

## Briefly Reviewed

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**Marlène Buitelaar, ed.** *The Scent of Music, Haiku with a touch of music.* Den Bosch, Netherlands: 't schrijverke, 2013, 74 pp., perfect softbound, 5 x 7. ISBN 978-94-90607-8. US\$16 plus postage from [www.redmoonpress.com](http://www.redmoonpress.com) or [max@verhart.org](mailto:max@verhart.org).

This boutique collection “is dedicated entirely to haiku referring in one way or another to man-made music.” A first volume was devoted to Dutch haiku poets; this second volume features 194 haiku written by English-language poets or translated into English from the Dutch. The introduction by Marlène Buitelaar and Max Verhart offers three categories of musical reference. In the first, music functions as “décor” or background for the poem; in the second, it functions as metaphor; in the third, as subject. Readers decide to which group each haiku may belong. The game is an enjoyable one, as is the eccentric choice of many splendid examples of musical haiku. *Chopin nocturne— / the lower octaves warm / from the sun* (Hortensia Anderson); *night rain— / the small serrated song / of a frog* (Ferris Gilli); *after the shooting star— / a single note / from the wind chime* (Michael Dylan Welch).  
~MRB

**Carolyn Hall, ed.** *The Color of Water.* Santa Rosa, CA: Two Autumns Press, 2013, unpag., stapled, 5.25 x 7. No ISBN. US\$8. Available from the publisher. To order, contact [jwrobello@hotmail.com](mailto:jwrobello@hotmail.com).

This handsome chapbook features haiku by the four poets invited to the 24th annual (September 2013) Two Autumns

reading sponsored by the Haiku Poets of Northern California: Gregory Longenecker, Eve Luckring, Carolyne Rohrig, and Ce Rosenow. Carolyn Hall's selection of twelve representative poems for each (from among many more read) includes not a single miss. There is enough of excellence here to give the reader a decided taste for the style, concerns, and particular genius of these poets, whose work runs the gamut of traditional, contemporary, and experimental approaches to a wide range of natural and human matters. Beyond the appreciation of distinctive and compelling differences, the reader may seek and find commonalities of experience and expression that lend haiku in all its forms transcendent power. *he rereads / her last text message / footprints on the moon* (Gregory Longenecker); *words / / still pink / close to the bone* (Eve Luckring); *corner bar / I drink to the last drop / of your intention* (Carolyne Rohrig); *a few crumbs / on the tablecloth . . . / she says maybe* (Ce Rosenow). ~MRB

**Marco Fraticelli. *Drifting*.** Catkin Press, 2013, 86 pp., perfect softbound, 5 x 6.75. ISBN 978-0-9880784-4-4. US\$10 plus postage from claudiaradmore@gmail.com or kingsroadpress@hotmail.com.

This extraordinary little book features selected entries from the diaries of one Celesta Taylor, a widowed woman living in rural Canada at the turn of the 20th century, and what amounts to an extended haiku meditation on her life by Marco Fraticelli, the man who discovered the diaries years ago in an abandoned cabin. Although the endeavor bears resemblance to haibun, it is something other—a kind of call and response—or more accurately, call and empathically imagined equivalence. Fraticelli notes in a brief preface that he wrote the haiku “as I imagined Celesta might have,” for despite constraints of gender and history, “there are experiences and emotions that are universal and timeless. It is into these that I tried to tap.” And, indeed, he does. Celesta's first entries, as selected by Fraticelli, record her many chores and the comings and goings of her widowed cousin, by whom she is employed to care for his children and household. Her direct references to the natural world beyond her door are few: quarts of strawberries picked,

the weather, the presence of crows or the good sound of “birds.” Yet, knowing that Celesta works the garden, wanders the woods in search of the herbals with which she makes medicines, and at times wishes she “could fly,” Fraticelli intuits a fuller poetic response to her environment. Then, as the diarist grows into self-awareness, more ready to use the writing to note dreams, desires and the emotional turmoil of her relationship with her cousin, Fraticelli channels the undertow too. Page by page, diary entries and haiku take on separate currents that cross and recross into a rising torrent that is dammed at the last to a trickle. Throughout, the haiku do an excellent job of speaking the unspoken with authenticity—only a few struck this reader as too “modern” and self-referential for the historical Celesta’s voice. On balance, these hardly mar Fraticelli’s unusual and yes, experimental, achievement. The haiku bring as much depth to the diary as the diary to the art. *I sprinkle ashes / from the woodstove / onto the compost pile; new year’s eve / behind the jars of preserves / a broken cocoon; night of no moon / I light every lamp / to read your letter.* ~MRB

**Jay Friedenberg. *One Rock Out of Place.*** Uxbridge, UK: Alba Publishing, 2013, 40 pp., perfect softbound, 5.75 x 8.25. ISBN 978-0-9575265-5-6. US\$12. Order from [info@alba-publishing.com](mailto:info@alba-publishing.com).

In this fine first collection, Jay Friedenberg organizes some 60 haiku in two kinds of place: “Town and Country” and “City and Street.” In the first, he visits many of the more conventional themes in haiku—moments of attention to the great outdoors, the weather, the flora and fauna that inspire and intrigue—and in self-effaced style. In the second, his lens zooms inward, as if self-awareness were more of a premium when pressed on all sides by the strangers, the noise, the choices, the endless information of city life. The stark juxtaposition of these two kinds of spaces makes for a read both charming and compelling. *morning downpour / at my doorstep / a small frog; morning shave / my memory of the dream . . . / cut short; her rant an express train speeds through.* ~MRB

**Robert Epstein, ed. *Now This: Contemporary Poems of Beginnings, Renewals, and Firsts*.** Shelbyville, KY: Wasteland Press, 2013, 187 pp., perfect softbound, 6 x 9. ISBN 978-1-60047-895-6. US\$17.95 from [www.wastelandpress.net](http://www.wastelandpress.net).

Fourth in a series of poetry compilations focused on the stress points of human existence, this volume celebrates beginner's mind and the ability to see the present moment as if for the first time, as a new start on life—all as expressed by a wide range of haiku poets. *the long day you leave as it begins* (marlene mountain); *commencement / all eyes turn toward / the hummingbird* (Robert Epstein); *meadowlark— / all you'll ever need to know / about sunrise* (Chad Lee Robinson); *themomentwhenmoonlightbecomesbirdsong* (Sandra Simpson).

~MRB

**Claudia Chapline. *Bird Watch*.** Stinson Beach, CA: Red Comma Editions, 2013, 104 pp., perfect softbound, 5 x 7. ISBN 0-9653569-8-1. US\$18 from [www.claudiachapline.wordpress.com](http://www.claudiachapline.wordpress.com).

In this first collection of haiku, remarkable for its evocation of the northern California sand spit and salt water estuary where the writer-artist makes her home, over 150 poems take us through the four seasons on land and sea, in mind and heart. *harvest moon / noctaluca swimming / my own light forgotten*.

~MRB

**Jane Reichhold. *A Dictionary of Haiku*,** second edition. Gualala, CA: AHA Books, 2013, 328 pp., perfect softbound, 6 x 9. ISBN 0-944676-24-3. US\$18 from [www.AHApoetry.com](http://www.AHApoetry.com); \$16.20 at Amazon.com.

A reprised collection from the formidable and prolific Reichhold, in its first instar (1992) *A Dictionary of Haiku* won the Haiku Society of America Merit Book Award. Readers may expect a new selection of over 5000 poems written (or revised) since 1993, “arranged according to the five seasons and seven traditional *saijiki* categories of Japan.” SUMMER: Animals: *lizard: rented cabin / the lizard hisses me / off his porch*. ~MRB

**Kala Ramesh, Johannes Manjrekar, and Vido Jyoti, eds.** *First Katha Book of Haiku, Haibun, Senryu, & Tanka*. New Delhi, India: Katha Publishers, 2013, 116 pp., e-book. ISBN 978-93-82454-19-9. US\$2.99 from [www.magzter.com](http://www.magzter.com).

Thirty-five voices from a country that “draws much of its sustenance from nature and her transient seasons” are featured in this e-book of haiku and its related forms. One recognizes an immediacy in the treatment of diverse nature and human settings and themes, with “dream spaces” suggested by the artwork of Surabhi Singh. In the afterword poet and writer Tracy Koretsky guides the reader through the use of *kigo* to unlock meaning in a variety of the poems included on the pages of this engaging and delightful collection. *stalled traffic / a cow picks flowers / off the wedding car* (Johannes Manjrekar); *thunderclap— / the sleeping newborn / throws up her arms* (Chitra Rajappa); *temple ruins / only the wind still / offers flowers* (Rohini Gupta). ~FB

**Marian Olson.** *Moondance*. Santa Fe, NM: Deep North Press, 2013, unpag. (52 pp.), perfect softbound, 5.5 x 7. ISBN 978-1-929116-19-5. US\$18 from [www.modernhaiku.org](http://www.modernhaiku.org).

Of all the themes and images treated in poems written through the ages, the moon must be at the top of the list. This planetary body in all of its phases is a constant companion. It is the *sabi* and *wabi* of our musings and most often inseparable from our deeper feelings, especially those of love and longing. As a symbol for fulfillment and emptiness, we are often pulled under its spell. The author has taken great care to bow deeply to the moon, both through her haiku and the art and design by Lidia Rozmus. Paper stock is midnight blue and like satin to touch, as if passing a hand through the summer sky. Pages are fittingly sparse, with a single haiku on each accompanied by a degree of the moon placed strategically in an upper corner so that when the reader flips quickly through the pages the eye catches the moon waning and waxing. Fifty-two pages, one for each week of the year, with 39 haiku that reach for the heart. *moon shadows / luring me deeper / into the dream; full of mischief / the old devil moon / between us*. ~FB

**Graham High, ed. *Barbed Wire Blossoms: The Museum of Haiku Literature Award Anthology 1992–2011***. Essex, U.K.: The British Haiku Society, 2012, 91 pp., perfect softbound, 5.75 x 8.25. ISBN 978-1-906333-01-0. £7.00 from [www.britishhaikusociety.org.uk](http://www.britishhaikusociety.org.uk).

A well-composed and comprehensive anthology of haiku selected from the British Haiku Society's quarterly journal *Blithe Spirit* to receive the Museum of Haiku Literature Award. The BHS and *Blithe Spirit* were launched in 1990 and the first MHLA for an issue was presented in 1992. Over 80 haiku by 58 writers are included with each selector's informative commentary. As would be expected in a collection that spans 20 years, the poems contained within vary in style and content. Readers may also be interested in comparing these award-winning haiku with haiku currently written by others in the global community for commonalities and differences. *Snow bent branches / moonlight / slides to the ground* (Natalia L. Rudychev); *Willy-nilly / through her ashes / mother's daffodils* (David Leather); *Singing the storm / our words / / hurl / in the spinning drift* (Arwyn Evans). ~FB

**Scott Wiggerman & Constance Campbell, eds. *Lifting the Sky: Southwestern Haiku and Haiga***. Austin, TX: Dos Gatos Press, 2013, 100 pp., perfect softbound, 6 x 9. ISBN 978-09840399-3-7. US\$15.95 from [www.dosgatospress.org](http://www.dosgatospress.org).

*Lifting the Sky* is a collection inspired by the landscape, seasons, and human connection to the beauty and flavor of the American Southwest. A variety of voices, some more seasoned than others, deliver lines teeming with mountain and mesa, cactus and canyon, saguaro and snakeweed, lizard and luminaria, hoodoo and horno (a brief glossary is provided for terms unfamiliar to the reader). Many of the haiga are photographs that illustrate a sense of place, of time past and present in a region of the U.S. that is both wild and tamed. *lifting the sky / high over Arizona / saguaro arms* (Lesley Anne Swanson); *city lights— / counting constellations / to find where we are* (Bryce Emley); *hiking / the highest peak / I fold the map* (Carolyn Tourney Floreck). ~FB

## Other Collections Received

**Carolyn Giles Banks. *Tigers, Temples and Marigolds.*** Minneapolis, MN: Wellington-Giles Press, 2013, 16 pp., hand-crafted, limited edition, 5.5 x 8.5. ISBN 978-0-9645254-5-0. US\$17 + \$3 postage from wellingtongilespress@gmail.com.

This beautifully designed chapbook contains 6 haiku and 12 haibun that record the author's travels in India in 2013. The haibun journey begins in a Minneapolis airport and ends on the Ganges where the author scatters her late husband's ashes. Engaging prose and well-imagined haiku. *Ayurvedic spa / a cow's moo / ends meditation.*

**Satoru Kanematsu. *Hazy Moon: Haiku Diary.*** Nakagawaku, Nagoya: Gakuhōsha Publishing Co., 2013, 83 pp., perfect softbound, 5.5 x 8. ISBN 978-4-9907320-0-4. US\$15 from the author at 4-23-13 Yobitsugi, Minami-ku, Nagoya 457-0014.

A collection of haiku by Kanematsu published in *Asahi Haikuist Network* from 2000 to 2012, with comments by David McMurray, editor of *Asahi*. Kanematsu is assistant editor of the haiku journal *Kō*, writes on a variety of themes from nature to family to war, and adheres to a 3-5-3 syllable count. The haiku are dated and serve as a kind of diary, as in: April 15, 2011—*Hazy moon / thousands of souls lost / in the quake.*

**Saeed Abbasi. *My Haiku/Mis Haikus.*** Self-published, 2012, 266 pp., perfect softbound, 5 x 7. ISBN 978-1-62847-188-5. US\$25 from saeedabbasi33@hotmail.com.

Haiku in English, Spanish, and Persian, most nearly at the full 17-syllable count. Seasonal and personal themes with a poetic feel to a variety of lines: *The November wind / around midnight has a sound / no one can ignore.* In the last section of the collection, the lines become tighter and the haiku more concise: *From now on / the certain distance / for writing.*