JUXTAFIVE

Research and Scholarship in Haiku

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Editor's Welcome

Thank you once again for taking the time to read and enjoy our fifth iteration of *Juxtapositions*. I think we have put together a wonderful issue that lays the foundation for a growing interest in haiku research and scholarship.

It is with mixed emotions that I share this will be my last issue as senior editor of *Juxta*. While I will remain an editor on issues still to come, it's time for me to pass the baton. Next up as senior editor is scholar and excellent haijin Ce Resnow, doubtless a familiar presence to most of you in the haiku world. She will carry on our tradition of bringing the best in haiku scholarship to *Juxta* 6.

Through four issues, and now with this our fifth, *Juxta* has served, we hope, as a beacon for those who wish to elevate this wonderful form of poetry into serious realms of academic and interdisciplinary research. With issue five, we bring you further work being explored on haiku and perception, as well as a special section on 'Women in Haiku' wherein female poets explore what it has meant to them over the years to be a female haiku poet and essayist. Women in haiku have been guiding beacons in our poetry for decades now.

I want to thank sincerely all those on our editorial board, and The Haiku Foundation, for making *Juxtapositions* a success. It's been hard work yet through it all we've persevered. With gratitude, and a nod to our publisher Jim Kacian, please enjoy *Juxtapositions* 5.

Warm regards,

Peter McDonald
Senior Editor

Gull with the starry prints

do you stand here and watch

these ballets in the sand?

Gull with the starry prints
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these ballets in the sand?

Haiga: Ann Atwood

Knocking on the Doors of Perception

Further Inquiries Into Haiku and the Brain

Stella Pierides, Thomas Geyer,
Franziska Günther, Jim Kacian,
Heinrich René Liesefeld,
Hermann J. Müller

ABSTRACT: Haiku has been shown to be fruitful material in investigating the manner in which we come to appreciate poetic and literary texts, providing a promising path for understanding the neuro-cognitive processes of poetry reading. The latter accolade, by way of our first study, has now found further evidence in our second series of tests, which repeated and extended the first. Specifically, the use of the 'cut' in haiku creates a recognizable trace which is reflected in the pattern of eye movements that readers make in their efforts to understand the poem – with the eye movements telling us where attention, and mental effort, is focused during initial reading and re-reading. Our new findings show that the use of explicit punctuation to mark the cut in haiku (such as dashes and ellipses) modifies the eye-movement pattern in characteristic ways compared to poems with unmarked cuts. Following a sketch and discussion of the new findings and their implications for understanding how we read haiku, we consider a number of interesting questions and methodological approaches for further research on how the 'mind-brain' constructs poetic meaning.

Reading and appreciating haiku

While haiku was shedding its garments originally acquired through the Japanese form via its translations in the West, and transforming through an alliance with Imagism, to the form it has come to acquire today, a parallel development was taking place: the consideration of how to read this new-to-the-West poetic genre and what reading haiku, or learning to read haiku, might yield for the reader in terms of how to appreciate haiku (and poetry in general); and at a later date, for the neuro-cognitive scientist interested in the processes of how the 'mind-brain' arrives at an understanding of the poems' meaning. In this paper, we highlight two signposts on the roadmap of reading haiku: an interesting early essay by Phyllis Rose Thompson, titled 'The "Haiku Question" and the Reading of Images' (Thompson), which was meant to provide a guide to teaching haiku in the classroom, recognizing its potential for engaging the senses and enriching sensual awareness; and our recent attempts to 'read' haiku on its way through the 'sensory' system in our eye-movement studies.

Thompson, in her 1967 essay, considered failure to engage the senses fully in the imaginative appreciation of poetry as the barrier to appreciating the reading of poetry at large. Thompson recommended that prior to the reading of sensuous poetry, one should study haiku. Taught to read fast, she wrote — at a time when society and culture were far less hurried than today — the reader does not always appreciate the sensory content of the poem, the main difficulty being how to place oneself in the "there" of the poem. Studying haiku before venturing to appreciate sensuous poetry would offer the necessary tools. Haiku require close observation of a named object and precise delineation of all the sensations aroused by it in the reader; it asks of its readers that they narrowly question their feelings.

Thompson illustrates this close questioning by quoting and discussing two haiku, one by Buson:

> On the temple bell
> Has settled and is fast asleep
> A butterfly.

and one by Shiki:

> On the temple bell
> Is settled and is glittering
> A firefly.

In Thompson's reading of the two haiku, placing herself, in imagination, in the very spot in which the poets stood, and recreating their experience, the differences between the poems became clear to the uninformed reader.

In a process mirroring the poet's questioning, Thompson interrogated the images from all senses: where exactly is the bell (in a church steeple? outside the temple?), how heavy is it, what is it made of, how is it sounded (struck with a hammer? swung and rung with a clapper?), is it warm or cold to the touch? Similarly with the butterfly: what color is it, what is its texture, its weight, what time of the day is it portrayed, in which season is the experience taking place, what are the similarities between temple and butterfly? (stillness) . . .

In Thompson's essay, a similar process of questioning the poem and the sensory associations in it follows, this time with the firefly. In contrast to the butterfly, the firefly is seen in different light conditions: early nighttime. While the butterfly haiku is bathed in a warm, soft, sleepy color, Thompson pointed out that the firefly nervously settling in the early evening evokes a cooler setting and feeling.

Thus, even though composed of similar elements, the sensations and feelings evoked by the two haiku are very different, and the difference becomes apparent only through close reading. Haiku require an attentive, image-creating response from every sense of the reader. It is as if the questioning of sensations is an attempt to match item by item the rich images emanating from the haiku's words to the neuronal networks affording our sensory awareness. And so this practice of reading haiku in an accurate, deep, and direct manner, trains the mind in asking the same kind of questions when reading other forms of poetry.

There have been other illustrations, by poets, theorists, and teachers, before and after Thompson's essay: For instance, Higginson and Harter (Higginson and Harter), Gurga (Gurga), and Kacian (Kacian *How to Haiku*) spend at least part of a chapter on using the senses as catalysts toward the writing and appreciation of haiku. And those books specifically devoted to teaching children the appreciation of haiku — *Haiku: Asian Arts and Crafts for Creative Kids* (Donegan), *H is for Haiku* (Rosenberg), and the four bilingual (French/English) seasonal collections by André Duhaime (Duhaime), among others — tend to stress it to an even greater degree.

In Thompson's, one might say, 'informed' way of reading haiku, reading achieves understanding, or approaches it. It is a measured, slow process of elaborating the images in one's mind and integrating these into a coherent whole, or into what Wolfgang Iser (Iser) referred to as a 'meaning Gestalt'. Given the need for rich sensory imagination, reading haiku can be considered a prime example of reading as a process of 'embodied' comprehension (e.g., Zwaan "The Immersed Experiencer: Toward an Embodied Theory of Language Comprehension"; Zwaan "Embodiment and Language Comprehension: Reframing the Discussion"; Glenberg and Robertson; Vandaele and Brône; see also, e.g., Barsalou; Shapiro for more general, psychological approaches to embodied

cognition): (re-)creating — on the 'stage of consciousness' — a rich, multisensory simulation (e.g. of perception and/or motor activity) of experiencing the moment the poem encapsulates, and, in this way, giving rise to feelings of insight and aesthetic appreciation. [How many readers actually practice this 'reading' deliberately is an interesting question.]

Haiku as 'paradigmatic material'

Note that Thompson's essay advocates the use of haiku as paradigmatic material for learning to appreciate poetry in general: mastering the art of reading haiku enriches reading and appreciation of other forms of poetry.

Similarly, we have recently proposed that haiku might provide an exemplary study material for understanding the brain mechanisms and processes involved in reading poetry and, perhaps, in constructing meaning in general. More precisely, in a series of studies, we asked:

> "Might its [i.e., haiku's] shape, juxtaposition of images, play with pacing, rhythm, speed, and other qualities have something to do with the way it is being received by the brain and transformed into gold? Might the poetic form of haiku have unique properties that act on us like 'a magical utterance', a 'poetic spell' (Lucas)? And if so, were we to explore some of the form's pathways to the brain, might we understand how a given haiku is re-created by the neuro-/cognitive system, as well as discover a baseline of how meaning in general is re-constructed by the mind-brain?" (Pierides et al.)

To approach these questions, we began by examining how non-expert readers of haiku read this form of poetry — specifically by looking at their eye movements while scanning and re-scanning the poems' lines — aiming to contrast their reading of haiku with more informed readers in the future.

Our arguments for using haiku — specifically, normative English-language haiku (ELH) — as exemplary material for studying the processes of meaning construction were twofold. Quoting from our 2017 study, we saw: (i) "[Normative ELH] engage a rich set of mental functions with the minimum of linguistic means, using everyday, unadorned language, characterized by the use of high-frequency vocabulary and 'plain style' (Brooks) thus offering a potent literary form for investigating processes of meaning construction. Importantly, processes of arriving at a coherent 'meaning Gestalt' can be assumed to figure centrally in ELH comprehension, since it requires the resolution of surprise induced by the fact that ELH usually juxtapose two seemingly unconnected images." And (ii): "they are compositionally well constrained and highly similar in structure; they thus constitute ideal test material for experimental research in (Neuro-)Cognitive Poetics by allowing for systematic variation of stimulus features and repeated measurement."

Examples of the haiku that we presented to our novice readers (in our 2019 study) are shown in the table below. As can be seen, we systematically varied: (i) the type of haiku: context–action vs. juxtaposition; (ii) the cut position: at the end of line 1 (i.e., 'fragment' in line 1, 'phrase' in lines 2 and 3) vs. the end of line 2 (i.e., phrase in lines 1 and 2, fragment in line 3); and the cut marker: marker (such as a dash or an ellipsis) present vs. absent.

Briefly, in context–action haiku, one component (image) of the haiku, the fragment, provides the context (take, for example, Hansha Teki's poem: [fragment] "last rites —") and the other, the phrase, describes an action set within this context ([phrase] "I watch her eyes / let go of me"). Both images, although each relatively familiar, are set in a relationship with one another by the poet.

In juxtaposition haiku, by contrast, there is no immediate, straightforward (familiar) context–action relationship, that is, the images juxtaposed are more jarring, in a relationship of tension

that needs to be resolved (e.g., Melissa Allen's poem: [fragment] "bruised apples /" [phrase] "he wonders what else / I haven't told him"). In a given poem, the cut can be either at the end of line 1 (i.e., the fragment part is in line 1, like in Allen's poem) or at the end of line 2 (i.e., the fragment is in line 3). Further, cut effects can be reinforced by punctuation (i.e., explicit cut markers) at the end of the fragment line 1 (L.1-cut haiku) or second phrase line 2 (L.2-cut haiku). In the 2019 study, reading behavior was also assessed in a control condition: one-image haiku (e.g., "behind the camera / I face / my family", Eve Luckring) with only a single picture/image, i.e., without significant tension between conflicting elements (fragment and phrase lines in haiku, respectively).

It should be noted that by examining readers' eye-movements as they read the poem for the first time and then re-read it, we focus on the beginnings of the processes of understanding and appreciation. The deliberate and close questioning of the poem described, for instance, by Thompson belongs to/is highly likely involved in a later process in that it requires that the poem has already been read (or heard) and is represented in the reader's mind. Our eye-movement research, by contrast, focuses more on the earlier processes that render a more or less elaborate form of this representation; so, in a sense, it is the first knocks on the doors of perception, comprehension and appreciation.

In the tradition of eye-tracking research in reading, our work is based on the 'eye-mind assumption' (Just and Carpenter): eye movements tell us where, when, and for how long attention — and, thus, the mind — is allocated within the text to extract information in a first attempt to integrate it into global meaning. Importantly, we know (from cognitive linguistics) that the mind attempts to construct meaning immediately ('on-line') as it encounters each new piece of information (and it continually predicts, syntactically and semantically, what is likely to come next: e.g., Clark; Friston; Kuperberg and Jaeger). Also, there are some points, for instance,

at the end of a sentence, where there is 'meaning wrap-up': the eye pauses as if taking a break to enable the mind to establish a coherent interpretation of what is being conveyed by the sentence (Carpenter and Just). On this background, we assumed that reading eye-movements would reveal something about how the first under-

haiku type	cut	marker	example poem	source
context-action haiku	L.1-cut fragment: L.1 phrase: LL.2-3	present	**last rites—** **I watch her eyes** **let go of me**	Hansha Teki, *The Heron's Nest,* Vol. XIV:3, 2012 (reprinted with permission)
		absent	**heatwave** **I see more** **of my neighbors**	Stella Pierides, *The Heron's Nest,* Vol. XV:4, 2013 (reprinted with permission)
	L.2-cut fragment: L.3 phrase: LL.1-2	present	**the bright edge** **of a falling axe. . .** **low winter sun**	Jo McInerney, *The Heron's Nest,* Vol. XVII:4, 2015 (reprinted with permission)
		absent	**closing my eyes** **to find it** **cricket's song**	Billy Antonio, *The Heron's Nest,* Vol. XVII:1, 2015 (reprinted with permission)
juxtaposition haiku	L.1-cut fragment: L.1 phrase: LL.2-3	present	**music two centuries old—** **the color flows** **out of the tea bag**	Gary Hotham, *Brussels Sprout,* Vol. XII:2, 1995 (reprinted with permission)
		absent	**bruised apples** **he wonders what else** **I haven't told him**	Melissa Allen, *Acorn*, 26, 2011 (reprinted with permission)
	L.2-cut fragment: L.3 phrase: LL.1-2	present	**another talk** **that's only in my head. . .** **summer rain**	Stewart C. Baker, *Frogpond,* 36:3, 2013 (reprinted with permission)
		absent	**from the throat** **of a blackbird** **morning star**	Claire Everett, *Acorn*, 26, 2011 (reprinted with permission)
one-image haiku			**behind the camera** **I face** **my family**	Eve Luckring, *Frogpond*, 28:2, 2005 (reprinted with permission)

Table. Example haiku from the sample used in the 2019 study.
(Teki; Pierides; McInerney; Antonio; Hotham; Allen; Baker; Everett; Luckring)

standing when reading a haiku is created, which then forms the basis for the subsequent 'query process' illustrated by Thompson.

Importantly, we examined the reading of normative, three-line ELH with a clearly discernible 'cut', that is: a gap between two image components ('fragment' and 'phrase', in Reichhold's terms) brought, by the poet, in a more or less tense relationship with each other, which needs to be worked out ('resolved') by the reader to understand the haiku's meaning. Accordingly, our central question was whether the reader's encountering the cut would at all be discernible in the eye-movement patterns; and, further, whether the strength of the cut (stronger in juxtaposition than in context–action haiku), its positioning (at the end of line 1 or the end of line 2), and whether or not it is marked by punctuation would be reflected in the eye movements.

The (Neuro-)Cognitive Poetics Approach

We consider our work set within a '(neuro-)cognitive poetics' approach which conceives of the processes of meaning construction in analogy to the processes of 'Gestalt' formation elaborated by Gestalt Psychology for visual perception. The main proponents of this approach are A. Jacobs and collaborators. In their (qualitative) model of literary reading (Jacobs; Schrott and Jacobs), they envisage that all literary texts, including even single words in isolation, consist of, and transport, background [BG] and foreground [FG] features, in various mixture ratios (see also Van Peer, Hakemulder and Zyngier). When combined, these elements constitute the 'meaning Gestalt' of a text (Iser). Gestalt Psychology (Koffka; Wertheimer; Arnheim; Gombrich) has described processes that energize and organize the array of elementary features in the visual field into unified, coherent 'objects' that can become the focus of attention in perception (against a background 'context'). In analogy to these

processes, processes of literary construction and appreciation are seen as encouraging play with different perspectives, conceptions, and expectations, and thus of processes that are all directed towards eventually arriving at a coherent, contextualized 'meaning Gestalt' for a text (for applications of Gestalt Psychological principles to language more generally, see, e.g., Langacker; Croft and Cruse; Ungerer and Schmid).

Shifts between background and foreground features figure centrally in this process of literary comprehension (see also Lüdtke, Meyer-Sickendieck and Jacobs). BG features are said to be the elements of a text that create a feeling of familiarity in the reader: familiar words, phrases, and images; familiar situation models, socio-cultural codes, and affective scripts. As such, BG features are coherent with readers' previous experiences and expectations, and thus provide them with a context against which the cognitively more challenging FG features stand out and in which they can be grounded (Jacobs). Background features therefore enable rich and relatively effortless cognitive simulation, and, accordingly, facilitate automatic (fast) processing of the respective passages of literary texts (Jacobs; Schrott and Jacobs).

In contrast, FG features, such as unusual form elements (including, the use of line breaks) and semantic vagueness or ambiguity as well as textual inconsistency or (seeming) incoherence, may be brought in a relationship of tension or conflict with the BG elements, interrupting the (automatic) processing of texts by capturing attention. In such situations, the repertory of standard cognitive and affective schemas no longer suffices to make meaning. Instead, FG elements challenge the situation model that a reader has formed on the basis of the BG elements and make it necessary for her/him to reconsider and update this model. This will trigger a controlled (slow) reading mode, involving ongoing, cognitively challenging processes of 'meaning Gestalt' construction through information integration and synthesis. Reaching the end of this

effortful "aesthetic trajectory" (Fitch, Graevenitz and Nicolas) is likely experienced as rewarding: "after initial moments of familiar recognition, followed by surprise, ambiguity, and tension, the closure of meaning gestalts [releases the tension and is] . . . occasionally supplemented by an 'aha' experience . . . or feeling of good fit, 'rightness', or harmony . . ." (Jacobs p. 16).

Jacobs and colleagues developed this model based on investigating, in the main, the reading of longer texts, including texts from novels and longer poems (sonnets: Xue et al.). And so it may not be immediately transparent how it applies to haiku. In the Buson and Shiki poems above, the bell, its warmth, weight, sound, stand for background features that ring associations in the reader's mind and reverberate with other poems, moods, situations. Also, fragment lines — with seasonal references (*kigo*) such as "heatwave", "bruised apples", "cricket song" in the example poems in the table — would evoke some 'situation model' and/or 'affective script' allowing for an element of immersion, on the part of the reader, in the poet's situation. However, the fact that there is no straightforward linkage between this image and the one presented in the phrase lines would jolt the reader out of an immersive (automatic) into an attentive reading mode; that is, the cut acts as a 'foregrounding' element evoking active processes of filling-in the gap and constructing the 'bridging context' that allows the fragment to be aligned with the phrase. The end state would be the poem's meaning Gestalt, constructed out of its (seemingly conflicting, jarring) image elements.

The 'Cut' Effect in Eye-Movement Patterns

Thus, to investigate how this reading 'trajectory' — and especially, processes involving foregrounding elements in haiku, in particular, the 'cut' and punctuation marking the cut — would be reflected in

(non-experienced, naïve haiku) readers' eye-movement patterns, we conducted a series of experiments (Müller et al.; Geyer et al.). Here, we focus on the new study (as we already reported on the first one in Juxta 2017). In addition to replicating the basic 'cut effect', i.e., the extended fixational dwell time spent on the fragment line relative to the other lines (see below for details), the new study further examined (i) how this effect is influenced by whether the cut is purely implicit or explicitly marked by punctuation, and (b) whether the effect pattern could be delineated against a control condition of 'uncut', one-image haiku.

Before summarizing our main findings, a note on how they were statistically corroborated is in order: All 'findings' referred to below are corroborated by Bayesian ANOVA- (analysis-of-variance-) type analyses or, for direct comparisons between two conditions, two-tailed Bayesian t-tests. Here (below), we simply report the so-called Bayes Factor (BF10) associated with an effect (main effect or interaction in an ANOVA or a direct comparison); a full specification of the analyses, numerical descriptions of the effects, and statistics can be found in Geyer et al. The Bayes Factor weighs the evidence in favor of the existence of an effect (the statistical 'hypothesis') by the evidence for its non-existence (the 'null-hypothesis') (see, e.g., Rouder et al.). Accordingly, BF10 values > 1 provide net evidence for an effect, with values > 3 providing 'substantial' evidence; conversely, BF10 values < 1 favor the null-hypothesis, with values $< 1/3$ providing 'substantial' evidence for the absence of an effect.

Our findings can be summarized as follows:

The eye spends more time (per word) in the poem's fragment line, compared to the phrase lines (BF10 = 1.04+e7) — a finding we have referred to as 'cut effect'. For instance in "bruised apples / he wonders what else / I haven't told him", the reading time (per word) is longest for "bruised apples". This is true whether the

cut occurs after line 1 (like in the above example) or after line 2 (like in "closing my eyes / to find it / cricket's song"), and whether the poem is a context–action haiku ("closing my eyes . . .") or a juxtaposition haiku ("bruised apples . . ."). Nevertheless, the type of poem makes a difference: more time is spent in the fragment line, relative to the phrase lines, in juxtaposition haiku (e.g., on "bruised apples") than in context–action haiku (e.g., on "cricket's song") (BF10 = 6.3+e7). No such pattern is evident in uncut, one-image (control) haiku, in which the eyes dwell for similar amounts of time (per word) in all lines. Thus, the cut effect in two-image haiku indicates that the reader treats the fragment as being pivotal for global meaning construction: it is, ultimately, in the fragment line that the tension between the two images is resolved.

In juxtaposition haiku, the increased activity in the fragment line reflects the increased difficulty of working out the fragment's meaning in relation to the phrase. And the amount of time required to elaborate and settle on a fitting interpretation would depend on when the fragment image is encountered: before or after the phrase image (BF10 = 75.86). If encountered after the phrase, working out a possible relationship would already be informed by the prior reading of the phrase lines, and the fit of any emerging interpretation(s) could be assessed directly in the fragment line. Thus, with a cut at the end of line 2, both the elaboration of plausible relationships and the assessment of their fit would be concentrated on the fragment line — giving rise to a pronounced cut effect (BF10 = 602.25). By contrast, if the fragment is encountered before the phrase, while some, 'salient' interpretation(s) may immediately be evoked in the fragment line, the matching process (elaboration and assessment of fit) would have to be deferred to the subsequent reading of the phrase lines, thus reducing the cut effect in haiku with a cut at the end of line 1 (BF10 = 67.65).

While this pattern would be similar for context–action haiku, with this type of poem, less mental effort would be required to align the

two images because the setting and its fit with the action taking place within this context is easier to determine (perhaps because the context–action relation is one of the most fundamental schemas available to us to construct 'episodic' representations) — thus giving rise to a less marked cut effect (BF10 = 60.41).

Note that readers engage in these two processes — elaboration of relationships and assessment of fit of the fragment to the phrase image — already during the first reading of the haiku, and continue to do so when re-entering the fragment line in a second (or third) reading. However, after the first reading, the cut effect tends to be less pronounced (BF10 =.86), suggesting that re-reading may serve to confirm some already favored solution, and that readers would engage in an extended rechecking mode only if the preferred solution is dismissed on second reading.

Interestingly, on top of these general cut effects, the presence of punctuation marking the cut — like the dash after "last rites — / I watch her eyes / let go of me" — had a significant effect on the way the eyes sampled the poem. In particular, the eye 'dwelled' relatively longer on the line/s after the cut (line 1 BF10 = 56.72). This suggests that when encountering a marker at the end of line 1 (like in "last rites —"), the reader might be prompted to attempt an integrative analysis of the haiku as a whole (working out and aligning the meaning of the fragment image with the phrase image) already in the phrase lines ("I watch her eyes / let go of me"). This would reduce the cut effect (BF10 = 2.83), especially on the first reading of the haiku, that is: the cut marker makes the eye move on to (i.e., look for the poem's solution in) the phrase. Conversely, when encountering a marker after line 2 (like the ellipsis in "another talk / that's only in my head . . . / summer rain"), these processes of working out the impact of the fragment on the already sampled phrase are concentrated on the fragment line ("summer rain") (BF10 = 28.59). This immediately enhances the cut effect (BF10 = 8.63), that is: the marker makes the eye dwell extendedly on the

fragment (in a foreground-processing mode), possibly because it heightens the surprise associated with encountering the cut.

These modulatory effects are generally similar for the two types of cut marker — dashes and ellipses — that we examined. Interestingly, however, ellipsis markers, perhaps counter-intuitively, appeared to be more beneficial (hastening the eye on when encountered at the end of line 1) or less disruptive (making the eye dwell less when encountered at the end of line 2) than dash markers, at least for juxtaposition haiku for which we could make this comparison (BF10 = 12.73). This suggests that readers make immediate use of the marker type to construct the haiku's meaning. Specifically, ellipsis markers hint at something that is left unsaid (but implied) and so might trigger active foregrounding 'generation' processes, that is, working out what is implied (in foreground-processing mode), that may ultimately help bridge the gap and promote understanding.

Interestingly, this is how the poet Aparna Pathak described this effect in her haibun "Vacuum" published recently (Pathak).

> The ellipsis is toughest of all the punctuation marks. It provides space to leave the things unsaid.
>
> But I want to join the dots, as sound can't travel without a medium.
>
> twinkling stars . . .
> jargon of an
> autistic boy

Discussion and further Research Directions

We interpret these highly characteristic eye-movement and cut-effect patterns to track and illuminate the earliest, moment-to-moment processes in the reading and understanding of

haiku — prior to those of our participants reflecting on their sensations and understanding the poem as a coherent whole.

How to describe this? If we imagine a continuum, it would be a graph of the readers scanning the poem for the first time (first pass) and then following this up by one or more (re-)readings, to construct and settle on the poem's meaning. However, in our tests, the readers did not follow an orderly left to right, top to bottom sequence of reading behavior. They did not simply read from beginning to end. Instead, their eye-movement behavior showed a pattern that we believe is unique to haiku reading: reading several times, the eyes jumping back and forth within lines and between lines — but nevertheless showing a regularity that is determined by the cut: its placement and strength, as well as its marking by punctuation (or the absence of punctuation, respectively).

In this respect, our results suggest that at least elementary processes of elaboration (to some rudimentary extent including Thompson's 'questioning of the senses') take place not only after reading the whole poem, but already during it, while encountering the cut, which causes back-tracking to the previous line, and jumping ahead again — indicative of simultaneous, ongoing meaning construction processes. We expect that, especially during these later (re-)readings, the senses and cognitive system are being interrogated until at least some degree of closure or meaning resolution is achieved.

In the present set of (eye-movement) data, we glimpse some of the initial processes through which we acquire information to achieve understanding. To gain a richer picture of these processes, in addition to eye movements, we also recorded our readers' electroencephalogram (EEG) while they were reading and re-reading the haiku. The EEG data have yet to be analyzed. Specifically, guided by the cut effects (i.e., the time at which they emerge in the eye-movement record), we plan to look for special

markers of the experience of 'surprise' in the EEG (triggered by encountering the cut) as well as markers of 'aha', feelings of 'harmony', and aesthetic appreciation if and when a solution — a coherent meaning Gestalt — has been worked out. We have a rich data set available to examine for such markers, but whether we will find them remains to be seen. It is a bit like looking for the proverbial needle in the haystack.

In a follow-up study, we also plan to look at readers' reactions to the senses addressed by the poem: such as the sensation of warmth, light, etc. evoked in Buson's and Shiki's poems; taste when reading "bruised apples", hearing when reading "cricket song". We know that by merely thinking about, or imagining, certain sensations, specific areas of the brain that are involved in providing us with the respective (real) sensory experiences become active. Thus, for instance, when processing foods conceptually, gustatory regions become active (e.g., Simmons, Martin and Barsalou); when processing things that emit smells, olfactory areas become active (e.g., González et al.); etc. We can track activity in these areas while reading haiku by conducting our experiments in an MRI (Magnetic Resonance Imaging) scanner. These sensory associations, together with the more semantic associations (including organizing situation models and affective scripts) evoked by the poem would form part of the poem's representation in the reader's mind — on the stage of consciousness. One interesting question that arises from this neuroscientific approach is whether brain activations (in sensory regions) are predictive of the 'reading trajectory' (i.e., cut effect, haiku understanding, etc.). Beyond this, we might also get at the dynamics of how such an — initially perhaps incoherent — representation of (passive-automatically invoked) elementary associations might, over time, evolve and settle into a coherent meaning Gestalt. This is likely to involve attentive, 'foreground' processes, triggered by encountering the cut, as well as active generation of new, 'bridging' associations and the discarding

of associations that do not fit. These processes are likely to involve more frontal brain areas related to 'problem solving'.

Concerning the issue of how we parse haiku, one interesting extension of our work with normative, three-line ELH would be to explore the eye movements during the reading of one-line haiku, or monoku, in which one image is extended into a second context, and where the cut can be placed arbitrarily in several parts of the line, thus allowing for a number of alternative 'readings' of the poem. An example would be Kala Ramesh's monoku (One-line Haiku, Ramesh):

a tornado spiraling thoughts to the sky

Kacian (Kacian "The Way of One") elaborates: "Multiple stops yield subtle, rich, often ambiguous texts which generate alternative readings, and subsequent variable meanings. Each poem can be several poems, and the more the different readings cohere and reinforce each other, the larger the field occupied by the poem, the greater its weight in the mind." These poems might be said to be more reader-driven, in that the reader is invited by the poet, through the poem's construction, to try to determine the poem's meanings by parsing it in various ways. It would be most interesting to examine whether we can see the emergence of such multiple readings in the eye-movement patterns (involving asking the reader to explicitly mark where she placed the cuts).

Furthermore, while we found the reading dynamics outlined above (for three-line normative ELH) to be going on even in those of our readers who took the shortest time to read a poem, it is an open question whether 'expert' readers of haiku would exhibit the same or different patterns of eye movements. To examine this, we envisage a study involving a 2-tier design: first testing 'naïve' participants using our standard procedure, followed by instructing them in the reading and 'questioning' of ELH, and finally testing

them again now as 'expert' readers. This design would allow us to compare the same participants' eye-movement patterns between a 'novice' and an 'expert' stage of haiku reading.

So far in our research, we have only looked at the reading of haiku — in our experiments presented visually on a computer screen for a time determined by the reader (though with an upper limit). One interesting scenario to compare with this reading situation would be the auditory presentation and reception of haiku, when the poem is read out aloud to the listener. The practice of reading aloud the poem and, after a brief interval, reading it out a second time, has been practiced in the Japanese tradition. Modern-day ELH practitioners, too, in readings and conferences, present their haiku by reading them aloud typically twice, providing the listener with the opportunity and time to imagine the situation being conveyed through the poem. Still, due to the limitations of the auditory system, the listener is limited in the way she can sample the poem and its constituent images, unlike the reader who is free to scan the poem, or selected parts of it, several times to understand it. The (so far unresolved) challenge would be to find ways of tracking the listening process on a moment-by-moment basis.

In summary, we believe our work thus far demonstrates the potential that the neuro-cognitive study of haiku reading holds for understanding how we construct poetic meaning at large. While this work is of interest to the field of cognitive neuroscience, some of its results would also have implications for the poetic practice: knowing how we read haiku (and, for instance, process cut markers) may inform the ways in which the haiku poet uses the various devices offered by this form of poetry.

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Reparative Leanings of Haiku Aesthetics:

Ways of Knowing and Reading in Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick's *A Dialogue on Love*

Aubrie Cox Warner

ABSTRACT: Haiku and related forms, particularly haibun, by their very nature, invoke reparative ways of reading and knowing. Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick's haibun models (performs, even) these ways of knowing by utilizing the space between haiku and prose to queer the text, and appealing to the powering the power of dialogue in reader-writer relationships. This article highlights Sedgwick's understanding of reparative reading as a theoretical practice, connects it to haiku aesthetics, and then identifies how these are reflected in the moving parts of Sedgwick's *A Dialogue on Love*.

Introduction

Although theorist and poet Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick (1950 – 2009) is primarily known for her foundational work in queer, literary, and gender studies, I was first introduced to her work through my first MFA poetry workshop in a lesson on close reading. Dominant academic theory often demands a method of reading that seeks to unearth one, definitive truth within a text; within the poetry workshop, this means writers might latch onto one way to read a poem, as though a poem is a puzzle to solve. In one such instance, our professor asked us to consider the concept of reparative reading, which he explained (perhaps overly simply for our sakes) as being generous and open to multiple readings, and following the possibilities of what the text could be doing. Reparative reading, which is derived by Sedgwick's uptake of Melanie Klein's psychoanalytic strategy of reparation (i.e., finding pleasure out of a depressive state), struck me as complementary to haiku aesthetics — the best haiku allow for multiple readings, and the social nature of that multiplicity means that the life of the poem grows the more that it's shared. The capacity to read and reread is what make haiku pleasurable.

In the years since this initial encounter, I've found myself often gravitating back to Sedgwick's theory, but it's only within the most recent revolution that I discovered Sedgwick's book-length haibun *A Dialogue on Love*. This encouraged me to revisit reparative reading directly through a haiku aesthetic perspective. This lens is not so much about writing haiku, but rather the experience of reading through the craft and aesthetics of haiku. Haiku, and particularly haibun, by their very nature, invoke reparative ways of reading and knowing. Sedgwick's haibun models (performs, even) these ways of knowing by utilizing the space between haiku and prose to queer the text, and appealing to the power of dialogue in reader-writer relationships.

This article will highlight Sedgwick's understanding of reparative reading as a theoretical lens and connect it to haiku aesthetics before identifying the moving parts of Sedgwick's *A Dialogue on Love*. In an effort towards transparency and accessibility, a few notes on terminology: By "ways of knowing," I'm referring to the way we, as humans, create and access knowledge based on our positionality in the world. This is often influenced by our life experiences, senses, and beliefs. I use this term often as an umbrella for "ways of knowing and reading," as I believe our individual ways of knowing often influence our reading experience. "Haiku aesthetics" is used as an umbrella for both haiku as genre, and related forms (senryu, renku, haibun, etc) that utilize common craft elements such as brevity, concrete image, juxtaposition, and link-and-shift (as per Tadashi Kondo and William J. Higginson and Kondo's "Link and Shift: A Practical Guide to Renku Composition").

Reparative Reading and Haiku Aesthetics

In the fourth essay of *Touching Feeling: Affect, Pedagogy, Performativity*, which is aptly named "Paranoid Reading and Reparative Reading, or, You're So Paranoid, You Probably Think This Essay Is About You," Sedgwick introduces reparative reading as an alternative to the critically dominant paranoid reading.

Reparative reading is inspired by psychoanalyst Melanie Klein's description of paranoid and depressive states. In response to Freudian psychology, which treats paranoia as part of a *diagnosis*, Klein posits it as a psychological *position*—practice as opposed to ideology (Sedgwick, *Touching Feeling* 128). Where the paranoid is anxious, raging against part-objects, the depressive position seeks to "'repair' the murderous part-objects into something like a whole—*though I would emphasize not necessarily like any preexisting whole*" (128, emphasis in original).

In other words, reparation is a strategy that is achieved through the depressive state in order to bring pleasure and comfort.

From a theoretical and critical reading standpoint, paranoia, also beginning with a Freudian lens, does its best to guard against homosexuality; however, queer studies, as Sedgwick explains, realized that paranoid reading is also useful in identifying "the mechanisms of homophobic and heterosexist enforcement against it" (*Touching Feeling* 126). This process has been replicated by other theories, such as feminism and Marxism, though Sedgwick's concern is that it has become the only acceptable way to critically approach a text.

Despite the potential problems with paranoid reading, it's held in high regard because there is grounding for the theory. As an intellectual exercise, it's a strong theory that is: "anticipating . . . reflexive and mimetic . . . a strong theory . . . of negative effects," which, "places its faith in exposure" (Sedgwick, *Touching Feeling* 130). In wielding exposure as knowledge, the paranoid reader makes sure that there are "no bad surprises" (130). To be surprised is to fail to read critically. For the reparatively positioned reader, Sedgwick argues, it's healing to imagine things differently than they currently are; the possibilities beyond what's definitive in the here and now offer a chance to contemplate a new future and alternative past (146). The desire within this is "additive and accretive" (149).

It's important to acknowledge that Sedgwick doesn't *condemn* paranoid reading, or say that it does not have any value, rather, its prevalence as the *only* valid method of reading is problematic (*Touching Feeling* 130). Sedgwick offers reparative reading as a potential alternative, but by no means the only possibility:

> To read from a reparative position is to surrender the knowing, anxious paranoid determination that no horror, however apparently unthinkable, shall ever come to the reader *as new*; to a reparatively

> positioned reader, it can seem realistic and necessary to experience surprise. Because there can be terrible surprises, however, there can also be good ones. (146)

Because paranoid reading does not allow for surprise in reading, it often misses other ways for the text to grow, and does not allow alternative ways of knowing or engaging with a text. Monica Pearl interprets Sedgwick's notion as a suggestion that: "We might aim to read reparatively, that is, with an effort to participate and understand rather than disparage" (164). Participation is key to haiku aesthetics.

While haiku are not wounded spaces, I would argue that they're incomplete, open-ended places with built-in invitations for the reader to finish what has been started. Haiku are often described, as prompted by Makoto Ueda, as only half-finished — it's only complete when a reader, who assumes the role as an active collaborator, comes and offers their reading (vii). However, this completion is not a fixed reading, nor does the culture of haiku encourage any one fixed interpretation. Brooks argues that: "The haiku experience is not something that occurs when the haiku is written; it occurs when the written haiku finds a reader who fully imagines it in order to fulfill its promise as a gift of realization, insight or feeling" ("Genesis of Haiku" 41). The one-breath poem is valued for its capacity for multiple readings, especially when those readings can engage with one another in a social setting (in a classroom, at a reading, in a roundtable discussion, an online forum, etc); haiku tradition is deeply rooted in reader response. A paranoid reading leaves a haiku dead in the water — there is no breath, no "ah!" experience. Through the juxtaposition, cut, and brevity, haiku rely on the capacity for surprise.

Sedgwick's examination of paranoid and reparative reading, and the positionality of the reader, reminds me of Brooks' look

at haiku through rhetorical traditions — in describing the role of the reader within each poetics, I hear echoes of paranoid and reparative reading. Different rhetorical lenses offer different roles for the reader, some that are more restrictive than others. For example, haiku invented through an objective poetics embody an egoless observation of nature "without interpretation, explanation, commentary, or emotional response" (Brooks, "Haiku Poetics" 29). Intended to be clear, and uncolored by the writer (or reader's) perspective, "the language is supposed to disappear as the reader recognizes the truth of the observation — 'yes, that's the way it really is'" (29). As Brooks notes, this objective poetics originates from a *shasei*, sketch of life, poetics, but when placed side by side with Sedgwick's descriptions of paranoid reading, it's difficult not to see how these kind of poems may evoke a paranoid response: "paranoia for all its vaunted suspicion acts as though its work would be accomplished if only it could finally, this time, somehow get its story truly known" (*Touching Feeling* 158). I personally see this particularly in the way that haiku in English, especially in the US and the UK, developed in response to Blyth's Zen-heavy *HAIKU* volumes, leading to strong beliefs that haiku cannot be metaphorical and must come out of real world experience.

Although objective tradition of haiku can generate multiple readings, there are likely certain readings that are deemed more valuable than others: "The role of the reader in objective haiku poetics is to become an 'everyman' reader who imagines themselves reliving the experience of reality . . . The reader 'steps into' the writer's 'everyman' perspective and imaginatively observes what the writer observed" (Brooks, "Haiku Poetics" 30). This strict alignment with the writer's experience leaves little room for surprise. In some ways, it guards against big surprises. The objective haiku poetics, however, is a strong and beautiful approach — its long history with *shasei* leads to distilled, preserved

moments that transcend hundreds of years; however, this tradition can easily be dogmatized as the one true way of writing haiku (not unlike paranoid reading's status within academic scholarship).

The subjective tradition offers a little more room — though because "there is little room left for the reader" (Brooks, "Haiku Poetics" 31) this may reroute certain readers back into wondering what the writer actually intended; the theory I want to emphasize as the other end of the spectrum from the objective is the transactional. The transactional space is a social space. Because this is a collaborative experience, "reality is socially constructed as images and language connected to culturally shared memories and experiences" (32). Rooted in reader response, transactional poetics expect variety; in other words, there is room for surprise on all sides. I would not argue that transactional haiku poetics are a one-to-one fit with reparative reading, but the openness and relationality make reparation more feasible. Brooks argues that to be a good reader of haiku within a transactional lens "requires a certain amount of trust and expectation that both writer and reader understand and appreciate the arts of reading and writing haiku" (33). In order to truly have a "shared consciousness," full participation is required (33). In this rhetorical space, the reader's contributions and "completion" of the haiku is open to a multitude of possibilities.

This active reader participation is deeply important to not only haiku, but related forms such as renga, haiga, and haibun, as they incorporate additional media and voices. The link and shift from one mode of reading to the next demands that the reader be able to switch gears and recognize how these parts are operative together (or against one another). The multiplicity of reading enriches the reading experience, and the liminal spaces of hybridity make liminal positions and identities more visible.

Haiku, especially within a haibun, disrupt linear, dominant expectations of a text (i.e., narrative prose), and therefore could

be argued as queering a text — deviating societal norms and expectations. The act of queering a text, in and of itself, may be marked as a reparative gesture when considering linear narrative prose as patriarchal and heteronormative. In "Haiku as Queer Tourism: From Bashō to David Trinidad," Justin Sherwood describes coming out as "a form of travel," and draws parallels between this and haiku's history as being "men writing to, of, for, with, men." In Western poetics, Ashberry utilized haibun in his 1984 collection *A Wave* as a means for explicit descriptions of "homosexual encounter," which is otherwise rare in his work (Sherwood). This served as an inspiration for James Merrill's *The Inner Room* in 1988, which served as Sedgwick's first introduction to haibun (Sedgwick, *A Dialogue* 194).

It's worth pause here to acknowledge that queer ventures into haibun have a complex and problematic history. As Sherwood explains, in complicated power dynamics, gay, white men have a history of appropriating and exoticizing other cultures; in the above examples, orientalist tropes are utitlized as means of creating queer narratives. Merrill in particular draws parallels of his own suffering with HIV to the "imagined, historical suffering of the Japanese" (Sherwood). Furthermore, Merrill uses Japanese culture and people as a metaphor for "ill health and infirmity" while his trip to Japan serves "as his final voyage" (Sherwood).

Despite this complicated history of association in Western poetics, as previously hinted, haibun not only complements queer content through the use of travel narrative, but through the nature of the form. The performative nature of moving between prose and haiku disrupts readerly expectations and dominant structures of narrative. The haiku often break away from the prose structure, which also feels akin to "coming out." This, Freedman argues, makes the form ideal for "witnessing queerness" (14). In "Queer Therapy: On the Couch with Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick," Monica Pearl notes the value of plurality of form: "The story of the queer

self cannot be told singly. We might say that under duress, in the realm of illness, for example, autobiography becomes community. Formalized queer conversation is often used to address debilitation and loss" (156). Haibun's capacity to make community, liminal space, and queerness visible potentially makes it possible to enter a "space of repair" (Pearl 167). Shifting between prose and poetry, haibun create space for imaging other realities beyond what's on the page. Quoting Koestenbaum, Pearl also suggests that haibun as a form, "a queer genre," gave Sedgwick permission to write about her experience with depression, and gives her readers permission to engage with it (167).

Sedgwick's *A Dialogue on Love*

Sedgwick's book-length haibun operates as memoir and a critical (perhaps even theoretical) exploration of queerness, love (especially queer love), death, and mental health. Pearl identifies the "likely genres" as "autobiography, experimental memoir, transcript, poetry, and queer manifesto" (154), while recognizing it as simultaneously "genre-less (or multi-genre)" (153). *A Dialogue on Love* follows the speaker, Eve, on her psychological journey as she returns to therapy after breast cancer, which has left her depressed and disconnected from her creative and sexual imagination; the text captures the interactions between Eve and her new therapist, Shannon, as they explore her sexuality and perceptions of queerness. It could be argued that the book is a documentation and performance of reparation, both psychologically and textually.

Perhaps due to Sedgwick's influences and attraction to the form, *A Dialogue on Love* bears more resemblance to classical Japanese travel diary haibun, such as Basho's *Narrow Road to the North* and Issa's *Spring of My Life*, than what's permeated global haiku traditions in the last 20 years. While reading, I was also reminded of

Rod Wilmott's *The Ribs of Dragonfly* — the use of narrative, multiple points of view, and haiku as transitions in-between. Sedgwick's haibun rarely turns to Japan and do not fall into the same practices as Ashberry or Merrill, but Sherwood argues that her work mirrors Basho's in its exploration of interiority. This likely also stems from Sedgwick's background in Buddhism and particularly interest in the bardo — "the liminal state or 'fairytale opening' in Buddhist theology that follows death, before the soul is reincarnated or born anew (2005, 166)" (Freedman 16). Additionally, the act of therapy itself demands the patient gaze inward.

The haibun form becomes a vehicle for exploring her interiority as well as the dialogic relationship between her and her therapist. Within *A Dialogue on Love*, Sedgwick expresses the desire to capture the experience, but it's not until the last 30 pages of the book that she identifies haibun as the form for it. Sedgwick expresses a lack of investment in haiku as a form unto itself — "I never really got into haiku as a short form. Precious, insipid, I think would have been my words for it" (*A Dialogue* 194) — but haibun offers something new. In a meta moment of the book, Sedgwick takes the time to evaluate the form, narrating her discovery of it and why it appeals to her for documenting her and Shannon's relationship: "[Haibun] seems so different. Sweeping into and through the arias, silent impasses, the fat, buttery condensations and inky dribbles of the mind's laden brush" (194). She describes Merrill's work as "spangled with haiku," and "prose that's never quite not the poetry" (194). Like most hybrid genres, haibun doesn't exist in any one particular space. Sherwood describes haibun, within this context, as allowing "observation, narrative, and progression, but also reflection and triangulation." Poetry was Sedgwick's first love, but she needed something more than a poem; although Platonic dialogues feel within the spirit of what she wants to accomplish, they are too close to prose for her own liking (*A Dialogue* 194). Haibun borrows from both worlds without necessarily being

either. The haiku and prose work together to create a link and shift that, while sometimes unexpected, operate within the spirit of haiku traditions while also creating and performing reparative spaces. If reparation is seeking pleasure through creating a whole, more desirable object, then haibun, as a form, brings Eve pleasure in her depressive state.

A Dialogue on Love maintains a typical haibun structure of juxtaposed poetry and prose; however, Sedgwick disrupts genre expectations of haibun (and patient narratives) by including Shannon's session notes alongside her prose. Craftwise, these three parts of the text — Eve's prose, Shannon's notes, and haiku — are visually distinctive from each other on the page, and have functions which blur and overlap as the book progresses. The use of three, rather than two "authorial voices," Freedman argues, disrupts binary thinking, which is key to *A Dialogue on Love* witnessing and performing of queerness (13). Meanwhile, Pearl emphasizes the importance of the fonts because they "tell us who is speaking — because sometimes they speak for or as each other — but whose notes are being presented" (155). As the use of first person becomes more heavily blurred — beyond heuristic to "textile" (155) — the fonts provide cues for the reader that the words themselves may not.

The prose from Eve's perspective are in a serif font and fully justified. This internal monologue is how the book introduces the reader to Eve and the situation. The opening pages, in their own way, model Sedgwick's own past with paranoia. Eve recounts her past experiences with therapy and reflects on how she's often had a set way of understanding her actions and feelings. Eve's prose are also where the majority of the quoted dialogue appears. Although heavily analytical at the beginning, the prose has the capacity to become raw with emotion: "But I think I know depression, I have my own history of it; and it felt, twenty years ago when I was really subject to it, so much less bearable than this does. So much. 'And yet,

you're crying now'" (Sedgwick, *A Dialogue*, 3). Eve's prose follow a fairly traditional narrative structure, progressing linearly. There are occasional time jumps, but these usually have clear markers. While those moments of raw emotion are present, the emotional power of these passages are the accumulation and the way they build, such as leading up to the quoted text that she's crying as she speaks. Similarly, when considering her history with depression, Eve acknowledges: "Sadness is such a groundtone for me. I almost only feel like myself when I'm sad" (62). These moments quietly creep up in the midst of the theoretical ponderings and wash over the reader.

Meanwhile, Shannon's notes are in full caps with a ragged edge, and equally ragged language. While Eve's prose follow a narrative flow, Shannon's notes are often more stacco, fragmented shorthand that cuts out unnecessary language. This often makes these passages more potent and abrupt with no warning or washing over feelings of Eve's prose:

> UP-AND-DOWN WEEKEND—EUPHORIC/UNCENTERED BY HAIKU BOOK PROJECT—IS IT RELATED TO SEX STUFF? // DREAM—BLEEDING AGAIN WITH THE DREAM AFFECT MIXED. IS AT A SCHOOL REUNION WITH GIRLS SHE WAS TAUGHT, AND ALTHOUGH SHE DOES NOT CLEARLY REMEMBER THEM, THEY ARE DEVOTED TO HER. (195)

The notes start as purely reflective on the therapy sessions and Eve's responses and descriptions of topics. In these spaces, we get more of Shannon's perspective as he interrogates his own response and slowly starts to include more of his own experiences. Interestingly, it's here, not in Eve's prose, that the reader also gets the most description of Eve's dreams. This may reflect the fact that Eve feels detached from her previous sexual fantasies, and that she needs to somehow complete the part-object she is left with. As such, the dreams exist in a separate space than her within the

narrative. As the notes go beyond the therapy sessions, they begin to take more and more space within the book, sometimes going on for pages where before they'd only be roughly half a page once every few pages. Edwards marks this as following the tradition of Basho's travel logs, which often include work from other poets, who become collaborators within the text, but do not receive credit as co-authors of the work. Although Shannon's take "center stage," his name is not on the cover of the book (Edwards 41).

The final component, the haiku, which are lowercase, sans serif, and indented (as per typical formatting), "spangle" the text in multiple capacities. Primarily in Eve's prose or serving as a transitional space between Eve's prose and Shannon's notes, the poems open up the text, especially in moments of a speaker's stubbornness or avoidance, to invite another way of reading the situation — another perspective dictated by another form. The haiku follow a 5-7-5 format, use of concrete images to varying degrees from poem to poem, and oftentimes break away from the mid-sentence — an example of the many ways Sedgwick utilizes enjambment throughout the book (Pearl 162). Sedgwick has a clear understanding of the importance of juxtaposition and line breaks, as demonstrated by:

> as I've suspended
> the worry about Shannon
> just being too dumb (51)

The break at "suspended" leaves both "I" and the reader suspended at the precipice of the first line, the white space — a space Freedman also reads as queer (16) — a liminal space that has yet to be defined or coded. The second line shifts the suspension from a person to a feeling, though it's unclear what the worry itself is until the third line. Without enjambment this poem loses all poignancy. The first haiku of the book operates in a similar fashion:

word that makes no claim
to anything but — wanting
to be happier (1)

In isolation, this poem relies less on context than the first. For me as a reader, the first line asks me to consider how easy it is for words to lose their meaning; I also think of the way complicated or uncommon language argues for a certain positionality (usually one of upper class or superiority). However, it's not that there is no claim at all — the second line argues there is only a singular claim, which like the previous example, is clarified in the final line. The haiku in *A Dialogue on Love* often focus on these moments of contemplation and confession, shifting and utilizing the breaks for an emotional rollercoaster. Though occasionally, Sedgwick shifts to more image driven haiku:

a storm of driving hail-
seeds and mica flakes snow
against the deep hill (11)

For those within the contemporary haiku in English community, this likely reads closer to the genre expectations — there's a clear cut at the end of the first line, and a juxtaposition between the images. The texture of the language is evocative, though, admittedly, feel out of place within the text that is uninterested in being traditionally poetic. Nevertheless, in both approaches (the language based and image based), Sedgwick utilizes enjambment to create surprise and new possibilities with each line.

There are plenty of instances of individual haiku throughout, but Sedgwick also frequently strings them together into a sequencing, further pushing the use of enjambment. During an early session, Eve brings in a photo from her childhood in order to help her therapist attempt to get to know her and her history. The text begins

in Eve's prose before breaking out into haiku, which introduce Shannon's observations:

> —But looking at that picture with Shannon, with the instant turbulence it brings to our relation, seems a direct pipeline to that time;
>
> also I notice
> the angle of the photo
> emphasizes this
>
> girl's breasts quite a lot
> and I'm picturing Shannon
> appreciating
>
> the new, soft, alien
> curves from my father's point of
> view behind the lens
>
> (he admits to this
> identification!) while
> for me, even when
>
> I had the two breasts
> I kept forgetting them. They
> weren't there for me.
>
> THIS DISCUSSION DOES NOT RESOLVE OUR RELATIONS NOW OR MAYBE MY RELATION WITH THIS GIRL AS YET. (77-78)

Where the haiku in Wilmott's *The Ribs of Dragonfly* operate more as intermissions between prose, the haiku in *A Dialogue on Love* serve as a pipeline from Eve's prose to Shannon's notes. Because the reader does not have direct access to the photo (only a description through the prose), the haiku are a placeholder for the exchange

and the experience of viewing the photo. The call-and-response does not end with a resolution, but as a table setting for further discussion; ending with "as yet" keeps a door open.

When observing Sedgwick's use of form, Edwards says she "repeatedly bent [haiku] to her own ends" (39). While inspired by Merrill, Sedgwick avoids the use of rhyme, and occasionally would break away from a strict haiku form in order to create three haiku-like sentences, compacted together in three-lines: "Like many genres Sedgwick explored, the haibun aesthetic she adopted in *A Dialogue on Love* is mostly, but never entirely, systematic" (Edwards 39). This, and the emphasis of 5-7-5, is not meant to be a critique of the quality of Sedgwick's poetry. Rather, this is to say that although on the surface her haiku do not follow the same conventions as most contemporary haiku in English, they still distill individual moments and change the overall reader's tempo, especially when shifting away from Eve's narrative prose. In this, I'm reminded of Kerouac's *Dharma Bums* and David Lanoue's haiku novels, which also incorporate haiku mid-dialogue, through character's voices. The relationality of the text echoes that of transactional haiku poetics — these pieces, these voices, are active participants and collaborators.

The book begins with Eve in the position of the writer and Shannon as the reader. Eve relays information that Shannon wants to know; however, this process quickly becomes reciprocal as Eve begins to ask (demand even) things of Shannon and Shannon begins to share more from his perspective. The lines blur between traditional "writer" and "reader," reaching the co-authorship Edwards describes. The dialogue between the two parallels the dialogue between prose and haiku, just as the three parts are in dialogue with one another. The reader begins to see that there isn't one right way to understand the situation; the perspectives come into a shared space, and they inform one another and come into a new way of knowing all together. It's through this that there is

some healing, that Sedgwick (and perhaps Shannon as well) comes to a sense of peace, even in light of the re-emergence of her cancer toward the end of the book.

In this relationship, Eve and Shannon model possibilities for what reparative reading can be. Open to multiple understandings, the two question one another and explore their options, and generously challenge one another when the other seems to be a definitive mindset. They so do not just with the goal of a "productive" therapy session (whatever that may mean), but to help each other work through feelings and ideas in order to gain a wider perspective. Freedman refers to this relationship between Eve and Shannon as "mutual witnessing" (20), though Pearl extends this relationship to the reader and communal "we": "Sedgwick's book is queer therapy — for the reader. It describes and affects the ways that one wants transference with her — with her writing, her books, her words — all the time, nearly universally" (Pearl 158). Eve and Shannon find pleasure in each other's company; they create something new between them (the book, and their relationship). The reader's engagement with the text creates further possibilities as it becomes a space where they may also offer a completion of the part-object.

Conclusion

Perhaps one of the most fruitful aspects of returning to Sedgwick's work through the lens of haiku aesthetics and reparative reading is that, as this article discusses, is it that it allowed me to see her work, and my own, from new perspectives. In some ways, this serves as a response to Brooks' note that, "Theory helps us value the different approaches enriching the genre, so that we are not narrow in our conceptions of haiku" (39). This research challenged me to think of haiku and haibun in terms that I hadn't previously

considered — through a queer lens, as a form of healing — while simultaneously making connections to the current work I'm doing with theoretical lenses. To an extent, I had to perform my own reparative reading of a genre I've spent over a decade reading, researching, and writing. In short: in demonstrated that the closer I look, the fewer gaps and differences I see between the haiku forms and other writing and theorizing. This is not to say that haiku and related forms are not unique or that they don't offer something special; it's that these spaces inform one another more than I, and perhaps others, give them credit for. I like to think that this is something I've always known, but I also recognize that it's easy to forget.

I offer this article as another way to critically discuss and write about haiku — a way we, as contemporary haiku scholars, can approach scholastic discourse to bridge the gap between academia and the haiku community. This is done with an effort to both honor global haiku traditions and make connections with wider scholastic theory without (ideally) participating in gatekeeping. Extending our perspectives and critical lenses surrounding haiku creates not only new opportunities for scholarship, but new doorways for others to enter the conversation. And in some cases, as is seen with Sedgwick's work, it's also about connecting to already existing conversations. Haibun have been permeating "mainstream" poetic traditions for decades, often going undocumented in global haiku scholarship. Within the last five years, this has become a topic of increasing interest for haiku communities — mostly as means for new venues for publication — and this article is an attempt to continue that conversation beyond spaces for publication.

Furthermore, I hope that this serves as an invitation for further intersectionality within haiku studies. Although there has been a demand for further documentation and conversation, the history of women and haiku is complicated (not to mention needlessly controversial). This not only articulates a gap in recognition

of women's contribution to global haiku traditions, but other underdeveloped representations such as queerness, disability, race, and socioeconomic class. As a social art, haiku are nothing without the people who read and share it; we have a responsibility to consider and reflect whose presence is recognized and who is allowed to contribute in the social, publication, and scholastic sphere.

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on my own i created a day i got through

Haiga: Marlene Mountain

Poems About Nothing

Learning Haiku from Antonio Porchia

Michael Dylan Welch

ABSTRACT: Through the aphorisms of his only book, *Voices*, first published in 1943, Argentine poet Antonio Porchia has proved to be popular around the world in various translations, especially those in English by W. S. Merwin. This essay reviews twenty-five selected aphorisms for their relevance to reading and writing haiku poetry in English, focusing largely on Porchia's ideas regarding "nothingness" and how they apply to haiku poetry — leading to the conclusion that haiku may be considered "poems about nothing." Porchia teaches haiku poets that they can embrace nothingness in the way they can embrace the mereness of now as simultaneously significant and yet insignificant in relation to infinity. The essay folds in numerous tangential but essential ideas, contexts, and other quotations, and includes seventeen haiku by various poets on the theme of nothingness.

"Perfection is achieved, not when there is nothing more to add, but when there is nothing left to take away."

—Antoine de Saint-Exupery

"The listener beholds nothing that is not there and the nothing that is."

—Wallace Stevens

"Saying nothing sometimes says the most."

—Emily Dickinson

In 1943, Argentine poet Antonio Porchia (1885–1968) published *Voices* in a small private edition, and expanded it in 1947—his only book. It collects hundreds of the author's poignant and timeless aphorisms, but they are considered so poetic that Porchia is referred to not as a nonfiction writer but as a poet. Over the years his book gained a cult following and has been published in many editions and translated into several languages, notably into English by W. S. Merwin (Copper Canyon Press, 2003). The Wikipedia page for Porchia says "Some critics have paralleled his work to Japanese haiku and found many similarities with a number of Zen schools of thought." No citation is given for this claim, but in speaking of Porchia elsewhere, Jorge Luis Borges has been quoted as saying that "he was creating for others the image of a lonely man, who sees things with clarity and is conscious of the unique mystery of every moment." This sounds like the spirit of haiku, does it not? In first introducing his translations in 1969, Merwin wrote that "A few of the aphorisms have close affinities with sentences from Taoist and Buddhist scriptures," adding that "the authority which the entries invoke, both in their matter and in their tone, is not that of tradition or antecedents, but that of particular individual experience" (viii). This observation suggests at least some level of an affinity with haiku, or at least a haiku sensibility.

Beyond this philosophical overlay, however, it seems that the comparison of Porchia's aphorisms to haiku rests chiefly on their brevity. Merwin does note that each aphorism is coloured by

immediacy, but it's an immediacy of ideas, not experience, thus they might be considered something other than haiku. In his 1988 introduction to an expanded book of his translations, Merwin quotes the poet Roberto Juarroz, who knew Porchia closely, as referring to Porchia's "unusual and deepening attention" (xii), but again, this seems to be an attention — at least in the aphorisms — to words, ideas, and the intellect, and less to the five senses of personal experience that typically serve as the primary realm of haiku poetry. And yet, as Merwin notes, "Porchia the man was something of a mystery" (xi), so we may never know.

Ultimately, nothing in the aphorisms themselves feels haiku-like other than the occasional image from nature and their shortness — and even then, most of them are longer than haiku. Nevertheless, Antonio Porchia still has something to say *about* haiku through his aphorisms. He teaches us, I propose, that haiku are poems about nothing, in a very positive manner. Nothing is the same as everything. He teaches us that we can embrace nothingness in the way we can embrace the mereness of now as simultaneously significant and yet insignificant in relation to infinity. This is because, in fact, they are one and the same.

"Situated in some nebulous distance I do what I do so that the universal balance of which I am a part may remain a balance." (3)

Bashō told us to learn of the pine from the pine, not just so that we might write with authenticity, but also to recognize that we are not merely observers of nature but part of it. We are part of a whole. It seems that haiku recognizes this wholeness, and seeks to preserve it — thus its appeal as a kind of ecopoetry. As haiku poets we may sometimes feel a nebulous distance between us and what we might write about, but in some sense it is illusory. We *are* part of everything, and it's our challenge, even duty, as haiku poets, to maintain a balance with what we observe and our relation to it. We are even part of what we write. As Bashō said, "When composing a verse let there not be a hair's breadth separating your mind from what you write."

"The little things are what is eternal, and the rest, all the rest, is brevity, extreme brevity." (5)

Haiku are poems *about* those little things, and they speak of the infinite, the full and expansive. It's the big things, whatever we may take that to mean, that are really small — that is, not of eternal value. In a paradoxical way, haiku dwell on the seemingly ephemeral minutia of daily life that may turn out to be the most important details of our existence. As Rilke once said, "If your everyday life seems poor don't blame it; blame yourself that you are not enough of a poet to call forth its riches."

dissatisfied —
polishing the new haiku
till nothing is left
Patricia Neubauer, *Bottle Rockets* #17, 9:1, 2007, 21

Pare everything down to almost nothing,
then cut the rest, and you've got
the poem I'm trying to write.
David Budbill, *Bottle Rockets* #30, 2014, 57

"One lives in the hope of becoming a memory." (11)

Perhaps haiku, too, may come into being in the hope of being remembered, just as each poem makes the experience it celebrates memorable. If humans live in the hope of being remembered, perhaps haiku poets can accomplish this through their poetry and their valuing of the ephemeral. Indeed, if anything, it could be that our poems are remembered instead of us.

butterfly —
I remember
nothing
Robert Kania, *The Heron's Nest* 16:1, March 2014, 2

"Nothing that is complete breathes." (13)

Many of Porchia's observations speak of nothingness. We may take this particular observation to speak of the incompleteness that earmarks each haiku—Seisensui referred to haiku as an "incomplete" poem, relying on the reader's interaction to complete it. In this way, each haiku poem remains forever alive, forever in need of human interaction to complete it. When the poem has said too much, and completes itself, then the poem dies.

"He who tells the truth says almost nothing." (25)

A chief goal of haiku to strive after authenticity, that is, to tell the truth, is counterbalanced by the reality that even the truth is nothing. Rather than despairing in such a suffering point of view, Porchia's book is one of *accepting* this suffering, of *accepting* the nothingness of existence. Where haiku point out the most ephemeral and insignificant of details, they may partake of the eternal and the infinite, yet they are still nothing. But Porchia says "almost." This reminds me of Issa's poem about the world being merely a world of dew . . . "and yet."

Whatever I say
a dewdrop says much better
saying nothing now.
Cid Corman, *Modern Haiku* 35:1, Winter–Spring 2004, 86

"When I believe that the stone is stone and the cloud cloud, I am in a state of unconsciousness." (33)

This is an example of Porchia's thought that echoes Buddhist or Taoist beliefs. Here I am also reminded of Richard Gilbert, who refers to haiku as "poems of consciousness." That may be, and one can take many paths to haiku, but the integration of going to the pine to learn of the pine would seem to speak of the *unconsciousness* that Porchia mentions, the way a chess master does not have to

think consciously about avoiding bad moves. As D. T. Suzuki put it in his introduction to Eugen Herrigel's *Zen in the Art of Archery*, "One has to transcend technique so that the art becomes an 'artless art' growing out of the Unconscious." When we are one with the subject of our contemplation—that art thou—we are not conscious of this oneness, this suchness. Rather, we *are* oneness and suchness. Fish, as they say, are unaware of water.

"They will say that you are on the wrong road, if it is your own." (35)

Everyone must find his or her own road for haiku—and I do mean *for* haiku, not to haiku. Plenty of pundits, me included, may well suggest or feel that a particular poet is on the wrong road, but ultimately each of us must always find our own way. Yet this does not mean we should completely ignore the advice of others, especially when they have experience that we are just beginning to explore. There are no shortcuts to haiku, but there may well be overpasses, and we can certainly seek guidance from those who have travelled similar paths.

winter dusk
a path that stops
at nothing
Matt Morden, *Presence* 49, January 2014

"We become aware of the void as we fill it." (43)

Everything is nothing. We are all part of the void. But again, this is not a nihilistic resignation but an *acceptance* of that void. But what does it mean to become aware of the void, or to fill the void ourselves? How does this relate to haiku poetry? We may find the answer in every good haiku we read, especially in the way it makes us aware of what we already knew, but didn't realize that we knew. That's how we fill the void with our haiku.

"A hundred years die in a moment, just as a moment dies in a moment." (45)

Ah, the ephemerality of haiku. Even a hundred years is nothing, in terms of time. Same with a million billion trillion years. I think of Carole MacRury's poem (*Haiku Friends* Volume 2, Masaharu Hirata, ed., Osaka, Japan: Umeda Printing Factory, 2007, 68):

heat wave
the horse blinks away
a gnat's life

And yet a millionth billionth trillionth of a nanosecond is equally valuable. And simply equal. If we do not grasp this verisimilitude, perhaps we do not grasp the wonder of haiku. As Diane Ackerman once said, "Wonder is the heaviest element in the periodic table of the heart. Even a tiny piece of it can stop time."

"Only a few arrive at nothing, because the way is long." (51)

Yes, perhaps haiku is nothing, a dissolving into the merest image, the merest subtlety, the merest moment. But getting there, to the point of finding value in nothingness, is indeed often a long road.

"Certainties are arrived at only on foot." (53)

If the road to haiku is long, like the road to nothingness, our road will not be certain for us if we try to take shortcuts. A journey of a thousand miles always begins with a single step. But more than being an inspiration to start, this adage is a reminder that it's the process of stepping and stepping again that gets us to any kind of certainty. This is the value of pilgrimages such as the Shikoku Henro in Japan, or the Camino de Santiago in Spain, taken one step at a time. I also appreciate Porchia's candor, amid his intellectual musings, that we must remain practical, real, and on solid ground.

And yet, and yet.

ground fog
I am certain
of nothing
Scott Mason, third place, 2013 Porad Haiku Award

"A child shows his toy, a man hides his." (55)

Haiku has been described as having a childlike point of view, of being wide-eyed in wonder at the world around us. This is what I believe Bashō meant when he said, "To write haiku, get a three-foot child." We delight in our discoveries as haiku poets, our daily uncoverings of experience. If we are shy about sharing, this may happen because we do not have the child's joy of discovery and curiosity. It is well worth cultivating. No wonder William J. Higginson began his *Haiku Handbook* by saying that the point of haiku is to share them. Sharing one's haiku is an act of joy.

"Some things become so completely our own that we forget them." (55)

This thought brings to mind Bashō's proposal to learn the rules and then forget them. He did not mean, in my estimation, to learn the rules *in order* to forget them, or to ignore them. Rather, by learning the rules, and internalizing them deeply, we will *end up* forgetting them—that is, we will no longer be conscious of them, like fish that know nothing of water. In a practical sense, in writing our haiku, this means that we have integrated the haiku way of life so deeply that observing, feeling, and writing about our experiences becomes ingrained, as do the most reliable techniques for writing these poems. It becomes who we are to do this. And in doing this, that's the moment when we forget the haiku way—because it has become so completely our own.

"I know what I have given you. I do not know what you have received." (61)

In crafting our haiku, it seems reasonable to refine them in such a way that we prevent misreading. There's a point where ambiguity goes too far and confuses rather than expands meaning. Yet no matter where we think we've gone with our haiku, or what we think we are giving to others through our poems, the reader may receive something different. There is value in letting each poem go, in trusting that each poem will find its audience, and in our being content with the fact that some poems may find their own audience without us.

"The shadows: some hide, others reveal." (61)

Haiku dwell in shadows—celebrating the partially revealed, the partially hidden. The subject of shadows themselves may be overdone in haiku, in that it can be exceedingly hard to write freshly about any kind of physical shadow, but to the extent that our haiku are shadowlike, metaphorically, we can endlessly partake in the ritual of sharing our haiku, in hiding and revealing. It's because of its shadows that haiku is an unfinished poem. The reader adds light.

reaching
for the butterfly
nothing but shadow
Jeff Hoagland, *Bottle Rockets* #26, 2012, 35

"Everything is a little bit of darkness, even the light." (69)

This thought may well extend the previous one, that the reader adds light to the author's shadows. Yet even the light we add has its own shadows. Every haiku is a shadow of meaning, written out of the darkness of life, with shades of Lorca's duende.

"My bits of time play with eternity." (73)

This is a comment *about* the author's bits of time. But, for Antonio Porchia, what *were* those bits of time? What was his daily life like in Buenos Aires? What were the moments that he might have written haiku about? In an alternate world, perhaps there's an undiscovered manuscript of Porchia's haiku. But unless we can visit that world, we might just have to write those haiku ourselves. In each one, by focusing on the moment, we can play with eternity. In each one, by focusing on nothing, we can play with everything.

"In its last moment the whole of my life will last only a moment." (79)

There's that eternity in a grain of sand again. Here I think of the Japanese tradition of writing a death poem, or *jisei*. The following example is by Banzan, who died in 1730, from Yoel Hoffman's *Japanese Death Poems* (Rutland, Vermont: Tuttle, 1986, 143):

farewell—
I pass as all things do
dew on the grass

"Every time I wake I understand how easy it is to be nothing." (79)

Once again we feel an acceptance of the nothingness and even the suffering of life (another theme of Porchia's aphorisms, even if not often referred to here). As Samuel Beckett once said, "Nothing is more real than nothing."

rain falling
through smoke
maybe nothing matters
Michael Ketchek, *Frogpond* 30:2, Spring/Summer 2007, 30

And as W. H. Auden said, "Poetry makes nothing happen." Or perhaps it's the other way around.

"A full heart has room for everything, and an empty heart has room for nothing. Who understands?" (91)

Porchia also says "A large heart can be filled with very little" (93). One of the joys of haiku is that it fills our hearts, which makes us open still further—to everything. But it's a nothingness that fills us, an acceptance of the insignificant. It is one thing to begin our haiku by *noting*. But it is quite another to move beyond merely *noting* to making our haiku celebrate *nothing*. Add an "h" (for haiku) and *noting* can become *nothing*. As John Mellancamp said in titling his fourth studio album, "Nothin' matters and what if it did?" Or as John Cage once said, "I have nothing to say and I am saying it and that is poetry as I need it."

These hills
have nothing to say
and go on saying it
Ken H. Jones, *Blithe Spirit* 9:1, March 1999

afternoon heat
there is nothing to do
and I'm doing it
Michael Ketchek, *Bottle Rockets* #24, 2011, 12

The golden maples:
saying things that can't be said,
by not saying them.
Nicholas Virgillio, *American Haiku*, II:1, 1964

There is nothing to be said
about Mount Fuji, so
I have said it.
James Kirkup, *Blue Bamboo*, Hub Editions, 1993, 49

This nothingness, which is everythingness, fills our hearts. As poet Mark Doty said, "The heart is a repository of vanished things."

Again, haiku embraces ephemerality, the insignificant, and thus, paradoxically, it embraces the infinite. We have all heard that a cup or bowl is useful only because of the space inside it. Perhaps we can come to understand that this space is not emptiness but a kind of fullness. Likewise, the beginner's mind, which we like to think of as empty, is actually completely full, but in the sense of being completely open, the way every cup is full of potential.

the river—
coming to it with nothing
in my hands
Leatrice Lifshitz, *Frogpond* 19:3, December 1996, 46

"I hold up what I know with what I do not know." (97)

We might easily think of "holding up" here to mean to elevate or celebrate. But we could also take it to mean inhibit. Indeed, what we do not know inhibits what we do know. Yet how does stopping at what we *know* inhibit us, in haiku and beyond? Many scientists have said that their ever-expanding learning, though they learn so much, merely shows them how much they do not know. Or as Will Durant put it, "Education is a progressive discovery of our own ignorance." This is what it means to explore the infinite, to recognize the gnat-ness of our lives. This idea can apply to haiku in two ways. One is that we may know a few techniques for haiku, but what little we know may well inhibit us. An example is someone who believes that counting 5-7-5 syllables is all there is to haiku. Such a person, it would seem, is "held up" by what little he or she *does* know, which seems unfortunate. But Porchia is suggesting the opposite, and it may well be self-evident—that we are held up by what we do *not* know. Yet beyond Porchia's claim, even after we learn much more, might we still be "held up" by the *more* that we know? Just as we can be inhibited by what we do not know, might we remain endlessly inhibited by what we *do* know?

Thus we can be reminded of beginner's mind, the nothingness that haiku welcomes, and that welcomes haiku. Meanwhile, there I go saying that the syllable-counter's road is a wrong road, but the admonition to move beyond paint-by-numbers haiku will lead to deeper mastery, if I get out of the way after raising the question. Yet a larger point remains that whatever we "master" can still inhibit us. As Shunryu Suzuki put it in *Zen Mind, Beginner's Mind*, "In the beginner's mind there are many possibilities; in the expert's mind there are few." The second way Porchia's observation applies to haiku is not in terms of haiku craft but haiku spirit. I hesitate to use the term "haiku spirit" when it is so easily thought of in idealized and precious ways. But something behind haiku drives this poetry forward, and drives its practitioners forward, that elusive something that the masters sought. At any moment, we do not know what we do not know, yet as we learn we may see what we didn't know before, and that realization may instill in us a kind of humility that makes us open to more learning. It brings us to a point, I think, where the full heart has room for everything.

No sound, no movement—
nothing out there in the night . . .
yet the somethingness . . .
Foster Jewell, *American Haiku* 6:2, May 1968

"He who has made a thousand things and he who has made none, both feel the same desire: to make something." (103)

This is the passion of haiku, to make something—even if it's about nothing. And if the passion remains, we still want to make something even if we've already made a thousand. This is how process can matter more than product. The conscientious poet does not ignore product, polishing and refining his or her poetry to push it out the door, but the passion remains in the process, of always wanting to make more. It's like that old Doritos tortilla chip slogan: "Crunch all you want—we'll make more."

"The virtues of a thing do not come from it: they go to it." (105)

We may like to think of haiku as having many virtues, but it's surely what we bring to haiku that may or may not give it any virtue. And those virtues may vary for different poets, at times being literary, at times being self expression, therapy, diary records, or amusement. Each stance has its place. As readers of haiku, too, it may well be our responsibility to find the *poet's* virtues, and not just assume our own virtues will be what give another writer's haiku their value. As readers, we need to go to the poem, and not always expect the poem to come to us.

"In the eternal dream, eternity is the same as an instant. Maybe I will come back in an instant." (115)

Chuang Tzu wondered if he was dreaming he was a butterfly, or if he was a butterfly dreaming he was Chuang Tzu. We may never know the truth. And what is truth? Likewise, what is time? Time keeps everything from happening all at once. But to think about this another way, if the here and now is the same as eternity, perhaps everything *is* happening all at once. Eternity is an instant, whether we come back or not, as Porchia speculates—but perhaps we don't need to come back because we are already part of eternity. Likewise, if the universe is infinite in all directions, there can be no center—or *everywhere* is the center. All this theorizing may seem remote from haiku, but if we remember that haiku captures not just an instant but eternity—that haiku is a means of approaching infinity—it may humble us in choosing to write about the everyday and the ordinary.

about 100 billion galaxies I'm about nothing
Dietmar Tauchner, *Noise of Our Origin*, Red Moon Press, 2013

"Everything is nothing, but afterwards. After having suffered everything." (119)

Note the reference to "afterwards"—like Wordsworth's sense of poetry being powerful emotion *recollected* in tranquility. But there's more to learn here. Antonio Porchia's aphorisms repeatedly speak of life as suffering and of his acceptance of this suffering. They also speak of life as nothing but also of his acceptance of this nothing. In this way, everything is not only nothing, but nothing is everything—and human life reaches both everything and nothing through inevitable suffering. As Antonio Porchia says near the beginning of his book, "I believe that the soul consists of its sufferings," adding that "the soul that cures its own sufferings dies" (13). This echoes with the thought from the same page that "Nothing that is complete breathes." Life is suffering, or *dukkha*, as we may know from Buddhist scripture. Or, as we may know from our own personal experience, life is hard, and then we die. Haiku, in seeking nothing, speaks of everything. Or we might say the opposite. Haiku, in seeking everything, speaks of nothing. In this way, haiku is poetry about nothing, but also about everything. Balance, wholeness, suchness. An acceptance of suffering. Much ado about nothing. The inevitable, beautiful everything. Haiku are poems about nothing.

carrying on
as if nothing had happened
dogwood in bloom
Carolyne Rohrig, *Daily Haiku*, November 16, 2010

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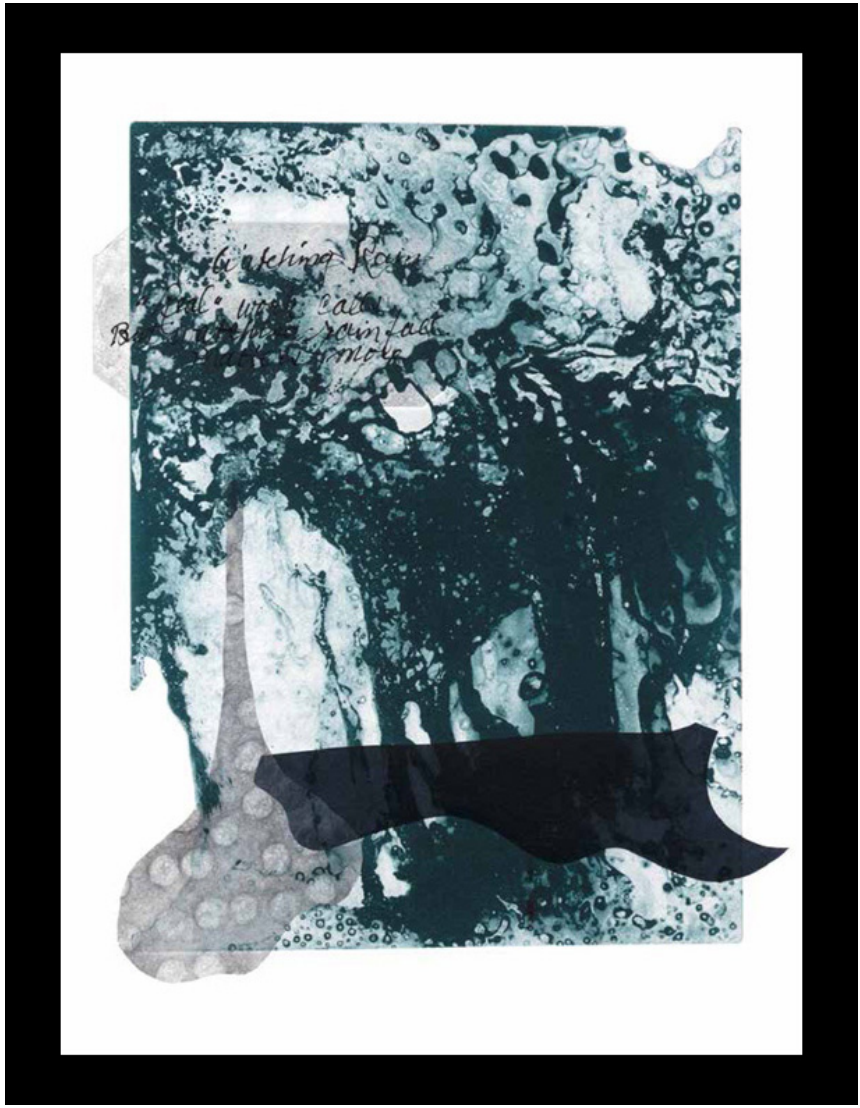

"real" work calls
but watching rain fall
matters more

Haiga: Ellen Peckham

JUXTAPOSITIONS SPECIAL SECTION

Women Mentoring Women in Haiku

For this issue, the editors of *Juxtapositions* invited some of the leading women contributors to English-language haiku to offer perspectives on influential women mentors, including discussions of distinctive features of haiku composed by women. In response to our call, poets offered a range of detailed reflections, as unique and fascinating as their own haiku paths. Taken together, these reflections add a vital dimension to the history of modern haiku and should help kindle the next generation of mentors.

The Role of Mentorship in the Life of a Poet

Terry Ann Carter

The possibility of mentorship is a golden opportunity. It is a silver opportunity. It is, as Yeats once described, "the silver apples of the moon, the golden apples of the sun."

My golden and silver apples arrived with Canadian haiku and tanka poet, Marianne Bluger. We met through the League of Canadian Poets in the early 80's, and lived in the same city — Ottawa, Ontario.

From the get go, Marianne encouraged me to read the "Japanese classics" and try my hand. Often we would meet by the fireplace in her small cozy home and pore over books, share writing challenges and read poems out loud together. Here's a little bit about Marianne:

Marianne Bluger loved to wear high leather boots and berets; her favourite colour was chartreuse. She once told me one of the best moments in her life happened in Montreal when a young man mistook her for a prostitute. Marianne loved to laugh, even in her illness. South African Marula (creamed) was her favourite liquor.

She loved Larry Neily. She loved birds. She loved to read her haiku and then ring a small bell, or strike a crystal glass with a spoon.

Marianna Sasha Bluger was born in Ottawa, Ontario, at the Grace Hospital on Wellington Street to Walter Vladimir Bluger (a Holocaust survivor) and Ruth Anna Mallory, on August 28th, 1945. The eldest of four children, she lived most of her early years within one block of her first home on Helena Street. She attended Elmdale Elementary School, Connaught Middle School, then Fisher Park High School; she later attended McGill University in Montreal in the late sixties where she met and maintained a lifelong connection to Jeremy Walker and Louis Dudek. After graduating summa cum laude, she received a scholarship to medical school but turned it down in order to marry an itinerant Buddhist monk who was lecturing in the religious studies department. Soon a son was born. Marianne travelled to NYU to study Korean and Buddhism and a daughter was born in New York City. Upon their return to Canada, the marriage dissolved and Marianne raised her children on her own.

In the early 80s Marianne began her tenure with the Canadian Writers' Foundation (a position she held for twenty five years) and the publishing of longer lyric poetry beginning with *The Thumbless Man Is at the Piano* (Three Trees Press, 1981) followed by *On Nights Like This* (Brick Books, 1984), *Gathering Wild* (Brick Books, 1987) and *Summer Grass* (Brick Books, 1992).

Marianne met her second husband — Larry Neily — birder, conservationist, and web master for several national and international birding sites, at the Britannia Conservation Area on Oct. 28th, 1989. Together they pursued an interest in nature that became an integral component to their relationship. In 1992, a breast cancer diagnosis resulted in surgery which seemed to put her illness on hold. She returned to her poetry with a vengeance to "record each word in its proper place." Whether it was illness, or her own spiritual reading, Marianne turned to eastern thought and

literary forms. She read Suzuki and Blythe and other traditional and contemporary haiku and tanka poets. She began her own "haikai path" eventually winning national and international awards.

In 1996, with award winning photographer, Rudi Haas, Marianne published haiku in *Tamarack & Clearcut* with Carleton University Press. The title encapsulates the positive and negative aspects of nature and human kind. The collection is divided into four sections (each reflecting a season): leafsmoke, winter dusk, loam, and early evening pieces. In her review of the book (which can be found online http://startag.tripod.com), Elizabeth St. Jacques explains that "these haiku lead us in a renga-like exploration along the straight, ascending, descending, and curved paths which add a pleasing balance to the collection. On these paths we share Marianne's world in and around Ottawa, as well as surrounding pastoral areas." Here are a few examples:

with the tip of her cane
touching fresh snow
New Year's morning

thin light
only the shadows
of snowflakes

Marianne was also aware of the darker realities:

t.v. gunfire
the sleeping child's
eyelids flutter

stiffening
on frost curled leaves
a fawn's corpse

Some of her haiku give us a murmur of hope amid devastation, the sense that life continues:

mad shadows
a moth at the porch light
I grip a cold key

in a dark window
Dad's pale face
watching our bonfire

In 1999 she published *Gusts* with Penumbra Press, the first woman to publish tanka in Canada. Of her work in this collection, Christopher Wiseman wrote, "I have really enjoyed this book. It's the images and the depth and the modesty and the dignity and insight and sheer humanity that distinguish Bluger." The first publication of the newly organized Tanka Canada was named *Gusts* by (then) editors, Angela Leuck and Kozue Usawa, as tribute to Marianne's contribution to Canadian tanka. In 2000, *Scissor, Paper, Woman* appeared with Penumbra Press, followed in 2003, by *Early Evening Pieces* (Buschekbooks). In her review for *Modern Haiku*, Cherie Hunter Day wrote,

> "*Early Evening Pieces* is the eighth book by Canadian poet Marianne Bluger in a writing career that spans over two decades. She is also known as an award winning tanka poet and imagist lyric poet. Her new collection features a selection of 211 of her new and previously published haiku . . . [there is a] sensitivity to the measure of light and darkness at the close of the day, for example:
>
> the last ember dies
> a chill takes the house
> by moonlight

singing somewhere
in this unravelling mist
a thrush

wind in the trees
tonight by one bare bulb
I pack the shadows

Naturalists will delight in Bluger's specificity. A veteran birder, she depends on her readers' familiarity with eiders, gannets, bitterns, and kingfishers, to elicit an appropriate response."

It was shortly after the publication of *Gusts*, that Marianne's cancer returned, but she was eager to start up a haiku group in the city and we founded Ottawa KaDo together, for poets in the area, interested in Japanese literary forms. The group met seasonally to share haiku, resources, discussion, and friendship. KaDo launched a broadsheet of haiku each year at the Japanese Embassy, thanks to the encouragement of Mr. Toshi Yonehara, who retired in 2013 after forty years of service to the Embassy's cultural programs. KaDo Ottawa continues to meet under the direction of Pearl Pirie, and Claudia Coutu Radmore.

Marianne's good friend Dorothy Howard chose these poems as a tribute in the Nov. '05 issue of *RAW NerVZ*:

having missed the bus
I walk
into spring

wind bunts
the marigolds
the marigolds bunt back

ah these soft spring nights
full of bawling cats
and lilacs

all down the road
escaped from her garden
lupine blooms

Dorothy composed this haiku commemorating Marianne's love of horticulture and gardening:

haiku poets gather
to the bloom of
bluger tulips

Red Moon Press honoured Marianne Bluger with the postscript volume *faint notes* (2008), including some of her signature poems:

wind in the long grass
and somebody
whistling

mountain silence
a leaf floats in the gorge
where a boxcar rusts

stopped cold in housewares
ambushed
by emptiness

Sanford Goldstein, Professor Emeritus at Purdue University, and an internationally awarded tanka poet and confidante to Marianne wrote

> "Her passionate concern for the language and for poetic theory and even the rage to get it right, all these Marianne has. Her intensity may be due to her long illness, which has forced on her the need to get things down and to get them down with exactitude." (*Gusts*: Contemporary Tanka, winter 2005)

Marianne was a genuine poet. Sadly, she passed away on October, 29th, 2005. Her mentorship to me was invaluable. I will always remember her words, "Terry Ann, three lines do not necessarily a haiku make. Read. Read. Read." I think Marianne would be pleased with the evolution of haikai poetry in Canada; her small bells ready to chime a new poem. I think of her golden and silver apples. I am grateful.

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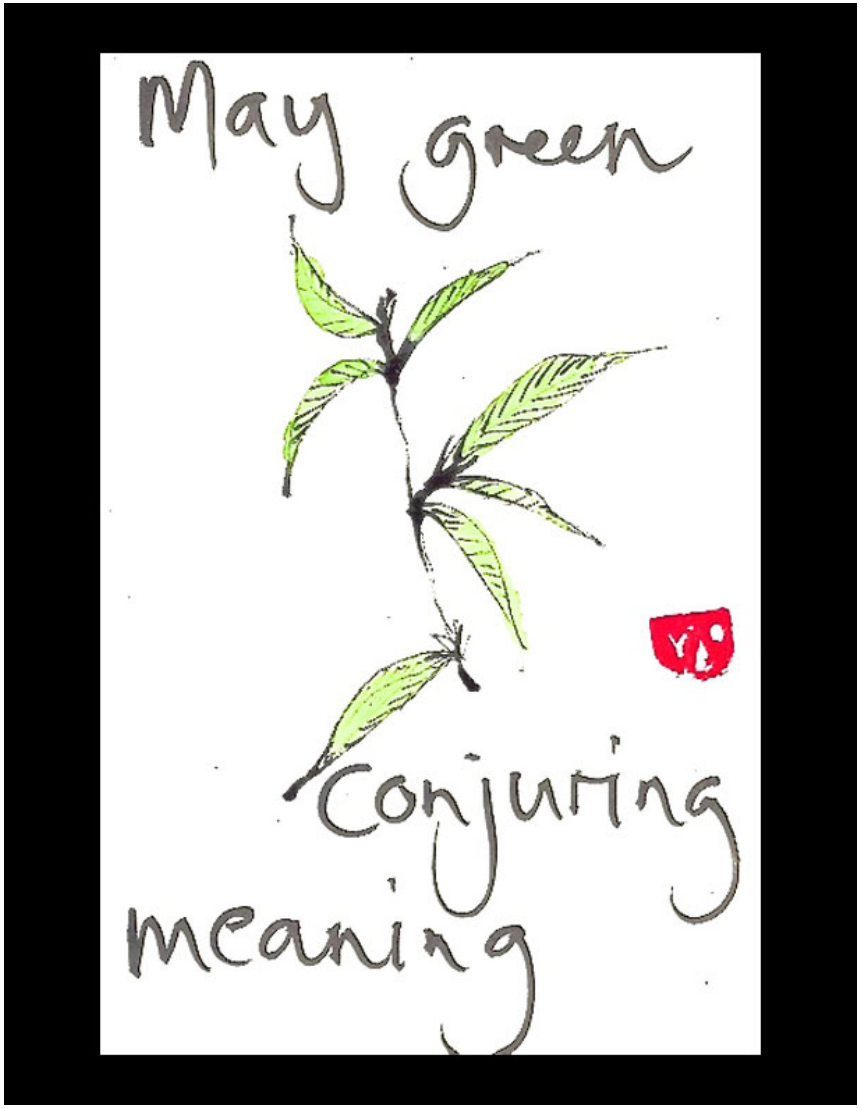

May green
conjuring
meaning

Haiga: Beth McFarland

Women Haiku Poets Who Influenced Me

Patricia Donegan

These women haiku poets touched me deeply:

1. Chiyo-ni (1703 – 1775)
2. Teijo Nakamura (1900 – 1988)
3. Elizabeth Searle Lamb (1917 – 2004)
4. Edith Shiffert (1916 – 2017)

I choose these four women haiku poets especially because they all had one important thing in common: they were/are an example of "living the Way of Haiku" in their everyday life — which is what, for me, sets haiku apart from other genres of literature — whether I've studied, taught or written haiku, I always approached & advocated it as an awareness practice for daily life.

Chiyo-ni (Kaga no Chiyo) — in the Edo era (1603 – 1867) when women barely had any rights, she embraced haiku as her path, studying with two of Bashō's disciples, & becoming a famous haiku master, artist and Buddhist nun, following what Bashō called *haikai no michi* (the way of haiku). In fact, the haiku poet Shōin, who wrote the preface to her collection *Chiyo-ni Kushu* (1764), said of her way of life:

> "Chiyo-ni's style is pure like white jade, without ornament, without carving, natural. Both her life and her writing style are clear & pure. She lives simply as if with a stone for a pillow, and spring water to brush her teeth. She is like a small pine, embodying a female style that is subtle, fresh, and beautiful. Chiyo-ni knows the Way, is in harmony with Nature. One can better know the universe through each thing in phenomena, as in Chiyo-ni's haiku, than through books."

While there were and still are very few Japanese women haiku poets translated into English, it was Chiyo-ni's life that so inspired me, to co-translate with Yoshie Ishibashi, the first book in English on a woman haiku master's life and haiku, *Chiyo-ni Woman Haiku Master* (Tuttle, 1990). And it was also rare for a woman of her time to publish two collections of her own poetry in her lifetime: *Chiyo-ni Kushu* (*Chiyo-ni's Haiku Collection*, 1764) and *Haikai Matsu no Koe* (*Haiku: Sound of the Pine*, 1771).

And when visiting her museum & temple in her hometown of Matto city of Japan on several occasions, I felt as if enveloped in her living haiku spirit & lineage. As the years passed while doing further co-translations of her haiku, I gained an awakening insight into the depth & potential of haiku in general: the absolute kitchen-sink ordinariness of it, yet at the same time its luminous extraordinariness, co-emerging naturally when we are immersed in the present moment.

(All haiku translated by Patricia Donegan & Yoshie Ishibashi (5-7-5 syllable count in the original Japanese; open-ended in translation)).

mikazuki ni hishihishi to mono no shizumarinu

at the crescent moon
the silence
enters the heart

nuimono ni hari no koboruru uzura kana

at her sewing
the needle drops —
the quail's cry

beni saita kuchi mo wasururu shimizu kana

rouged lips
forgotten —
clear spring water

wakakusa ya kirema kirema ni mizu no iro

green grass —
between, between the blades
the color of the water

ha mo chiri mo hitotsu utena ya yuki no hana

green leaves or fallen leaves
become one —
in the flowering snow

oi no kokoro miru hi no nagaki botan kana

this old heart
looks all day long
at the peonies

Teijo Nakamura — was one of the greatest of the modern women haiku masters in Japan, known as one of the four 'T"s (along with Takako Hashimoto, Tatsuko Hoshino and Takajo Mitsuhashi). She not only studied with Takahama Kyoshi (the main disciple of the 'father of modern haiku' Masaoka Shiki), and was a member of his *Hototogisu* (*Cuckoo*) group, but she later created her own movement of women's haiku, having her own group *Kazahana* (*Snow Flowers in Wind*) and magazine; her main collections include *Teijo Haiku Collection* (*Teijo Kushu*, 1944) and *Flower Shadow Collection* (*Hana Kage: Nakamura Teijo Kushu*, 1948). Her life was totally devoted in every aspect to haiku. At the same time, she had to deal with sexism in the Japanese haiku world where women haiku poets were often regarded as second class, and their haiku often dismissed as mere "kitchen haiku" and therefore of less value; however, her lifelong writing, teaching and advocacy, helped change this misperception. Her haiku style was not of the avant garde, as some other women poets, but rather expressive of a quieter inner life.

I was very fortunate to meet and interview her at her house in Tokyo in 1985, and even though it was only once, her presence and words resonated in my bones. When I asked her, "What is the highest principle of haiku?" she answered (through a translator) simply, "Be honest to yourself and write what is there." At first I thought that this was a mistranslation, that it was too simple, or that I was perhaps being seen as dishonest . . . I pondered her words for many years, and finally one day realized the truth & depth of her statement, and how terribly difficult it is to be totally open to whatever is (in both your mind & the environment) on the spot,

and record that naked moment. The only way to do this, is to be totally aware of each breath, each moment, and appreciate that. Her parting words, "Remember, today's flower is today's flower, today's wind is today's wind."

(All haiku translated by Patricia Donegan & Yoshie Ishibashi (5-7-5 syllable count in the original Japanese; open-ended in translation)).

natsu no cho ya ware wa kyo machi kyo sarase

summer butterfly —
I wait for the moment
& then let it go . . .

ware ni kaeri minaosu sumini kangiku akashi

ah, in the corner
look again —
winter chrysanthemum, red

to nimo deyo fururu bakari ni haru no tsuki

come on out —
this spring moon
almost touchable . . .

kaji akari mata kagayakite ikki sugu

firelight bright[1]
again, brighter still
a bomber passing . . .

1. This haiku was referring to the B-29 Tokyo bombings during WWII in which at least 100,000 civilians were killed, more than in Hiroshima.

bara chiruya onoga kuzureshi oto no naka

rose petals scattering —
the sound of my heart
breaking into pieces

koke no hana fumumajiku hito koi itari

stepping around
the moss blossoms —
yearning for someone

Elizabeth Searle Lamb — some like myself consider her to be the "Mother of America haiku", not only because of her immersion in and dedication to the continuing creation and promotion of the American haiku world, but also because she imbued the haiku spirit. Just meeting her, as I was fortunate to do on several occasions in the 1990's in her New Mexican old adobe house, I could feel that haiku was not just a hobby or a literary pursuit, but an integral part of her being, of her everyday life — she seemed to breathe it. And — her face seemed to radiate an inner peace, as if haiku had become almost a spiritual path. And perhaps having lived & traveled widely abroad in many countries, with her husband Bruce in her early years, had expanded her already depth of heart.

Her haiku world contributions as haiku collector, historian and editor include these highlights: in the early years being a founding member (along with Harold Henderson) of the Haiku Society of America in 1968 and also its President and editor of its magazine *Frogpond*; and in later years, being the first honorary curator in 1996 of the American Haiku Archives (in California) to which she bequeathed her personal papers & vast haiku library.

Her legacy is a living treasure, as one of America's greatest haiku poets, although she was also known for her longer imagist poems &

haiku series. Winner of many haiku awards, over the years, her haiku appeared in innumerable haiku anthologies and magazines — and her collected lifetime of poetry, *Across the Windharp*, is an archive of the human spirit, that spirit which carries us across time, and across the luminous moments of our lives: the year turns — / on the harp's gold leaf / summer's dust.

pausing
half-way up the stair—
white chrysanthemums

even bricked up
the window still
reflecting light

just at sundown
the shrilling of the cicada
above street noise

shiverrrring
on the winter balcony—
first star

wind in the sagebrush —
the same dusty color
the smell of it

too early awake
but this mockingbird
this moon

Edith Shiffert — one of the greatest, yet fairly unknown & unrecognized of American haiku poets, perhaps because she lived most of her adult life in Japan as an expatriate. And for some, she is more known for her longer imagist poetry which the poet Kenneth Rexroth praised, "Her poetry possesses . . . a reverence for life and gratitude for being, her being and all being."

One of the most important Japanese aesthetics is *mono no aware* (beauty of the transient, or sad beauty); another essential Japanese aesthetic is *makoto* (sincerity or truth): this is the heart-essence of her poetry. I know no other poet whose poetry, without being sentimental, brings tears to the eyes — a poetry that captures the poignancy of this life of impermanence, and a poetry above all that reflects a deep gratitude towards Nature & our small place in it. Perhaps it is because her poetry is a direct reflection of her life. When asked about her religion, she'd always say to me that it was closest to Buddhism or Taoism, like being a hermit-monk living simply & contentedly in the mountains.

I first met her in 1985 and then visited her on & off over a period of about twenty years while she lived in Kyoto. Her face & presence seemed to have a kind of purity, not mystical, but rather detached, yet with a compassionate view towards all things. Her small apartment house was simple & sparse except for her Japanese husband Minoru and her cat — and of course except for piles of letters, poetry books & papers scrawled with poems. She would often read some of her recent poems over tea, and then in her earlier years, we'd go for a walk in the Kyoto hills to a nearby temple or hermitage of a haiku great like Buson.

In some sense she lived her life as a pilgrim: born in Canada, and then lived in Hawaii and Alaska, before settling down in Japan. Besides numerous books of poetry, among them: *The Light Comes Slowly, In the Ninth Decade,* and *Clean Water Haiku* (with Minoru Sawano), she was also editor & co-translator of *Haiku Master*

Buson (with Yuki Sawa), and *An Anthology of Modern Japanese Poetry* (with Yuki Sawa); she also received numerous haiku awards. However, she never, to my knowledge, wrote any essays or books about poetics or haiku principles — she rather lived them everyday whether she wrote them down or not — she always brought an attitude of keen awareness and reverence to the moment — and a reflection on life's deepest mysteries.

no flower can stay
yet humans grieve at dying —
the red peony

can I feel the bliss
of the scarlet leaves & sky
and myself quiet?

for this small beetle
a lifetime on one tree trunk
everything is there

that old ginkgo tree,
the longer I look at it
the more I am it

journey almost done
we sit relaxed side by side
with an old white cat

seen for eighty years
but still I feel awed & glad —
white water lilies

sudden silence
. . . the boss's unexpected
return

Haiga: Diane Mayr

Women . . . Writing . . . Haiku

KJMUNRO

Why are we not more familiar with the names & accomplishments of the women of haiku? Recent essays by Terry Ann Carter in *Haiku Canada Review*, celebrating Marianne Bluger, Muriel Ford, Winona Baker, Betty Drevniok & Naomi Beth Wakan, & Vicki McCullough's book about Anna Vakar, all contribute to this canon of haiku literature.

Of course, every writer can list many influences & circumstances that have affected them & their writing path, but here I will emphasize the impact of the women writers I have met, & those whose work has had an impact on me & my writing.

I credit my high school English teacher — in Grade 8 — for starting me on this path of writing. Several of us were excused from the regular classroom to do a kind of self-directed independent study. In my case, I spent every hour reading poetry in the library — every poetry book I could find, especially the Canadian

poets — eventually exhausting the extensive collection. A couple of years later, I was able to experiment with my own writing in my first actual Creative Writing class, with that same teacher . . . he was male, though, so enough about him!

As someone who has always read a lot of poetry in particular, it has always struck me how few poems I actually like. But when I like a poem, I really like it. Not one for memorization, I keep paper copies of these poems in a file. Every now & then, I simply must read a particular piece from this collection because of how I am feeling at that moment, or because of some event that has affected me. I flip through the pages until I find the poem that is calling to me, & then read it aloud to myself . . . sometimes many times. This makes me feel better, &, perhaps, better able to cope . . .

I have favourite poems from a number of poets, but the female poets who have most captivated me over the years include Sylvia Plath, Edna St. Vincent Millay, & Elizabeth Smart. Sylvia's tulips that are "too excitable" & "too red", & where smiles in a photograph are described as "hooks", & Edna's 'Spring', where April babbles 'strewing flowers', & the entirety of *By Grand Central Station I Sat Down and Wept*. Their words led me to read more of their work, & then to research further, & the biographies that I discovered made these connections even stronger.

I began by writing free verse as a young adult, & then life got in the way. It turns out that I am the kind of person who, once committed to a project, tries to do the best possible job that they can . . . & so it was with parenting. I became a full-time parent & wrote very little for more than 15 years. When our youngest earned his driver's license, a whole new realm of possibility opened up for me, as I decided to turn my attention, my time, & my energy to poetry with that same degree of seriousness. (At this point I should mention that one of the many things that I am grateful for, that has helped to make this possible, is my generous patron (read *husband*)). It

was while researching publication possibilities for my poetry that I discovered haiku.

My style as a poet has always been a condensed one — I strive to incorporate as many different levels of meaning in as few words as possible. Many of my poems are relatively short. People had often said my poems were 'haiku-like', but I never really knew what that meant (& now I'm sure they didn't really know what that meant, either!).

Reading journals like *Modern Haiku* opened my eyes to this haiku world, & I have not looked back. At first, I analyzed my own short poems to decide if they were, in fact, actually haiku. In most cases they were not. If they were close, my next step was to rework them with the intention of making haiku out of them. This was successful some of the time.

One of the best ways to learn about writing is by reading. When I read a poem that I admire, especially if it is written in a style that differs from my usual style, or is an example of the kind of poem I would like to write, as a first attempt, I will try to copy it. This is usually followed by much revision — many attempts, & some dead-ends. Occasionally, though, the results are worth all that effort, & in any case, the reading, writing & re-writing all form the writer's path.

Still, it is the poets whose work I adore that I turn to again & again — poets like Roberta Beary & Eve Luckring — & in turn, with each reading, I learn even more from them . . .

I was already familiar with Roberta's work when I created The Haiku Foundation's *Troutswirl* Blog feature 'Haiku Windows' in 2018. Soon I looked forward to her almost weekly contributions — they are just that good (imho), & this is one from that column:

attic dollhouse
the window that marked
my sister's half

Word choice is important in any poem, but especially so in the brief haiku. The inclusion of one word can add an entire level of meaning, or take the whole poem in a refreshingly new direction.

I struggled for a long time with the concept of a monoku. I read in earnest to try to understand. (In particular, the work of Jim Kacian helped me on this road (oops!).) Then I read a poem published in *Frogpond* that cracked it open for me — I wrote many (failed) poems about washing dishes, baking pies & other 'mundane' household events as part of my study of this poem by Eve Luckring:

open scissors beside a vase of water

This example illustrates for me the gap or space left for the reader to complete — one of the important elements that we strive to achieve as haiku poets.

There is a generosity that seems to be inherent in the haiku world. Haiku poets attend conferences & share their knowledge in presentations & workshops for their peers. Many have also written books that encourage the writing of haiku. Two such authors are Naomi Beth Wakan & Terry Ann Carter.

Naomi has published many, many books — of these, the most beneficial to me was the first one I ordered from her — *Haiku: one breath poetry*. Here I insert a memory of my first experience with the Anonymous Haiku Workshop after the ginko at the Gabriola Gathering — sitting in a chair under that yellow plum tree in Naomi & Eli's backyard — Vicki McCullough & Susan Constable at the front of the group with the easel of poems, (the pressure!), the helpful group comments, & Naomi's genuine enthusiasm at the discovery

that the poem just discussed (later revised & published in the 2013 *Haiku Canada Members' Anthology*) did indeed belong to me!

Terry Ann has published *Hue*, a haiku primer with Leaf Press, as well as the larger, & more comprehensive *Lighting the Global Lantern*, as well as many books of poetry. I have had the great good fortune to not only meet both these women, but also to have enjoyed their generosity, their hospitality, their warmth, & their genuine love of writing & the artistic process. They are mentors to me, & they inspire me to be a mentor to other writers . . .

One of the women in my life who offered unrelenting support, enthusiasm, & inspiration was Jessica Simon. She was a crime fiction author in Whitehorse, who joined me at the Bean North Café once a week to write. She offered a monthly writing workshop called 'Cramped Hand', where participants wrote to prompts & then shared what they had written with the group. Jessica always found something positive to say about each piece. We collaborated on a number of projects — local readings & writing events — but our relationship strengthened when I announced that I would be working to bring the Haiku Canada Weekend to Whitehorse in May, 2016. Jessica came up with the idea of sharing a display at the library — a space she had already booked for a crime display to celebrate National Crime Writing Month. I put a call out for crime-themed haiku at her suggestion (& some of the poems from the resulting display became the anthology *Body of Evidence: a collection of killer 'ku*, thanks to another amazing woman — Claudia Coutu Radmore of Catkin Press). I brought Jessica further in to the haiku world by asking her to take some photos for me during the conference. She began to see what I had been saying all along — that all writers can benefit from learning about haiku. In the months following the conference, as we put that manuscript together, she marveled at the generosity of haiku poets. We reminisced about the late night renku, & she began work on a haibun-inspired crime story, where haiku were left as clues.

Sadly, Jessica passed away, quickly & unexpectedly, a few months after the launch of our anthology. . . . & I miss her. I am grateful for the time we spent together, & for the other brilliant women who are part of my life — on the page or in my kitchen — for the challenges that I have been able to see as opportunities, & for the lessons I have learned by taking a chance on collaboration. I am glad to be able to contribute to a celebration of women, women writers, women poets, & women haiku poets.

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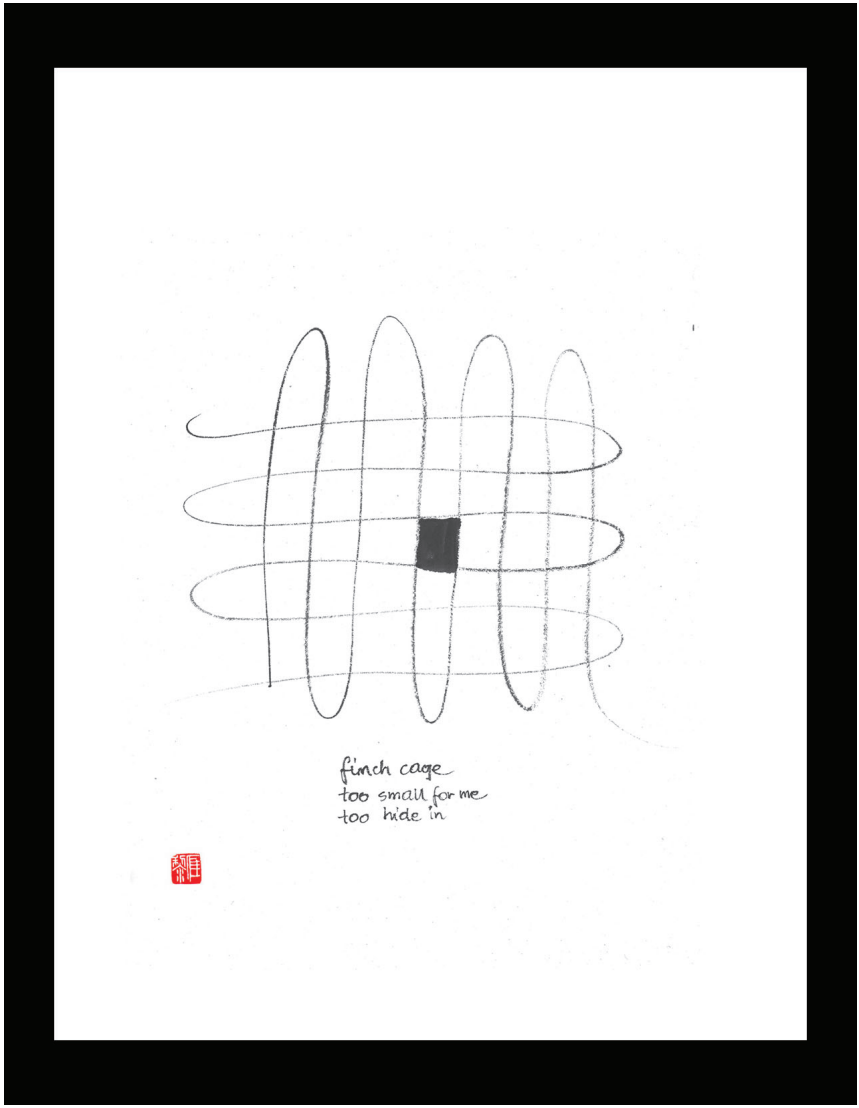

finch cage
too small for me
to hide in

Haiga: Lidia Rozmus

Alexis Rotella Remembers

Alexis Rotella

In the beginning

As a woman haiku poet, I've been most fortunate to have been rewarded with much recognition and a feeling that I have played a small part in advancing the genre of haiku and its related forms. But perhaps my most satisfying endeavors were the startups of journals where old and new haiku poets were given a showcase for their work. Early on, I started *The Persimmon Tree, Brussels Sprout* and in later years, the still active *Prune Juice* (*Senryu Journal*) which has had a string of editors.

It was an honor in the early 80's to have *East West Journal* publish two of my articles — one on haiku and the other on senryu which introduced the forms to a wider audience outside the haiku community. In that era, mostly small serious groups met at Japan House every quarter to discuss and share haiku (and not always in a civil way). After the meetings, Hiro Sato frequently invited poets

to his house for appetizers and drinks over which we continued the dialogue. We sometimes gathered in restaurants and wrote renga together. Many encounters enriched and stretched my life in ways that were pleasant, but unfortunately, some were downright painful.

At my Mountain Lakes, New Jersey home, I hosted several outdoor parties. One such occasion celebrated the publication of Cor van den Heuvel's *The Haiku Anthology* (Norton, 1984). Editor/poet Rod Willmot came from Canada to join the festivities. While getting up early to get fixings ready for breakfast, I first piled cold cream on my face, hoping to get a few alone moments to catch my breath, but Cor had beaten me to the punch. There I was and there he was when the burglar alarm went off as Cor opened the back door to go out for his morning constitutional. As if that weren't shocking enough, he nearly doubled over when he saw me in a black kimono and white face — a creature from the floating world.

When Hiro Sato, who for years served as President of the Haiku Society of America stepped down from the post, he asked Gerrie Little and then me to serve as president. It's a position I took seriously because the meetings generally did not have a friendly atmosphere — more like attending a wake with total strangers. Poets just sat round the large oval table, not speaking to one another, while waiting for the meeting to begin. But they seemed all too eager to pounce when someone read a haiku that was not to their liking. As a newcomer, I was shocked to witness such aggression. I tried my best to change the atmosphere by serving green tea and cookies before the meeting started. A warm drink and a little sweetness did wonders to break the iceberg.

At the time, *Frogpond* was in danger of folding and members were demanding their subscription monies be returned. After asking who would like the job of editor, there were no takers so I took on that task as well. I was often criticized for giving too much space

to certain poets, but I was determined to let new voices be heard. I was blessed to have a great VP — Herman Ward, who invited me to his Colonial-era homestead just outside Princeton, NJ. His support was invaluable. We dined together in my kitchen numerous times to discuss how to make quarterly meetings more friendly and engaging. On one occasion we attended (with other poets) a moon-viewing in the hills of New Jersey where a *shakuhachi* flute player entertained us. Dear Herman snored all the way through.

My husband Robert and I did a fair amount of travel during which we met poets at their homes. On one trip we visited Arizona Zipper in Maine. He was still snoozing when we arrived but his mother made us really feel at home. She let me make kudzu pudding on their ancient stove. When Arizona finally rolled out of the sack, he stayed in his longjohns throughout our visit, puffing on a corncob pipe.

In Santa Fe, Elizabeth Searle Lamb hosted us for tea and cookies. Her husband, Bruce, had just gotten out of the hospital and we were careful not to overstay our welcome. Elizabeth proudly showed us around their historic adobe including the room with her legendary harp with the broken string. At that time, I, being the new kid on the block, took care to acknowledge her as the grand dame of haiku. However, I did sense a bit of worried concern coming from her.

I also sensed similar concerns from Gerrie Little, Raymond Roseliep and a few other old timers. I think they were afraid I was going to give haiku a bad name — taking it to unrecognizable directions. Gerrie, Raymond and Elizabeth often offered unsolicited advice about the journals I edited. Raymond suggested that in my own writing should I focus solely on concrete poetry. That most certainly would have tied my Muse's hands. While Elizabeth remained distant until her final days, Gerrie phoned often when I lived in Los Gatos, California, rarely to discuss poetry, but to connect as friends. She wanted me to know that her husband took his own life. And she confided her fears of becoming a bag lady. This is the couple who

attended my New Jersey party — her husband was engaging and gave me an impassioned pep talk on how important it is to love what one does for a living. I remember Gerrie's spectacular silver ring — a giant Buddha head. Whatever star she landed on, I wish her everlasting peace.

During one of those morose haiku meetings in New York, (before I became president), I noticed a young man with sparkling eyes sitting close by. It was Scott Montgomery who had just returned from Japan after studying martial arts. We made an instant connection. A few weeks later he took a bus from Boston to spend a week with us. Scott is a Gemini and wow, could he converse! I don't just mean chatter. We took many walks with Blue, our beloved golden retriever, and covered every topic imaginable. I loved hearing what rolled off his tongue. "Spring must be really hard on old people," he said while the scent of lilacs hung in the air. I thought that so profound for a young man in his 20's. Scott's father, also a writer, committed suicide. We had talks about what it's like to be the surviving child. Unfortunately, Scott faded from the scene early but not before having some of his fine haiku published in Cor's anthology.

Scott served as guest editor of *Brussels Sprout* for a season. One evening we were so engrossed in going over submissions and talking haiku that we couldn't believe it was already dawn. Looking up from all the little pieces of paper and index cards (we only had snail mail back then), the brilliant white dogwood pressed against the study window.

A new phrase is coined

Quite a few poets were miffed that I wrote haiku which included relationships with lovers, family, friends and strangers, as if only birds, trees, flowers were worthy of inclusion. (Rod Willmot coined

the phrase psychological haiku.) I have always been interested in people and the games they play. From childhood I noticed how often people say one thing while their body language says the opposite. I did receive my fair share of "hate mail." Surprisingly, much of it from women . . . some of the betrayals are hard to think about, but I've memorialized a few incidents in published haibun. A few males dismissed me, ignored me, did their best to convince others that my work wasn't worth serious consideration. Making my way through Haikuland was often a precarious journey. While I sought friendships through open-hearted dialogue, many just wanted to ride my coattails. Others were determined to block every opportunity for me to become better known, especially at events where the audience was largely unfamiliar with haiku. Typically, I was told about these happenings at the very last minutes or the next day–purposely it seemed. Surprisingly, this kind of opposition often came from other women. Whatever happened to sisterhood and helping females break the glass ceiling?

I'm most grateful to Cor van den Heuvel for encouraging me to keep writing, no matter what others thought. It wasn't long after my poems started to make an impact that I got calls from Nick Virgilio (who said he and I could make beautiful music together), Virginia Brady Young and Alan Pizzarelli. I'll always cherish the long phone conversations back in the day when haiku seemed to be the most important topic on the planet. I recall Cor's book-signing party in New York — how disappointed we were that Shirley MacLaine didn't show despite my sending her a handwritten invitation!

I must share a funny but revealing moment when I met a San Francisco-based haiku poet at a coffee shop shortly after *The Haiku Anthology* was published. He extended his hand and greeted me with, "No single poet deserves to have so many haiku included in one anthology." When the second edition came out, of course, he didn't object when he, too, had a satisfactory number of pages devoted to his work.

Nothing stays the same

Time, of course, has wings and the old days are just memories now. Email drastically changed the way we communicate — I sometimes miss the earfuls of gossip and the extemporaneous Hi, Lex, can I bounce a haiku off you? via telephone. Haiku has circled the globe infinite times, made its way into mainstream poetry, often with embarrassing consequences. To the average person, haiku is still the classic (but to me, boring) 5-7-5 form filled with prepositions, adjectives and sentimentality forced into that mold.

After enrolling in acupuncture school, first in Santa Cruz, then commuting to Miami from San Francisco, I basically dropped out of the haiku scene (except for writing renga and inventing new forms with ai li, editor of Still). Learning Chinese Medicine is like learning another language — the right brain gets a real workout. I had no time to submit to journals or keep in touch with many in the community except for gab sessions with Vince Tripi every now and again between my stints in Florida. However, I did scribble my poems and fragments on scraps of paper before tossing them in a big box for the day when I would once again emerge.

To be honest, it was a relief to extricate myself from the politics and the game playing for half a dozen years. I didn't know who was writing what and I simply didn't care. After I opened my practice in Arnold, Maryland (having jumped through many hoops to get licensed in my state and nationwide), Alan Pizzarelli invited me to be his secret guest at Haiku North America in Winston-Salem (2007) where I shared senryu from my then soon-to-be-published *Ouch* (*Senryu that Bite*) collection. Shortly thereafter I submitted on a lark a haiku to the Kusamakura contest and won the Grand Prize (as well as the Second). My husband and I traveled to Kumamoto for the ceremony and then spent ten glorious days exploring the mind-blowing city of Kyoto. I'm not one to enter a

lot of contests but I figured if I wanted to get to Japan, I would have to get there myself, since most of the American haiku poets who had been invited as guests were male.

2017 and beyond

In 2017 Hiro Sato asked if I'd like to take over his editorship of the Ito-En Haiku Grand Prize (English Division) Contest. The first year I traveled to Manhattan for the ceremony and banquet where I met a number of really talented artists including a jazz pianist, painters and a famous calligrapher. The banquet was over-the-top especially the Kumamoto oysters which were as smooth as butter. At the end of 2019, I will have served in that capacity three years after which the baton will be passed to another.

When the #MeToo wave started, I felt driven to share my own experiences and to edit and curate an anthology where other women (and a few men) opened up and told their story-poems in *Unsealing Our Secrets* which won a Touchstone Distinguished Book Award in 2019. It was the most laborious and emotionally consuming project I have ever undertaken since many poets wished to remain anonymous. My husband Robert helped edit and publish the anthology. I'm deeply grateful to him for giving the project his all.

What's next?

Much of my present focus is on mobile photography and digital art. Within a short period, my work has been shown in Florence, Porto, Portugal and Milan, Italy. I don't know what is on the horizon after I publish my next two books, *Living in White Linen*

(haiku) and *Dancing the Tarantella* (tanka). Starting July 2019 I will be the 19th haiku poet to be included in the American Haiku Archives (www.americanhaikuarchives.org). One friend joked, At age 72, they probably thought they'd better act quickly.

I agreed to edit *The Tanka Society of America Journal* later this summer and if the stars align favorably, my husband and I will attend the Haiku North America gathering in Winston-Salem where he will discuss copyright pointers for haiku authors and I will talk about the moon.

curling leaves
you turn your face up
to the sun

Haiga: Debbie Strange

Haijin Calling Me In

Ruth Yarrow

Looking back on the 47 years that I have been writing haiku, I remember haiku poets generously inviting me into the haiku world. Of course men were among the important ones; I think particularly of Robert Spiess, Cor van den Heuvel, and Michael Dylan Welch. But there was a special camaraderie with fellow women poets. They opened the door to haiku, welcomed me in, listened so deeply that they heard things in my work of which I was not aware, encouraged me to develop new skills, included social/political issues in their writing, and modeled how to support haiku groups.

Opening the Door

I stumbled into writing haiku through teaching science. In 1972, only the second year of a new state college in southern New Jersey, Stockton State, I was hired to teach field biology and environmental

science courses. In addition, each faculty member was challenged to teach something they probably weren't trained in but loved. For example, the chemistry professor was a classical music fan so taught Baroque recorder; I enjoyed literature and poetry so taught a course on how cultures around the world viewed the natural environment as evidenced in their literature. When I was planning for the Asia section, I vaguely remembered having heard of a Japanese form of poetry that included nature. I read all I could find about haiku and asked my students to join me in trying to write it. The result: I got hooked.

A few years later, perusing the poetry section of a small town bookstore, I found the newly published first edition of Cor van den Heuvel's *Anthology*. In it was a note that the Haiku Society of America was launching a periodical called *Frogpond*. When I received Volume 1 Number 1, I found the format the perfect door into haiku for a beginner. Any submission would be printed in a section entitled "Croaks -?" and those chosen by at least four of the judges would be published in a subsequent issue as haiku in a section labeled "Watersounds." I enjoyed reading the submissions, noted my reactions and eagerly awaited the next issue to see which judges agreed with me. These early issues helped me to learn key attributes of effective haiku and introduced me to an array of early poets of haiku in English.

After three issues I felt ready to submit croaks. We had gone backpacking in the West and I was delighted to have published in "Watersounds":

A marmot's whistle
pierces the mountain
First star

Two judges on the selections panel voting for this haiku were L. A. Davidson and Kyoko Selden. Kyoko also contributed scholarly

articles, calligraphy and translations of Japanese haiku in those early issues. Because all Haiku Society of America members/ *Frogpond* subscribers were listed with addresses, we were able to contact each other. When our family moved to Ithaca, New York, in 1979, Kyoko invited my family to dinner, my first experience of incredible Japanese hospitality. She and the early *Frogpond* community opened the door for me to the world of haiku.

Welcoming in

As a mother with a preschooler, moving from New Jersey to Ithaca one week before our second baby was born while we were remodeling an old house around us and while I was launching the county Nuclear Weapons Freeze Campaign, I only rarely sat down to write. But I could compose and revise haiku in rare quiet moments, such as walking with a sleeping baby to our preschooler's cooperative nursery school, because I could hold all the words in my head. I delighted in having a form that could capture those moments that seem ordinary at first glance but you then realize are the essence of childhood. Support from other women poets at that point in my life was a real gift.

I received a generous invitation from Geraldine Little to come to her New Jersey home (luckily near where we visited my parents) and discuss haiku. Over cups of tea she shared her concepts of powerful poems and was very encouraging to me as a beginner. She suggested we write a linked poem together, so the haiku went by mail between southern New Jersey and upstate New York for two full years, and was published in *Frogpond*. I was impressed that she hinted at a wide variety of emotions with simple phrases, such as this eerily ominous one:

summer afternoon
a beach umbrella
no one comes to

Some years later on a family trip to the southwest, we visited Elizabeth Searle Lamb's home with the thick adobe walls that kept it cool on that hot summer day. She was also hosting Penny Harter and Bill Higginson, and generously listened and shared her joy in writing with all of us. Her poems struck me as finding power in the ordinary:

the emptiness
where the eyes were in the shed
snakeskin

Her history of "Haiku in English to 1978" brings home how deeply she was involved in and contributed to the beginnings of haiku in English.

Listening Deeply

It was the strong feminist haiku poet Marlene Mountain who listened deeply to my work in her unique way. Marlene's work had long delighted me because she could say so much with the absolute minimum:

pig and I spring rain

I could feel the firm wet bristly back of the pig as it slithered in the mud with Marlene, suggesting complex feelings of exasperation, humor and springtime joy. Since I already admired her poems, I was surprised and moved when she pointed out that my haiku

warm rain before dawn
my milk flows into her
unseen

was a woman's poem. She wrote in an interview with herself (she says "innerview") in *Frogpond*:

> "What is really exciting is Yarrow's phrase 'flows inter her unseen.' Even 'flows into her ' would have been more than adequate as an evocative phrase, but 'unseen,' wow! The intimacy deepens considerably, as it had by the pronoun 'my' (rather than 'her,' although again that would have been more than adequate). What is this 'unseen' force which 'flows' from one female into another? Isn't it more than milk, or water, or even blood?"

Marlene goes on from there to launch a discussion of the image as going beyond motherhood to reaffirm the ancient heritage of women, of matrilineal societies, and woman as the "Creator and Mother of All."

I am most grateful to Marlene for her courage in dealing with issues that most of us haiku poets were avoiding. She was one of the few haiku poets to include her passionate emotions about what was right and wrong in the world. Her poems that she characterized as 'pissed off poems," Cor van den Heuvel dubbed "however admirable, something other than haiku or senryu." Even when her poems felt powerful, such as:

less and less nature is nature

I found many of them closer to bumper stickers than poems. But her efforts inspired me to continue to struggle to find and to write effective political haiku. As she says in her "innerview" with herself:

"I: You're throwing haiku into the political realm.
M: It's already there. In an age such as ours, omission is as much political as . . . "

As when reading Marlene's work, I have found it challenging to write effective haiku about issues that could be labeled political. Writing a successful poem on such issues can't be didactic but needs to subtly include the issue and the poet's emotions about it. Marlene and I tried a linked poem that included environmental and nuclear issues in the Reagan era. Some of my one-liners in that piece were anything but subtle. For example:

flicking off his speech on star war weapons the glowing dot

Some haiku poets have succeeded in subtly hinting at the tangled emotions about these issues, as in this one by Peggy Willis Lyles:

recycling:
before he grinds the stump
he counts the rings

My family's sabbatical year in the coal-mining region of West Virginia gave me rich material for haiku with undercurrents of power and wealth disparity. My husband and I interviewed over 100 coal miners and their wives, and I longed to capture some of the danger, strong community, and multigenerational culture of their lives. This is one I wrote after a trip underground:

low top:
the Jesus on his hard hat
leans sideways

And my husband's:

lighted Pepsi sign
old miners basking
in the dim glow

Encouraging New Skills

Alexis Rotella was another woman poet whose work I admired, especially for her ability to perceive strong emotions in subtle behaviors:

Discussing divorce
he strokes
the lace tablecloth.

In 1983, while Alexis was editor of *Frogpond*, she invited me to write comments on others' work, submitted anonymously, to a new section of the journal titled "Haiku Workshop." I didn't feel confident to be the only critic, so Alexis joined me. I enjoyed thinking about other's work and why it was effective or not. Being asked to take this role encouraged me to develop critical skills.

I confess that in this stage of my development, I was convinced that the one effective way to write haiku was contrasting or comparing two resonating images from the poet's actual experience, that conveyed emotion, preferably including nature and season. While I still enjoy reading and trying to write poems that succeed in doing that, I now realize other approaches also express and inspire. But then I tended to be critical of haiku that didn't fit that description. I am embarrassed to remember, when asked to do a review of Anne McKay's book, that I doubted the authenticity of some of her haiku. I didn't believe she could have experienced those details of Native American ceremonies in the Northwest. This no doubt stemmed partly from my racist bias that real Native Americans and culture were mostly gone. I was humbled to receive a gently rebuking

letter, letting me know that she had close relations with people in the tribe and that her experience was genuine. I am still learning to question my assumptions and accept broader definitions of what can be haiku.

After Alexis's encouragement to think critically, and after I had received various awards, I gained confidence that I could be an effective workshop leader to introduce others to the enjoyment of capturing key moments in this powerful poetic form. My workshops were interactive, often starting with sharing exemplary haiku on 3x5 cards clothes-pinned to a clothesline. I challenged participants to express why they liked the ones they chose, which enabled us to create a group list of what was effective. I often led these workshops outdoors, so people had immediate sensory experience of the natural world. At the end the participants tried their hand at writing a haiku, and shared them if they wished.

Including social/political issues

While I enjoyed leading workshops and continuing to read and write haiku as it gained popularity, I began to feel something was missing. For decades my husband Mike and I had worked on peace, justice and environmental issues, and that work generated emotions that I tried to capture in haiku. When reading other forms of poetry by women poets such as Carolyn Forché, Adrienne Rich, Denise Levertov, Nikki Giovanni, and Marge Piercy, who dealt with social and political themes, I began to suspect that very few published haiku broached those issues. I challenged myself to find ones that effectively did just that. Over the decades I have scrutinized haiku publications to find political themes and have written articles for *Modern Haiku* and *Frogpond*, and given presentations for HSA meetings, with the following titles:

"Haiku and the Mushroom Cloud"
"From Nature to Environment: What Happens to Haiku?"
"Environmental Haiku"
"Haiku and the Environment"
"Haiku at Work"
"Haiku Awareness in Wartime?"
"A Haiku Eye on Camden"
"World Economy in Word Economy"
"Afterword" (a follow-up to the above-mentioned
"Environmental Haiku", focusing on climate change)

Recently, I have led workshops on the challenge of writing about racism: one at the 2011 Haiku North American conference in Seattle titled "Putting Our Own Early Awareness of Race into Haiku" and another at Vincent Tripi's 2016 Haiku Circle on "Social Issues: Bumper Sticker or Poem?" In 2017, I gave the keynote at the Haiku North America conference in Santa Fe, linking to their theme of "Earth Tones." By searching out haiku written by Native Americans, African Americans and Japanese Americans, I found a rich trove of haiku with undertones of the persistent racism in our nation, that I presented with the title "Skin Tones are Earth Tones"

In all these articles, presentations and workshops, I wanted to convince myself that haiku could handle issues ranging from the threats of nuclear war and environmental degradation to inequality of wealth and racism. I admit I also wanted to poke at haiku poets to challenge and encourage them to stretch their range of subjects to include political issues.

Supporting Haiku Groups

In 1997 when our children fledged, we took early retirement from our teaching jobs and moved to Seattle to find peace, justice and environmental organizing work that could modestly sustain us

economically. We reveled in backpacking in the wilderness that surrounds the city in every direction. I appreciated that haiku lends itself to capturing those moments of awe at the beauty of the natural world while realizing that our own footsteps or breath are part of it.

alpine lake —
my breast stroke's shining arc
toward sunrise

Another joy of living in Seattle was taking part in the first on-going haiku group I had experienced.

Almost immediately after we arrived in Seattle I received a warm phone call from Francine Porad, inviting me to the next meeting of the Haiku Northwest group. It often met in her home, and was attended by a delightfully diverse group of poets. They ranged from beginners to the well-published Michael Dylan Welch who was involved in the major haiku organizations, and from Bob Major who only wrote strictly in 5-7-5 syllables to Mas Odoi who wrote only senryu. Francine infallibly found something of value in each person's submission, but also was able to directly challenge extraneous words or make suggestions to strengthen the poem. When we lost Francine to cancer, we continued meeting, often in libraries. As we shared our work, I found Connie Hutchison, who had been assistant editor of Brussels Sprout with Francine, particularly perceptive. Connie and Michael Dylan Welch generously helped me choose and arrange the haiku in my latest collection, *Lit from Within*, for which I was pleased to be given the Touchstone award. Haiku Northwest continues to be a strong support for haiku poets, using Francine's combination of support and constructive criticism.

After 18 years in Seattle, I have moved back to Ithaca. The move was prompted by my husband's death, both of our children and their

families having moved back here, plus my second granddaughter's birth and the opportunity of being her caretaker up to 30 hours a week. My life is full with family, and activist groups working for racial justice and alternatives to our nation's militaristic foreign policy. But I miss the northwest wilderness:

moonlit ripples
the distant quavering
of a loon

And while a few of us in this town have given haiku readings, I miss the group support of Haiku Northwest.

Looking back, I am grateful for the women poets mentioned here, and many more I have not mentioned, who have called me in to the world of haiku. My experience tells me that haiku can be written by any of us humans in any surroundings about any subject, but that writing successful haiku remains a creative challenge to find and arrange the right words to capture the emotional experience. That challenge, and sharing the results, brings joy.

memory
almost every one
a bird flies through

Haiga: Jean LeBlanc

The Haiku Life of Kiyoko Tokutomi

Patricia Machmiller

Early Life

ながい性の炭うつくしくならべつぐ
長谷川素逝

ah! this woman . . .
charcoal gracefully arranged
gracefully added
Sosei Hasegawa (tr Fay Aoyagi and Patricia J. Machmiller)

This is the haiku that brought Kiyoko Tokutomi to haiku. In her own words:

> I would like to tell you how I opened my eyes to haiku. That was a half century ago, when I was living in the dormitory of my school. The last year college students were a bit wild. No one wanted to stay in the room. About three girls got together and visited the dormitory inspector. He was a psychology professor who welcomed

> us and gave us interesting topics. That night, he said "I am going to introduce you to a wonderful haiku." . . . [H]e stirred the charcoal fires in the hibachi with the iron chopsticks. . . . As soon as his voice reached my ears, I was startled at how such a short poem could give the image of a beautiful lady's movement, adding black charcoal on white ashes, and inside the ashes, fire-red embers." (Tokutomi, "The History . . ." 17).

Her life began in Japan on Kyushu Island on December 28, 1928:

> Her grandfather named her Kiyoko for her happy personality. She was . . . the second child of seven to the Shibatas, a family of rice farmers. Her spring, summer and fall were marked by the family's work planting, tending, and harvesting rice. . . . Kiyoko watched hermother and the other women of her hometown, Nabeshima, harvest silk from the silkwormsthey raised. This small community in the prefecture of Saga near the Sea of Ariake is located about 40 miles from Nagasaki. In the nearby city of Saga she attended Saga Girls' High School. Upon her graduation in the spring of 1945, she immediately enrolled in Saga Teachers' College where she majored in Japanese literature.
>
> In the summer of 1945, Kiyoko's father, heeding the warnings in leaflets dropped by American pilots over Saga, bundled his children into their winter jackets and sweaters and took them to hide in the cave that he had dug in the family garden. Her mother and one of her sisters, on their way home when the planes flew overhead, hid in a deep ditch alongside the road. In this way the whole family survived the bombing of Nagasaki.
>
> In 1948 she graduated from college and took a position at Nabeshima Junior High School, where she taught literature and dance. Here she met Kiyoshi Tokutomi, who was teaching English there. When Kiyoshi was nine, his father suddenly passed away. At the time, he and his siblings, all born in the United States, were sent to Japan by his mother to study. . . . Kiyoshi was still in Japan when the war broke out, trapping him there.

During and after the war, food was scarce. Kiyoshi cared so much for his young students that he gave to them whatever food he acquired for himself. Kiyoko would admonish him, "You are not the Buddha; you have to eat." He had contracted tuberculosis. With no medical help in Japan he became extremely ill. After the war ended, he was not able to return to the United States immediately, as the United States required that he first prove he had not been a traitor.

While [his mother] pursued his case in the U.S. courts, his health deteriorated. All that saved him was the streptomycin she was able to send him from the United States. Finally, in 1951, he was given permission to return to the United States where he was promptly hospitalized.

Before he left Japan, he invited Kiyoko to come to America. She arrived in 1954. His long hospitalization had not improved his condition so it was decided to surgically remove one of his lungs. She was there for the first surgery and a second surgery to fix the first and a long succession of hospitalizations thereafter.

She spent her days at San Jose City College studying English and the rest of the time at his bedside. By her own account, in her first year in the United States she could neither speak English nor comprehend what was being said. During her second year she could understand everything but could not converse. It was in the third year that she began to speak English. (Machmiller and Tokutomi-Northon 114-115)

The Marriage

They were married in 1957 and had only one child, [Yukiko]. Since Kiyoshi was not strong enough to work, Kiyoko took a job at Fairchild Semiconductor on the assembly line. Her work was noticed because of her dexterity and precision, and as a result, she was often asked to perform technical work for the engineers. The accuracy with which she kept records of the experiments and her ability to read graphs and mathematical tabulations led to her transfer to the technical manuals department, where she became

> a specifications designer laying out and proof-reading engineering reports. It was in this capacity that the company discovered her finely developed sense of proportion and keen eye for graphical design.
>
> [In 1967 Kiyoshi was given a medication for a lung infection.] A possible side effect of the medication, however, was deafness. Due to the improper administration of the drug, Kiyoshi suffered permanent nerve damage resulting in complete hearing loss. ((Machmiller and Tokutomi-Northon 116)

In an attempt to reverse the hearing loss a decision was made for Kiyoshi to travel to Japan for an extended period for medical treatment. Kiyoko would stay in the U.S. caring for their daughter, then ten, while continuing to work at Fairchild. The deep bond between the two is evidence by the letters they exchanged. In the five months he was gone, Kiyoshi wrote to Kiyoko every day, sometimes two or three times a day; she wrote him once or twice a week. In all they exchanged over 280 letters. An indication of the tight bond between the two is in these excerpts from the letters:

> From Kiyoko, July 22 [1967.] Your first letter arrived this Friday. I hoped I would get another one today, the 22nd, and it came. It seems this is the first time that you went into the hospital with a happy feeling surrounded by well-wishers and good opportunities. Don't you think so?
>
> At times we thought that luck was not on our side. But I've never felt this happy noticing that you stand on the brighter, warmer side of life and feel blessed in spite of being hospitalized.
>
> Because of Watanabe-sensei, you have been given this good opportunity and are happily receiving treatment—I've never felt this blessed—although we are separated, I feel more content than the times when I would visit you every other day in the hospital and get to talk with you every night. Can you understand? Let's make the best of this regardless of the result. (Tokutomi and Tokutomi 43)

Then she joked with him:

> By the way, before I forget, I'd like to give you some advice. You were so happy that you wrote 主侍医, which means the Emperor's chief physician. The Imperial Household Agency may not like it! It may be safer to call your doctor 主治医 (physician-in-charge). It would be funny if you use 主侍医 in any letters to others. I recommend sincerely that you give up the duties of the Emperor immediately and become a commoner! (Tokutomi and Tokutomi 43)

On that same day Kiyoshi was writing from Japan:

> Kiyoko-san, you took care of me so well and gave me strength. I don't know how to thank you.As my wife you poured your devotion over me, loved me, took care of me tenderly—sometimes at night tears run over the brim of my eyes just to think of it. Can I ever take care of you as you take care of me, from the depth of my heart, with a tender touch, with love, like you do to me? I know I can't match your compassion, your tender care—but if our situation were reversed (I pray it won't happen), I am going to try very hard to take care of you as you have done for me. When we are apart like now, I feel your devotion so strongly that I realize how lucky I am. (Tokutomi and Tokutomi 45)

After this extensive hospitalization in Japan, Kiyoshi and Kiyoko came to the realization and acceptance that Kiyoshi's hearing loss was permanent.

Founding of the Yuki Teikei Haiku Society

> Upon accepting this change in Kiyoshi's health, Kiyoko decided that she would introduce him to her passion, haiku. She hoped that at literary gatherings, where the focus was on the written language, Kiyoshi would be able to participate more easily with others.
>
> To Kiyoko's delight, Kiyoshi enthusiastically embraced haiku; it was his idea to teach haiku to English-language writers. Together they founded the Yuki Teikei Haiku Society [YTHS][1] in 1975.

1. The Yuki Yeikei Haiku Society started as the English Language Division of Yukuharu Haiku Society of Japan. In 1978 it became independent of Yukuharu and took the name Yuki Teikei Haiku Society of the United States and Canada.

> (Scott 10) This is the same year that [they] joined Kari Haiku, the Japanese Haiku Group of Shugyo Takaha. Thus began [Kiyoko's] extensive years of writing haiku in both Japanese and English. [Kiyoshi and Kiyoko] conducted the haiku meetings as a team. Kiyoshi would introduce an idea for discussion and Kiyoko would follow the discussion, translating the cogent points for him by air-writing in Japanese on her hand and forearm, which she would hold up like a tablet for him to "read" the invisible strokes as she wrote. This was their usual method of communication: Kiyoko listening to what people said, Kiyoshi reading what she wrote either in the air or on paper. Close friends would often take up the pen themselves and write directly to him. (Machmiller and Tokutomi-Northon 116)

I meet the Tokutomis in 1975 when I attended my first haiku meeting that September.

> From the beginning, Yuki Teikei Haiku meetings involved a discussion of the kigo that was appropriate to the season followed by writing. Often meetings were conducted outdoors to bring the writers in direct contact with the natural world. In 1977 [the Tokutomis] published the first *Haiku Journal*, the official magazine of Yuki Teikei; it contained a list of kigo for autumn and winter, which Kiyoko had compiled, and several articles by Kiyoshi on writing traditional haiku. In July 1978, Kiyoshi and Kiyoko edited the first *GEPPO*, a work-study journal for members, which has been continuously published by the organization ever since. (Machmiller and Tokutomi-Northon 116)

For the Tokutomis tradition was very important. They not only promoted their traditions; they were interested in other traditions, as well. For example, Kiyoko and Kiyoshi always came to my house for Thanksgiving dinner. Thanksgiving was not a tradition in their house and when their daughter went off to college, they were even less inclined to make a big meal. However, they both enjoyed being introduced to the traditional foods of an American Thanksgiving, the roast turkey, the stuffing, the mashed potatoes,

and the cranberry sauce. Kiyoshi particularly loved the pumpkin pie; Kiyoko not so much. She said she had eaten enough pumpkin during the war that she had no desire to eat another pumpkin. She preferred apple.

Wherever Kiyoshi was, because of his deafness, note-writing was part of the mix. He loved young people and he was very adept at engaging our two teenage boys in conversation by writing notes back and forth to them. One Thanksgiving my mother, who was visiting from South Dakota, was sitting next to him. Suddenly in the midst of the general din, Kiyoshi and my mother burst out laughing. In their exchange of notes, he'd sprung a joke on her. He loved jokes—even practical jokes. When their notes were passed around the table, one person after another burst into laughter as the joke was revealed.

The year that Kiyoshi died, I invited Kiyoko to come for Thanksgiving dinner, but she declined saying she didn't feel up to it. We were about to sit down to eat when the doorbell rang. It was Kiyoko. Kiyoshi had come to her in a dream and told her *I don't know where you are going to be tomorrow but I'm going to be at the Machmillers'*.

Later Years

> Kiyoko's initial return to Japan was in 1964 when she brought [Yukiko] to meet [Yukiko's] grandmother and great grandmother. . . . It would be another 15 years before she would return to Japan. (Machmiller and Tokutomi-Northon 116)

On July, 1, 1979. Lillian Giskin and I, accompanying Kiyoko Tokutomi, landed in Seoul, South Korea; *Air Force One* carrying the US President, Jimmy Carter, had just departed after he completed a State visit to South Korea's President Park Chung Hee. We were attending the Fourth International Poetry Conference hosted by South Korea. The Park regime under a 1972 constitution

had imposed a very harsh, authoritarian rule on South Korea. During his visit "President Carter asked President Park to abolish the emergency decree forbidding criticism of the Government and to release dissidents who had been placed under house arrest during his visit, and Mr Cyrus Vance, the Secretary of State, who accompanied him, presented two lists of over 100 political prisoners and requested their release." (*Keesing's Record of World Events* 29799) Among those imprisoned was the prominent South Korean poet, Kim Chi Ha. This was the atmosphere we found at the conference. There were protests against the government and people led away by uniformed officials. Since the signs were in Korean, it was hard to know exactly what was happening. What was clear was that tensions were running high. When I asked Kiyoko about what was going on, she said, "The Koreans fight with their poems." It was in this highly charged state that Kiyoko was verbally accosted by four Korean poets; they were expressing their anger at the abuses that the Japanese had inflicted on Koreans prior to and during WWII. I watched as she quietly and graciously apologized without equivocation for all the pain caused by the Japanese government. I could see that her sincerity won them over. In her charming way she made many friends for Japan at that conference.[2]

Following the conference the three of us continued on a two-week tour of Japan. We had lunch in Nabeshima in the house where Kiyoko was raised.

How I love it
the sea of my hometown . . .
cherry petal shell (Tokutomi, *Kiyoko's Sky* 27)

2. Machmiller, Patricia. "Notes from Korean Trip to the Fourth Annual International Poetry Conference." *Haiku Journal*, Yuki Teikei Haiku Society, vol. 6, 1986, pp 43-45.

We toured Kyushu Island, saw the Gion Parade in Kyoto with its centuries-old floats adorned with treasured tapestries, visited Nara's famed temples, and attended the all-day Kabuki Theater in Tokyo.

> This trip would become the beginning of many regular trips. She delighted in traveling to Japan, and in her later years she usually scheduled three-week excursions once a year. She enjoyed the prospect of visiting places in Japan that she had not yet seen. The many people—musicians, artists, writers, as well as former classmates—that she met on her journeys were unfailingly generous in their welcome. Even with the outpouring of hospitality, by the third week she would feel the tug of home, and she would be ready to return. (Machmiller and Tokutomi-Northon 117)

Kiyoshi died in 1987. This was a terrible loss to Kiyoko. She suffered a deep depression and lost her appetite. Once she was hospitalized because she was so weak she fainted.

> Lost—with my husband—
> my wish to play jokes
> April Fools' Day (Tokutomi, *Kiyoko's Sky* 74)

> Kiyoko continued on with the work they had started together in the Yuki Teikei Haiku Society. Her leadership style was more indirect than Kiyoshi's: she tended to listen, to give encouragement, and to offer guidance when asked. In 1997 she was invited to speak at the Haiku International Conference in Tokyo about what she and Kiyoshi had accomplished. On this trip she led another group of haiku poets [Alice and Alex Benedict, June Hopper Hymas, Lynn Leach, Patricia Machmiller, and Fay Aoyagi] in an exploration of the historical places of Japan. They visited Kyoto, the cultural center of old Japan; Matsuyama, birthplace of Shiki; Mt. Yoshino, with its hermitage of the 12th century poet, Saigyo; Sado Island, land of intellectuals exiled during the shogun era; and Tokyo, with its Edo past. In Tokyo the poets were invited to dinner at the home

of Teruo Yamagata, long-time member of YTHS and member and last president of Yukuharu. Poets Jerry Ball, Garry Gay, and Claire and Patrick Gallagher joined Kiyoko's party there. Everywhere the poets went they met modern Japanese writers of haiku and renku, who greeted her with great warmth and enthusiasm.

She continued to write haiku in Japanese and English and in 1999 she was named dojin in Kari, a designation in Japan given to the most accomplished members. In 2000, the Yuki Teikei Haiku Society celebrated its 25th Anniversary. Speaking at the dinner celebrating this event, she modestly gave credit for the success of Yuki Teikei to its long succession of presidents starting with Kiyoshi. Kiyoshi had decided early on to pass the torch to others, and Kiyoko attributed the Society's ability to attract and retain creative talent to this decision.

In September 2001, she was invited to read at the celebration of the Fiftieth Anniversary of the US-Japanese Peace Treaty held in the Bay Area.

. . . She has spent well over thirty years teaching Japanese in various locations in the Santa Clara Valley and many years teaching calligraphy and Japanese at Yu-Ai-Kai, the Japanese Senior Center in San Jose.

. . . [After she retired she moved from San Jose to] Ben Lomond, a town in the Santa Cruz Mountains south of San Jose [where] . . . redwoods and the nearby creek [could be] seen from her windows season after season [and] can be found in the haiku she has written since 1994.

In August 2000, she was diagnosed with cancer. . . . She [was] also diagnosed with Alzheimer's Disease. . . . (Machmiller and Tokutomi-Northon 117-118)

I bask in the winter sunshine
of the calligraphy
"Returning Home" (Tokutomi, *Kiyoko's Sky* 81)

Her book of haiku, *Kiyoko's Sky*, was published in December, 2002

(K. Tokutomi). She read from it at the Yuki Teikei Winter Party; two weeks later she died on Christmas Day, 2002.

Kiyoko Tokutomi's Poetics

Kiyoko Tokutomi studied with Shugyo Takaha, haiku master of Kari Haiku Society of Tokyo, Japan, since 1975. In an introductory commentary to her book, *Kiyoko's Sky*, he wrote:

> Kiyoko Tokutomi is one of those rare haiku poets who follow *yuki teikei* (the traditional Japanese form with a seasonal element or kigo) both in English and Japanese. To understand the background of her haiku, we should keep in mind that she lives in Ben Lomond, California, on the West Coast of the United States. I have heard that spring in California comes early, and by mid-February, many people have started wearing short-sleeved shirts. Cherry blossoms bloom in full in March or April, the same time as in Japan. They even have a Cherry Blossom Festival. Their summer is relatively cool along the coast. In San Francisco, it seems that one needs an overcoat on a summer evening. Though there is no lingering heat like in Japan, there are heat waves, referred to as Indian summer, which come in September and October. Winter is their rainy season and especially around New Year, it rains often. It is then that you can see a rainbow. Therefore, "rainy season" and "rainbow" would be winter kigo there.
>
> In a letter to me sometime in 1985 Mrs. Tokutomi reported on her Japanese haiku group's activities: "Here in the US, an ocean away from Japan, access to Japanese culture is limited, and we have to grope in the dark when we write haiku. We decided to watch a video, *Introduction to Haiku*, on NHK TV, which featured Shugyo; we also criticized each other's work at the monthly *kukai* [a meeting for the purpose of writing and judging haiku]. We began to read each other's haiku more intensely and with greater appreciation. We live in an English-speaking society, but one night each week, it a pleasure for us to speak in Japanese. Sometimes we lecture each other on Japanese expressions we have forgotten and the *kukai* becomes a study of the Japanese language." (Takaha 14)

In her haiku the redwood appears throughout the seasons.

With its redwoods
springing to their full height
the mountain laughs

Redwood
on its top the presence of
summer moon

The redwood's
intended destination
towering autumn sky

Withering blast!
redwood forest
thrown into confusion

Is there a redwood forest near her house? The redwood seems to be an important center of gravity for her haiku. It is very symbolic. I want to ask her what kind of tree it is. Perhaps I should visit her to see the tree for myself. (Takaha 17)

And June Hopper Hymas, a long-time student of the Tokutomis, made these observations:

Some themes recur in Kiyoko's haiku. One is of a distant childhood

A child's New Year's gift—
the days when I last received one
are far away

and of a remembered home place:

In deepest winter
I only think about it—
a hometown visit

It was here in a never-forgotten garden that her father had cleverly fashioned a koi pond so a stream would pass through it, keeping the water always fresh:

White camellia—
my father loved this garden
now so forlorn

Her home on the island of Kyushu was very near to the sea. On a visit to Japan in 1997 Kiyoko and a group of Yuki Teikei members traveled to Sado Island where we watched some beautifully performed traditional dances at a reception the local mayor had arranged in our honor. Sado, a remote island used by the Tokagawa shoganate as a place of exile, has preserved many of the traditional folk arts. One of the songs, "Sado Okesa," Kiyoko remembered singing during her childhood on Kyushu. Sado and Nagasaki, we learned, were major seaports during the rule of the shogun and communicated by sea. Kiyoko had long wondered how she had come to love a Sado folk song and now she knew.

How I love it
the sea of my hometown . . .
cherry petal shell

In this haiku she is referring to *sakuragai*, the fragile pink shell of a tiny crustacean. Sometimes found on ocean beaches, and prized for its delicate beauty, the shell's name and appearance signify cherry blossoms. The fleeting beauty of cherry blossoms has a special significance for Japanese people. Her use here of the cherry petal shell, a spring *kigo*, evokes feelings of tenderness and a deep recognition of the transience of life. (Hymas 9-10)

Fay Aoyagi while translating Kiyoko's haiku made these observations:

Although we know from Kiyoko's renku writing that she can write from her imagination, we find that when she writes haiku, she writes only from her direct experience. She sketches small but

> precious moments of happiness, which she is able to discern in her immediate surroundings: rivers, ponds, and the woods near her house. She describes her ordinary life as a widow, a mother, and a grandmother. She left her birth country as a young woman and spent her adulthood in a land where everything is fast-paced and many people are eager to be recognized. She is a strong-willed woman, who is not afraid of speaking her thoughts. But at the same time, she has never lost her love for subtlety, modesty and gentleness. . . . . Though she does not place herself at center stage in haiku, we feel her gentle, but keen eye. The power of her haiku is simplicity. With very few exceptions she uses the traditional 5-7-5 form in her Japanese haiku. (Aoyagi 125)

Kiyoko's simplicity, it turns out, can be very deceptive as seen by this example:

> *minasoko no ishi marumaru to haru no koi*
>
> water bottom/'s/stone/round-round/-ly/spring/'s/koi
>
> On the pond's bottom
> a round, round stone
> and this spring carp (Tokutomi, *Kiyoko's Sky* 87)

I too had noticed Kiyoko's way of writing:

> Her approach to writing was very direct: she would look out at a scene, trust her ability to discern the important, and write without any apparent inhibition, always being true to what she felt at that moment. Like a highly skilled painter, her writing had just the right tone and color to perfectly balance the mood of her expression. The deftness with which she wrote her delicate images always surprised me. To be able to write so skillfully in a second language is the sign of a great sensibility. With her life propelled by caring for Kiyoshi's physical (the whole time I knew Kiyoko and Kiyoshi, his health was precarious) and mental needs (he was an innovator originating, for example, the first English-language haiku study journal and with her help starting a mathematics competition between United States and Japanese high schools) as well as working full time to support her family, I am sure getting

> time to write was difficult. She never mentioned writing for the Japanese Haiku Group, Kari, and it was not until, as a member of a group accompanying her on a trip to the 1997 Haiku International Conference in Tokyo, Japan, that I learned that she was studying under Shugyo Takaha and that her haiku had been published in Kari, the official magazine of the Kari Group. . . .
>
> Kiyoko's haiku are in the formal, traditional style whether she is writing in English or Japanese. Her work in English always begins with a capital letter; the 5-7-5 structure has consistently been part of her haiku practice. . . . The language she uses, whether writing in Japanese or English, is always simple and direct and so we have chosen vocabulary that honors this simplicity of expression. (Machmiller, "On Translating . . ." 126-127)

In 2000 it became clear that Kiyoko had developed Altzheimer's; she was house-bound so I would visit her once a week in her home in the Santa Cruz Mountains. Her ability to converse in English fell away and since I don't speak Japanese, we did not talk much. But we wrote haiku. It was my hope that she would write in Japanese because, as a dojin in Shugyo Takaha's Kari, she was expected to send ten haiku to him every month. But I was unable to communicate this to her. Instead, my presence seemed to be the prompt she needed to write haiku *in English*. Which she would do. After our writing session, we would share what we wrote. She had always written haiku, whether in Japanese or English, in the five-seven-five form. This did not change. I could see on her paper the pencil marks where she had been counting the syllables. These hand-written drafts of her work now reside in the California State Library. Here is a haiku written during that time period; she was also being treated for colon cancer:

> Chemotheraphy
> in a comfortable chair—
> two hours of winter (Tokuomi, *Kiyoko's Sky* 111)

Sometimes during our exchange, I might suggest that a particular haiku could be improved by, say rewriting the first line. She would ask what did I suggest. I would ask her to take a fresh piece of paper and write twenty first lines from which she could than choose a replacement. Or I might suggest she choose a different adjective by writing down twenty adjectives.

Here is a haiku revised in this manner:

> Such musical green
> the tree leaves washed with rain
> quiet winter morning (Tokutomi, *Kiyoko's Sky* 111)

> But the essence of Kiyoko's haiku, as the reader can see from the later examples of her English-language haiku, is lightness:

> So lightly it goes
> and so lightly it comes back
> —the swallowtail (Tokutomi, *Kiyoko's Sky* 64)

> With the barest language and the simplest observations, her images touch us so lightly that we are left wondering what was it that she, like the swallowtail, did to open our hearts. We cannot see the effort, for there is none. There is only purity of spirit, transparent and uplifting. (Machmiller, "On Translating . . ." 126-127)

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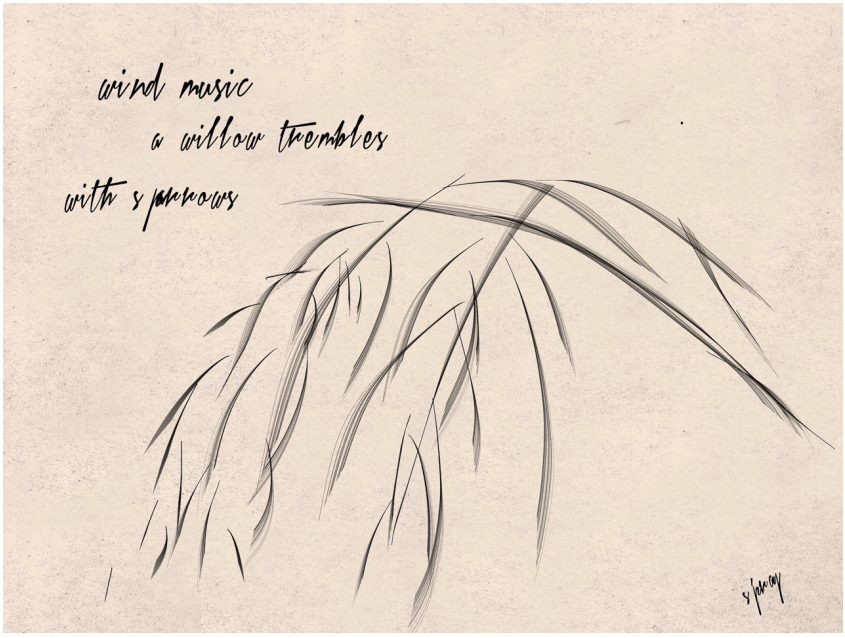


wind music
a willow trembles
with sparrows

Haiga: Sandi Pray

Dipping One's Toes:

A Review of *Going to the Pine: Four Essays on Bashō*

Danny Blackwell

Wilkinson, Geoffrey. *Going to the Pine: Four Essays on Bashō.* (self-published, 2019.) 60 pages. £7.99 / $8.99US / $12.99AUS. ISBN 978-1-9160622-0-7.

"Set aside all personal thoughts and motives, for you will learn nothing if you insist on interpreting objects as you see them." Thus speaks Bashō in a quote that opens Geoffrey Wilkinson´s interesting collection of essays. It's a slim volume (some 60 pages) containing four previously published essays, and its title is taken from a quote attributed to Bashō: "Go to the pine to learn about the pine."

In the first essay, the author compares Japanese poet Matsuo Bashō and English poet John Keats, and deals with their poetic notions of annihilating the self, and also their experience with travelling. The comparison is interesting and reminds one of the work of Blyth, who often found counterpoints from World Literature to compare with Japanese haiku.

With plenty of reference to Bashō's poems and writings, and many extracts from Keat's letters to his acquaintances, Wilkinson states that "much of what Keats says could easily have been uttered by Bashō, and vice versa." It is Wilkinson's belief that both Bashō and Keats teach us that "we are deluded (. . .) if we suppose that truth is something we set out to discover as we pass through the world. The reality is that truth discovers itself as the world passes through us." The first essay is a unique opening to the book, and certainly gives us food for thought and is a welcome addition to comparative literature.

The second essay, "Bashō's Frog, the Great Survivor," delves into the back-stories behind the renowned frog-pond haiku, one of the most infamous haiku of all time. It looks at a variety of narratives that aim to reconstruct the poem's origin, and subsequent interpretations, and highlights how some of them may not be as reliable as others. Anyone who knows the haiku and hasn't read the differing stories regarding its genesis would do well to read this essay and ponder what lies beyond the pond.

The essay shows the importance some have attributed to the poem, and how others felt it was an inferior haiku. The interpretations also vary. Shiki felt it was more like the kind of "life-sketch" poem he himself advocated — in Shiki's own words:

"This poem is nothing more than a report of what the poet's auditory nerves sensed. Not only did it include none of his subjective ideas or visual, moving images, but what is recorded was nothing more than a moment of time."

Other versions consider the poem to be the result of a Zen exchange in which "paradoxical and seemingly meaningless utterances" are exchanged between master and disciple in order to strive towards illumination. D.T. Suzuki is one of the key figures in promoting a more Zen interpretation, and he influenced haiku commentator Blyth as a result. Wilkinson summarizes Suzuki's view thus: "The frog, the pond, the poet, the whole universe itself, are all dissolved in that one sound and united in the undifferentiated nothingness."

It is interesting, as always, to see varying translations. Let's look at the first rendering in the essay:

> The old pond —
> A frog jumps in,
> The sound of water.

Now let us compare that more austere translation with this limerick version, which appears later in the essay, by Alfred Marks:

> There once was a curious frog
> Who sat by a pond on a log
> And, to see what resulted,
> In the pond catapulted
> With a water-noise heard round the bog.

Of particular interest to myself was one particular four-line translation, in which the first line is repeated at the end, and which brings to mind the early haiku experiments of Catalan poet Josep Maria Junoy, whom I recently investigated for my anthology *Haiku from Iberia and Beyond*, and who also used said technique (a technique, it might be added, which mirrors our instinctive reading patterns, especially when reading haiku.) The four-line version is as follows:

> The old pond —
> A frog jumps in;
> The water sounds —
> The old pond!

The essay ends with an interesting comparison to Arvo Pärt that makes us consider the relationships between artist and audience; in Pärt's words: "There are as many different ways of perception as there are listeners (. . .) and all of them are justified."

The third essay, "Found in Translation," stands out for its style, which is less academic and strikes a more conversational tone, imitating — as it does—the inner monologues of a translator. As a translator myself, I found this piece illuminating, although the constant mental leaps of the translator-narrator at times make it less of an easy read, and it is potentially a little specific for the casual reader not familiar with translation or with the Japanese language.

The final essay, "The Frog and the Basilisk," suffers from some overlap with elements which are repeated here from other essays. This may have been more evident to me as I read the whole book through in one sitting, and perhaps someone reading these essays individually, with a little space between them, might not notice the few minor repetitions. The final essay is rather ambitious in its scope, and I found it perhaps the least convincing essay of the collection, but there are nevertheless some admirable efforts on the part of Wilkinson to broaden the scope of our interpretations of Bashō, and our understanding of the world itself. This essay looks at the Eastern poet Bashō in reference to the West and its Judaeo-Christian traditions. Wilkinson sees in the East and the West the following common denominator: "a collective fear of the unintelligible, that is, of the merest suspicion that there might not be any reason why the world is as it is." The author assuages that fear by telling us that it is "both a disconcerting discovery and a liberating one, because it frees us to recognize that responsibility for what happens in our world (...) lies with us, not with some imagined creator or force."

I look forward to reading more of Wilkinson's work on haiku in the future, and I can recommend this collection of essays as a good way to dip one's toe into Bashō's own peculiar pond and come out with new perspectives, and maybe new questions, regarding what lies behind the poems and poets we spend so much time with, and how best to translate and interpret them.

No 'Safe' Poems:

A Review of *Poetry as Consciousness: Haiku Forests, Spaces of Mind, and an Ethics of Freedom*

Dave Read

Gilbert, Richard. *Poetry as Consciousness: Haiku Forests, Spaces of Mind, and an Ethics of Freedom*. Japan. Keibunsha Co. LTD., 2018. 294 pages, hard cover. ISBN 978-4-86330-189-4.

There is mystery in poetry, an ineffable quality that distinguishes the good from the bad, and the average from the memorable. Wherein does this quality lie, and how can it be mined from the imaginative landscape? Are there aspects of creativity that can be better understood and, through understanding, generate deeper and more authentic poems?

In *Poetry as Consciousness: Haiku Forests, Spaces of Mind, and an Ethics of Freedom*, Richard Gilbert addresses mind as a creative space. Specifically looking to understand poetry within a concept of consciousness, Gilbert draws on studies from a wide variety of academic disciplines including literature, linguistics, philosophy, psychology, and the social sciences. On the back of these studies,

Gilbert explores the poetic mind and its relationship to haiku in three manners. First, Gilbert examines consciousness. His analysis leads him to the concept of *thoughtspace* — the subjective and vast imaginative space we inhabit. Secondly, Gilbert discusses freedom from social constraints as a requirement for creativity. Here, he presents interviews with a variety of poets on their experiences with anarchic sanctuaries (places of safety in which new language and thoughts outside of the norm can be shared). Finally, Gilbert returns to *thoughtspace* and its relationship to haiku — showcasing a plethora of poems categorized within its seven properties and 36 qualities. *Poetry of Consciousness*, beautifully illustrated by Sabine Miller, is a thoughtful, detailed articulation of *thoughtspace*, sanctuary, and haiku.

After a preliminary discussion of mind, Gilbert introduces his concept of *thoughtspace*. *Thoughtspace* is a subjective space which provides a potentially infinite number of imaginative possibilities. Within it, we "create not only the stories of who we are and how worlds of imagination become; in a deeper orientation — more invisibly, covertly, self-secretly — we create novel spaces of mind." (42) Mind, as explained in archetypal psychology, is essentially metaphoric. Its metaphoric nature works in expanding the breadth and depth of consciousness. To illustrate the point, Gilbert provides the following: "I am a river. What is its source?" (40) In this example, both "river" and "source" are metaphors. Yet "source" is dependent on "river". This dependence, this stacking of one metaphor upon the next, "impels a further journey within the imaginative landscape." (40) Furthermore, *thoughtspace* is inhabited by imagery, mentalese (the meta-language that we think in that precedes natural language), and, in certain instances, distinct poetic language from the outside. The uniqueness of this psychic material within the metaphoric mind may or may not provide meaning. However, it is always there and always visible within consciousness.

To clarify the concept of *thoughtspace* Gilbert provides an analogy using Ovid's creation myth from Metamorphoses. From Ovid:

> Before the seas and lands began to be,
> before the sky had mantled everything,
> then all of nature's face was featureless—
> what men called chaos: undigested mass
> of crude, confused, and scrumbled elements,
> a heap of seeds that clashed, of things mismatched. (48)

Prior to a god bringing order to the elements of the universe, nature was a chaotic, "featureless" mess. Nothing was in a discernible, cohesive order; everything was "crude, confused, and scrumbled." While what existed as base materials in chaos was no different from that which would ultimately be given structure, it was not recognizable nor useable. Only after a god unravelled "these things from their blind heap, assigning each its place" (49) did the universe show its structured form.

Likewise, *thoughtspace*, and the imagery and mentalese therein, are analogous to Ovid's chaotic universe before a god's intervention. Just as the universe required a god to bring order, so does thoughtspace require that "the poet orders psychic material, in forms of insight and revelation" (p 50). Gilbert, quoting Gary Snyder, argues that the poet's task is "a matter of discovering the grain of things" (50), interpreting the grain into language, and structuring authentic poetry from the discordant imagery and mentalese of *thoughtspace*.

The exploration of *thoughtspace* and the ability to successfully and authentically articulate its 'grain of things' leads to poems that change minds and expand understanding. Inherent within good poetry is a quality Gilbert labels philopoetic volition. A combination of philosophy and poetry, philopoetics is the personally philosophic content of the poem. While philosophical

in nature, it is not limited to a rational, logical order. Instead, even if the poem's meaning cannot be explicitly stated, its philopoetic volition exists "in the inseparable weave between image, rhythm and story" (71). Further, it is inherently a part of the poet's personal voice. While derivative of the *thoughtspace* of the individual author, philopoetic volition is also social in nature. The Japanese poet Kaneko Tohta, whose viewpoint Gilbert discusses, sees it as developing a personal philosophy or *shisō*, which is fundamental to a poet acquiring a world view. This view, only to be achieved through freedom of thought, can lead the poet into society, and enable him/ her to relevantly provide social critiques.

However, freedom of thought, the ability to independently explore *thoughtspace*, is not enough to ensure a creative process which results in authentic poetry. More and more, we are living in an age of surveillance. With security cameras increasing in number and an ability to widely share pictures or videos with a tap on our phones, Gilbert compares our modern world to a panopticon: a circular prison in which the prisoners could always be observed. Studies have shown that surveillance impedes our ability to freely think. In fact, even when one is "in the presence of possible surveillance, we subconsciously adapt our behaviour, especially our thoughts: self-censoring based on a subliminal knowing that we might be being watched." (94) To be free in our creativity requires a freedom from the judgement of others. Without a place to go in which we are safe to explore and share novel thoughts, the pressure of conformity will hinder our ability to create. Even so, Gilbert states that "New language is animate, alive, risking edges and crossing borderlines. There are no 'safe' poems or 'pretty' haiku. Authenticity requires more of us." (111) But how, in a world of surveillance, can poets proceed towards attaining such authenticity in their work?

In addressing this question, Gilbert changes tactics. He moves from the theoretical perspective of his discussions on consciousness, mind, and *thoughtspace*, to an experiential perspective in which

he seeks feedback from various poets who have looked for, and found, places in which they could safely break free of conventions. Throughout history, humans have sought physical spaces as places of sanctuary — places in which we know we are safe to explore, be honest, and be vulnerable. Psychologically, such spaces can be thought of, using Jung's term, as *temenos*. *Temenos* is a "protected space of privacy wherein dimensions of self-knowing are given permission to be." (109) To be able to share new language and be true to ourselves, we need that safe space in which a transition from private to public is possible. As much as we seek authenticity privately through the "intelligence of the heart . . . we also desire authentic community." (135) Gilbert presents the idea of anarchic sanctuaries as places in which poets can reside freely and outside the normative expectations of society. The poets Gilbert interviewed provide several examples of anarchic sanctuaries, both from their own personal experiences and from instances in history. The sanctuaries they listed include secret societies, masks, burlesque, masquerade, cosplay, literary groups based on the Paris of the 1920s, non-human collaborators, virtual gaming, and raves. For illustrative purposes, two anarchic sanctuaries, online forums and the Argentine Tango, will be examined.

Mr. M Haller, in his interview by Gilbert, discusses the effectiveness of online forums as anarchic sanctuaries. Online, one enjoys the benefits of anonymity. Posing behind an avatar, these virtual spaces enable individuals to overcome their inhibitions. Despite the physical distance between members of the forum, or perhaps because of it, there was "a loosening of inhibitions that lead to a kind of shared intimacy that created very strong personal connections." (115) Haller speaks of good friends he has had for years but only knows online. He, in fact, has reservations about meeting them, afraid that "it might even ruin some of the magic to meet in person." (116) Typically, people are drawn to groups within social media that host individuals with shared interests.

(Haller enjoys forums with other writers.) The anarchic sanctuary provided by the internet allows like-minded individuals to explore their similar interests in far greater depth and detail than would discussions in real life with people who do not have the same passions. These common interests encourage the transition of the new ideas, language, or insight mined in *thoughtspace* from the private to the public domain.

At the other end of the sanctuary spectrum is the Argentine Tango. The poet Mr. Pablo H discusses how his experience with the social dance provided him a form of anarchic sanctuary. He describes the improvisational nature of the Tango and the non-verbal communication between the partners. Yet even more impressive is the fact that this communication sometimes occurs between people who have never met. At a *milonga* (tango event) you can enter the room and "ask someone to dance without a word, just eye contact and a nod called *el cabeco* and then dance with a complete stranger . . . and not even know the person's name or anything about them." (126) Despite the physical proximity between the dancers, the heat, the sweat, and the pulse of the music, the activity is still almost completely anonymous.

Although there are obvious differences between an online forum and the Argentine Tango (virtual vs. physical, written vs. non-verbal, distant vs. close) there are also remarkable similarities between them. In both scenarios the poets articulated strong senses of privacy, anonymity, and the freedom that's inherent in engaging a stranger. Mr. Pablo H put it best in saying "Tango is escapist, writing is escapist, and in general the anarchic sanctuary is an escape from the limits of the banal and the socially acceptable." (127) Both of these anarchic sanctuaries fulfill Gilbert's requirement for the freedom from convention that may lead to authentic creativity.

Having outlined the concepts of *thoughtspace* and anarchic sanctuaries, Gilbert returns to *thoughtspace* and examines its

relationship to haiku. In the final section of the book, Gilbert examines 216 haiku through the lens of the 36 qualities found in the seven properties of *thoughtspace*. His selection emphasizes poems that maintain the authenticity inherent in the freedom of thought prior to the restrictions imposed by cultural norms. Gilbert contends that "Excellent haiku enhance the mysterious space between living and dreaming." (142) The selected poems, in synch with his thinking on haiku found in *The Disjunctive Dragonfly* (Gilbert, 2013), include varying degrees of disjunction and reader resistance. These poems are their own experience, defy or a least limit explanation, and seek to deliver authentic expression. Here, haiku reflecting two of the qualities of *thoughtspace*, novel worlds and alternativity, will be considered.

As one of the 36 qualities of thoughtspace, Gilbert describes novel worlds as places that "challenge rules of physical reality" (149) and "reveal how imaginative modes that break with conventional thought — in language, image or story — not only surprise, but may inspire revolutions in how a 'world' is defined, or comes into existence." (149) Through philopoetics that utilize new language and thoughts, novel worlds challenge conventions and seek to construct the impossible. The following haiku by Peter Yovu is an example of this quality:

a blue coffin one nail escapes the solar system

This haiku plays "with violent semantic and epistemic shifts, which throw us out of habitual consciousness." (150) Within the context of the solar system, the "blue coffin" can be read as a dead Earth. It is a transformational look at a world that perhaps reflects the future of our planet. The uniqueness of Yovu's haiku continues in the activity of the nail. A nail is an object whose purpose is to bind or hold things together. That such an object is what "escapes" is ironic and enhances the novel aspect of the world Yovu has created.

Another example of this quality comes in a haiku by Chen-ou Liu:

im-mi-grant . . .
the way English tastes
on my tongue

Liu's poem demonstrates a novel world that results from the process of immigration. His haiku is "concrete in style, eloquently posing a synæsthetic, cultural otherness (presenting disfluency literally) in his first line utterance." (150) The manner in which "immigrant" is broken between syllables demonstrates the challenges immigrants face, including learning languages, in their new world.

The second quality of *thoughtspace* to be examined is alternativity. Alternativity may include any of the following:

1) cognitive estrangement
2) paradox
3) futurism
4) time-space subversion
5) speculative mythopoesis. (185)

The poems Gilbert selects here as examples all utilize cognitive estrangement. Cognitive estrangement refers to the reader's awareness that what is contained within the poem does not reflect the world as it is commonly known. Instead it presents "a cosmos whose alternative phenomena, through the displacement of empirical and materialist views, impels a reconsideration of habitual, scientifically-based perspectives." (185) Consider the following haiku by Fay Aoyagi:

white breath
my shadow confesses
a crime

That it is the shadow, not the narrator herself, which "confesses a crime", raises many questions. What sort of crime could a shadow commit? Why is it deciding to confess? How does the shadow's guilt implicate the narrator? Gilbert notes that "the alternate-physics of a shadow confessing a crime offers an abundance of cognitive estrangement." (186) While the reader recognizes that the landscape the poem places them in is not, in a traditional sense, real, they accept the haiku as it is presented and plunge into the implications of its imaginative space.

Similarly, the following one-line haiku by Jim Kacian uses alternativity:

pain fading the days back to wilderness

The impact of this poem depends upon where the reader reads the break. A reading of "pain / fading the days back to wilderness" implies that "pain (impossibly) 'fades days' 'back to wilderness' — evocative of the wilds of mind, and loss of memory." (186) On the other hand, a reading of "pain fading / the days back to wilderness" suggests something more benign. Experiencing less pain, perhaps the narrator is able to return to the wilderness and activities outside.In either case, Kacian's haiku utilizes cognitive estrangement in the manner in which pain takes an active role in altering the narrator's experience.

Richard Gilbert's *Poetry as Consciousness* is a thought-provoking, rewarding book that probes the mind as a creative space. Highlighting the imaginative landscape of *thoughtspace*, the freedom from social conventions that anarchic sanctuaries provide, and *thoughtspace* again but in its relationship to haiku, Gilbert has opened a path towards understanding creativity, and, potentially, the ability to generate more authentic poems. *Poetry as Consciousness* is required reading for every serious poet or student of haiku.

Contextualization Icebergs:

A Review of *On Haiku*

Michael Dylan Welch

Sato, Hiroaki. *On Haiku*. New York: New Directions Publishing, 2018. 306 pages. 5.25" by 8". ISBN 978-0-8112-2741-4. $19.95.

When I first heard about Hiroaki Sato's *On Haiku*, I imagined that this venerable commentator and translator was about to offer new thoughts on how to write haiku in English and perhaps explore this poetry's great flowering beyond Japan's borders. I presumed it would be new writing, and I eagerly anticipated what he might have to say. I was unsure how much he would share thoughts about Japanese haiku or haiku in English, or a mix of the two, or whether it would be descriptive in exploring what had been done in the genre, or prescriptive in advising students of haiku how to read and write this poetry in English. Except for advocating a one-line delivery of haiku, however, Sato is rarely prescriptive, and the actual book has turned out not to be what I first imagined. Instead, it's a notable collection of Sato's numerous essays relating to haiku, previously published over decades of observation and close consideration in various magazines, journals, books, and presentations — gifting readers with deep and reliable contextualization for varied haiku poems and poets at every turn.

The book's chapters include at least five essays from *Modern Haiku*, three from *Roadrunner*, and one each from *Lynx* and *Frogpond*, among other published sources or occasionally speeches or presentations. Consequently, I'd seen some of these essays before, but was immediately grateful to have them all in one place, where their cumulative effect underscores Sato's influence in the haiku genre — or serves as a reminder to those who weren't paying attention that they should have. For those who regularly read the established haiku journals, perhaps it's more significant to find essays in this book (at least half of them) that did not originally appear in those journals (a practice that more writing about haiku might emulate, so we're not just preaching to the choir). The acknowledgments at the start indicate most of the sources, suggesting that at least the book's last two essays are previously unpublished (one may also wonder what other haiku-related essays were omitted). It is useful to see the genesis of these essays, but it could also have been useful to have dates for each essay and more specific indications if any had been revised for the book—and yet they are typically timeless enough that the dates might have been valuable to only a few readers. I also note that each essay is left to stand on its own, and recall seeing only one footnote reference (172) pointing from one essay to another in the book, and one parenthetical reference (270) with a similar purpose.

All told, the book's "meandering discourse" is like Japanese *zuihitsu* essays that "follow the brush," offering remarkable range in revealing 20th-century haiku in Japan, from the tidepools of haiku basics to deep-sea dives into the work of prominent and sometimes controversial figures (for example, how many Westerners know that Japanese haiku poets have been arrested and imprisoned for their haiku?). We see essays on free-rhythm haiku, war haiku, haiku by a hooker, explorations of *gendai* (modern) haiku, haiku and Zen, women and haiku, and near the end, a brief consideration of haibun. Almost every chapter includes copious translations, each

including the original Japanese, the romaji, and Sato's one-line rendition, leaning towards a literal presentation of images, even if sometimes cryptically (that is, with sometimes fractured syntax, no punctuation, and not always with easily parsed grammar). Along the way, we find in Sato's prose a unique and perhaps underappreciated perspective that straddles the worlds of English-language poetics (not just haiku) and modern Japanese literature (again, not just haiku). Sato has been a contextualizing conduit for an awareness of contemporary Japanese haiku practices for a long time, lifting the curtain on recent decades of haiku activity in Japan, often giving Western haiku poets their first view — and authoritative revisits — into the details of 20th-century Japanese haiku, and older haiku as well. This book celebrates that gift.

One feels depths of erudition and knowledge when reading the essays collected in *On Haiku*. And yet the book has fleeting moments of paucity, such as a reference to Harold Henderson's *Bamboo Broom* influencing Robert Spiess's haiku, where Sato says "I haven't seen *The Bamboo Broom* [published in 1934] . . . but it may well have been the direct predecessor of his 1958 book, *An Introduction to Haiku*" (260–270). The earlier book is readily available in leading libraries and was indeed directly expanded for the 1958 publication, as the latter book announces in the very first sentence of its preface. In *On Haiku*'s first essay, Sato mentions in passing, "I do not have all of Blyth's four-volume *Haiku*" (15), which may no longer be true, but it seems to be quite an admission in reference to such seminal books on haiku literature published in English, especially for someone like Sato (either that or it indicates that such books are not seminal for Sato, who can readily go directly to Japanese source texts). Another example is a 1999 essay, in which he asks "Are one-line haiku possible in English? The answer must be yes" (73). This is an admitted hobby horse of Sato's, so when he goes on to mention the one-line haiku of Janice M. Bostok and Chris Gordon, one wonders why he does not mention Marlene

Mountain, the doyenne of one-line haiku in English. These are instances of choices that set some of Sato's essays apart from more academic exposition, and yet come with a sense of surefootedness. I do not mean to suggest that Sato isn't thorough — in fact, the consistent sense one gets from the majority of these essays is of their fullness, and that each essay is like an iceberg, where we see only the top ten percent of the subject, or just a small fraction of Sato's knowledge of it. Indeed, when Sato chooses not to shore up that one essay with a check of *The Bamboo Broom*, his implication is that the detail does not matter. He's ultimately right, especially when the knowledge and contextualization throughout the rest of the book, from both a Western and Japanese literary perspective, is so dazzling. The general lack of citations and footnotes underscores his aim at more of a lay audience than an academic one, yet I doubt that an academic reader would blink twice at the great majority of Sato's descriptions of history or literary significance, such is his voice of authority, disguised as it sometimes is by self-effacing casualness.

This is a book more likely to inform than to convince, but Sato's goal is seldom to convince. What we get from *On Haiku* is a confident aloofness, an awareness that its author knows his subject deeply, yet is unshy in revealing the occasional gaps in his knowledge. He writes from where he is and does not always find it necessary to fill in every last gap. This conversational tone makes for a refreshing dismantling of pretense even while he dazzles. In the book's preface, in which he briefly traces his path to haiku, including being president of the Haiku Society of America for three years, he notes his skepticism of haiku in English and his preference for translating (and writing) haiku in a single line "because most Japanese writers . . . treat it as a one-line form" (vii). From there, he launches readers into a smorgasbord of haiku icebergs, each essay giving much yet hinting at more.

The following are glosses on each of *On Haiku*'s nineteen essays.

Haiku Talk: From Bashō to J. D. Salinger

This is one of the book's few essays for which a date is provided — 1994. It offers a high-level view of haiku and some of its concerns, such as form and content, plus its influence in the West. He notes that "Haiku has completely become a part of American life" (3), tracing its origins from the hokku or starting verse of renga, where seasonal reference was paramount, and where the verse acted as a salutation. He also talks of translator R. H. Blyth, and of Salinger's influence on haiku, posing the question that "You might hazard that a sizable portion of American people who turned to haiku in the last three decades did so on account of Blyth via Salinger" (14–15).

What Is Haiku? Serious and Playful Aspects

This chapter offers an exploration of haiku's Confucian, Taoist, and Buddhist background in Japan and how that informs the so-called seriousness and playful inventiveness of haiku. Sato describes Bashō as "a secular seeker of the Way" (23) and contrasts the supposed seriousness of haiku's religious contexts with the playfulness and wordplay that Bashō advocated, taking haiku out of the imperial court and into everyman's tavern or tatami room, even while retaining erudition. Haiku tradition is described as more of a social act than a literary one, with social aspects lending wit and games of allusion to the mix — being "'playful' in a sophisticated way" (36).

Haiku and Zen: Association and Dissociation

Following on the religious context discussed in the preceding chapter, this essay uncovers the role of Zen in haiku tradition. While haiku has been excessively associated with Zen (thanks chiefly to R. H. Blyth), Sato does not take a counter stance, but merely presents the subject as demonstrated by haiku

practitioners. The essay is a meander through poems and poets who may or may not have been following the way of Zen with their haiku. He notes along the way that "you might say that Zen makes it easy to feign facile profundity" (46).

Hearn, Bickerton, Hubbell: Translation and Definition

Here we find a defense of Sato's hobby horse, the one-line presentation of haiku translations, with a hint of one-line haiku in English. This essay is dated 1999. Sato notes, somewhat in lament, that "With the majority of translators casting their translations in three lines, the view has taken hold that haiku is a three-line poem" (70), and adds that "the awareness that haiku is regarded as a three-line poem in the West seems to generate a sense of unease among the Japanese when translated in one line" (72). He does not say that three-line translations are "wrong," but makes a case for the monostich.

White Quacks and Whale Meat: Bashō's Kasen, "The Sea Darkens"

While much of Sato's cogitations on Japanese haiku focus on contemporary writing, this essay turns its attention to Bashō, specifically a *kasen* renga written in 1684, offering a complete verse-by-verse explication, including seasonal references, linkages, allusions, and contexts. This essay was first published in Jane Reichhold's *Lynx* journal for collaborative writing in Japanese forms. We see into the life of the entire renga, and also into the minds of its creators.

Renga and Assassination: The Cultured Warlord Akechi Mitsuhide

This essay looks even farther back in history, to 1582, and provides an account of "Atago Hyakuin," a 100-verse renga led by Mitsuhide, which may or may not have foretold his treasonous

attack on his own warlord master, Nobunaga. It was written just before a surprise assault. Controversy abounds regarding Mitsuhide's hokku, which was altered after its composition to give it a different meaning, as if to hide or mute treasonous intent. The essay also explores the complexities of renga composition, emphasizing that even warlords were well-versed in the art of renga writing. This chapter gives contextual intensity to what Sato describes as "the only renga of its kind in the history of Japanese literature" (109). Imagine if Churchill, Eisenhower, and all their generals were to write poetry together on the eve of the Normandy invasion.

Issa and Hokusai

This essay, from *Modern Haiku*, explores how Issa's use of exaggerated perspectives echoes the painterly exaggeration of Hokusai, sharing numerous example verses by Issa. Sato draws out comparisons beyond just a common depiction of Mt. Fuji, noting that Issa "is thought to be the first haikai poet to record his day-to-day feelings" (112).

From Wooden Clogs to the Swimsuit: Women in Haikai and Haiku

Here we have a selective overview of women in haikai and haiku, starting with a definition of "haikai spirit," stating that "Any haikai person must be imbued with *fūryū, fūga*, or *fūkyō*" (125). Fūryū is described as wind flow, or "a poetic turn of mind," fūga as elegance and refinement, and fūkyō as a sort of "poetic dementia." The chapter focuses mostly on fūkyō, exploring numerous examples of "eccentric" haikai women over a couple of centuries, those with a sort of wild creativity, including Chiyojo (also known as Chiyo-ni), that set them apart — making this one of the book's more fascinating chapters. Following this comes a selection of modern haiku poets, starting with Hisajo Sugita,

born in 1890, Takako Hashimoto, born nine years later, and Madoka Mayazumi, born in the later 20th century (I present names here in the Western order, surnames last, although Sato's book does not, except for his own name).

The Haiku Reformer Shiki: How Important Is His Haiku?

We find an assessment here of Shiki's worth not as a haiku reformer but as a poet, noting how extremely prolific he was (some 24,000 haiku in a greatly shortened life), yet proposing that, "For all his importance, Shiki was a mediocre haiku poet" (149). But is it fair to judge Shiki on his success rate, purely by percentages, or by the absolute number of excellent haiku? It can be argued that Shiki used a more prolific process to reach a certain number of good haiku, as if throwing more at the wall to see what might stick. If Shiki was aware that many of his haiku were weak, it would seem that the *process* should not be blamed for producing mostly weaker haiku — it was just a different way, through *shasei*, of getting to at least some good haiku. Sato acknowledges exactly this when he quotes Shiki from his book, *Outline of Haikai*, published in 1895: "It is even harder to get haiku of highest beauty by copying actual scenes [Shiki's *shasei* technique, or sketching from life], but it is easier to get what may be termed second-rate [by doing so]" (151). Sato also notes, however, that "the *shasei* approach Shiki adopted couldn't be the sole reason he didn't turn out many good haiku" (152), adding that Shiki did not "expect much from haiku" (152). Of additional interest in this chapter is a discussion of Shiki's controversial cockscomb poem.

The "Gun-Smoke" Haiku Poet Hasegawa Sosei

From the preceding chapter on Shiki we move to a discussion of war-related haiku, which Shiki advocated. Shiki himself

attempted to reach the war front, as a journalist, but the war ended just as he arrived. Nevertheless, many other haiku poets wrote about war, in Japan's Chinese, Korean, and Russian conflagrations early in the 20th century and especially during and after World War II. Questions of authenticity arose, too, regarding whether it was legitimate to write about war when one is not in the trenches oneself. Sato says that while "some haiku poets . . . believed that haiku ought to describe what the writer actually saw . . . it became fashionable to write haiku imagining what might be happening on faraway battlefields" (166). This chapter discusses the 1940 Kyōdai Haiku Incident, where at least fifteen haiku poets of the Newly Rising Haiku movement were arrested for harboring "dangerous thought" in their haiku (the unconventional forms of which were also seen as not being traditional enough). The chapter concludes with "gun-smoke" haiku written in the trenches, especially those by Sosei Hasegawa. Here is one example: "Facedown on snow an enemy corpse coppers scattered" (173).

From the 2.26 Incident to the Atomic Bombs: Haiku During the Asia-Pacific War

A further exploration of war haiku extends to this chapter, perhaps the book's most fascinating, also its longest. It is filled with historical details such as when battles occurred, how many air raids occurred, and when, how many bombers were involved, and how many homes were destroyed, giving a more human perspective to Japan's devastation in World War II (this sort of knowledge was surely part of Sato's early life, having been born in Taiwan in 1942, fleeing to Japan immediately after the war, and going to college at Doshisha University in Kyoto, graduating in 1967). These details provide context for the many poems presented. It's a difficult chapter, outlining a selection of haiku (and a few tanka) written about war, including by soldiers

and commanders. This survey details the persecution of Newly Rising Haiku movement poets, especially Sanki Saitō and other key figures (if I come from this book wanting to read more work by any one poet, it would be Sanki Saitō). Particularly compelling is the section on Hakusen Watanabe (196), who was arrested for his war haiku (including his famous "War was standing at the hall's end" poem). The chapter concludes by featuring poems written by poets in the army, not just poets critical of the war, the most wrenching of which is the section on Vice Admiral Matome Ugaki, who led a suicide raid *after* hearing of Japan's surrender (202–203).

"Haiku Poet Called a Hooker": Suzuki Shizuko

A frank portrayal of the hooker haiku of Shizuko Suzuki, presenting not just her overtly sexual haiku but also dark poems on subjects such as methamphetamines, suicide, and her relationships with American occupation servicemen after World War II, where she was one of the tens of thousand of "comfort women" that catered to occupation forces. This chapter offers a startling view into postwar haiku, exploding the too-common myth of haiku as tame nature poetry.

"Gendai Haiku": What Is It?

This chapter purports to answer the question of what "gendai" (modern) haiku is, but partially just flirts with the answer — ultimately because the term itself is so general that it has been misunderstood in Western haiku circles. Sato notes that the term "is defined by time period rather than by content or approach" (219), even while most Western haiku poets seem to perceive "gendai" in terms of content, or as being experimental or avant-garde. Along the way, this chapter gives examples from various eras of haiku over the last century and distinguishes

between the avant-garde and the merely "modern." The chapter takes no stance for or against any of it. Sato says of Japanese haiku poets, "haiku writers are a contentious lot" (221), and the same seems eminently true of haiku writers in English (I recall, maybe twenty years ago, well-known formalist poet Annie Finch saying in an online poetry forum that "Haiku poets are touchy"). Particularly useful is a section on avant-garde haiku, called *zen'ei* in Japanese, and its discussion of the vanguard work of Shigenobu Takayanagi, Tōta Kaneko, and others. Sato contrasts the avant-garde as distinct from both "traditional" *and* "nontraditional" haiku, referring to "the great divergence from the standard mode of haiku that took place after Shiki's death" (227).

Mitsuhashi Takajo: Some Further Explication

This essay offers a sampler survey of haiku by three of Japan's "Four T's," four outstanding contemporary women haiku poets: Takajo Mitsuhashi, Teijo Nakamura, Tatsuko Hoshino, and Takako Hashimoto, but mostly Takajo (Takako is not discussed, having already been presented in the "From Wooden Clogs to the Swimsuit: Women in Haikai and Haiku" chapter, which this essay might easily have been grouped with). We are thus given a continued view into haiku by women — not so much into topics that are restrictively feminine, but poems of varying subject matter by these prominent women haiku poets. Here's one selection from Takajo: "Red spider lilies bloom I think of a battlefield," after which Sato notes that "Red spider lilies are associated with death in Japan" (236).

Mishima Yukio and Hatano Sōha

Yukio Mishima made a name for himself in many ways throughout his life, mostly through theater, but especially in 1970 by means of a dramatic public disembowelment and decapitation. Because

of his notoriety, his haiku had been saved, though relatively few. Sato presents a selection of them here, in the context of the poet's sensationalist belief (according to Donald Ritchie) that "life was but a stage" (240). These poems are paired with selections by Sōha Hatano, who Mishima had written about at length.

Outré Haiku of Katō Ikuya

Referred to as an "anti-traditionalist," Ikuya Katō made "heavy use of puns and allusions" and produced poems of "incomprehension" (247) that are "deliberately abstruse," pursuing the "'meaninglessness' in haiku" (252). Perhaps it is no wonder, then, that this essay on "outré" haiku (like the essays before and after this) appeared in *Roadrunner*, Scott Metz's erstwhile online journal for avant-garde haiku in English that has privileged the opaque. This chapter digs into extreme leaps of logic necessary to even begin understanding this poet's work, ultimately ending with the question, "are such extended, extraneous interpretations warranted?" (254).

In the Cancer Ward: Tada Chimako

This chapter offers a view into the haiku of Chimako Tada, a noted translator who took up haiku writing late in life when diagnosed with cancer. Each poem, from 160 published after the poet's death, may be seen in the context of that diagnosis, such as "Summer-thin: a little gaining the weight of death" (261). Here we encounter haiku as a sort of therapy, one of many stances by which to approach this poetry.

Receiving a Falconer's Haibun

This is perhaps the book's most personal essay, a glimpse into English-language haibun, in contrast with Japan, where haibun

is essentially no longer written — this chapter referring to the "last notable haibun in the modern period [in Japan]" most likely being a selection assembled in the book *New Haibun* by Kyoshi Takahama in 1933 (269). Sato distinguishes haibun from journal entries that include haiku. Accordingly, this chapter presents a haibun by Mary Ellen Rooney, contrasted with a journal entry (ending with a haiku) by Sōseki.

Through the Looking Glass

Another more personal essay, this one is listed as being "for Mary Jo Bang" (who provides a back-cover blurb). It discusses some of the challenges of translation — as if the translated poem is seen through a looking glass, that is, at best a mirror of the source rather than ever being the source itself. Perhaps this chapter serves as an apology for whatever ends a translator can never reach, yet defends the translator, perhaps subconsciously, for grappling with difficult and sometimes impossible choices. In *The Book of Tea*, Kakuzo Okakura wrote that "Translation is always a treason, and . . . can at its best be only the reverse side of a brocade." Hiroaki Sato embraces this treason, for it is the only way Westerners can see the fabric of Japanese literature in many of its riches.

Rounding out *On Haiku* is a two-page glossary of terms, where "waka" is not listed and the definition for "haiku" mentions *kigo* (season words) but not *kireji* (cutting words). Here I was informed that the name of the 36-verse "kasen" renga form was "derived from the 36 poets designated as poetic saints by the poet Fujiwara no Kintō (966 – 1041)" (281) and, in the definition of *kireji*, startlingly, that "Bashō did not recognize any *kireji*" (282). Following this is an eleven-page glossary of names, with birth and death years and brief information on the significance of each person — a mix of

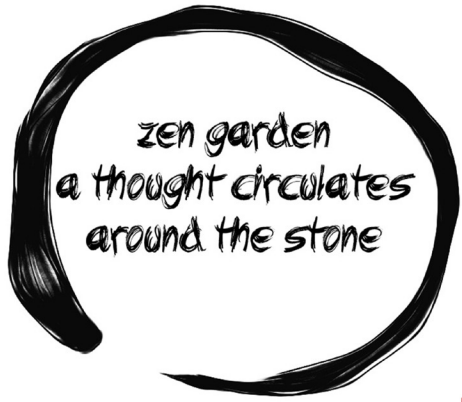
both Japanese and Western figures, limited to those mentioned in the book. I imagine both of these additions to be at the publisher's request, and they are useful resources in a single location, but what might have been of greater benefit, especially for any researcher, would have been a thorough listing of poets, themes, locations, eras, and other topics in an index. Because *On Haiku* ranges so widely, and in such a meandering way (though pleasing), an index is the one feature I most wish this book had included.

Woven into all the essays in *On Haiku* are occasional but sufficiently common references to the Haiku Society of America, the Haiku North America conference, Red Moon Press, the Haiku Foundation, and other artifacts of the North American haiku community, plus references to several key English-language haiku poets. A book such as this is likely to reach a wider audience (even beyond just poetry) than the usual haiku journals and organizations, so these references generate a sort of validation and promotion of the English-language haiku community, a recognition of its activity — even while Sato questions the HSA's definition of haiku (67). Sato's focus is clearly seated in Japanese haiku, whether modern or ancient (but mostly modern), and we may wonder if he might turn his pen to writing more systematically about haiku in English, with Japanese contextualization, instead of mostly the other way around (perhaps he could write that new book I imagined when I first heard about *On Haiku*, something to update his *One Hundred Frogs: From Renga to Haiku to English*, published by Weatherhill in 1983). At the very least, Sato has already published a book in Japanese about haiku in English, *Eigo Haiku: Aru Shikei no Hirogari* (*Haiku in English: A Poetic Form Expands*, Tokyo, Japan: Simul Press, 1987, a 250-page book), but it would be fascinating to see an English translation of that book — not to mention updates to cover the three decades since its publication.

Speaking of updates, as previously mentioned, some readers might have wanted this book's essays to be updated to reflect

developments and new understandings that have evolved in the decades since each piece first saw the light of day. That would have surely taken a tremendous amount of work for some essays, yet not have been necessary for others. Each essay serves as a snapshot of haiku studies at the time of its original publication, but readers might have been better served with updates where useful, or at least a clearer explanation of what appears to be a choice not to update all or most of the text. As it is, the book collects a remarkable set of essays, but it would have been beneficial for dates or publication information to be more clearly emphasized, either with each essay or in supplementary material — and in more detail, and more systematically, than the information provided in the acknowledgments. This possible insufficiency, or lost opportunity, pales in comparison to the value of what the book does provide, however.

There's also a sort of randomness to the topics in these essays (understandable given how they were produced over many years for a variety of journals or other purposes), and although they are partially grouped in a logical progression, such as putting together the chapters on war haiku or experimental haiku, one wonders what remains unspoken but within the author's capable experience, his encyclopedic reliability, whether about English-language haiku or Japanese haiku — or haiku elsewhere in the world. Among the many icebergs of haiku that Hiroaki Sato explores, we may wonder what remains below the surface. As readers we sense that Sato knows. To that end we might wish for a sequel to this book, whatever content it might explore, if only we could give the septuagenarian author another forty years.



zen garden
a thought circulates
around the stone

Haiga: Maria Tomczak

Juxta *Haiga*

Haiga are among of the most delightful offshoots of haiku, and it turns out that almost all of the great Japanese masters would occasionally add a drawing or sketch to their poems. Some haijin like **Yosa Buson** (1715–1783), were extraordinary painters, ranking among the finest in Japanese history. Others, like **Kobayashi Issa** (1763–1827), could barely paint at all, and yet his modest images can evoke as much feeling as the skillful haiga of Buson. It has been the personal feeling of the poet-artist that has counted the most, and the combination of haiku, calligraphy, and painting by a master using the same brushes, ink and paper unifies the different forms of artistic expression.

In the western world, haiga has lagged behind the broad acceptance of haiku, but over the past few decades more and more poets are adding visual images to their words. Unlike in Japan, however, instead of almost everything coming directly from the poet-artist, photographic and/or computer images are common, creating less personal feeling than most Japanese works.

Nevertheless, the selections for *Juxta* 5 show haiga by fine women poet-artists with a great range of observation and imagination. This demonstrates growing interest and increasing creativity in this multifaceted form of visual-verbal expression. Each of the following artist-poets has also been chosen for the Gallery of the Haiku Foundation, where you will find further examples of their work (*https://www.thehaikufoundation.org/category/video_archive/thf-galleries/*).

All but one of the poem-paintings in this issue were published during the past 15 years, but an evocative haiga by **Ann Atwood** (p. 7) was created several generations earlier. She was known for her photo books, and many of her images could stand alone as fine photographs, but one in particular is more tantalizing in its combination of words and image:

Ballet

Gull with the starry prints
do you stand here and watch
these ballets in the sand?

From *haiku: the mood of earth* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1971)

One feature of this poem is that instead of 5-7-5 syllables, it has 6-6-6, suggesting more of an evenly-patterned feeling than most haiku. Similarly, the image is primarily symmetrical, with a tall form in the center, and of 3 and 2 smaller forms to the sides. In Japan, the image would probably have been given more empty space to one side or the other, but here the irregularity of the forms give the work its own sense of life.

Moving 33 years forward in time, a haiga by **Pamela A. Babusci** (p. 35) from 2004 utilizes the Sino-Japanese character for "moon," originally a picture of the crescent moon but later "somewhat squared off (月). In this haiga, the main image is both writing and painting; the bending of the vertical in the middle of the composition nicely creates space for the poem, signature, date, and a round seal. We can note the important role this touch of red plays in terms of shape, placement, and color.

moonbathing
Buddha
&
i

Marlene Mountain was one of the most active, innovative, lively, and sometimes controversial poets of her time. Her haiga were featured in *Juxta* 4, where some of her wide range of styles and techniques were shown. Here (p. 59), a black-and-white computer graphic image from 2005 adds a further range of feeling to her haiku:

on my own I created a day I got through

Utilizing her expertise in silver-plate etchings with *chine collé*, **Ellen Peckham** has been able to create haiga with a depth of visual expression. Even when working basically with a modest palette of black and grey tonalities, as here (p. 77), her complex composition maintains a primarily unity of strong major areas of black with more dilute areas of black and grey. To balance this complexity, her haiku is a 3-5-3 expression of the values of an artist.

"real" work calls
but watching rain fall
matters more

The use of one's own calligraphy is a feature of the haiga of **Beth McFarland** (p. 89). In her case, the large size of the writing gives it at least equal visual importance with the haiku, as in a work from 2012:

May green
conjuring
meaning

This laconic poem in lines of 2-3-2, is buttressed by the word "conjuring," with all of its magical overtones. Visually, the seven leaves echo the seven syllables of the haiku, while a red seal helps to punctuate the total composition. The painting might be considered too slight without the poem, and the poem too theoretical without the painting, but here, the words and image are truly equal partners.

Among a number of haiku poets who use digitally altered photography for many of their haiga (perhaps better called photo haiku), **Diane Mayr** shows a good deal of variety in her subject-matter, among which living creatures are frequent. One of the most interesting has a rooster with a bright red caruncle (p. 101): the poem might at first seem unexpected, but makes a nice comparative connection.

sudden silence
. . . the boss's unexpected
return

Watching a rooster prance around a yard, his pomposity can indeed suggest a boss; or at least a creature who would like to be seen as a boss.

finch cage
too small for me
to hide in

With her expertise in ink-painting, **Lidia Rozmus** is able to create a open-ended cage easily, with one central space filled in—but what is this? A finch? A birdhouse? An abstraction that suggests closure or safety? Or is it the poet herself, trying to hide in the middle of her art, despite its small size? (p. 111)

Utilizing digital elements to help transform both her watercolors and her digital elements, **Debbie Strange** (p. 121) is able to create a number of focused images, many from everyday life. Some of her ink paintings are minimal but cogent, while her digital images tend to be more complex. In either case, there are always free areas that give the poems their own space while helping to completing meaningful visual structures.

curling leaves
you turn your face up
to the sun

One of the significant features of 20th century art is the development of the collage—which is used in poetry and music as well. Collage allows for elements of life from a certain time and place to maintain their original connotations while becoming part of a larger and more complex image. Here adding a feather to paper collage, **Jean LeBlanc**

(p. 135) strengthens the dual role that objects added to a painting can provide, along with a generous serving of ambiguity.

memory
almost every one
a bird flies through

Working in haiku, haiga, and tanka, **Sandi Pray**'s works show a strong central image accompanied by secondary elements. In one of her most informal works (p. 193), a bending branch of willow leaves is leaning towards and then past her poem:

wind music
a willow trembles
with sparrows

This work is a good example of what at first seems to be simple in fact having several layers of meaning. Even the way the poem is spaced allows us to see how there is a strong unity among poem, calligraphy, and visual image, so that in fact they become a single image.

Coming to much of Japanese culture originally via *manga* and *anime*, the Polish poet-artist **Maria Tomczak** (p. 225) has now delved deeply into haiku and haiga. She now serves as editor of the haiku journal *Wild Plum*, for which she has also created several cover images.

Zen garden
a thought circulates
around the stone

Like a Zen koan (meditation subject), the words are deceptively straightforward—but if the poet is meditating, is having the thought positive, or a distraction? Since it is circulating, what happens when the circle ends without meeting itself?

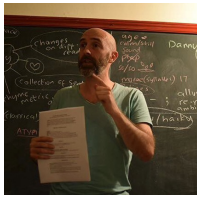
Among the variety of haiga created by **Carole Timmer**, a strongly composed photo haiku is created by opposing diagonals (p. 239), always a way to give a sense of movement to any image. The poem offers further potentials for meaning:

> Eighty-four laps of life
> since when is my mother
> shorter than me

Of the two figures seen here, is one the "mother," and the other the "me"? Or does it suggest vice-versa? In this image, the importance of the holding hands is created by the cropping of the photograph; nothing more needs to be said.

—Stephen Addiss

Juxta *Contributors*



Danny Blackwell is a British-born poet, who has lived in Spain, Argentina, Mexico, Portugal, and Japan. He has had his haiku published in numerous journals, and was the editor of *re:*Virals, a weekly feature on the Haiku Foundation website, from 2017-2019. In 2018 he published *Haiku from Iberia and Beyond,* an annotated anthology and history of haiku written in the languages of the Iberian peninsula and by Japanese *nisei* in Latin America. See more at www.monoyamono.com.

Dr. Randy M. Brooks is the Dean of the College of Arts & Sciences and Professor of English at Millikin University. He and his wife Shirley are publishers of Brooks Books, and co-edit *Mayfly* haiku magazine. His books include *School's Out*, and the *Art of Reading & Writing Haiku*. He has served on the editorial board for the Red Moon Anthologies since 2005.

Poet and paper artist Terry Ann Carter is the author of seven collections of lyric poetry and five haiku chapbooks. *Tokaido* (Red Moon Press, 2017) won a Touchstone Distinguished Book Award and *A Crazy Man Thinks He's Ernest in Paris* (Black Moss Press, 2011) was shortlisted for the Archibald Lampman Poetry Prize. She is a past president of Haiku Canada and founder of Ottawa Kado Haiku Group and Haiku Arbutus (Victoria, British Columbia).

Patricia Donegan, MA, is a poet, translator, professor of creative writing, Fulbright scholar, meditation teacher, student of haiku poet Seishi Yamaguchi, and an advocate of haiku as an awareness practice. Author of *Haiku Mind: 108 Poems to Cultivate Awareness & Open Your Heart* and *Haiku: Asian Arts for Creative Kids*; and (with co-translator Yoshie Ishibashi) *Love Haiku: Japanese Poems of Yearning, Passion & Remembrance* and *Chiyo-ni Woman Haiku Master*. She was "Honorary Curator, 2017 – 2018" of the American Haiku Archives.

Thomas Geyer (PhD, 2004; "habilitation", 2008; both LMU Munich) is Professor of Experimental Psychology, co-director of the international and interdisciplinary M.Sc. program in "Neuro-Cognitive Psychology". He is the head of "Cognitive Imaging" at the Department of Psychology (including the administrating the Department's new f/MRI research scanner) and leads the "MEMVIS" (MEMory in VIsual Search) research group at the Department of Psychology.

Franziska Günther studied English and German linguistics and literary studies at LMU Munich and holds a Ph.D. in linguistics. She has been doing research at the intersection area between linguistics, cognitive psychology and literary studies for years. She is keen on finding out more about how people read and understand haiku.

Jim Kacian is founder and president of The Haiku Foundation (2009), founder and owner of Red Moon Press (1993), editor-in-chief of *Haiku in English: The First Hundred Years*, the definitive work on the subject (W. W. Norton, 2013), and managing editor of *Juxtapositions*. His latest book of haiku and sequences is *after / image* (Red Moon Press, 2018).

Heinrich R. Liesefeld studied psychology at Saarland University, including stays abroad in Nancy and Shanghai. Ph.D. in 2012 within the scope of the IRTG Adaptive Minds hosted by Saarland University and the Chinese Academy of Sciences (Beijing). Now a lecturer and researcher in General and Experimental Psychology, LMU München. Current research focuses on distraction, priority computations, spatial selective attention and working memory, using psychophysics, electroencephalography, eye tracking, and computational modeling.

Herman J. Müller is Professor (Chair) of General & Experimental Psychology at Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität, München. In 2014, he received the Wilhelm Wundt Medal, and was made an Honorary Member, of the German Psychology Society (DGPs), for his contributions to fundamental psychological science. He has co-/authored over 300 original research articles published in international journals of *Experimental Psychology* and *Cognitive Neuroscience.*

Originally from Vancouver, Canada, KJMunro moved to the Yukon Territory in 1991. She is Membership Secretary for Haiku Canada & a member of the League of Canadian Poets. In 2014, she founded 'solstice haiku', a monthly haiku discussion group that she continues to facilitate. Since January 2018, she has curated a weekly blog feature for The Haiku Foundation, now managed with guest editors. Her debut poetry collection is *contractions* (Red Moon Press, 2019).

Stella Pierides, British poet and writer of Greek descent. She serves on the Board of Directors of The Haiku Foundation and is managing editor of its *Haikupedia* project. Her books include *Of This World* (Red Moon Press, 2017), and *Feeding the Doves* (Fruit Dove Press, 2012/13); and, as co-editor, *Even Paranoids Have Enemies* (Routledge, 1998).

Dave Read is a Canadian poet living in Calgary. He was a recipient of the 2016 Touchstone Individual Poem Award for haiku, as granted by The Haiku Foundation. His work has been published in many journals (including *Otata, Presence, Modern Haiku* and Haiku *Canada Review*), and anthologies (including A *New Resonance 11*). You can find his work at davereadpoetry.blogspot.ca.

In 2019 Alexis Rotella was named an honorary curator in the American Haiku Archives. She curated *Unsealing Our Secrets* (*MeToo Anthology*) which was awarded a 2018 Touchstone Book Award. Her latest books include *Scratches on the Moon* (Haibun) and *Dancing the Tarantella* (Tanka and Cherita).

Aubrie Cox Warner went to university to write a novel and came out writing haiku. Since then, she has been experimenting with the intersections of poetry and prose. Warner received her MFA in poetry from Temple University in 2018 and currently is pursuing her PhD in Rhetoric and Composition at the University of Louisville. Her creative work has appeared in journals such as *Modern Haiku*, *District Lit*, and *Little Fiction*.

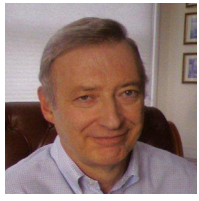
Michael Dylan Welch has been investigating haiku and related poetry since 1976. He founded Press Here in 1989, and edited *Woodnotes* from 1989 to 1997. Michael cofounded Haiku North America in 1991 and the American Haiku Archives in 1996; as well as the Tanka Society of America (2000), the Seabeck Haiku Getaway (2008), and National Haiku Writing Month (www.nahaiwrimo.com, 2010). He served for two years as poet laureate of Redmond, Washington. One of his latest books is *Becoming a Haiku Poet*. Find more on his website, www.graceguts.com.

Ruth Yarrow taught ecology and has been an activist for environmental, peace and justice issues for a half century. She has published over 700 haiku in the major journals, led haiku workshops, won and judged contests, edited journals and coordinated Haiku Northwest. Six books of her haiku have been published; her most recent, *Lit from Within,* received the Touchstone award. In 2017 she gave the keynote address at the Haiku North America conference. She finds that writing haiku helps her be aware of the richness of life.

Juxta *Staff*

The haiku and haiga of Stephen Addiss have appeared widely. Lately he is concentrating on ink-cuts (a form of paintilligraphy) and wood-fired teabowls. His books include *Cloud Calligraphy, A Haiku Menagerie, The Art of Zen, Haiga: Haiku-Painting, The Art of Chinese Calligraphy, Haiku People, A Haiku Garden, Haiku Humor, Tao Te Ching, Japanese Calligraphy, Haiku: An Anthology*, and *The Art of Haiku*.

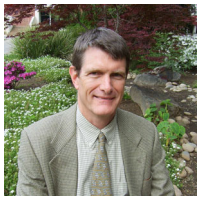
Dr. Randy M. Brooks is the Dean of the College of Arts & Sciences and Professor of English at Millikin University. He and his wife Shirley are publishers of Brooks Books, and co-edit *Mayfly* haiku magazine. His books include *School's Out*, and the *Art of Reading & Writing Haiku*. He has served on the editorial board for the Red Moon Anthologies since 2005.



Bill Cooper serves as president emeritus at the University of Richmond. He has authored books and articles in cognitive science, higher education, and international relations. His collections include *The Dance of Her Napkin* (2012), *overtones* (2014), *young osprey* (2015), *the fingertips of a glassblower* (2016), *b-flat blues* (2017), *a peep within* (2018), and *moon music* (2019).

Jim Kacian is founder and president of The Haiku Foundation (2009), founder and owner of Red Moon Press (1993), editor-in-chief of *Haiku in English: The First Hundred Years*, the definitive work on the subject (W. W. Norton, 2013), and managing editor of *Juxtapositions*. His latest book of haiku and sequences is *after / image* (Red Moon Press, 2018).

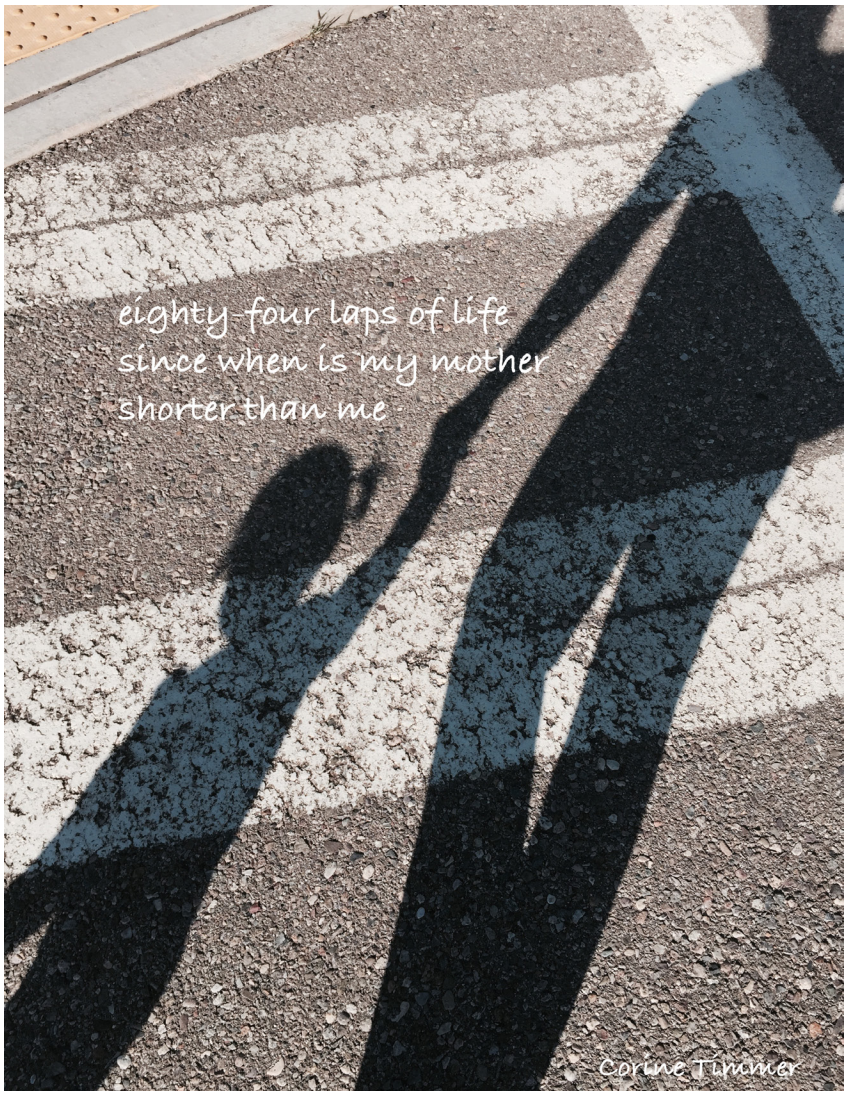
Shrikaanth Krishnamurthy is a psychiatrist from Bengaluru, India living in England. He writes in several languages. His *haikai* writings appear regularly in reputed journals and anthologies and have won prizes. Former editor of *Cattails* & *Blithe Spirit* (British Haiku Society), and former proofreader for journals *Cattails* and *Skylark*, he now edits and publishes *ephemerae*, a print journal for all things *haikai* and tanka.



Senior editor Peter McDonald is the Dean Emeritus of Library Services at California State University, Fresno. He is director of the Fresno Poets Association. An award-winning author, essayist and poet, he has decades of experience in journal publishing, having served as editor on numerous publications, including Cambridge University Press's inaugural E-journal Advisory Board.

Ce Rosenow is the co-author with Maurice Hamington of *Care Ethics and Poetry* and the co-editor with Bob Arnold of *The Next One Thousand Years: The Selected Poems of Cid Corman*. Her essays have appeared in various collections and journals including recent publications in *American Haiku: New Readings, African American Haiku: Cultural Visions*, and *The Journal of Ethnic American Literature*. She is the former president of the Haiku Society of America.

Dave Russo's haiku have appeared in *Frogpond*, *Modern Haiku*, *Acorn*, and other journals. He is included in the *New Resonance* 5 anthology from Red Moon Press. He organizes events for the North Carolina Haiku Society and is the web administrator for NCHS and The Haiku Foundation, and is a founding member of both.



eighty four laps of life
since when is my mother
shorter than me

Haiga: Corine Timmer

JUXTAFIVE features new articles by Aubrie Cox Warner ("Reparative Leanings of Haiku Aesthetics: Ways of Knowing and Reading in Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick's *A Dialogue on Love*"), Michael Dylan Welch ("Poems About Nothing: Learning Haiku from Antonio Porchia"), and the team of Stella Pierides, Thomas Geyer, Franziska Günther, Jim Kacian, Heinrich René Liesefeld, and Hermann J. Müller ("Knocking on the Doors of Perception: Further Inquiries Into Haiku and the Brain"); plus a special section on "Women Mentoring Women," featuring Terry Ann Carter ("The Role of Mentorship in the Life of a Poet"), Patricia Donegan ("Women Haiku Poets Who Influenced Me"), KJMunro ("Women . . . Writing . . . Haiku"), Alexis Rotella ("Alexis Rotella Remembers"), and Ruth Yarrow ("Haijin Calling Me In"); a bibliography of the works of selected Women Haiku Poets by Randy M. Brooks; reviews by Danny Blackwell (on Geoffrey Wilkinson"s *Going to the Pine*), Dave Read (on Richard Gilbert's *Poetry as Consciousness*) and Michael Dylan Welch (on Hiroaki Sato's *On Haiku*); plus full-color haiga by 13 women artists, with commentary by Stephen Addiss.

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