

FROGPOND XXII:3



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Established 1968

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Subscription/Membership US\$25 USA, \$27 Canada, \$35 overseas in US dollars by check on a US bank or International Postal Money Order. All subscriptions/memberships are annual, expire on December 31, and include 3 issues of FROGPOND. Single copies: US\$7 USA & Canada, US\$9 overseas, except 1992 & 1993 double issues, US\$10 US & Canada, US\$12 over-seas. If xeroxed copies of out-of-print issues are not acceptable, please specify when ordering. Make checks payable to Haiku Society of America, Inc.; send subscription/memberships, renewals, and donations to the Secretary, and back issue orders to the FROGPOND Editor.

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President's Message

Our second national meeting in June was held at Wilder Forest, near Milwaukee, and was organized by Midwest Regional Coordinator Randy Brooks and Jeanne Emrich. A fairly small meeting, it was choice. Jeanne runs a web site devoted to haiga, called HAIGAOnline, and during our meeting, we practiced this art under her direction. Wilder Forest is a camplike retreat area, complete with woods, deer, and loons. A good time was had by all, with good fellowship, and many good poems were written.

Haiku North America, while not an HSA function, was populated largely by HSA people. Meeting at Northwestern, it was the largest haiku gathering ever held in North America and featured some fine papers, much poetry, a celebration of the third edition of Cor van den Heuvel's haiku anthology, and much good interaction. Headed by Charles Trumbull, Sara Brant, and Joe Kirschner, it was a beautifully run meeting. Even the weather cooperated. The predicted heat and humidity of a Chicago area summer didn't materialize.

One HNA attendee, who was there briefly on his way to Tokyo, was Susumu Takiguchi, who is heading up the big meeting in London and Oxford next year, *Haiku2000, a World Haiku Festival*. HSA has become an official supporter of this festival. Further information will appear in our newsletter.

A letter from L. A. Davidson in May has informed me that an era in American haiku history has passed. Mary Benjamin, widow of HSA founder Harold G. Henderson, passed away at 93. Mrs. Henderson was a renowned dealer in documents and autographs of the famous, ending her distinguished career in 1995. The date of her passing was November 30, 1998.

Apropos of nothing, if there were a haiku group in the town of Ukiah, California, they would never win any contests, because their haiku would always be too late—in obedience to the following palindrome: *Emit no Ukiah haiku on time*. You are supposed to laugh.

Paul O. Williams

haiku

1) An unrhymed Japanese poem recording the essence of a moment keenly perceived, in which Nature is linked to human nature. It usually consists of seventeen *onji*.

2) A foreign adaptation of 1, usually written in three lines totalling fewer than seventeen syllables.

(from *A Haiku Path* page 82 with corrections from page

country mailbox leans
away from the road . . .
spring thaw

Randy Brooks

a note from my wife—
willow branches rub
the window sill

Christopher Pusateri

stiff breeze
sweeping up
her broom straw

Ernest J. Berry

spring afternoon
in and out of a nap—
the breeze

Stanford M. Forrester

the quiet
unfolding
a paper crane

Sandra Fuhringer

holding the guitar
still in his lap
a breeze across the porch

A. C. Missias

sparrows
suddenly silent
the eulogy goes on

Andrea Vlahakis

a tedious rain—
one by one, poplar tulips
drop into the creek

Elizabeth Howard

easing the lull
in conversation
fountain in a pond

Rees Evans

6
after the funeral
the closet dark
with rows of coats

Robert Boldman

awakening alone
on this first warm day
my old scars itch

Mykel Board

spring thaw—
the stream's lively gurgling
quickens my step

Evelyn H. Herrmann

spray off the torrent—
silver notes
of an ouzel's song

Ruth Yarrow

salmon run
the eagle's arc
from fir to fish

Robert Gibsoon

spring thunder clouds—
a tribe of wild monkeys
drumming on the roof

John Crook

spring afternoon
at the park playground, grandpa hangs
by his knees

Michael L. Evans

inside the burst
of children's laughter
white-moth butterfly

Robert Kusch

spring green
on the scaffold a workman
swinging his feet

Pamela Miller Ness

8

setting the chalkline
a spider follows behind
the carpenter

George Skane

slowly slowly
the clouds move
the steeple

Larry Kimmel

following a bus
following a backhoe
uphill—hot day

Paul Watsky

Dusk: the deepened sound
of the creek
after the bulldozer

A. Frederick Gasser

digging compost
worms in the wheelbarrow
burrow again

Lori Laliberte-Carey

woodpecker—
the silence when my shadow
touches the tree

Cindy Zackowitz

an answering whinney
from the valley
wind in the pines

A. C. Missias

The Cyber Pond

A. C. Missias

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One goal of "Cyberpond" has been to make available to readers lacking internet access a portion of the content (essays, poems, contest results) that they would otherwise miss. However, another goal, less explored up until now, has been to look into ways that the existence of the internet has influenced the evolution of the haiku community, both by acting as a forum for discussion that spreads and alters opinions, and by providing a medium for new kinds of sharing. It is that broader area that will concern the next several columns in this space. The World Wide Web has created a revolution in the dissemination of literature. Rather than relying on the slow and costly processes of putting together a book or journal, both of which also rely on editorial oversight, just about anybody can put up a website to showcase their own writing, and even collect and post the writing of others. There has been a proliferation of haiku sites over the last few years, including not only the comprehensive sites already reviewed in Cyberpond, but also personal collections by many authors, book reviews and commentaries, and all kinds of essays and information ranging from the insightful to the ludicrous. There are even sites where you can enter your own haiku into a box and have them automatically added to the site; for example Threejack Haiku <<http://www.threejack.com/haiku.htm>> gives a forum for haiku "venting" where you can read previous contributions and leave your own. This results in some fairly random compilations, as the only editing involves screening submissions for pornographic content. Readers have to exercise their own judgment in finding content that is worthwhile from among the offerings, as well as in determining what

constitutes haiku. However, beyond this large creation of "noise", the web is offering unique new directions for haiku's evolution. The first of these is the possibility of making older print content available again. For example, Gary Warner's haiku site for *Dogwood Blossoms* <<http://glwarner.narrowgate.net/haiku/>> has most of the back-issues of that journal, including essays on various topics (I got caught up in one about introducing haiku to an elementary school class), columns for beginners, and many haiku. I don't know how many other journals will follow this practice, but it could provide a wonderful opportunity for new readers to catch up on many of the discussions and debates that long-time writers may take for granted, as well as to access some classic essays that would otherwise be impossible to come by. Particularly in this day and age, when most editors lay out their journals using electronic tools anyway, converting them into web-accessible documents would not be difficult. Perhaps as back issues of discontinued journals (such as *Woodnotes* or *Dragonfly*) run out, their editors would be interested in "resurrecting" them in this way as Gary has done; the HSA might even provide an archive site. Alternatively, ongoing journals (such as *Modern Haiku* or *Frogpond*) might put current content on-line after a set period of time (perhaps several years). I am sure that there are both economic and legal landmines along such a path, but the payoff for future readers and students could be immense.

A second direction being pioneered by Web technology is the combination of haiku with complex graphical images. While haiga has a rich tradition of its own, it is rare for such work to have wide exposure; journals seldom have the capacity for photographs or color images, and there are few other ways to collect and distribute individual pieces. Now, however, this process is nearly painless: by using a scanner, it is easy to convert any picture into digital form and make it accessible on the web. This has led to several sorts of developments. First, contemporary haiga are getting a larger forum, especially in the new journal *Haiga Online* <<http://members.aol.com/HAIGA/HAIGAOnline.index.html>> put together by Jeanne Emrich. This site features "traditional" haiga: haiku are translated into

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Japanese, and thence into Japanese hand calligraphy, which is then laid on top of a painting or other artwork done in response to the poem. The whole combination (English haiku, and art work with calligraphy) is then visible on the site. Each issue of *Haiga Online* also features open challenges to writers and artists to complement each others' work ("haiku this picture" or "paint this haiku"), as well as examples of more modern haiga styles involving abstract painting, collage, or other media. In addition to this formal outlet, however, other sites have begun to incorporate images, not necessarily as part of a single piece of art, but as an accompaniment or punctuation. For example, Paul Mena, a name familiar to many of you, has recently reworked his site <<http://www.lowplaces.net>> so that haiku are presented singly or in small groups with accompanying images that range from sleek black and white photos to goofy color cartoons. Use of such graphics can set a mood for the reader or complement the contents of a specific poem, and many sites are using these techniques well.

Another way that the web is creating new possibilities goes beyond the use of simple images into multimedia presentation. For many years Rodrigo de Siquiera's "bamboo forest" <<http://www.lsi.usp.br/usp/rod/poet/sumie/sumie1.html>> has included background music of the shamisen for atmosphere. But now the intrepid folks at Haiku Canada have attempted to bring you face-to-face with the participants of this summer's Haiku North America meeting: they collected haiku from the authors in their own handwriting (on a digital tablet), many of which are already visible on their website <<http://hna.haikucanada.org/>>. And they've even taken this a step further, by recording short video clips of poets reading their own haiku, so that some day soon we should be able to see and hear there many of the people that we otherwise would only know by name. What documentary possibilities! What one wouldn't give to be able to see clips of Bashō at a renga party with pals. . .

The final change being wrought in haiku by way of the web is probably the one whose repercussions will be the longest-lasting: the creation of a popular concept of "haiku"

quite different from the ones held by most *Frogpond* readers. This derives partly from the large amount of noise created when anybody can put anything onto a web page with little available filtering, but it also arises from several specific trends or fads of recent years. These mostly consist of the appropriation of the suffix "ku" to a wide variety of poetic (and non-poetic) genres, whose only shared characteristic is that they are written in 17 syllables. For example, there is a site called *Haiku Headlines* <<http://www.coolwebsite.com/>> which collects and showcases "haiku" which are comments on recent news events.

forty nations talk
about rebuilding balkans
serbia left out.

alexander alkman

atlanta murders
death in the land of the spree
the home of the crave

jim poyser

|| 3

These poems show no lack of creativity, but I think they are more about commentary than about perception, and thus probably don't qualify as "haiku" as most of us would use the term. Even farther from traditional haiku are the overtly humorous and irreverent *Grumpy Dog* site <<http://grumpydog.com/>>, whose motto is "a cultural truckstop for those with a tiny attention span," and the archive of Spam-ku <<http://pemtropics.mit.edu/~jcho/spam/>>, 17-syllable poems devoted to the mystical question of what goes into that most famous canned luncheon meat, and what its effects might be. As examples from these two sites I offer you:

Highly unnatural,
The tortured shape of this "food"
... A small pink coffin

lonely lily pad
once pride of the pond, now home
to a farting frog

Christopher James Hume

There are also proponents of SciFiKu <<http://www.scifaiku.com/read/tom/>> which have science fiction themes, and occasional lists of "cat-ku" and "dog-ku" make the rounds by email. At the end of this continuum, one can find sites that are essentially a pure parody of the haiku form, such as the Random Haiku Generator <<http://>

/www.tripod.com/explore/fun_games/haiku/>, which will group together random 5- and 7-syllable phrases from its memory base (sometimes with quite humorous results).

What does the proliferation of all this Fun-ku mean for the general public understanding of haiku? Certainly some of these sites will admit that they have nothing to do with genuine haiku – the *Grumpy Dog* site has a disclaimer to that effect (along with a few pointers to “serious” haiku sites), and one of the “create your own pseudo-haiku poetry” forms is in the midst of an otherwise serious haiku site (belonging to de Siquiera) and clearly light-hearted. But it appears that the *Threejacks* site does think what it is collecting is haiku, and many other sites and collections are equally misled and misleading. Thus, the community of haiku “purists” is faced with a growing revolution, as a large number of readers and writers are coming in contact with some concept of haiku which may or may not align with our own. On the one hand, this offers the opportunity to greatly increase the pool of haiku appreciators, as people exposed on the web go on to seek out more information and perhaps become students of the traditional form. On the other hand, we must also face the fact that the Whatever-Ku has taken on a life of its own, and may generate its own community of appreciators and participants who have no interest in being constrained by the boundaries of some externally imposed definition of “haiku”, preferring the challenges and satisfactions that a well-wrought editorial-ku or kitten-ku can bring on its own. This will irritate some, inspire others, merely appear as a curiosity to most; but it is part of the expansion and change that any literary form undergoes as it passes from being the exclusive domain of a select group into being part of the popular realm. We can’t ignore it, and we probably can’t prevent it, but we need to realize that it is happening and decide how we wish to be involved with the continued evolution of this form that we hold dear.

For now, that’s it from the Cyberpond. See you next issue!

nature walk
a ladybug climbs out
of the dog's tail

Carolyn Rohrig

surrounded
by lavender
I hum with the bees

Muriel Ford

15

mockingbird
opens its wing—
lightning strikes the field

F. W. Chambliss

summer
a thousand branches gathered
by a single trunk

Giselle Maya

On the bare hill
the unchanging shape of
a windswept pine

Edward Zuk

her ashes
on the hilltop breeze
again the meadowlark

Kelly Clifton

digging ginseng
earth worn into
my lifeline

eric l. houck jr.

dry heat—
to the same withered flower
a bee returns

Charles Easter

16

the dead snake
curls back upon itself
heat wave

Marc Thompson

sultry afternoon—
the lizard's tail sways
with the heron's flight

Linda Jeanette Ward

honeysuckle!
the turn
home

John Turner

a string of Christmas lights
brightens the trailer park
summer solstice

Marc Thompson

17

Key West heat—
the kitchen staff's
chained bicycles

Barry George

tiger lilies
just a few left
by the parking lot

Michael Fessler

voices drifting from the road
bindweed
on the tilted gate

Brett B. Bodemer

afternoon sleep
the slack tangle
of the garden hose

Judson Evans

around the morning glory—
the soil holding
the day's rain

Gary Hotham

quiet afternoon
only the sound of an ant
hauling a crumb

Robert Epstein

yellow day lily—
Grandmother picking off
faded blooms

D. Claire Gallagher

mindfully weeding the garden
forgetting the tea kettle

Robert Boldman

hot
the tiny worm stuck
to the gardening glove
Francis W. Alexander

lone summer squash . . .
one more day
letting it fatten
Robert Mainone

19

rain expected . . .
between rumbles
a dog barks
Pamela Connor

gathering storm—
the scent of honeysuckle
across the marsh
Rick Tarquinio

during the rainstorm
the child's coloring-in
becomes more intense
Richard von Sturmer

The Conscious Eye

Dee Evetts

Finding myself some three thousand miles from home, with a deadline to meet, I have taken stock of my resources. These consist of the two most recent issues of *Frogpond*, and the Spring Street Haiku Group's 1998 and 1999 chapbooks. In this extremity, it occurs to me that it might prove an interesting exercise to seek out specifically those poems which prompt me to think—to reassess some aspect of my own life, or life in general—yet which do so unintentionally, or only incidentally.

Right off I discover two such haiku, that affect me in a straightforward but significant way. The first is by Robert Epstein, the second by Kate MacQueen:

first spring day
taking the long way
to the gas station

half way across
why rush past
this warm dry rock

Both these poems remind me how important it is to remain capable of lingering and dawdling—which once came so naturally to us, as children. Like most adults I tend to hasten all day long from one appointment or goal to another. There is a meditative practice called The Pause, which requires the adherent to stop at least once during the day and take half a minute

(even fifteen seconds) to gaze, to touch, to listen—to connect totally with the present through one of more of the senses, while abandoning momentarily all notions of purpose.

Other messages come more indirectly, from an experience or image that offers the reader hidden intimations. Thus Rebecca Lilly's

So quick,
the bee's sting on my arm—
summer heat

opens my mind to the possibility of not taking things so personally. A drenching shower, an insect's bite— must I necessarily feel a sense of injury, or can I stretch so far as to admit such ideas as blessing, baptism, even initiation?

Still in the garden, I find Dimitar Anakiev:

garden work—
talking to each other
back to back

This is such a quiet poem, by contrast. Yet it embodies for me the very essence of human companionship. Father, friend, sister, lover—regardless, this is the real stuff. Let there be more of this in my life.

Sometimes I am hard pressed to find the words for what it is I apprehend or intuit from a particular poem. Take this one by Catherine Mair:

above his pillow
an ex-girlfriend's shell mobile
swings with the tide

This works wonderfully on the literal level; at the same time I am left with an inexplicable sense of acceptance—of atonement almost—in contemplating my own past relationships that have swung with the tide.

Equally elusive are the feelings prompted by
Arkedy Elterman's

after classes
playing all by herself
the piano teacher

Again, the picture is compelling and complete in itself. And without bidding, I find myself thinking about the way each of us nurtures her own soul—or fails to do so. In ? Morrie Schwartz' near-to-last words: "Love . . . or die."

In the realm of human relationships, some of the most effective senryu invite us to smile at another's behaviour, while they hold up a mirror to our own. So it is with Karen Sohne's delightful

scenic hillside
my daughter apologizes
for the absence of cows

How can I not recall the many occasions when I wanted to show off a favorite place or prospect, only to discover the windows boarded up, the peaks hidden by cloud, the menu changed? I catch myself in the role of stage manager, deeply attached to things being as I remember or plan them to be. Next time around, having read this poem, I may be a little more trusting of the fact that perfection offers itself in an infinite number of guises.

Sohne excels at probing the human psyche with a compassionate eye, through poems that present themselves as disarmingly domestic. She has another poem, of far greater complexity:

fifteenth birthday
my son's eyes no longer
exactly blue

On one level we have simply the unvarnished

statement that the poet has noticed a change in the color of her son's eyes. On another, the poem evokes all the conflicting feelings of the parent regarding a child who is on the brink of adulthood. It's about the love that knows it must let go. Or, as in Gibran's image: the bow that remains steady so that the arrow may fly true. I find the word "exactly" to be the master stroke in this poem, for it carries so much: the closeness of observation, the tender familiarity with such physical details, the determination to be objective.

On a yet deeper plane, we are reminded of the inevitable change and loss that we must face in our lives, not excluding our own mortality. I can think of perhaps a dozen haiku—ancient or modern—that supremely succeed in uniting the everyday with the sublime. This is surely one of them.

* * *

1. *Frogpond* XXII:1
2. *Frogpond* XXII:1
3. *Frogpond* XXII:1
4. *Frogpond* XXII:2
5. *Frogpond* XXII:2
6. *Frogpond* XXII:2
7. *Absence of Cows* (Spring Street Haiku Group 1998)
8. *Absence of Cows* (Spring Street Haiku Group 1998)

(Submissions and recommendations for this column can be sent to Dee Evetts, 102 Forsyth Street #18, New York NY 10002. Please state whether previously published, giving details. Work may also be selected from general submissions to Frogpond, and other sources.)

unrippled glass—
the smoothness
of the morning lake

F. W. Chambliss

chosen moment
we slip into cold water
between willows

Doris Thurston

The feeding mother—
toes dipped
in sunlight.

Edward Beatty

24

until we stop
the long straight backbone
of the heron

Bruce Ross

gathering driftwood—
a yellowjacket trails me
from find to find

Emily Romano

a few berries left
over the edge . . .
waves on the rocks below

Randy Brooks

the ferry slows
through Wrangell Narrows . . .
meteor showers begin

Billie Wilson

25

riverbend—
the perfect curve
of migrating birds

Robert Kusch

loon's wake
and loon's cry
becoming darkness

Winona Baker

tossing sleepless
recalling those forgotten . . .
sound of the buoy-bell

Barry Spacks

thick summer fog
whitening the darkness
a plane's descent

Lenard D. Moore

after the earthquake—
the knocking
of flies on the window

Marie Louise Munro

fallen nest
I carry it gently
home

Carolyn Thomas

26

There, by the roadside
a family of crosses
in the fading light

Joan C. Sauer

among cyclists
a butterfly balances
on a blade of grass

Patricia Prime

telephone wire
sinks at the wind
of the hawk's wing

Thomas Keith

hermit thrush—
a pod of purple thistle
lets go

Robert Gilliland

27

sunset quiet
a hummingbird's wings
scatter dry leaves

David Carlson

squeezed into
her black slinky dress—
night

Edward J. Rielly

moonlit heat
strains of country music
of lost love

Louise Somers Winder

cancer
 scare—
 my
 garden
 has
 weeds
 as
 tall
 as
 me

John Ower

This hot summer day . . .
 looking for a little give
 in the honeydews

Tom Tico

running up
 the lightning scar—
 poison ivy vine

John Ower

sickroom window—
 still clinging in the orchard
 ripe fruit clusters

H. F. Noyes

under the covers
 making elaborate plans
 for the eclipse

Thom Williams

quick-flitting moth
my old cat pretending
not to notice

Carolyn Hall

steeping tea:
the sky growing deep
with storm . . .

Carol Wallen

29

sun replaces rain
yellow leaves at the window
suddenly gold

Ann Seelbach

I yo-yo our spider
outside to a leaf—
company's coming

Ann Goldring

carrying home
a jar of mint—
summer moon

Gloria Procsal

The Practical Poet: Creating a Haiku Checklist

Michael Dylan Welch

In the previous issue of *Frogpond* I invited readers to share examples of checklists they use to assess the effectiveness of their haiku. I'm pleased to share a selection of the response with you now (most are edited and shortened). By asking some of these questions or applying some of these ideas to your haiku, you can improve the quality of your work. With your own haiku checklist, you can be your own editor first before sending your haiku out for publication.

Pamela Miller Ness in New York City shared a useful list she uses to teach haiku revision to her students. She begins by asking if the poem is a haiku and offers two definitions of haiku to serve as benchmarks. She quotes the first definition from the Haiku Society of America book *A Haiku Path*: "a poem recording the essence of a moment keenly perceived, in which Nature is linked to human nature." She also quotes R. H. Blyth: "the expression of a temporary enlightenment, in which we see into the life of things." These are good places to begin. She also asks the following questions:

1. Are the experience, imagery, and language clear?
2. Does the experience resonate? Is it more than a picture or a mundane experience? Does it transcend the merely personal?
3. If a seasonal reference is used, does it augment the experience?
4. Does the haiku let the reader enter the poem and complete the experience?
5. Is each word necessary and evocative? Are the nouns and verbs specific? Is each adjective and article necessary?
6. Are the line breaks effective and are the lines in the most effective order?
7. Does the haiku have "music"? Consider the positive and negative effects of alliteration, assonance, accent, and internal rhyme.
8. Does the language and/or experience have an element of surprise? Does the poem evoke an "aha" response in the reader?
9. Is the image and/or language fresh and unusual?
10. Does the haiku effectively juxtapose two images?

In addition to Pamela's question about whether each word is necessary, specific, and evocative, I would also ask whether the language is simple, ordinary, and authentic. If the language is too unusual, the poem may come across as contrived.

Another response came from Lori Laliberte-Carey in Tucker, Georgia. She notes that her checklist is not so much for sending haiku out to editors, but for assessing haiku that aren't working quite right. Her "toolbox" for assessing problem haiku includes the following questions by category:

1. Juxtaposition: Does the poem use a strong, interesting, or credible juxtaposition?
2. Language: Can better words be used, perhaps with fewer syllables or better meter?
3. Line placement: Does moving one or all of the lines around improve the clarity or impact of the poem?
4. Direction: Does the poem move from small to large, big to small, up to down, down to up? And should the direction be changed to improve it?
5. Focus: Is the poem about one focused moment or a whole afternoon? Is it one poem or many?

3 ||

I quite like Lori's question about direction in the poem. Often haiku move from large to small in an attempt to sharpen our focus. However, perhaps moving in another direction can give us fresh insight. In addition, sometimes it's important to present images in the order they were experienced (first you notice a shadow, and then you turn and see the turkey vulture sweeping down upon you). In other cases you may want to rearrange the sequence of images if the effect is improved without becoming manipulative or contrived.

Lori also brought my attention to Phil Rubin's six concise criteria for judging haiku that appeared in a recent issue of *South by Southeast*:

1. Does the poem say something it doesn't tell?
2. Can I read the poem over and over and get something different from it?
3. Does the poem use necessary and carefully chosen words?
4. Do I like the poem's sound and rhythm?
5. Does the poem offer a new way of seeing a commonplace thing?
6. Does the poem provide a natural, though unexpected twist?

Of course, revising a poem so it passes these tests is the tough part. Some poems are best abandoned. But for those poems worth refining, the goal of these lists is to give you something to aim for. Charlotte Digregorio of Portland, Oregon, presented two useful lists divided into questions of form and then content. These classifications are a useful reminder that haiku are a concise marriage of both form and content. These divisions may be thought of as the science and art of haiku. Here's Charlotte's procedural checklist regarding form:

1. After I write a haiku, I let it sit for a few days, rereading it to myself periodically. I am then able to tighten the haiku, cutting out extraneous, redundant, or implied words.
2. I repeat each haiku to myself to determine the best placement of words. For example, sometimes a verb that one would be inclined to put at the end of a line may sound better as the first word of the next line.
3. In revising my haiku, I choose the best line sequence.

With my own haiku, my habit is to let them sit so I can give them a fresh look after some time has passed. I often let six to eighteen months pass before assessing the poems in my notebooks or considering them for publication. Hopefully, the best haiku will age nicely like a fine wine. I also like Charlotte's suggestion to read each poem aloud. This is an excellent way to assess the lyricism, sound, and rhythm of the poem. Now here's Charlotte's checklist regarding content:

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1. Does my haiku appeal to the senses, emotions, and imagination of the reader, based on my daily observations that most people could relate to?
2. Does my haiku avoid abstractions or explanations? Are the images specific, direct, and concrete?
3. Does my haiku contain images that reinforce the relatively humble condition of human beings?

Here Charlotte takes a moment to consider the audience of her poem, and whether typical readers will find experience in common in what she writes. And by asking if the poem reflects human existence with humility, she asks if the poem produces a feeling of awe in the reader as he or she considers human experience in the grand context of nature.

Another list I'd like to share with you is one prepared by Christopher Herold of Port Townsend, Washington. This list appears on the Web site for Christopher's new online haiku journal, *The Heron's Nest* (<http://www.theheronsnest.com/journal>). The following are qualities that Christopher finds essential to haiku:

1. Present moment magnified (immediacy of emotion).
2. Interpenetrating the source of inspiration (no space between observer and observed).
3. Simple, uncomplicated images.
4. Common language.
5. Finding the extraordinary in "ordinary" things.
6. Implication through objective presentation, not explanation; appeal to intuition, not intellect.
7. Human presence is fine if presented as an archetypal, harmonious part of nature (human nature should blend in with the rest of nature rather than dominate the forefront).
8. Humor is fine if in keeping with *karumi* (lightness)--nothing overly clever, cynical, comic, or raucous.
9. Musical sensitivity to language (effective use of rhythm and lyricism).
10. Feeling of a particular place with the cycle of the seasons.

Thank you to everyone who responded to my request for haiku checklists. I hope the ideas presented here will be a help to you as you assess your haiku, and refine your haiku perception. As you can see, the lists include significant overlap. These areas of repetition are perhaps the most important aspects we should consider in revising our haiku.

As I mentioned in the previous installment of this column, several others have written valuable haiku checklists, including Lorraine Ellis Harr with her "Isn't of Haiku" and Jane Reichhold with her list of "Haiku Rules that have Come and Gone" (<http://www.ahapoetry.com/haiku.htm>). One list that I find particularly useful is by James W. Hackett (you can find it in each of his books as well as in Harold G. Henderson's *Haiku in English*). He emphasizes the importance of interpenetration and lifefulness, as does Christopher (learn of the pine from the pine, as Basho said). I hope creating your own haiku checklist will help you see the lifefulness of all experience.

dawn
a broken line of shoes
on the temple steps

paul m.

dew on the grass
the morning paper
leaves a trail

Jerry Ball

end of summer—
the grocery store flowers
crowding their pots

Kim Hodges

34

autumn dusk
the bent-over mason chooses
one more rounded stone

Anne Homan

sound of footsteps—
hidden in the long grass
fallen apples

Caroline Gourlay

window frost
in the shape of leaves—
bare trees

jack galmitz

before leaving for
the graveyard he feeds sparrows—
All Saints' Day

David Jungwirth

35

Autumn Sunday—
into the church, a procession
of oak leaves

Flori Ignoffo

last vesper bell—
thistledown hurries
along a winding path

Ross Figgins

cold night
the pale glow of headstones
behind the fence

Bruce Ross

harvest moon
an old rusted plow
deep in the woods

William Cullen Jr.

hand looms at rest
cries of gulls pierce
the sabbath silence

Patricia Neubauer

steady drizzle . . .
counting the coins
in a coffee can

Mike W. Blottenberger

36

wet logs:
a wolf cry
echoes in the hearth

Rich Krivcher

bitter wind—
frozen ripples
across the pond

Susan Howard

black woolly bear . . .
reconsidering
an electric blanket

R. A. Stefanac

Without a virtue
that would keep me warm tonight:
winter seclusion

George Gott

37

drifting snow
a snug
waistband

John Stevenson

Light onto each page
as I bend it, my thumbnail
yellow from oranges

Lindon Stall

blue pot—orchid—
not quite the room's
center

John Martone

morning stillness . . .
a line of snow
on the greenhouse ridgetop

Michael Dylan Welch

On the sun-bright boards
fleeting shadows
of steaming tea

Ken Jones

winter morning—
the tennis courts occupied
by seagulls

Catherine Mair

38

winter squall—
beneath the umbrella
his bristling moustache

Catherine Mair

upswept wind
its shape
in frozen grass

Matthew Louvière

New Year's Eve—
my shirt in the mirror
OY79UJ 920L

George Skane

ice glazing the marsh
following my own footsteps
through the frozen mud

Anne L. B. Davidson

39

never saw
the chickadees
all the way home

Michael Ketchek

by their winter lights
across the way
I feel I know them

Thom Williams

valentine's day
my neighbor's dog barks
at the mailman

Jerry Kilbride

senryū

1) A Japanese poem structurally similar to the Japanese haiku but primarily concerned with human nature; often humorous or satiric.

2) A foreign adaptation of 1.

en route to the bar
we discuss what constitutes
heavy drinking

Brett Peruzzi

waking—
a thought follows me
into day

ubuge

4 ||

joining with
the dawn chorus
my smoker's cough

Maurice Tasnier

hangover
milk detonating
the rice krispies

R. A. Stefanac

At Target, listening
to an aria from the
Threepenny Opera.

Horst Ludwig

unemployment line—
the middle-aged man
counts his change

Anthony J. Pupello

prison visit—
mother's shadow on the son
forbidden her hug

Dorothy McLaughlin

the gadfly
now buzzing
by email

Stephen Addiss

42

dad's birthday
I schedule my call
for half-time

Joann Klontz

Mother's Day bouquet
surrounded
by her own perfume

Dorothy McLaughlin

exercycle outlook
the tree in front of me
in front of me

Kay F. Anderson

a young man
slowly circles the Harley—
stroller wheels squeak

D. Claire Gallagher

43

severely wired bonsai
my teeth ache

Ruth Yarrow

lift bridge
the broken flow
of tourists

Tom Painting

channel dispute
she aims the clicker
at me

Dee Evetts

watching my daughter
watch her daughter
miss the basket

Nina A. Wicker

walking past
the closed school, a nun
in her sneakers

Charles Easter

turning on the light—
examples on the board
from the last class

Peter Meister

44

last page
of *The Brothers Karamazov*
a gray hair

John O'Connor

dialing the friars
getting the same message
as yesterday . . .

Liz Fenn

first tremor . . .
everyone in English class
speaking Japanese

Michael Fessler

After the earthquake
a couple of people leave
the movie theater

Tom Tico

45

silent film
in the beam of light
dust

Arkady Elterman

dress rehearsal
the girls wearing
even less

Molly Magner

flamenco dancers—
the old teacher's cane
pounds out the rhythm

Christopher Pusateri

scare-crow in overalls
again
fear of grandpa
Le Wild

frozen section—
her fears
find an edge
Judson Evans

between sessions
the psychoanalyst's blank face
animated
Robert Epstein

46

worrying
that the stress workshop
will be crowded
David Carlson

first time swimming
with my son in water
over our heads
Michael Ketchek

long meditation
the wild striped shirt
on the cushion ahead

Jeff Witkin

dozing off—
the thought
almost tapped
ubuge

47

the boulder
not even moving
to swat a fly

William M. Ramsey

a kicked pebble listening until it stops

Michael Cecilione

from just its name—
Monastery of Heaped Fragrance
—I would have joined
Rupert Spear

at grandfather's grave
my small daughter
gently pats the stone

Nancy S. Young

after the funeral
her red-rimmed glasses
on an unused notebook

Edward J. Rielly

recovering . . .
visiting grandchild also
crawls into bed

Jo Lea Parker

chicken pox—
the embrace of my daughter
even warmer

Dimitar Anakiev

coming back
from the mailbox
together

Ed Baker

a loose button—
the creamy color
of her skin

Gary Houchens

yearning for
her lips so softly
the night descends

Jeff Winke

49

using his toes
to pick up a pencil:
the new boyfriend

Emily Romano

complicating
my love of music,
her urge to sing

John Stevenson

years after the divorce
passing our honeymoon spot—
vacancy

Mauree Pendergrast

linked

forms

From the Artist's Hand

the drive home
in the mountain's shadow
sunlit treetops

LLC

the cloud that was a dragon
becomes a dragon's bones

PWL

51

a magic charm
fades into the dream
daybreak

MHT

above the pot's rim
the white sprout of narcissus

LLC

a haiku
in translation . . .
butterfly

PWL

a red-sailed dhow emerges
from the artist's hand

MHT

*Lori Laliberte-Carey
Peggy Willis Lyles
Mitzi Hughes Trout*

Tracings

stripping off ivy—
the sinuous tracery
of unweathered wood

between her shoulder blades
the mandala tattoo

that nasturtium
the wrong hue for our garden—
pollen-covered bee

sidewalk café
on an empty table
coffee cup rings intersect

shadow of calla lilies
on the faux marble wall

fire-scarred oak
his initials, her initials
in a carved heart

charades

charades
at the New Year's Eve party
midnight comes and goes

*someone remembers
to hang new calendars*

birthday mammogram
my double-yolk breakfast egg
reassuring

*the infant's face
tart applesauce*

harvest moon
pales as it climbs
the leafless sweetgum

*frosty morning
missile launching scrubbed*

*pumpkins in our arms
we stop to identify
constellations*

the look in your eyes
that hears my voice

*palpitations
surely she will die
after this first kiss*

strong currents
the ripple effect

*kids' argument
who will peer next
through the kaleidoscope*

grandma's good humor
lightens everybody's mood

heavy dew
grass touched by the moon's glow
glistens

fields to the horizon
distant dinner bell

ballot count complete
at the political convention
a cheer goes up

another hot air balloon
comes in for a landing

holiday photo
more than the poplar seedlings
fireweed in bloom

Easter sunrise service
under cloudy skies

greening hillside
Alice invites the March Hare
to lunch

dentist and his wife
display their perfect smiles

madam chairman
still an oxymoron
in our time

in style again
lace-up boots for women

yesterday's paper
pulled from the snowbank
old news

lost in the mountains
temperature below zero

my one true love
on a hike when we were young
said it wouldn't last

*paired for life
wild geese in flight*

shoe salesman
takes a shine to the lady
her beautiful feet

*miles and miles
of burnt-out timber*

forty-yard field goal
turns the game around
a daylit moon

*pig roast
the scent of falling leaves*

*street performer
sits motionless, unblinking
smalltown fair*

mime peeling a banana
that isn't even there!

*hands warm and damp
the bride carries her Bible
up the aisle*

you step off the length
of our new garden

*along the driveway
a row of purple lilacs
hundreds of bees*

pheasant and chick
disappear down the road

—Yvonne Hardenbrook
Jean Jorgensen

Another Life

a sea gull floating
white clouds and blue sky -
spring morning

*sun shines down through
the kite's bright cloth eyes*

a little boy
laughs and points
to the circus clown

*here beneath the hot crowd
I hear the bleachers creak*

showing a path
in a field of wild flowers
summer moon

she picks strawberries
grandma bakes a pie

*let me taste
another life with
air in my bones*

renewing their vows
strains of that first song

*without him
where he put the bench
a wind for watching*

tourists at the blowhole
wait in wonder

*suddenly wet
the long-dry land
growing dark*

*a candlewick flickers
in a pool of wax*

*how clear tonight
the shadowed aspect
of the moon*

*fog lifts and I find trees
covered in autumn's colors*

57

*his kaleidoscope
with each gentle turn
pattering*

*a roller coaster
eases up its track*

*falling snow
powders the mountain
on skis, I glide*

*all the way to the bottom
of the cherry chapstick*

*in a vase
atop the diaper pail
baby's breath*

*amber nightlights toward the shore
it's turtle hatching time*

Betty Kaplan
Laura Young

The Whole Yard

(written 21-22 August 1999
Winchester VA—5th annual *Haikout*)

in the silence
of guests having gone
crickets and guitar jw

sweat on the neck
of the candle-lit beer am

play seance—
the kids all jump
at the lightning jk

the feel of the ground
after the trampoline mg

frozen pond
curve of the new moon
over the mountain jw

antique skates
hung by the fire jk

the toddler
takes back a crackler
from the goose am

the candy dish
still out of reach mg

a dental appointment
on the new page
of my calendar mg

first sprouts
in the tomato bed am

rising with the sun
earlier today
than yesterday mg

the swallows land
on the hills of Capestrano jk

the homeless man
places one rock on another
sea-side park jk

the sudden gust
brings a shower of leaves am

shifting storm windows
to make room for
red & yellow kayaks jk

the pumpkin vine takes
the whole yard jw

crowded car
he lets her sit
on his lap jk

out on the porch swing
they talk all night am

on the flagstones
of the garden walk
crushed petals jk

spring rain
clears the morning air am

jw: Jeff Witkin
am: Andrea Missias
jk: Jim Kacian
mg: Maureen Gorman

essays

Affinities

Thoreau and the Japanese Haiku Poets

In *Walden*, subtitled *Life in the Woods*, Henry David Thoreau paints a highly individualistic and exceptionally forceful self-portrait. But the picture is not that of a pure Occidental; for lurking beneath the facade of a gnarly Yankee, one can see the wise old visage of an Oriental. He seems more enthusiastic about the *Bhagavad Gita* than the Bible. And perhaps the best description of the life he led is Taoistic. But if I had to choose one group with whom he would have had the greatest rapport (at least spiritually speaking) it would have to be the old Japanese haiku poets. There are many qualities that he and they have in common, but the primary one is undoubtedly a great love of nature.

6 ||

affinities

"I think that we may safely trust a good deal more than we do . . . Nature is as well adapted to our weakness as to our strength. The incessant anxiety and strain of some is a well nigh incurable form of disease."

Simply trust:
Do not the petals flutter down,
Just like that?

Issa

"Most of the luxuries, and many of the so called comforts of life, are not only indispensable, but positive hinderances to the elevation of mankind. With respect to luxuries and comforts, the wisest have ever lived a more simple and meagre life than the poor. The ancient philosophers, Chinese, Hindoo, Persian, and Greek, were a class than which none had been poorer in outward riches, none so rich inward."

I have nothing at all,—
But this tranquillity!
This coolness!

Issa

“There are nowadays professors of philosophy, but not philosophers . . . To be a philosopher is not merely to have subtle thoughts, nor even to found a school, but so to love wisdom as to live according to its dictates, a life of simplicity, independence, magnanimity, and trust.”

The thief
Left it behind,—
The moon at the window.

Ryokan

“The philosopher is in advance of his age even in the outward form of his life. He is not fed, sheltered, clothed, warmed, like his contemporaries. How can a man be a philosopher and not maintain his vital heat by better methods than other men?”

The wind brings
Enough of fallen leaves
To make a fire.

Ryokan

62

“None can be an impartial or wise observer of human life but from the vantage ground of what *we* should call voluntary poverty.”

The full moon;
My ramshackle hut
Is as you see it.

Issa

“Love your life, poor as it is. You may perhaps have some pleasant, thrilling, glorious hours, even in a poor-house. The setting sun is reflected from the windows of the alms-house as brightly as from the rich man’s abode.”

How lovely,
Through the torn paper-window,
The Milky Way.

Issa

“To anticipate, not the sunrise and the dawn merely, but, if possible, Nature herself! How many mornings, summer and winter, before yet any neighbor was stirring about his business, have I been about mine!”

Suddenly the sun rose,
To the scent of plum-blossoms
Along the mountain path.

Bashō

63

“Every morning was a cheerful invitation to make my life of equal simplicity, and I may say innocence, with Nature herself.”

Spring has come
In all simplicity:
A light yellow sky.

Issa

“But I would say to my fellows, once for all, As long as possible live free and uncommitted. It makes but little difference whether you are committed to a farm or the county jail . . . For a man is rich in proportion to the number of things which he can afford to let alone.”

In the midst of the plain
Sings the skylark,
Free of all things.

Bashō

“In accumulating property for ourselves or our posterity, in founding a family or a state, or acquiring fame even, we are mortal; but in dealing with truth we are immortal, and need fear no change nor accident.”

My eyes, having seen all,
Came back to
The white chrysanthemums.

Issho

"Instead of singing like the birds, I silently smiled at my incessant good fortune."

The first dream of the year;
I kept it a secret,
And smiled to myself.

Sho-u

"There were times when I could not afford to sacrifice the bloom of the present moment to any work, whether of the head or hands."

Plum blossoms:
My spring
Is an ecstasy.

Issa

"I find it wholesome to be alone the greater part of the time. To be in company, even with the best, is soon wearisome and dissipating. I love to be alone. I never found the companion that was so companionable as solitude."

64_r

Tranquillity:
Walking alone;
Happy alone.

Shiki

"I have a great deal of company in my house; especially in the morning, when nobody calls."

I am one
Who eats his breakfast
Gazing at the morning-glories.

Bashô

"I had three chairs in my house; one for solitude, two for friendship, three for society."

They spoke no word.
The visitor, the host,
And the white chrysanthemum.

Ryota

"As I walked in the woods to see the birds and squirrels, so I walked in the village to see the men and boys; instead of the wind among the pines I heard the carts rattle."

The heavy wagon
Rumbles by;
The peony quivers.

Buson

"But why should not the New Englander try new adventures, and not lay so much stress on his grain, his potato and grass crop, and his orchards,—raise other crops than these? Why concern ourselves so much about our beans for seed, and not be concerned at all about a new generation of men?"

It is deep autumn:
My neighbor—
How does he live, I wonder?

Bashô

"Most men, even in this comparatively free country, through mere ignorance and mistake, are so occupied with the factitious cares and superfluously coarse labors of life that its finer fruits cannot be plucked by them. Their fingers, from excessive toil, are too clumsy and tremble too much for that . . . The finest qualities of our nature, like the bloom on fruits, can be preserved only by the most delicate handling."

What pains I took,
Hanging the lamp
On the flowering branch!
Shiki

"The true harvest of my daily life is somewhat as intangible and indescribable as the tints of morning or evening. It is a little star-dust caught, a segment of the rainbow which I have clutched."

The halo of the moon,—
Is it not the scent of plum-blossoms
Rising up to heaven?
Buson

"Fishermen, hunters, woodchoppers, and others, spending their lives in the fields and woods, in a peculiar sense a part of Nature themselves, are often in a more favorable mood for observing her, in the intervals of their pursuits, than philosophers or poets even, who approach her with expectation. She is not afraid to exhibit herself to them."

The straw coats of the raftsmen,—
The storm makes them
Flowery robes.
Buson

66 "In short, I am convinced, both by faith and experience, that to maintain one's self on this earth is not a hardship but a pastime, if we will live simply and wisely."

I take a nap,
Making the mountain water
Pound the rice.
Issa

"I arose to see what shore my fates had impelled me to; days when idleness was the most attractive and productive industry. Many a forenoon have I stolen

away, preferring to spend thus the most valued part of the day; for I was rich, if not in money, in sunny hours and sunny days, and spent them lavishly; nor do I regret that I did not waste more of them in the workshop or the teacher's desk."

What happiness,
Crossing this summer river,
Sandals in hand!

Buson

"Time is but the stream I go a-fishing in."

The summer moon
Is touched by the line
Of the fishing-rod.

Chiyo-ni

"See those clouds; how they hang! That's the greatest thing I have seen today."

How cool it is!
The clouds have great peaks,
And lesser peaks.

Issa

"In a pleasant spring morning all men's sins are forgiven . . . Through our recovered innocence we discern the innocence of our neighbors."

New Year's Day;
Nothing good or bad,—
Just human beings.

Shiki

"One attraction in coming to the woods to live was that I should have leisure and opportunity to see the spring come in."

Yes, spring has come;
This morning a nameless hill
Is shrouded in mist.

Bashô

"A single gentle rain makes the grass many shades greener. So our prospects brighten on the influx of better thoughts. We should be blessed if we lived in the present always, and took advantage of every accident that befell us, like the grass which confesses the influence of the slightest dew that falls on it."

Dance from one blade of grass
To another,
Pearls of dew!

Ransetsu

"I love to weigh, to settle, to gravitate toward that which most strongly and rightfully attracts me."

Spreading a straw mat in the field,
I sat and gazed
At the plum blossoms.

Buson

68 "Why should we be in such desperate haste to succeed, and in such desperate enterprises? If a man does not keep pace with his companions, perhaps it is because he hears a different drummer. Let him step to the music which he hears, however measured or far away."

Overtaken by night among the blossoms,
I walk across the moor,
Home far distant.

Buson

Tom Tico

Favorite Haiku

still in the taste
of afternoon tea,
my grandmother's brogue

yard sale
sunlight filling
mason jars

Jerry Kilbride

I think both of these poems by Jerry Kilbride are somewhat subjective, the first because the quality of a sound is transferred to a taste, and the second because it's not literally true for sunlight to "fill" a jar—at least not in the way mason jars are normally filled. Nevertheless, in their carefully crafted subjectivity, both poems present rich and resonating images.

In the first haiku, to say that a "brogue" (a sound) exists in the taste of something is a bit abstract, but is still believable—or at least, readers suspend their mild disbelief (because it's not literally true) long enough to let the associated meaning come through, which in this case is that the custom of having afternoon tea (an Irish as well as British custom) has survived into the new world—and that the memory of the Irish accent comes to the poet's mind when he is having afternoon tea.

In the second poem, "mason jars" are a particular kind of wide-mouthed jar used for preserving. As they are usually used to preserve fruit, jams, and so on, it is unique to have them filled with sunlight. That mason jars are being sold at a yard sale suggests not only that they have value but that the family has changed, that the person who did all the canning of preserves is no longer doing it, and that the family has decided to sell the jars. Yard sales are potentially bittersweet occasions, so in addition to the vibrant and unexpected image of sunlight in mason jars, this poem has overtones of *sabi* and harmony in the setting of the yard sale.

Michael Dylan Welch

Favorite Haiku

farmer's market:
the mushroom man
seems older this year¹

Charles C. Trumbull

As "no mind" is fundamental to the Zen way and haiku have at least in part their origins in Zen, I view no-mind haiku—devoid of the rational—as vital to our haiku world. How often we find ourselves thinking something quite senseless or being irrationally surprised at the obvious. And how delightful it can be to catch ourselves "empty-headed."

Icy April night
my ah-breath rising
toward the comet²

Phyllis Walsh

70 One of the most unique features of the haiku is its capacity to capture an eternal moment in the poetry of three brief lines. In other kinds of poetry, so briefly to achieve this end may require some sort of saccharine philosophy or religiosity unacceptable in haiku. Walsh's haiku conveys that sense of life's infinite expansiveness which a colleague of Tu Fu described as being alive twice³—an experience possible to us only when consciousness is awakened "just at the very moment when eternity lifts its feet to step into time—the eternal now."⁴

H. F. Noyes

1. *Modern Haiku* XXIX:2

2. *To Find a Rainbow* (Hummingbird Press 1997).

3. Robert Hass, *Twentieth Century Pleasures* (The Ecco Press). 4. D. T. Suzuki, *Living by Zen* (Rider, London, 1982).

The HSA Definitions Reconsidered

Reviewing Cor van den Heuvel's magnum opus, *The Haiku Anthology*, third edition, for *The Japan Times*,¹ I had occasion to take a close look at "The Haiku Society of America Definitions," and I was taken aback. Yes, Cor had printed them in the two earlier editions of his book. Yes, I had commented on the misguided introduction of the term *onji*.² But I hadn't paid sufficient attention to the entire *oeuvre*, so to speak.

In 2 of the Preliminary Notes appears what can only be a classic case of comparing apples and oranges: "while each of the entry words is reckoned as two syllables in English, 'hokku' and 'haiku' are each counted as three *onji*, while 'haikai' and 'senryu' each have four *onji*." 7 ||

Aside from different phonetic values of different diphthongs in the English language itself, this observation ignores the differences in the pronunciation and writing systems of Japanese and English. In Japanese, hokku is felt to contain the assimilation of *ho-tsu* and therefore is counted as three syllables. Haiku, written and pronounced *ha-i-ku*, obviously consists of three. Haikai, written and pronounced *ha-i-ka-i*, consists of four—again obviously. As to senryu, the word has *n*, which, in Japanese, is regarded not as a consonant but as a semi-vowel, as well as *ryū*, a sound unit with a long vowel, which is counted as two syllables, and so it is considered to contain four syllables. Indeed, in this sort of definitional attempt, it is strange that the authors—Henderson, Higginson, and Virgil—should have failed to use the macron for *u* in the word *senryū*.

Following the authors' example, you can say: "The name Virgil is reckoned as four *onji* in Japanese, but it is counted as two syllables in English." You can, but it will be pointless.

Why did the authors indulge in such a pointless exercise—and that by introducing the esoteric term *onji* and insisting on its use in the definition of the Japanese haiku? The reason—at least part of it—is given in the sentences

1. The review, which originally appeared in *The Japan Times* on June 29, 1999, is reprinted in revised form on pages 77-82 of this issue of *Frogpond*.

2. "Crop III," *Frogpond*, XVIII:1 (1995).

preceding the passage quoted: "The Japanese words *jion* (symbol-sound) and *onji* (sound-symbol) have been mistranslated into English as 'syllable' for many years. However, in most Japanese poetry the *jion* or *onji* does not correspond to the Western notion of the syllable."

These two sentences are erroneous or misleading. First, *jion* and *onji* are not interchangeable; *jion* refer to Japanized pronunciations of Chinese sounds (so, the authors are correct, it would be a mistake to translate the word as 'syllable'), whereas *onji* can only mean 'syllable' as long as it is applied to the Japanese writing system (but not to English alphabet, for example). Second, are the authors saying that syllabic count is possible in poetry but not in prose?

Third, what do the authors mean by "the Western notion of the 'syllable'"? That in linguistics there are Western and Eastern (Japanese) notions of the syllable? That in Japanese linguistics 'syllable' means something other than "the smallest unit of speech," as *The Oxford Companion to the English Language* puts it?

It seems to me that all this fuss arose from a failure to recognize a simple fact: Syllables have different values in different tongues.

Then, there is the definition of the Japanese haiku: "An unrhymed Japanese poem recording the essence of a moment keenly perceived, in which Nature is linked to human nature. It usually consists of seventeen *onji* (Japanese sound symbols)."

72 Unlike Douglas Hofstadter, in his *Le Ton beau de Marot: In Praise of the Music of Language* (Basic Books, 1997), let us say, the authors of this definition do not say that the haiku consists of "three lines." They evidently recognize that the majority of haiku in Japanese are written in one line (even though they may not concede that the haiku is regarded as a one-line poem by those Japanese who care to comment on it³). Why then "unrhymed"? Internal rhymes perhaps?

The rest of the sentence—in particular, the part about "the essence of a moment keenly perceived"—suggests the influence of R. H. Blyth who said that "haiku is a form of Zen." But it is doubtful that a Japanese definition of haiku will emphasize such flash-like enlightenment as the moti-

3. One of the three authors, William Higginson, once asserted that the Japanese have no sense of lines.

vational force of haiku composition. The standard dictionary definition of the haiku does not refer to the content, except to say that in most instances a seasonal word (*kigo*) is included.

And this brings us to the “Nature is linked to human nature” part. This nicely turned phrase is obviously an attempt to reflect the inclusion of a *kigo*. But what does it mean, really? Does it describe the Japanese haiku?

As to the “seventeen” part, the observation may be good enough for beginners, but as a definition of the Haiku Society of America, it leaves much to be desired; it completely ignores the existence of such haiku writers as Ogiwara Seisensui, Nakatsuka Ippekirō, Ozaki Hōsai, Taneda Santōka, and Kaneko Tōta.

In the Note, the statement, “all Japanese classical haiku, as well as most modern ones, contain a *kigo*,” is patently false. Bashō has left at least nine pieces without a *kigo*; he famously questioned the validity of the inclusion of a seasonal reference in each piece but was not revolutionary enough to trample on the rule. In this century, “non-seasonal (*muki*)” haiku have had strong advocates and adherents.

The statement that follows—“extreme variations of climate in the United States make it impossible to put a codified ‘season-word’ into every American haiku”—gives the impression that climate variations are small in Japan. As I have proposed elsewhere, the main reason for the creation, maintenance, and expansion of *kigo* is cultural. Certain literary conventions were laid down in Kyoto, then disseminated throughout Japan, which, incidentally, extends from subtropical Okinawa to sub-frigid Hokkaidō and is thus comparable to the Eastern Seaboard of the United States of America. The process was aided by the Japanese tendency to form teacher-student relations.

Today it may be possible to describe haiku but not to define it. This is indicated by the haiku dictionary *Gendai Haiku Dai-jiten* (Meiji Shoin, 1980). Its entry on haiku describes the history of the term, but makes no attempt to say what a haiku is. Both in form and content, all you can say is that a haiku, be it composed in Japanese, English, or any other language, is what the person who has written it presents as a haiku.

Hiroaki Sato

books

&

review

One Way of Getting Here

The Haiku Anthology. edited by Cor van den Heuvel. W. W. Norton, (New York, 1999). ISBN 0-393-04743-1. 363 pp., hardbound \$27.50.

Cor van den Heuvel is the most important anthologist of haiku composed in English. He has published three collections, all simply called *The Haiku Anthology*, all through prominent commercial houses: Doubleday, Simon & Schuster, and, now, W. W. Norton. It is a feat no one else has pulled off.

The expanding territory of haiku in English is evident in the growing number of haiku selected. The first edition, published in 1974, had less than 300; the second, published in 1986, 700; and the third, 850. The growth, along with the anthologist's confidence, is also clear in the prefaces. In introducing the first collection, van den Heuvel said: "Until now, the poets represented in this anthology have been largely 'invisible,'" adding, "Haiku in English is still in the process of finding its 'way.'"

He began the preface to the second edition: "Someone, probably thinking of Bashō's famous haiku about the sound-of-a-frog-jumping-into-an-old-pond, likened the English-language haiku movement to a small puddle far from the mainstream of poetry. If so, the puddle is doing very well on its own."

In contrast, van den Heuvel, now with unmistakable contentment, devotes the preface to the latest edition to saluting haiku luminaries, old and new.

This is understandable. In North America today, haiku are composed by the thousands every day (in Japan, you might say, by the millions). They are routinely recited at gatherings of cowboys and baseball fans. At least one highly competitive annual national contest exists where winning haiku are picked by the large, rowdy audience. The venerable *New York Times* not long ago gave a sizable spread to a selection of haiku describing urban life. Men

and women on Wall Street are known to exchange haiku among themselves lamenting their lucrative but lugubrious lives. And, of course, haiku whiz through the Internet.

So the question may be asked: What is Cor van den Heuvel's standard as haiku anthologist? The answer is simple: He adheres to the definition prepared by the Haiku Society of America and says the haiku is a "poem in which Nature is linked to human nature." In this view, people who turn out "little epigrams in [three lines of 5-7-5 syllables], or jokes about Spam, or cute descriptions of birds and flowers, and think they are writing haiku" are utterly misguided.

Let us look at some of the haiku poets Cor van den Heuvel cites with special admiration.

Nicholas Virgilio, who was stricken with a heart attack in 1989 while preparing for the national TV program *Charlie Rose Show*, van den Heuvel notes, created a classic—comparable to Bashō's pond-frog perhaps—when he wrote:

lily:
out of the water . . .
out of itself

(As originally published, this was written in descending indentations; now, as engraved on a lectern-shaped granite stone over his grave, in Camden, New Jersey, the lines are aligned flush left, I'm told.)

John Wills, called the greatest nature poet in American haikudom, created another classic when he came up with a one-line composition:

dusk from rock to rock a waterthrush

Wills, originally a college teacher of T.S. Eliot and such, wrote many haiku in one line but recast most one-liners in three lines for his last collection, *Reed Shadows*, though not the one just cited. Another haiku he left in one line shows how concise a haiku can be:

the sun lights up a distant ridge another

As it happens, 600 years ago the tanka poet Kyōgoku Tamekane (1256-1332) had written: *Shizumihatsuru irihi no kiwa ni arawarenu kasumeru yama no nao oku no mine*, "Close to the setting sun about to sink appears a hazy mountain then a peak beyond."

Clement Hoyt studied Zen with Nyogen Senzaki (1876-1958), the first to set up a Zen center in the US, in 1928, and wrote in three lines of 5-7-5 syllables. An example:

In this lightning flash—
through the night rain—I saw it
... whatever it was

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This brings to mind Bashō's hokku:

Inazuma ni satoranu hito no tōtosa yo
Someone not enlightened by lightning deserves respect!

O. Mabson Southard, who said his "poetic voice" was indebted to "aboriginal America," also wrote in the format of 3 lines, 5-7-5. Surely one of the most beautiful he composed is:

Across the still lake
through upcurls of morning mist—
the cry of a loon

This piece, as I once noted in a talk, reminds us of the arbitrary way *kigo*, "seasonal words," are selected in Japanese haiku; the loon, called *abi*, is not among them. When there are nearly 15,000 *kigo*, why exclude this particular bird?

Coming closer to the present generation, Alan Pizzarelli, whom van den Heuvel calls "one of this book's biggest attractions," has written another classic:

the gas station man
points the way
with a gas nozzle

It is in homage to Issa's haiku:

Daikohiki daiko de michi o oshiekeri
The daikon puller points the way with a daikon

Anita Virgil, who sat on the HSA committee to work out definitions, has written such pieces as:

following me
deeper into my quilt
the wren's song

spring breeze . . .
her breasts sway
over the porcelain tub

holding you
in me still . . .
sparrow songs

This last brings us to the distinctively feminine voice that is Alexis Rotella—and to the amorphous category of senryu:

Undressed—
today's role dangles
from a metal hanger

Late August
I bring him the garden
in my skirt

Leading him in . . .
my bracelet
jangling

starrynight | enteryourmirror

I said "amorphous" because, even though van den Heuvel may disagree, the distinction between haiku and senryu is quickly fading in English haiku, as it is in Japan.

Since I happen to have recently reviewed a compendium of 10,000 haiku by Japanese women called *Joryū Haiku Shūsei*, I might cite a few examples to show what I mean.

Fujiki Kiyoko, who became prominent in the *Shinkō Haiku* (Newly Rising) movement in the latter part of the 1930s and disappeared without a trace, wrote:

Furu-fusuma akuma ni kurokami tsukamarenu
In an old bed a devil grabbed me by my black hair.

(The *Shinkō Haiku* movement collapsed in 1940 when its leaders were arrested for advocating rejection of *kigo*—an act deemed subversive of the national polity!)

Katō Minako (born 1925), one of many women who run their own magazines, has written:

Rafuzō wa kurashi gaitō muragarite
The nude sculpture's dark with overcoats swarming.

And Ikeda Sumiko (born 1936), a recipient of a Modern Haiku Association prize, has written:

Haiku-shi ni hakkin • kenkyo • naku mimizu
In haiku history sale bans • arrests • earthworms that chirp

All three are presented as haiku.

Aside from the distinction between haiku and senryu, Ikeda's piece, in particular, compels me to note one other thing: the HSA definition of Japanese haiku—that haiku is a poem recording “a moment keenly perceived, in which Nature is linked to human nature”—which van den Heuvel has enshrined in each edition of *The Haiku Anthology*, was, from the start, oddly at variance with Japanese views of haiku, and the divergence has, if anything, grown in recent decades.

It isn't that there are no “non-traditional” haiku writers in North America; there are. Among them, Marlene Mountain has written such pieces as

heat wave “women's issues are the issues of the world”

intermittent showers intermittent peace

Cor van den Heuvel doesn't regard what Mountain calls "pissed off poems" as haiku, explaining that her pieces registering "her outrage at what we have done and are doing to harm the environment and to limit the freedom of women" are "something other than haiku or senryu." In fact, he hasn't included in his anthology the two pieces I've cited, though he represents the feminist painter-poet very well from her early, less political period. The two exceptions he makes are:

acid rain less and less i am at one with nature

old pond a frog rises belly up

Naturally he rejects—he did in a restaurant meeting—as non-haiku Allen Ginsberg's one-line, 17-syllable "American Haiku" assembled in his posthumously published book, *Death & Fame*. Here are two examples:

Mice ate at the big red heart in her breast, she was distracted
in love.

Jeannie Duval's cheek tickled by a Paris fly, 1852.

Does this matter? Yes, in the sense that van den Heuvel's stance seems to unnecessarily narrow the scope.

80 In reality, though, van den Heuvel gives considerable leeway to the HSA definition. And in any case, the anthologist must necessarily take a position, and in the position he has taken, van den Heuvel eminently succeeds. Like the first and second, the third edition of *The Haiku Anthology* will be treasured by many a haiku aficionado.

Hiroaki Sato

Wise Men from the East

Anakiev, Dimitar & Jim Kacian (Eds.) *Knots: An Anthology of Southeastern European Haiku Poetry* (Priatelj Haiku Press, Tolmin, Slovenia 1999). 240 pages, boards, 5.75" x 8.5", illustrated & designed by Slavoljub Stankovic. ISBN 961-90715-0-6. \$19.95 + \$3 shipping. Available from Red Moon Press, PO Box 2461, Winchester VA 22604-1661 USA.

Two important events concerning haiku and its evolution took place during this summer of 1999.

The first, a gathering called the First International Symposium of Contemporary Haiku, took place in Tokyo and concerned itself with what, if any, future haiku might have inside and outside its country of origin. The second, the publication of *Knots: An Anthology of Southeastern European Haiku Poetry* in Slovenia, is an indication of the future of European haiku sensibility.

On July 11, two hundred Japanese poets, including Natsuishi Ban'ya, Hoshino Tsunehiko, Takiguchi Susumu, Abe Kan-Ichi, and three foreign delegates (Messrs. Berner, Tito and the current author), representing German-, English- and French-speaking cultures, came together in Tokyo for the First International Symposium of Contemporary Haiku. Much was at stake, since what was being considered was nothing less than the survival of haiku. To be sure, breathless realities were the inspiration in Japan for these considerations. Haiku is threatened with asphyxiation if it is not renewed. And this Symposium was interested in disengaging haiku from its age-old traditional rules, and considering what other cultures, other currents were bringing to the form which might be of interest in Japan. The Symposium also sought to define which rules ought to be retained to work in harmony with that which is specific to Japanese culture, the new haiku, and that which is being carried on the winds of the world and has become a true form of universal expression.

Thus, the seasonal allusion, which is so characteristic of the sensibility in the Japanese isles, must be dropped in favor of *key-word* in its new international character; for

example: *mother, iron, ocean, island, future*. For elsewhere, it is the rhythm of the short poem, apart from the seventeen syllables of Japanese invention, which determines the effectiveness, not to say the musicality and form in each of the languages for these poets. Equally were questions before the Symposium concerning translation, and a wish to understand what, for this type of poem, is necessary to pass on for a minimal understanding of the form in other languages and cultures.

Accident or happy coincidence? At the same time, in Slovenia, Dimitar Anakiev and Jim Kacian published *Knots: An Anthology of Southeastern European Haiku Poetry*, magnificently illustrated by Slavoljub Stankovic, gathering the work of poets of eleven countries, including Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Greece, Macedonia, Romania, Slovenia, Turkey, and Yugoslavia. In reading this anthology, one is struck by the quality of these short poems, of which many are true masterworks of the genre. The reader will be stopped in the moment by such poems as this:

wearing their homes
only in their eyes—
the refugees

Robert Bebek

And again,

midnight thunder—
the new year splits away
from the old

Danilo Mijatovic

And later on,

storm over—
a boy wipes the sky
from the tables

Darko Plazanin

Other names, other poems arrest the attention in the course of this voyage of discovery: Ion Codrescu, Vladimir Devidé, Marijan Cekolj, Bojan Jovanovic, Ileana Crnomarkovic, Konstantin Abaluta, Radoslav Vuckovic... With the

profusion of so much talent, so many lands, one can imagine the possibilities haiku offers in all these languages. It is perhaps regrettable that this anthology is not bilingual, so the reader might get a sense of the original music of each of poem. But of course the choice to present all the poems in a single language, and that language being English, is an important statement in its own right.

When one moves beyond the dazzle of these poetic flashes, the surprise is how perfectly this anthology illustrates the conclusions drawn by the Tokyo Symposium. If one considers the basis of haiku structure the universal keywords and not the Japanese seasons, one sees how this anthology contributes to the regeneration of haiku, the emergence of an aesthetic appropriate to the Balkans, with focus upon their particular thematic needs and materials. One thinks here of the war, where, alas, several of the keywords which are the source of inspiration for some of these poems, are to be found.

The cultural richness and variety of the group of countries made apparent through the works in this extensive anthology make it a true poetic and literary manifesto. Born out of the sadness of conflict, this manifesto is also a gift of conscience. In effect, like this anthology, the Balkan poets have decided the future of their people here-after will emphasize generosity, fraternity, and artistic and literary appreciation, not a barbarous discrimination or hatred. We must here salute the foresightedness and courage of editors Anakiev and Kacian to be able to make so many good choices above the din of lesser and political noise competing for our attention, and to set out a book full of savor, full of the tumultuous vitality of the many voices rising from this complicated region.

Reading *Knots*, one becomes aware of the birth of a common artistic sensibility in the people of this part of Europe, who express and affirm this sensibility through the grace of haiku. This confirms the rich possibilities of the original poetic form, and these Balkan poets play a pioneer role in utilizing them. For discovering and expressing them, this poetic anthology deserves to become known throughout the entire world.

Alain Kervern

The Trans-Boundary Moment

Anakiev, Dimitar & Jim Kacian (Eds.) *Knots: An Anthology of Southeastern European Haiku Poetry* (Priatelj Haiku Press, Tolmin, Slovenia 1999). 240 pages, boards, 5.75" x 8.5", illustrated & designed by Slavljub Stankovic. ISBN 961-90715-0-6. \$19.95 + \$3 shipping. Available from Red Moon Press, PO Box 2461, Winchester VA 22604-1661 USA.

At the beginning of his informative introduction to this collection of haiku from eleven Balkan countries, its co-editor, Dimitar Anakiev, notes that from the thirties through the nineties haiku "has become the most popular literary form" in southeast Europe. That this region was subject to the Turkish Ottoman Empire from the late 15th century to the early 20th century accounts for the strong nationalist drives in our current century which percolated serious conflict, from World War I to Kosovo, where war has become "almost a kind of seasonal phenomenon" (see Marijan Cekolj's Croatian anthology *War Haiku*), although only about 13 or so of the 166 included haiku touch upon this subject, many of which are subtly restrained or startling in their contrasts, remarkable when for example, in Kosovo, old people chose to remain in their homes with their pets rather than retreat to air raid shelters during bombings. Here are works by two Yugoslavian poets:

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after the bombing
ruins of a bridge
linked by the fog

Nebojsa Simin

unexploded
yellow NATO bomb—
a field of dandelions

Radovan Zivanovic

Many of us are aware of Balkan haiku through Cekolj's anthology and the Romanian journal *Albatross* and the Croatian journal *Sparrow*. One detects in reading the haiku of this region determining poetic, cultural, linguistic, etc. particularities. A certain bittersweet, even cynical, humor is one. The presence of folk elements is another. Nonetheless, the editors have aimed at haiku reflecting values "across the artificial boundaries of countries and cultures, in a shared sensibility which unites poets beyond

the ideologies imposed by states and ideas," in other words, the "haiku moment." Anakiev spells out the criteria for us: "depth and purity . . . precision of image and delineation . . . unity of form and content . . . juxtaposition of and resonance between images . . . visual and aural polish." And the anthology succeeds in its aims at representing trans-boundary moments in haiku without diluting the vibrancy of the local color that supports such moments.

Alain Kervern's impassioned argument, in his afterword, for the renovation of haiku through a reorientation of consciousness and its relation to the very objects of the world, relying heavily on phenomenological theory, and quoting phenomenologist Merleau-Ponty: "our senses intercept 'messages from the outside through rumors, which they rouse in us'" is well met in *Knots*. Edmund Husserl's idea to return to things (*zu den sachen*) in order to let things speak for themselves to our newly receptive consciousness is the axiom of such theory. See how the Croatian Nediljko Boban opens up a snail's reality for us:

from the snail's shell
droplets
of mountain rain

None of the the haiku in *Knots*, as was the intention of its editors, sounds like a classical Japanese haiku. Each stands in its own place and time in its particularized felt moment. There is no allusion to Buddha and no "stink of Zen," yet, the values of the depth of feeling that shine through the best of those haiku or any culture's haiku are here, with much sensitive attention to the sense of smell, that most primitive of senses, in relation to feeling. There is also a prolific expression of deft juxtaposition between human experience and nature, as in this by Zoran Doderovic of Yugoslavia:

a cup of tea
shaking in the old woman's hands—
summer clouds

Co-editor Jim Kacian offers in the anthology's second introduction a universal standard for haiku: "It takes a very great artist to be deep and simple at the same time, and not leave her thumbprint all over the poem." Such thumbprints are nowhere to be found here. But values of depth and simplicity are prevalent, as in these *sabi*-drenched haiku:

after the concert
clearing the car of snow
not a word is said

Ion Codrescu

barely legible
on the faded nightgown:
je t'aime

Zorica Joksimovic

And the liveliness of our ordinary experience, call it *wabi*, is here well-manifested:

jumping—
a boy
and grasshopper

Ivan Kovacevic

spring rain—
the lid is hopping
over boiling beans

Marinko Spanovic

And Lucian Suciu offers this telling psychological insight:

gazing so long
at the clock—something inside me
comes to a stop

The translations, primarily the work of Kacian, most often in collaboration with the poets themselves, are uniformly clear and poetic in their own right. They often favor a more pared-down phrasing or adding a *kireji* to slow down the prose-like flow of an action over three lines.

The anthology, whose unusual design features a hole in its middle through which a straw tie is threaded and typographical accommodations made to that hole, is highly recommended as a testament to the haiku form that somehow transcends the impositions of the historical forces that brutalize us. A testament to the beauty this form opens to us, to the core of our deepest feeling, amidst the worst of those brutalities.

Bruce Ross

Books Received

Connor, Pamela *a Garden of Haiku* (self-published 1999). 5.5" x 8.5", 110 pages, perfect softcover. \$12 ppd. Available from the author at PO Box 133, Luzerne PA 18709-0133.

Conforti, Gerard John *Pale Moonlight* (Deep North Press, Evanston IL 1999). Foreword by Jane Reichhold. 5.5" x 8.5", 32 pages, unnumbered, saddlestitch softcover. ISBN 1-929116-00-4. \$8 ppd. Available from the author at 126 Cassidy Place, #M2, Staten Island NY 10301.

Welch, Michael Dylan & Cor van den Heuvel & Tom Lynch, editors *Wedge of Light* (Press Here, Foster city CA 1999). 5.5" x 8.5", 48 pages, perfect softcover. ISBN 1-878798-15-4. \$7.50 ppd. Available from the publisher at PO Box 4014, Foster City CA 94404.

Gorman, LeRoy, editor *layers of glow* (Haiku Canada 1999). 5.5" x 8.5", 24 pages, perfect softcover. ISBN 0-920752-20-9. \$5 ppd. Available from Haiku Canada Archives, 67 Court, Aylmer, QC J9H 4M1 Canada.

Burleigh, David *Octopus Dreams* (self-published 1998). 5.75" x 8.25", 24 pages, perfect softcover. No price given. Query the author at Frère Waseda No. 201, Nishi-Waseda 1-7-20, Shinjuku-ku, Tokyo 169-0051 Japan.

Sacré, Dirk & Marcel Smets, editors *Tonight They All Dance* (Bolchazy-Carducci Publishers Inc. 1999). English Translations by Herman Servotte. Illustrations by Mark McIntyre. 5.5" x 8.5", x + 94 pages, perfect softcover. ISBN 0-86516-440-1. \$14.95. Also available hardcover ISBN 0-86516-441-X, \$24.95. Available from the publisher at 1000 Brown Street, Unit 101, Wauconda IL 60084.

Martone, John *around this stream* (dogwood & honeysuckle, Huntington IL 1999). 5.5" x 8.5", 48 pps., handsewn softcover. No price given. Query the author at 325 W. Tyler, Apt. B, Charleston IL 61920.

INSA

News

1999 Gerald Brady Memorial Awards

This year's 523 entries included many poems, not recognized here, which the judges hope and expect to see published in journals and perhaps in other contests. Our criteria emphasized authentic humanity, simplicity, directness, senryu humor, irony, pathos and poems with both immediate appeal and additional payoffs with multiple readings. Entries were read several times silently and aloud. The final thirty poems were discussed at length via e-mail, telephone and finally over a kitchen table with tea.

First Place—Leatrice Lifshitz, Pomona NY (\$100)

in one room
everything she has
and a window

One may read this poem in quite a number of ways and it seems true in all of them. We first read it as a hymn in celebration of simplicity and hope. We sensed that this person was in a good place and that her surroundings were congruent with her internal state. In another reading we sensed that this may be an older person, perhaps living in reduced circumstances but enjoying the view of whatever is passing by. Or perhaps this is not a happy scene in any way. Perhaps the window only serves to channel a sense of envy toward those who have their freedom, their health or who have more 'things'. The poem holds all of these possibilities and others in a mere twelve syllables.

Second Place—Garry Gay, Windsor CA (\$75)

Floating
in the dishwater
a pair of chopsticks

Perhaps the cleanup after a meal for one? There is something very satisfying in this picture in its own right, but these chopsticks are intensely articulate objects. Everything about using them is so different from using silverware, of course they float!

Third Place—Jeff Witkin, Rockville MD (\$50)

serious
she takes off her sunglasses
to speak english

If one is not used to the language, one is likely to instinctively rely more than usually on non-verbal communication. This woman is, probably without thinking of it, clearing the way to make full use of her eyes to say that for which she may not be able to find all the right words and to listen with more than her ears.

Honorable Mention (random order)

nude beach
an empty bikini
turns me on

Ernest Berry, Picton, New Zealand

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This obviously appeals as an erotic poem to only part of its potential readership but we have selected it anyway because it seems to touch on a more universal truth, namely that there is nothing so sexy as one's own imagination. Prolonged nudity may not be the turn-on that some of us imagine, but the suggestion that just over the dunes . . .

dropping valentine chocolates
he quickly swaps them
for another box

John Barlow, Liverpool, England

Here is a gesture which proves nothing (who among us

would not at least be tempted to do the same thing) but suggests a life story. Does he take the same approach with his sweethearts: quickly swapping for a new one when one of them is damaged by his clumsy handling? We realize, reading this, that it could be better to receive a slightly dented heart-shaped box. This is a compassionate poem because it puts most readers close to the shopper and his sweetly sad wish to be perfect.

leaning back
in their chairs
old friends reunited

Carolyn Hall, San Francisco CA

No verbal pyrotechnics but a moment of human interaction keenly observed and presented with powerful simplicity. We are likely to think of the moment of reunion as one of feverish or tearful embrace. That is often the first of it. There may also be a period of time spent on the edge of seats, trying to catch up. But the moment in which a reunion is fulfilled is what is caught in such sharp focus by this poem, the moment when the friends can once again relax in each other's presence.

saving her best dishes
for a better day
my eighty-year-old mother

Theresa Mormino, Shreveport LA

This is such a common human folly, holding back until the time is right, with never any assurance that there will be such a time. Most often there will not be. We make it so by always deferring to some imaginary perfect moment in the future. How rare it is for us to look around, here and now, and decide that this is the time and place to do our living. On the other hand, it can be nice to enjoy the anticipation.

John Stevenson & Larry Kimmel, Judges

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THE HAIKU SOCIETY OF AMERICA

TREASURER'S REPORT

(April 1—June 30, 1999)

Income

Balance	16,384.74	
Membership Dues	3,514.50	
Frogpond Samples	154.00	
Contributions	245.00	
Museum of Haiku Literature	200.00	
Fort Mason Refund	50.00	
Miscellaneous	10.00	
Total Income		20,558.24

Expenses

HSA General Account

Postage	493.50	
Supplies	44.54	
Frogpond Awards	50.00	
Copying/Printing	71.50	
Website	140.00	
Donation Virgilio Memorial	50.00	

Newsletter

Printing	975.00	
Postage	498.29	

Frogpond

Printing	3,727.94	
Postage	325.66	

Total Expenses **6,386.48**

Balance (6/30/99) 14,171.76

Respectfully submitted
Raffael DeGruttola, Treasurer

Museum of Haiku Literature Award

\$50 for the best haiku or senryu
appearing in the previous issue of FROGPOND
as voted by the HSA Executive Committee

garden work—
talking to each other
back to back

Dimitar Anakiev



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