action—semantically uncomplicated location—action. The second is rich in poetic techniques. The third is almost mystical.

The second tanka begins with a poetic yet enigmatic image and ends with personal feeling. White magnolia blossoms are beautiful. Yet what is their actual colour in twilight? This unusual image sparks one to imagine the blossoms' actual colour by envisioning various possible hues. Hence, "twilight colour" can lead to visual multi-layering in the tanka's experience.

The twilight colour is not bright like its daylight colour. Thus, the flower's' twilight appearance is demeaned, mysterious, "enshrouded". The last three lines illustrate Mokichi's deep penetration of nature (twilight blossoms), his expression of inner emotional reality (lamentation), and the reflection of nature in one's self. Both the twilight colour and he are enshrouded, one by outer physical darkness and the other by the inner darkness of lamentation.

The third tanka written some seven or eight years later feels nearly noetic: so deep the penetration of nature, so profound the poignancy. The poet's intense absorption with the water's mist lends little distinction between him and the water; they are as if one. So entwined with the blue mist, the poet fails to notice rainfall beginning.

Shiki was the first to suggest the applying the juxtaposition of images already in haiku to tanka structure (Ueda). Mokichi developed Shiki's idea of juxtaposition to the use of contrasting images.

how bitter
the green apricot
I ate under a tree;
bashful now before men, my young fiancée,
and already so much time has passed

(Ueda)

The tanka above appeared in Mokichi's Araragi column, "Study of Tanka," in January 1911. Like Shiki, Mokichi used a new kind of juxtaposition of images that of two "apparently unrelated experiences [apricot bitterness, bashful fiancée] were a new attempt to show feeling through the use of association" (Shinoda & Goldstein). His feeling of unhappiness and bitterness applies to both images, his taste of the apricot, and his fiancée's behavior. In this manner the tanka becomes greater than sum of its parts.

Mokichi's language is a product of his time. The Meiji Reform (1886) was marked by significant cultural changes. Mokichi's language exemplified new changes in literary diction. His language could be coarse (Shinoda & Goldstein). He wrote in colloquial Japanese, and contended both classical and colloquial

languages were equally appropriate for tanka. He often used the first person pronoun, coined words and took foreign words from German. Sometimes he altered or inverted syntactical sequence (Heinrich).

Above all, Mokichi's verse is musical. His poetic choice of sound is consummate. Specific linguistic sounds or types of sounds can be a poetic symbol, re-enforce structure, enhance meaning, and support emotion in his tanka. Sounds can significantly impact the rhythm and tempo of poetry. For example lines with many stopped consonants can sound harsh, constrictive or excited. Lines with all or mostly fluid sounds can feel melodic, smooth, relaxed. In the hands of a talented poet phonics and semantics can join to meld the sound and sense of a poem.

kurogane no	let us put on
kabuto kamurite	our helmets of steel
idetatamu	and go forth

In the first lines of a war poem, 70% of all consonants are stopped plosives (b, d, t, k, g). Plosive consonants can provide a hard, abrupt or jerky tempo to a poem, because they abruptly stop the flow of air through the mouth. By incorporating mostly stopped consonants, Mokichi has re-created the jarring and jolting rhythm of military drumbeats, the pounding footsteps of marching soldiers, or the acoustics of fired gun pellets. These harsh consonants can sui generis contribute to the very nature of war.

In contrast, a tanka with fluid sounds can feel more melodic.

taema naki	as the waves
mizuumi no nami	of the lake incessantly
yosuru toki	approach the shore,
nami o kaburite	crowning the waves,
yuki kenokoreri	the snow remains unmelted

(Heinrich)

(Heinrich)

In contrast to the war tanka, this tanka has many fluid consonants (m,n,s,r,y). Two-thirds of its consonants flow unimpeded through the mouth, and this euphonic fluidity coincides with the topic of waves. These sounds flow like waves throughout the tanka becoming a euphonic symbol of the lake water. The Japanese word for wave(s) is "nami". More than half (60%) of the tanka's fluid consonants are "n" and "m", reflecting directly back the word, "nami". Repeated these two sounds provide an undulating wave-like tempo in the poem.

The repeated use of one vowel in one line or more can highlight a visual image.

morotomo ni
otoko no omo no
aka-aka to
kogara mo itsutsu
yamamizu no naru

(Heinrich)

ruddy
all these faces
of men at work
hearing bird song,
listening to mountain streams!

(Heinrich)

This tanka appears in the “Woodsmen” pages of *Red Lights*. In this section, hardy men and women are pictured vigorously at work in the forests (Shinoda & Goldstein). The first two lines, “all the faces of working men”, contain almost exclusively the back vowel “o”. This vowel is by nature deeper in tone which lends additional crustiness to the weather-beaten faces of the forest workers. In the last lines, about “birdsong” and “rippling streams”, the presence of the darker vowel “o” is dramatically reduced, even including the vowel in mandatory grammatical particles. Most vowels in the last two lines are the high, front vowels, “a’ and “i” and provide these lines with a light tone. Consequently, these front vowels embrace the bird song and rippling water with a bright and uplifting quality in the poem, as they are in reality.

Stylistically Mokichi often repeats larger linguistic structures and analogous or near analogous phonological forms. Shirokiyama (*White Mountains*) one of his last volumes, is considered an apex of his literary achievements and contains the following tanka.

amatstuhi no
katamuku goro no
Mogamigawa
watastumi no iro no
narite nagaruru

(Heinrich)

at the time when
the sun is setting
the Mogami River
turns the color of the sea
and runs its course

(Heinrich)

This poem has thematic unity. It is about the Mogami River, its colour and movement. It is a good example of repeated phonetic and structural repetition which build cohesive unity throughout. There are no contrasting juxtapositions as in some previous discussed tanka.

All five lines contain two syllable structures with the vowel a (ama-, kata-, -gawa, wata-, naga-). Three lines (1,2,4) begin with four syllable words. Most phonological and structural repetition occur between the first two lines and the last two lines which shall be designated as the first and last parts in this essay. The parts precede and succeed the tanka topic in line 3. All the repetitions serve literarily to unify the whole piece. Three lines (1,2,4) begin with two syllables each containing the front vowel a (ama-, kata-, wata-). In particular, the syllable forms, kata- in part one line 2) and wata- (line 4) in part two vary only by one consonant; likewise the words goro (2) and iro (4) and the two word endings -tsuhi and -tsumi (1,4). There are words in lines 1,2 4,5 that repeat the vowel sequence: a, a, u (amatsu, katamu, watatsu, nagaru).

There are also near analogous syllabic forms, such as -muku (2) vs -ruru (4), plus -tamu (2) vs -gami (3); as well as -gami (3) vs -garu (5). Uniquely these last two pairs each repeat the unit, -gami, from the third line and tanka topic, the Monagi River. "Gami's" nearly analogous partners, like the other euphonic pairs, also appear in the first and last tanka parts. Like creating a symphony, Mokichi sprinkled phonetically similar, somewhat similar and barely phonetically similar sound inits throughout the poem, but eschewed poetic mediocrity by their individual placement in words and by their appearance by the tanka parts.

An image one often finds in Mokichi's tanka is darkness. The Japanese semantic base ("kura-) appears in various of his tanka words, such as in English: dark, darken, darkness. By analyzing all (but Ohiro) tanka in Heinrich's book, I found poems with kura-based words are, in part or in full, by nature: grim, ominous, plaintive, lonely, or associated with solemnity or violence. Most tanka placed in dark times of the day, (evening or night images) are similar by dealing with topics of death, loneliness, sorrow, emotional pain, despair, and desolation.

The phrase "waga michi kurashi" (my way is dark) appears a number of times in Heinrich's selections of Mokichi's tanka.

honobono to	faintly, faintly	my road,
onore hikarite	its own light shining on	where I killed
nagaretaru	its wandering	the faintly shining
hotaru o korosu	I kill the firefly:	and wandering firefly,
waga michi kurashi	my way is dark	is dark
(Heinrich)	(Heinrich)	(Heinrich)

In both translations there can be a semantic contrast between light and dark (without light).

Heinrich states that the word, “korosu” can be understood as different parts of speech. As a verb, “kill”, it can end the first tanka part (ll 1-4) as seen in the first interpretation. Or “korosu” can modify the words, “waga michi”, “my road,” as depicted secondly in my hopefully not too dissonant interpretation. The utilization of a word, which could be two parts of speech each with different meanings, is linguistically clever on Mokichi’s part.

“Michi”, (the way) can have a concrete or an abstract meaning which would be in English: “road” or “life course”. “Kurashi”, “dark”, has both literal and figurative meanings, “without light” or “grim, ominous”. For example, the last line “my way is dark” might read “my road is without light” or “my life’s way is grim, ominous.”

The second translation in my opinion is less complex. “Michi” can only mean “road” and “kurashi” “dark” in the sense of without light. Hence, the ending “waga michi kurashi”, translates “my road is dark”. The last line of the first tanka version can also mean the same, but there are other interpretations given the other semantic interpretations of both “michi” and “kurashi”. “My road is dark’ can also mean “my road is grim”, e.g. in the sense of physically challenging to his movement.

If “michi” is interpreted as “life course” or “way of life”, the tanka reading is more interesting. “My way is dark” (waga michi kurashi), could mean “my life is dark” in the sense of cloudy, disorganized. In contrast to the firefly whose light can regulate its objectives, Mokichi’s life was often out of order according to his biography. In another meaning, the phrase could mean my life course is grim, ominous. The firefly, always in control with its light, could never be viewed as disconsolate about its course. In contrast Mokichi was often concerned about the soundness of his life and personal strength to pursue it.

Finally, why kill the firefly and what does killing reveal about Mokichi? Mokichi often wrote tanka about killing insects, flies and ants in his room, a nuisance to anyone. He also had a very sensitive skin condition, and frequently wrote about killing outdoor insects that could bite or sting, e.g. mosquitos. A firefly, however, is neither a bother or a dermatological danger. There is no cultural custom in Japan that promotes killing fireflies. Children may catch them and the flies may die, but death is not the intent (Amelia Fielden, personal communication).

“Waga michi kurashi” could also imply Mokichi felt his life was grim or ominous, because he murdered a unique and fascinating creature. Or he could have felt jealousy for the creature who was always in charge its life course. The small insect with its light could wander hither and thither wherever it deemed. Mokichi could not. He had no stable enlightenment in life.

Feelings of resentment not guilt are more likely related to killing the insect. Mokichi was an anti-social and misanthropic. He valued a high income over compassion for humanity. He was elitist, racist and fascist. He was compatico with the ideals of the Nazi SS, and all his life esteemed Hitler, the arbiter of

genocide. It is unlikely he felt sensitivity for the firefly, especially if he did not have it for many humans.

One might claim it is too fastidious analyzing Mokichi's feelings in detail. Yet, it was Mokichi himself who insisted "tanka must be an expression of inner self...and penetrate nature deeply." Mokichi was a brilliant poet, but his tanka primarily self-absorbed. His creativity and aesthetics are undoubtly outstanding, but he was not.

Footnotes: 1. Scholars Shinoda and Goldstein have composed a brilliant book. My hope is that I have presented their thoughts accurately and in a valuable manner.

2. Any of my analyses or conclusions about Mokichi's style might or might not be representative of his work in toto. My article is based on all the books which were available in European languages. There are few: two book in English and one in German (Wanzentagebuch).

3. Toxin in hima is ricin which militants introduced into Japanese subways to kill people.

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