

Hay(na)ku 15: A Commemorative 15th Year Anniversary Anthology: Spanish / English, Tabios, E (ed). 2018, 232 pp; perfect softbound, 6 x 9. ISBN 978-0-9826493-8-1, 18 USD (Meritage Press, xPress(ed) and Paloma Press, available from Amazon).

Reviewed by Neil Leadbeater, Edinburgh.

The hay(na)ku, a tercet-based poetic form, was created by Eileen R. Tabios in 2003. It received its name from Vince Gotera who had co-founded (with Nick Carbó) the Flips Litserve where Tabios introduced the form. The basic tercet presents the first line as one word, the second line as two words, and the third line as three words. The words can be as long or short as desired by the poet. The hay(na)ku is open to a number of variations, some of which are to be found in this anthology.

The book follows on from *The First Hay(na)ku Anthology*, (2005), edited by Jean Vengua and Mark Young, *The Hay(na)ku Anthology Volume II*, (2008), also edited by Jean Vengua and Mark Young, and *The Chained Hay(na)ku Project*, (2012) curated by Ivy Alvarez, John Bloomberg-Rissman, Ernesto Priego and Eileen R. Tabios, all three books jointly published by Meritage Press (United States) and xPress(ed) (Finland).

This anniversary collection brings together the work of 128 poets and translators from 13 countries with poems in eight languages: English, Filipino, Finnish, Hindi, Polish, Portuguese, Romanian and Spanish. In the second part of the book, 12 translators who, as part of the Poetry and Translation Seminar at the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM), translated 36 poets into Spanish from the now out-of-print *First Hay(na)ku Anthology*.

What is striking about this anthology is the way in which the contributors have chosen to use this form as a vehicle for expressing such a variety of content matter. For example, Tess Crescini (*Mindfulness Exercise*) and Jim Maccrary (*Mind Full Ness Ku*) use it as an exercise for mindfulness; Melinda Luisa De Jesús (*Crocus in Early Spring*) uses it to explore an act of personal remembrance, Elizabeth Robinson (*Sleep; Dream and Wake*) for

three exercises in extended metaphor; Randy Prunty (*untitled*) for the definition of a very long word; Vince Gotera (*9/11 plus 12*) for a comment on war and politics; Paul Cassinetta (*Viand*) for humour; Mark Young (*Shrug*) for a verbal description of body language and Ralph Semino Galàn (*Leda's Fate; Cassandra's Lament and Echo's Grief*) for a restatement of myth and legend.

To give a taste to the reader, here are four examples of other hay(na)kus that caught my attention:

deb y felio's chained hay(na)ku for its eloquent statement and the clever line break at the end of the first tercet which gives such a forceful impact to the hay(na)ku:

he
offered marriage
I said no
man
can own
a woman's body
after
her freedom
has been won.

Lani T Montreal's untitled hay(na)ku capturing a moment of extreme emotion (joy, fear, surprise? – the beauty of it is that we will never know) in six words:

Ma,
He called.
My heart leapt

There are interesting things going on with the punctuation there. The capital “H” contradicting the comma suggest that “Ma,” is only the beginning of what is about to be said (something that we as readers are not party to); the defining statement of “He called” emphasised by the full stop and then the absence of a full stop at the end of the final line, suggesting, once again, that there is more to follow.

Lars Palm's chained hay(na)ku, bucket of paint, for its quirky mixture of humour and high-seriousness put together between a bucket of paint and a cup of tea:

bucket of paint

*he takes a
break for
tea*

*to
regroup rethink
& return for*

*another round of
screwdriver versus
lid*

I particularly like the way the hay(na)ku is reversed for the middle section when the “thinking” is going on. The change of direction mirrors the change from physical to mental activity. Susan Echaore-McDavid's hay(na)ku, *Bad Days*, which reminds me of a line out of *Macbeth*: “Time and the hour run through the roughest day” (*Act I Scene 3*), as she canters through the days, the bad days, because one has to go on, one has to move forward, however difficult it may be. Riding high is like the shortness of breath that comes in shallow movements from the chest rather than the belly in moments of panic:

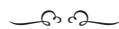
Bad Days

*Anxiety
rides high
in the saddle.*

All the poems are given enough space to breathe on the page.

Explanatory notes aid one's comprehension of the texts where appropriate. I was particularly appreciative of the extensive note accompanying Rebecca Mabanglo-Mayor's very fine chained hay(na)ku sequence *The Politics of Beauty* which, unfortunately, is too long to quote here. An informative essay, *Hay(na)ku / Sci(na)ku – Six Word Poetry* by Lauren McBride concludes the English section of the book and helpful biographies of all the poets and translators are given at the end.

Turning to the back of the book cover, it is clear that commenting on the hay(na)ku has become an art form in itself: Aimee Nezhukumattathil says that she loves the hay(na)ku “because of the zip and pop of it...the flame and spark of it. Like snapping a towel at someone you love” and Michael Leong describes it as “an elegantly minimalist form (a bit like the tip of an Oulipian “snowball”)”. It is hard to better these poetic descriptions of delight but it does say a lot about the way in which this versatile form has provided a new means for poetic expression. Fully recommended.



Number Eight Wire edited by Sandra Simpson and Margaret Beverland (2019, Piwakawaka Press, Tauranga, New Zealand) 150 pages 6” by 8¼”, Perfectbound, ISBN 978-0-473-46477-6, Australia: \$25 plus \$10 postage, UK/Europe/US \$25 plus \$18 postage (postal rates only good till July 1, 2019) To use paypal: haithologynz@gmail.com

Reviewed by Michael Ketchek

Number Eight Wire is the fourth New Zealand Haiku Anthology. In the introduction it is mentioned that ten years have passed since the last New Zealand Anthology. Composed of 330 haiku this fine collection highlights the work of 70 poets. The haiku touch on the universal and on things specific to New Zealand. For those haiku that are particular to New Zealand there is a helpful glossary of terms. So that if you are unfamiliar with