

東成謝寅



Under the Bashō

2017

a journal of English Language Haiku

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Under the Bashō is an organic journal that develops its content which will be displayed on the journal's website hosted at <http://underthebasho.com> as the year proceeds.

The opening date for submissions is March 1st remaining open until November 15th with a formal publication date of December 1st each year.

Mission Statement

Under the Bashō aspires to receive, appreciate, discuss and publish poems that have evolved from the genetic strands implanted by Bashō and other great Japanese masters. There appear to be five main stylistic groupings of these wonderful short form poems being written today exemplifying depth and concision; it is our desire to recognise what the marks of excellence in each approach are and to celebrate the differing ways that these are being achieved.

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|------------------------|---------------------------------------|
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| • Johannes S. H. Bjerg | Editor - modern haiku & personal best |
| • Seánan Forbes | Editor - one line haiku |
| • Hansha Teki | Editor - traditional haiku |
| | Webmaster & publisher |

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Autumn Landscape ca. 1780 by Yosa Buson (1716–1783)

Medium: Hanging scroll, color on satin

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Editorial by Johannes S. H. Bjerg

One-line haiku

(just a few words)

This is not going to be a one-line haiku school. I am no scholar and don't have the words (or mind) to express what it is that makes one-line haiku work or not, how various techniques work and such, but I will merely list a few points where the one-line haiku (might) differ from its three-line sister.

Time and space matters when we read, when we write. The time it takes us to see the poem on the paper (screen) and the time it takes to read it – and then the time it takes us to complete and digest what we have read. (It may be just a few milliseconds but they matter). Space is how a haiku is visually placed on a page (screen) - how we perceive it in relation to what is around it (on the page/screen).

In a three-line haiku we start at the top left and read to the bottom right - like we usually do in the West - which makes us (our mind, attention) move in two directions (from left to right and down). This works in conjunction with the most frequent structure of a three-line haiku: fragment + phrase (or phrase+fragment). We pin our attention to the first line and let a kind of gravity do the rest; a gravity that is our normal (Western) way of reading. It's easy for us to keep the two most frequently used building blocks apart and we usually pause (break) after the fragment (especially if that break is marked by a typographical sign symbolising a break/cut (- or ...)) and add the totality of the phrase next. We get an opening and a conclusion in an easily "digested" order.

In a one-line line haiku you're "forced" to read the whole thing in one go following your normal reading habit (how we usually read) – and perhaps you go back to read it again (and maybe thrice) because after all a one-line haiku just isn't a "normal" sentence. That's an "internal" (in the poem as well as in the reader) dynamic. Even if you say your haiku aloud (read them (to yourself)) you'll (probably) notice that you read them/say them differently depending on whether it's a three-line or one-line haiku. On a page (and in our minds) the two forms present themselves differently and that influences how we read them. Form influences perception. When we read top left to bottom right we perceive what we read differently than when we read a single line.

Perhaps you can say that a three-line haiku is a two-breath verse while the one-line haiku is a one breath verse/sentence.

All this means that *language* is the foremost tool of one-line haiku, language, syntax, ways of speaking, ways of thinking. Embedded in our language(s) are natural pauses, breaks, ways we normally verbalise our thoughts, our speaking patterns that are also reflected in our written language(s) – and mostly we speak in (depending on our language, of course) in measured beats (why the Japanese haiku became 5-7-5 on reflecting the Japanese speech pattern (Higginson)) and we can use these "mechanisms" as tools to have breaks and cuts in one-line haiku. (Of course, when writing in English for people for whom English is not the first language this can prove

to be a challenge; but challenges make us grow ;-) and often the unexpected, but interesting, arise from “the clash of languages” in the writer’s mind).

Over the years I have come in contact with a humongous list of theories and “rules” concerning haiku and the argument that these apply to one-line haiku as well as to three-line (normal) haiku, but the only one I myself have found any sense in adhering to is “katakoto” (don’t we just loooooove Japanese terms in the haiku world ;-) - and after all “rules” are merely techniques you can use or not, none of them are mandatory i.e. you cannot use them to determine what is haiku and what isn’t) which is “babytalk” i.e. the fragmented language of babies which describes very much the attitude to and the handling of language in one-line haiku. Normally we in the haiku world say that haiku is a condensed poetry. I would argue that one-line haiku is (or can be) a condensed version of an already condensed poetry; one that challenges the reader further – but maybe reflects our thought patterns more correctly. The idea that one-line haiku might be more true comparing to the Japanese way of writing haiku in one line is (mostly) nonsense. In Higginson’s *The Haiku Handbook* the correlation between Japanese spoken language and the 5-7-5 structure is nicely covered and explains why a Japanese reader automatically would add breaks/cuts when reading a haiku. Western languages have, as said, their own rhythm, their own innate periods of talk and pause – or pauses when spoken and THAT is our tool. Furthermore there are various techniques that can be fruitfully utilised when writing one-line haiku (as well as three-line ditto), all of which are splendidly explained in Richard Gilbert’s *Poems of Consciousness* and *The Disjunctive Dragonfly* (which elaborates on the chapter of the same name in “*Poems ...*”) and as Richard has done a splendid job there I will refrain from repeating them here. But get the book if you want to go deeper into the various techniques he has observed and described. It’s a gem! and indispensable if you want to add more tools to your writing be it in any kind of haiku.

Perhaps it’s easier to cast an indirect light on what one-line haiku is by saying a little about what it’s not (apophatically) (and remember, all this (text) is merely my subjective, personal thoughts and ruminations and represents (for all it’s shortcomings) only MY point(s) of view).

One-line haiku isn’t merely a three-line haiku written in one line with more or less emphasised breaks/cuts (the use of extra spaces between the sections of the haiku, the use of various typographical symbols to mark those breaks/cuts like : or :: or | or ~ which just makes the reading more difficult). Do not assume your readers are stupid and cannot by themselves recognise the break/cuts (if any) – and if your haiku has those clear breaks in it why not just write a three-line version?

a poem like

*in the marrow
a seasonal change
to consonants*

- Johannes S. H. Bjerg

could as well be

in the marrow a seasonal change to consonants

and still carry and jux the two images because of the natural (it's in the language)
break after *marrow*

but a poem like

*steamy mirror
no room for a desert
in yr face*

- Johannes S. H. Bjerg

(in my eyes) couldn't become

steamy mirror no room for a desert in yr face

I would have to take the “no” out and that would change the poem entirely.

One-line haiku seems to be a discipline of its own. What I have discovered is that it represents another way of thinking, perceiving (sensing), of “speaking” than a three-line haiku and often with more energy in it as it's even more condensed in thought and sensing than a three-line verse. It also represents a “remark in passing” ...

...

For the past 4 years I have been fortunate to be the editor for one-line haiku at UtB. Being an editor is a lesson in humility: you get sent the works of people and you have to treat it with respect knowing you (I) risk nothing but they expose themselves. And I try to respond to every submission respectfully and – if I don't find the material sent to me quite “does it” for me – I try to point the writer in the right direction by listing a number of web-sites and zines, journals and books that perhaps will help getting closer to the one-line form. And the age-old advise: read and write, read and write ... is always at the top of the list.

Recommended reading:

Books

- Jim Kacian: *where I left off* (handles/shows/names various types of one-line haiku)
- Hosai Ozaki: *Right under the big sky I don't wear a hat*
- Sumitako Kenshin: https://terebess.hu/english/haiku/sumitaku_kenshin.doc
- Richard Gilbert: *The Disjunctive Dragonfly* (Red Moon Press - 2013)

Web – selected:

- Marlene Mountain's web-site
- *Bones* journal of contemporary haiku
- Scott Metz's *is/let*
- *Roadrunner* journal roadrunnerjournal.com

Traditional Haiku

outside the library
a mother without a word
rounds up her readers

Peter Jastermsky

six jack-o-lanterns
lined up on the front porch steps
a night of her ghosts

Deborah P Kolodji

crowding the footpath
all the way to the temple
coral jasmine blooms

Shrikaanth Krishnamurthy

pajamas crumpled
on the end of my bed
winter rainfall

Melissa Patterson

treetops atwitter
a neighbor teaches his kids
how to play baseball

Agnes Eva Savich

twilit winds-
a slice of moon
with his cup of tea

Veerangana

Hokku

wild bee
...its orbit
shrinking

Helen Buckingham

white dawn –
a moth from the stars
to my snow peas

Lorin Ford

bee mantra –
lotus stems reaching
for the sun

Lorin Ford

mid flight –
a large stir of ripples
from a mayfly

Fractled

over and over...
the sound of paper fans
and mosquitoes

Fractled

sand cast...
the lugworm
lies low

Helen Buckingham

heat shimmer –
a covey of quail chicks
cross the bitumen

Lorin Ford

early dusk –
elms along the nature strip
at full twitter

Lorin Ford

rush hour –
a migration of sparrows
eclipses the sun

Fractled

fallen star
its connection...
to the tree

Fractled

snowfall -
on a branch, three crows
wing to wing

Eva Joan

empty air
above the lake ...
last iris

Marietta McGregor

falling leaves
in the shape of wind . . .
late autumn

Margherita Petriccione

a deer
becomes forest ...
turning leaves

Dave Read

frozen pond ...
turning away
from the sun

Mark Gilbert

humming
outside my kitchen ...
wisteria

Marietta McGregor

faint song
in the garden ...
windflowers

Marietta McGregor

a ditch
under the swings ...
summer's end

Dave Read

snow flurries . . .
the softened edges
of shadows

Debbie Strange

deep forest . . .
mushroom gills filter
rays of light

Debbie Strange

morning haze . . .
the bright blue flashes
of kestrels

Debbie Strange

drizzle . . .
the peacock's tail
pushes the moon

Veerangana

Modern Haiku

July rain . . .
the stray cat snuggles up
between my legs

Barnabas Ikéolúwa Adéléké

a girl learns to plait
using her granny's hair . . .
summer evening

Barnabas Ikéolúwa Adéléké

December cold . . .
with her mouth she sucks mucus
off her baby's nose

Barnabas Ikéolúwa Adéléké

long rains . . .
grandpa teaches the mailman
how to play ayò *

Barnabas Ikéolúwa Adéléké

low tide ...
children collect
sun and shells

Elisa Allo

urban tanning
deck chairs on the balconies
behind the geraniums

Elisa Allo

wind from the sea
a skirt on the rope
so twisted

Alexey Andreev

cigarette break
my thoughts dissipate
with the smoke

Debbi Antebi

early winter
a squirrel turns down
my croissant

Debbi Antebi

* ayò: a traditional mancala played by the Yoruba people in Nigeria

walking hand in hand
his shadow blends
into mine

Debbi Antebi

table for one
I sit on the floor
with my beagle

Debbi Antebi

asthma attack
a river full of
water lilies

Billy Antonio

early evening fog
the town begins
to flicker

Billy Antonio

alluvial fan
on a river bank
the ginkgo leaf

Hifsa Ashraf

autumn leaves
a sparrow's body
heavy in my palm

Debbi Antebi

falling snowflake
my daughter practices
her ballet

Billy Antonio

drifting clouds
my conversations
with father

Billy Antonio

abandoned refugees
around the barbed wire
wildflowers

Hifsa Ashraf

my parents leave
a silent house behind ...
memories rattle

Kizie Basu

temple steps ...
searching for slippers
lost in the pile

Kizie Basu

train ride ...
the moon at the window
my only constant

Kizie Basu

ebb and flow...
in my footprints
the sea

Kizie Basu

hot breeze -
few coins roll over
from the beggar's hat

Oana Aurora Boazu

silent night ...
the dripping tap softly
shatters my peace

Kizie Basu

flight overseas ...
22c opens his lunchbox
and takes me back home

Kizie Basu

overcast sky ...
i watch the bus leave
with my umbrella

Kizie Basu

afternoon heat—
the cuckoo's silence
as piercing as his call

Kizie Basu

end of season –
the fishing nets take
the shape of the boat

Oana Aurora Boazu

field event
grazing cattle
turn their backs

Helen Buckingham

new year
the screech owl
swivels its head

Helen Buckingham

Ash Wednesday
all of us marked
with snow

Matthew M. Cariello

gray spots
where lotuses grew
winter view

Anna Cates

too close
for comfort
ferris wheel

Helen Buckingham

twice the grey
between the bars of my comb
morning rain

Helen Buckingham

clinging to the stone
Buddha's ear
another ear of snow

Matthew M. Cariello

winter morning
at the corner
a new beggar

Matthew M. Cariello

autumn sunset
a prairie dog howls
at the loneliness

Anna Cates

day moon
wet sky heavy
with tomorrow

Anna Cates

puddle splash
the buffalo and I
exchange a look

Geetashree Chatterjee

lunchtime
loneliness folded in
a warm casserole

Geetashree Chatterjee

prayer hall
my inner storms
crowd the silence

Geetashree Chatterjee

returning geese—
the piano scores
of Debussy

Anna Cates

summer storm
the duster now
needs dusting

Geetashree Chatterjee

autumn's end
the frozen moon
lengthens the night

Geetashree Chatterjee

lachrymal eyes
I blame it on
sinusitis

Geetashree Chatterjee

Lotus Temple
I march with the crowd
in search of silence

Geetashree Chatterjee

saying goodbye
her favourite perfume
lingers in air

Geetashree Chatterjee

walking home
the fracturing leaves
break the silence

Robbie Coburn

night herons
rasping —
wetland chill

Lysa Collins

a cool breeze
skims the tassel grass —
some things you never say

Lysa Collins

unusual parting
broken to bits
yet I am

Geetashree Chatterjee

mannequins
in an abandoned store
a blank gaze

Robbie Coburn

from the window
a distant car
carries the weight of air

Robbie Coburn

Okavango delta —
dawn climbs slowly
from rhino to rhino

Lysa Collins

newborn —
watching
for each lift of breath

Lysa Collins

a lion's roar
wraps the veldt
in stillness

Lysa Collins

eyebrows of ivy
over teahouse windows
how crisp the air

Bill Cooper

freight elevator
the silent leaps
of a cricket

Bill Cooper

sugar-free diet
in the candy jar
some flowers

Marie Derley

the dark harbor
rimmed in rubble stone
cracks with light

Lysa Collins

curtains flutter
in the open window
- frangipani

Lysa Collins

backstage
a second pinch
of paprika

Bill Cooper

winter's coming
old folks and storks
moving south

Marie Derley

driving rain –
even the bindweed
is shivering

Anna Maria Domburg-Sancristoforo

childhood memory ...
a lamp flickering in the dark
a dog's wet nose

Michael Flanagan

winter chill
the clock's hands still
moving

Lorin Ford

dimming stars
linger for a while . . .
the magpie's song

Lorin Ford

steep hill
the sigh of cyclists
against the wind

Fractled

on the bridge
pigeons looking at me —
bread left behind

Diarmuid Fitzgerald

power cut —
the wind
in surround sound

Lorin Ford

rites of solstice –
rosemary buds open
to a winter bee

Lorin Ford

birds enter the clouds
. . . me and my
baggage

Lorin Ford

mirage...
a pillar of fire rising
from the Salton Sea

William Scott Galasso

in places where
you never thought to see it
Christmas glitter

William Scott Galasso

spring again...
a smile from the girl
in the polka dot dress

Grace Galton

November wind
further and further
the bend of a sapling

Grace Galton

cloud cover ...
all the sun worshippers
on hold

Grace Galton

roasting chestnuts...
that time of year again
in my native state

William Scott Galasso

the flourish of
a peacock's fan...
heatwave

Grace Galton

daydreams...
a tumble of clouds
shuffling the blue

Grace Galton

slap!

the time it takes
for a fly to return

Grace Galton

pondskater
the depth of our love
still uncertain

Tim Gardiner

autumn crickets
I hear their songs
not yours

Tim Gardiner

maternity wing
a sparrow
builds her nest

Enrique Garrovillo

A butterfly
in the spider's web
I feel trapped

Angela Giordano

I become a mother
the favorite doll
abandoned

Angela Giordano

broken ice
the river creeps
past the old mill

Tim Gardiner

match day
floodlight starlings
play 4-4-2

Tim Gardiner

spilled milk
the mop
stands tall

Enrique Garrovillo

like a drum
the sound of rain ...
old attic

Angela Giordano

old house...
the ivy's tangled leaves
whisper its secrets

Eufemia Griffo

newly painted
the old lighthouse
stands among stars

Simon Hanson

dried figs
the last time
you held me

Tia Haynes

muddy footprints
new ways
of thinking

Tia Haynes

snapped twig —
the sparrow chases
a raven

Louise Hopewell

morning sun
touching the grass
beneath the frost

Simon Hanson

stolen kisses
under the wisteria tree
our crown jewels

Tia Haynes

trail of wildflowers
her barrette
abandoned

Tia Haynes

rake marks
in the garden bed
wild tomatoes

Louise Hopewell

white cross
by the boundary fence
barren land

Louise Hopewell

summer deepens
a red apple's
green taste

Elmedin Kadric

hall of mirrors
the multiverse
looking back

David J. Kelly

morning yoga
imagination stretches
beyond old knees

Mary Kendall

train delays
the station cat's eyes
open and close

Brendon Kent

turning leaves
the beggar's hands
through crowds

Elmedin Kadric

gull-wing doors
the cars not flying
out of the showroom

David J. Kelly

bind weed —
I learn to hold
my tongue

Mary Kendall

after his funeral
the jarring call
of a blue jay

Mary Kendall

open road...
the taste of dust
in my blood

Brendon Kent

the weight
of the stadium's sound
Grand Final day

Brendon Kent

icy river
fragile thoughts
begin to thaw

Mohammad Azim Khan

hickory nut . . .
the layers of resistance
to our self

Nicholas Klacsanzky

weekend alone
I turn off
my shadow

Nicholas Klacsanzky

wind-blown field
the wild poppy's shadow
a deeper red

Brendon Kent

folded arms ...
grandfather asks
for an explanation

Mohammad Azim Khan

adoption
each raindrop
where do you go?

Nicholas Klacsanzky

rain cloud . . .
the pen returns
to its drawer

Nicholas Klacsanzky

Sunday morning
I attend the mass
of titmice

Nicholas Klacsanzky

afternoon T-ball
my son picks dandelions
in left field

Deborah P Kolodji

restless afternoon
three koi wiggle under
lily pads

Deborah P Kolodji

yellow needles
of a dying pine . . .
her refusal to vote

Deborah P Kolodji

not caring
how we got here
delicious berries

Rehn Kovacic

bare branches
red tail
of a Southwest jet

Deborah P Kolodji

news
from friends overseas
late summer rain

Deborah P Kolodji

beach mosaic
left by sanderlings
my footprints now, too

Deborah P Kolodji

another meeting
no time
for poetry today

Rehn Kovacic

lotus pond
a young sun
blushes

Shrikaanth Krishnamurthy

moonbeams
into the forest
into the house

Shrikaanth Krishnamurthy

night forest . . .
missing the music
of wolves

Jill Lange

a starling sings
to the setting sun
mother's lullaby

Michael H. Lester

old sugar maple oozing sap
children's tongues
longer and longer

Kendall Lott

opening your eyes
at sunup
frightened deer

Shrikaanth Krishnamurthy

on the radio
an old love song—
little cat comes purring

Jill Lange

like droplets
of a summer drizzle ...
your touch

Michael H. Lester

dark rain
digging
for the ancient music

Mark Levy

cold rain
mourning dove's
hoarse coos

Kendall Lott

awaiting test results...
I spread the mulch
thicker this year

paul m.

red onion slices
softening in cold water
two-day moon

paul m.

in the pond
the moon meets the lily –
a summer rendezvous

Nandita Jain Mahajan

jacaranda flowers
strewn on the empty bench ...
dusk already

Nandita Jain Mahajan

cold hands
stir fireplace ashes—
fireflies blink

Kendall Lott

dried seed pods
dangle from a mimosa stem
Lenten afternoon

paul m.

morning after
a blue shadow reveals
the groundhog burrow

paul m.

a jackal howls ...
ghost stories spook
my grandmother's home

Nandita Jain Mahajan

snowflakes:
the grandson gifts her
a popsicle mold

Nandita Jain Mahajan

a koi surfaces
through floating shadows
leaf-filtered light

Marietta McGregor

lamington drive
my mother's smile
in black and white

Marietta McGregor

willows weighting
the air above a pond
spring morning

Marietta McGregor

childhood village
I run through fields
no longer there

Andy McLellan

forbidden mangoes ...
I tiptoe into childhood
in my daughter's stilettos

Nandita Jain Mahajan

coffee shop queue
again forgetting
which name I go by

Marietta McGregor

wind tasting of dust
a train's doppler whistle
through my daydream

Marietta McGregor

Genji berries
the deep purple
of twilight

Marietta McGregor

coming to terms
with my own uncertainty
autumn moon

Andy McLellan

summer noonsummer noon
a lizard seeks relief
under the sundial

Claudia Messelodi

old pictures of her
one by one on my fingers
the taste of love

Claudia Messelodi

a long line
at the confessional
donut sunday

Ben Moeller-Gaa

spring wind
spinning the barstool
the kid in me

Ben Moeller-Gaa

watching my thoughts
the soft footsteps
of a cat

Andy McLellan

childhood evenings -
on the table a piece
of black bread

Claudia Messelodi

June wheat fields
a basket of bread
all year long

Maria Chiara Miduri

winter sunrise
the shadows of pigeons
on the power line

Ben Moeller-Gaa

driftwood
rising from the river
a big old turtle

Ben Moeller-Gaa

bar lights
the darkness in
her eyes

Ben Moeller-Gaa

water balloon—
the way her laugh
colors the air

Ashish Narain

sickle moon—
mountains etched
into the night

Ashish Narain

the slant
of falling snow—
street lights

Ashish Narain

midlife
pulling my youth
from a cardboard box

Ben Moeller-Gaa

summer starlight
flamenco voices
the guitar in them

Timothy Murphy

hot breeze ...
the beggar barely
raises his hand

Ashish Narain

hospital bed—
only a little red left
on the wick

Ashish Narain

both children away
I spend the evening
with a fly

Lee Nash

drifting smoke
the shape of
my heart

Precious Oboh

morning dew
filling the emptiness
of a fallen leaf

Precious Oboh

winter night
for a moment the warmth
of her touch

Precious Oboh

spring cleaning
I shake off
the neighborhood dirt

Carol Ann Palomba

heatwave
a child draws the head
on a hangman

Lee Nash

on the bonnet of
a wrecked car
the shadow of a butterfly

Precious Oboh

covering the last name
on the grave stone
a lizard

Precious Oboh

cruise ship buffet spread—
shorts worn on day one
tighter on day ten

Carol Ann Palomba

ballerina
a flock of starlings
rises and twirls

Carol Ann Palomba

retirement...
a jamboree of crows
every morning

Madhuri Pillai

fleeting youth
the shimmer of the ballgown
in the closet

Madhuri Pillai

spring storm
a trickle of rain
the trickle of time

Madhuri Pillai

winter mist
on the window pane
her goodbye to Dad

Marion Alice Poirier

new moon phase
the grip on my uterus
tightens

Carol Ann Palomba

frost on the grass
the slippery slope
of old friendships

Madhuri Pillai

raking leaves
neighbour's footsteps
dragging his age

Madhuri Pillai

behind the blinds
a gathering of strangers ...
autumn ashes

Marion Alice Poirier

without him
the silence . . .
autumn deepens

Marion Alice Poirier

mid-summer
the poinsettias still
on Mom's grave

Marion Alice Poirier

twilight sky
 one by one
we flatten into silhouettes

Rajani Radhakrishnan

another dawn
again we greet each other
like strangers

Rajani Radhakrishnan

long journey
a shifting shadow, a fickle moon,
and a poem with no end

Rajani Radhakrishnan

moonlit bench ...
the street dog growls
at a homeless man

Marion Alice Poirier

frog pond
croaking and chirping
until I approach

Keith Polette

talking to the morning sky
why does this mynah
disagree

Rajani Radhakrishnan

misty winter morning
the warm echo
of the temple bell

Rajani Radhakrishnan

creeping dusk
what was a pond, a heron
is now sky

Rajani Radhakrishnan

fresh deadline...
i'd rather be dead
than stick to the line

Kalyanee Rajan

dusty morning ...
the earth cools on droplets
from the leaves

Suresh Ramasubramanian

street lights ...
raindrops dissolve
in flickering shadows

Suresh Ramasubramanian

hedgerow ...
a ball bursts into
sparrows

Dave Read

jamun tree —
a splash of purple
on my new white kurti

Kalyanee Rajan

drip drop drip...
diamonds glisten
on the child's cheeks

Kalyanee Rajan

daybreak
in distant rolling greens
a flash of white

Suresh Ramasubramanian

still bouncing
the echo of a ball
down the street

Dave Read

brake lights ...
slowing the speed
of rain

Dave Read

up and down
the spiders web
sunlight

Duncan Richardson

painting
another sunrise
morning rain

Jacob Salzer

thistle
an old wound
surfaces

Tiffany Shaw-Diaz

deep slumber...
i'd give anything to hear her
bark again

Sonal Srinivasan

bits of root
stuck in the soil ...
moving day

Dave Read

where rivers meet
ripples running
both ways

Duncan Richardson

guitar solo
a seagull hovers
above the water

Jacob Salzer

rough bark
the untold stories
of my body

Tiffany Shaw-Diaz

i see you again
on your favourite spot...
mirage

Sonal Srinivasan

November rain
a whisper of sorrow
in mum's eyes

Iliyana Stoyanova

luna moth
unfolding the hidden
part of you

Debbie Strange

the sky ripens . . .
snow stars
decorate your sweater

Debbie Strange

the pulse
of oncoming storms . . .
our windows flex

Debbie Strange

empty space...
my ring finger again
shines with a diamond

Sonal Srinivasan

stillborn
the quiet flap
of angel's wings

Iliyana Stoyanova

frayed sunflowers . . .
this is the part where
we say goodbye

Debbie Strange

river stories
we always begin
at the end

Debbie Strange

summer night
following the path
of fireflies

Rachel Sutcliffe

seashell ...
the ocean has left
its song

Stephen Toft

temple riots—
there's a storm
in every silence

Veerangana

rag picker's hut
on the roof
unpicked rags

Veerangana

choice of wallpaper...
the moist sapling whispers
into my ankle

Veerangana

long weeds
the old lady's
shrunk spine

Rachel Sutcliffe

autumn chill
the priest's dog tethered
outside the church

Stephen Toft

my sister
a solitary reed
on a twilit pond

Veerangana

a swaying reed—
the moonlit pond gathers
scattered ripples

Veerangana

fairyland ...
lavender blossoms
after the rain

Steliana Cristina Voicu

winged shadow
skims the sidewalk--
another thought lost

Scott Wiggerman

new coat of paint
my ex-wife's birthday
on the calendar

Scott Wiggerman

burly men
at the construction site
pink cement truck

Scott Wiggerman

deep snow...
the foxes' footprints end
at the waste bin

Beata Wrzal

rough bark
coyote fences
with teeth

Scott Wiggerman

my father's grip
still crushing
a lifetime later

Scott Wiggerman

my brother's spine
the ladder weakens
rung by rung

Scott Wiggerman

anvil cloud
presses the horizon
this heat

Scott Wiggerman

lack of sun...
why can't I fly south
with the birds

Beata Wrzal

winter sunset...
the driver fails to notice
the change in traffic lights

Beata Wrzal

rustling reeds...
in the swan's shadow
an empty nest

David He Zhuanglang

sun rays
through the bamboo
a babbling stream

David He Zhuanglang

half awake...
I hear my dead cat
meowing at the door

Beata Wrzal

strong breeze ...
a shirt on the washing line
spooks the cat

Beata Wrzal

failing sunlight
grandma scans the directory
for her son's number

David He Zhuanglang

One-line Haiku

finding self the hidden mirror within the waterfall

Adjei Agyei-Baah

where the shadow turns back the inside of a coffin

Adjei Agyei-Baah

dawn revision the muezzin's call becomes part of a haiku

Adjei Agyei-Baah

sickle moon my son wonders about the handle

Adjei Agyei-Baah

the stillness of her needles chill wind

Billy Antonio

everlasting the pain of folding his clothes

Billy Antonio

losing green a leaf at the funeral

Don Baird

echoes of themselves songbirds

Don Baird

waterfall the emerging sigh of winter

Don Baird

"there's still some taste left in those leaves" the parting yerba-mate

Danny Blackwell

daybreak open all nite

Adrian Bouter

summer dreams the blue plate you drop

Adrian Bouter

wine-dark sea not one sail in sight night owl

Adrian Bouter

in eyelidless hours insomnia

Adrian Bouter

recurring dream the heights that won't leave

Adrian Bouter

world press photo a war encore in black & white

Adrian Bouter

election lies ahead

Helen Buckingham

the price of crude no debate

Helen Buckingham

campaign balloons tying knots in my sleep

Helen Buckingham

dead consultant pulls the other one

Helen Buckingham

what if the ferryman does doesn't take plastic

Helen Buckingham

loadstar the snowman is calving

Helen Buckingham

the double winged dragonfly is never alone

Matthew M. Cariello

my shadow goes first fallen cherry blossoms

Matthew M. Cariello

nowhere to nowhere winter ladybugs

Matthew M. Cariello

two shoelaces one me

Matthew M. Cariello

one last iris I sit I rise alone

Matthew M. Cariello

a robin sings from a dead elm canto five

Anna Cates

rag of scarecrow flapping endless night

Anna Cates

bog moon and bullfrog full of it

Anna Cates

gray sky the rainbow parade oblivious

Anna Cates

the darkest field I plough through this fear

Marion Clarke

old school games instantly downloaded

Marion Clarke

harbour mist caught up in the moment

Marion Clarke

duckling wake ripples a green strand of plastic

Bill Cooper

Rio hotel mirror says i'm white

Bill Cooper

cleansing a pretend wound at the old stone springhouse

Bill Cooper

high tide pausing the whale necropsy

Bill Cooper

bobblehead night his hero so still

Bill Cooper

mid-life tossed into a tangle of trade winds

Lorin Ford

catfish where our mythologies differ

Lorin Ford

the beach as the crow flies about time

Lorin Ford

sunset messages at my dawn more insomnia

Fractled

cherry blossoms and winter leaves

Fractled

the silence of crickets more interruptions

Fractled

loud speaker my thoughts during meditation

Fractled

high enough tonight noctilucent cloud

Tim Gardiner

not long for this world rainbow's end

Tim Gardiner

waiting to pick up my son April breeze

Tim Gardiner

summer rain cries of a farmer

Enrique Garrovillo

civil twilight jilted by the moon

Enrique Garrovillo

piano recital her earrings count the bars

Mark Gilbert

a new galaxy the back of my eyeball

Mark Gilbert

tandem dragonflies the juice of this nectarine

Mark Gilbert

collecting firewood my ice age self

Simon Hanson

deep tissue the pulse of electrons

Simon Hanson

taking stock a mirror's face character reference

Peter Jastermsky

all the secrets overlooked cemetery stroll

Peter Jastermsky

melting into shapes itself ice water

Peter Jastermsky

monarch on not having a pot to piss in

Elmedin Kadric

the words a hell of an ocean canoeing

Elmedin Kadric

kneading you on the journey to the dot

Elmedin Kadric

musically speaking silence

Elmedin Kadric

your skin on aching for a needle to sing ink

Elmedin Kadric

for more moonlight sea river

Elmedin Kadric

blue for now what tarries beyond a song

Elmedin Kadric

both yes and no plastic rose

Elmedin Kadric

stars a series of full stops

Elmedin Kadric

times walls full of was

Elmedin Kadric

arising from the sound of water catfishbird

David J. Kelly

first swallow it never tastes of summer

David J. Kelly

flying fish in every blue sky floaters

David J. Kelly

lighting a blue-green touchpaper Cambrian explosion

David J. Kelly

triple point an ice cube melting reason

David J. Kelly

genetic memory rears its head colonoscopy

Mary Kendall

rampant wisteria worrying a problem to death

Mary Kendall

a firework explodes the red maple

Brendon Kent

sunset chasing the flight of salmon

Brendon Kent

footprints shaping unshaping snow

Brendon Kent

eyes watching pumpkins in a row

Deborah P Kolodji

I change my mind puddles in a drought

Deborah P Kolodji

you start speaking the Veena notes fall flat

Shrikaanth Krishnamurthy

thinking of him crumbling the gingerbread man

Shrikaanth Krishnamurthy

through fog distant thunder and the east-bound train

Jill Lange

the faint whisper of autumn she leaves unspoken

Michael H. Lester

dozens of crows on the wire eating my words

Michael H. Lester

how gentle the spring rain on the tail of winter

Michael H. Lester

stirrings in the crypt beget a lively silence

Michael H. Lester

for the sake of transparency she reveals her ghosts

Michael H. Lester

the streetwise beggar cobbles together a few stones

Michael H. Lester

without looking she becomes her own mirror image

Michael H. Lester

she rejects the common doggerel in favor of the uncommon

Michael H. Lester

she sucks the life out of her lifesaver

Michael H. Lester

he battens the hatches with a flimsy off-brand

Michael H. Lester

snowmelt we listen to the stones

Eva Limbach

misty moon following the old rat run

Eva Limbach

in a dead language dragonfly

paul m.

before daylight touches the hill the backs of wild geese

paul m.

fire you in your element

Anna Maris

deep water I go all in

Anna Maris

spider's climb the rise and fall of his tiny chest

Anna Maris

nightfall blue pill red pill

Anna Maris

frantic search near completion a next turn

Anna Maris

above all skylark

Anna Maris

nothing out of the ordinary dandelion clocks

Anna Maris

touch the lines hopscotch and you are dead

Anna Maris

second skin my old nationality

Anna Maris

deep autumn that one last nail

Anna Maris

still as they were sprouting bulbs

Marietta Jane McGregor

overflowing fuel of solitude tank

Timothy Murphy

seizing the day-to-day silences of absence

Timothy Murphy

on the road open star clusters

Timothy Murphy

waning moon voice gift for the feast

Timothy Murphy

obituary column messaging silence into the sky

Pravat Kumar Padhy

coins our ancestors exchanged a great length of time

Pravat Kumar Padhy

scratching head under the Bodhi tree

Aparna Pathak

anywhere the mosquito can reach insomnia

Aparna Pathak

mosquito buzz explanations of survival

Aparna Pathak

the heavy emptiness of the used tea bag

Aparna Pathak

temple bell my changing wish list

Aparna Pathak

sickle moon rubbing the scratch on palm

Aparna Pathak

old photo where time could not wait

Aparna Pathak

day begins the night inside the morning bell

Keith Polette

dusk raven calls something out of me

Keith Polette

train crossing the desert stops the night wind

Keith Polette

this winter afternoon for three years

Keith Polette

drunk with rowing the wine-dark sea

Keith Polette

eye of the crow dead silence after the caw

Keith Polette

through the door that won't close winter

Dave Read

crossing the water the wind becomes

Dave Read

however I sweep the corner of my mind dust

Dave Read

where we inhabit the relative light

Dave Read

under the ocean ocean ocean

Dave Read

breaking surf those salt-dried salt lips

Cynthia Rowe

paper chase the brush turkey shakes out a fish

Cynthia Rowe

hometown always how long the freeway

Cynthia Rowe

bridge rail row upon row of broken moons

Cynthia Rowe

trout stream the angler snags evermore cottony cloud

Cynthia Rowe

washed-up cuttlefish her puppy's toothmarks

Cynthia Rowe

his wayfaring ways a ridge of loose beach

Cynthia Rowe

All Hallows' a zapped bat frizzles the power

Cynthia Rowe

crested a knoll the pregnant moon again pregnant

Cynthia Rowe

bait thief crab the fisherman inhales exhales inhales

Cynthia Rowe

we each disappear into a plant yard work

Tom Sacramona

household in my legs the mountain

Tom Sacramona

the sea crawls inside darkness covers all

Tom Sacramona

honeycomb frags of skull-white dandelions

Tom Sacramona

from one anniversary to the next Mohs Scale

Tom Sacramona

empty whiskey bottle breaking the silence

Jacob Salzer

fishing after dark river sounds never fading

Jacob Salzer

side effects lost in fine print

Jacob Salzer

empty of desire a room floods with light

Jacob Salzer

developing photo graphic memory

Jacob Salzer

bold winter shapes New York Times

Jacob Salzer

among the junkmail grandmother's handwriting

Agnes Eva Savich

the garden swing's chain crickets

Agnes Eva Savich

the breaths that grew it redwood

Agnes Eva Savich

all fun and pantsuits now what

Agnes Eva Savich

where the lotuses were my wavering reflection

Agnes Eva Savich

open window world in shape of the mouse

Ken Sawitri

happy meal how simple death feels

Ken Sawitri

morning practice to stop the timepiece alarm

Ken Sawitri

awaken in a disposable body with memory carved in the mammoth ivory

Ken Sawitri

spring melancholy she rounded the corner of her finger nails

Ken Sawitri

sloughs off its old skin new world in the shape of the mouse

Ken Sawitri

passes by the door i am become digital

Ken Sawitri

not so much a madeleine moment ocean air

Shloka Shankar

lasting a full minute flashbacks becoming flash forwards

Shloka Shankar

in teentaal the remainder of my dream sequence

Shloka Shankar

suspension of disbelief i become everything i never was

Shloka Shankar

the crinkly velvet of an autumn rose clouds all crinkly

Iliyana Stoyanova

orange sunset slips through the branches an orange leaf slips

Iliyana Stoyanova

the icon on focus only her smile

Iliyana Stoyanova

sudden cloud of sparrows neighbourhood cat

Rachel Sutcliffe

loneliness falling away the cliff edge

Rachel Sutcliffe

night light the moth and I

Rachel Sutcliffe

summer's end my son chases his shadow

Stephen Toft

deep winter my son invents new constellations

Stephen Toft

empty teapot pouring moonlight

Veerangana

my dreams strangled with neckties

Veerangana

another winter counting the leaves left

Scott Wiggerman

wind shift no longer in my face

Scott Wiggerman

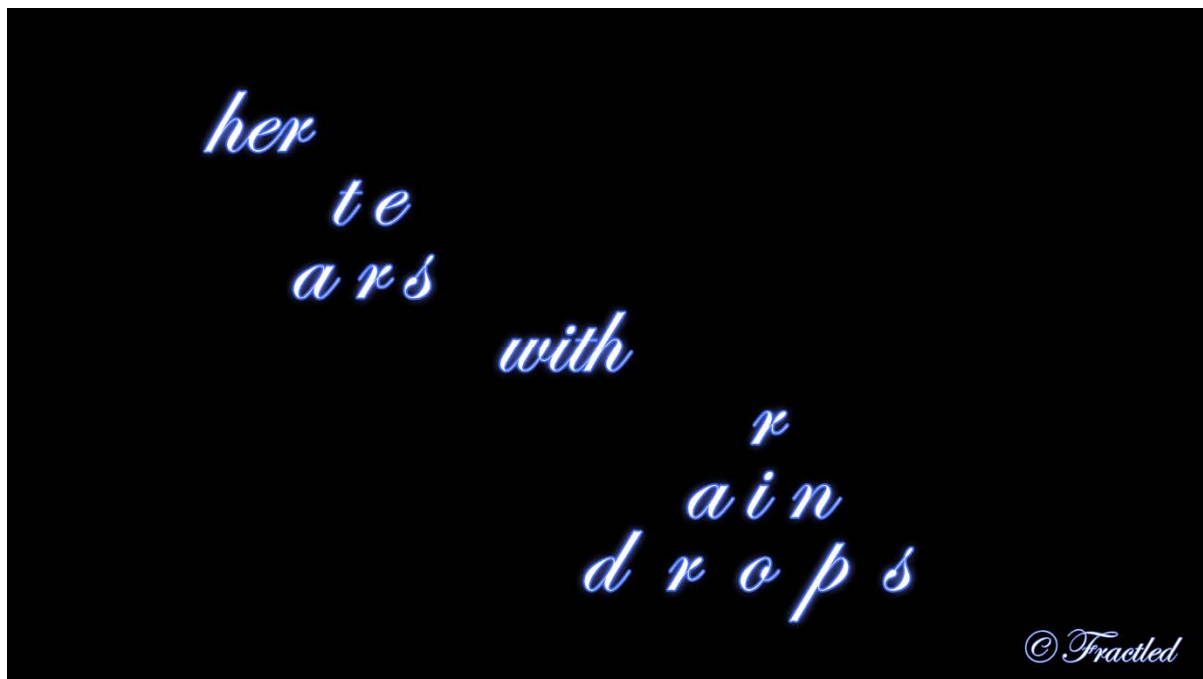
peloton racing by with my youth

Scott Wiggerman

Visual Haiku

h air cut

Fractled



Fractled

i
ha ku

Karen Harvey

dilated pupils
their fatal attraction
black holes

pupils
attraction
fatal
black
holes
dilated

David J. Kelly

mascara

o
f

f
a
i
l
e
n

outlines

t
e
a
r
s

David J. Kelly

rain
drops

playing
hoop-la

on the
Koi pond

David J. Kelly

black birds
o i l i c k

Michael Lester

C A R B R A K E E

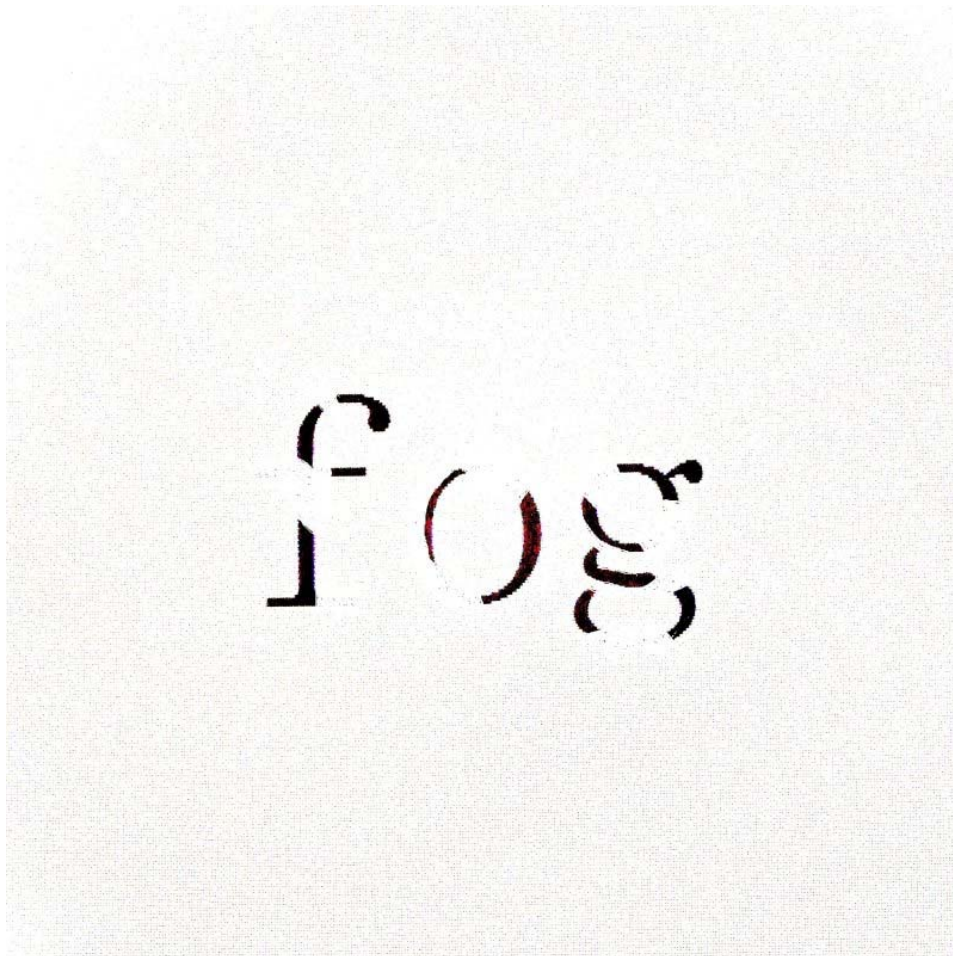
Ajaya Mahala

pendulum
/
arguing
/
back
/
and
/
(forth)

Valentina Rinaldi-Adams

|| /\n /\n /\n grasshopper
 \\

Tom Sacramona



Olivier Schopfer

fr
o
g

HK>

Lech Szeglowski

street food
ordering my
s e
m i l

Veerangana

MEDITATE...AWAKEN

Kamalesh Tripathi

Poet's Personal Best

swan—
running on its shadow
running on water

Adjei Agyei-Baah

**river bus
somebody always
waves back**

The Heron's Nest, December 2015

Alexey Andreev

soap bubble
the world stretches out
in one drop

Chrysanthemum 21

Debbi Antebi

**dandelion field
the weight of
so many wishes**

First Place, European Quarterly Kukai #18, Summer 2017

Billy Antonio

**moonless night
beneath the Iroko tree
crickets chirp**

Ayeyemi Taofeek Aswagaawy

daydreaming in the braille of winter

Modern Haiku, volume 48.3, Autumn 2017

Don Baird

**summer moon
my prayers for peace
go unanswered**

Johnny Baranski

**warm sheets of rain:
the old dog trembles
not knowing**

Gabriel Bates

following the frequencies of civilisations one snail one pen

Frozen Butterfly 3, November 2015

Johannes S.H. Bjerg

jogging by the hair by the bench where they comb their dog

Presence #56, November 2016

Danny Blackwell

**idle summer time -
steamy cast-mosaic floor
in Turkish bath**

Honorable Mention - 14th Mainichi Haiku Contest

Oana Aurora Boazu

**autumn equinox
the truck driver clicks his tongue
at a passing dray**

Martin Lucas Award, 1st Prize, Presence 57, March 2017

Helen Buckingham

after the ceremony gossiping jackdaws

tinywords Issue 15.2

Marion Clarke

**lunch break –
he gets back with grass
in his hair**

71st Basho Memorial English Haiku Contest, 2017

Marie Derley

**winter moon –
I wear his sweater
to keep me warm**

Presence #57, March 2017

Anna Maria Domburg-Sancristoforo

Sunday Times - today's news in the puppy's mouth

Honourable Mention - 2nd MHP Academy Contest

Kwaku Feni

jars of sauerkraut
still in the old root cellar--
in the air wild roses

50 Haikus Volume 1 Issue #10

Michael Flanagan

bones decaying into data – a withered field

tinywords Issue 17.2 | October 2017

Lorin Ford

peak mango season neighborhood watch in alert as fruit slams houses

Fractled

suicide forest
empty shoes
point west

The Heron's Nest 18.4

Tim Gardiner

**the butterfly's wings snap shut
without a sound
I change my mind**

Golden Haiku Contest (runner-up) February 2017

Mark Gilbert

pale morning
beyond the horizon
a ghost moon

Mark Gilfillan

rippled sandstone whitecaps on an ancient sea

Presence # 57, 2017

Simon Hanson

**spring thunder
cherry blossom rain
before the real storm**

Distinction - First European Haiku Contest, 2016

Zornitza Harizanova

**dark soil
another failed crop
of sunflowers**

Hedgerow issue 110, 2017

Louise Hopewell

**rough winter sea -
summer memories
roll ashore**

Eva Joan

crematorium

**today my son weighs the same
as when he was born**

Modern Haiku 48.3 (2017)

David J. Kelly

childhood home – acorns sprout in the ashes

Prune Juice, November 2016

Mary Kendall

our argument...
a robin in the birdbath
breaking ice

Blithe Spirit 27.1 Feb.2017

Brendon Kent

**war zone ...
amongst the rubble
an empty birdcage**

Acorn Issue #37, Fall 2016

Mohammad Azim Khan

this and that dandelion thoughts

Modern Haiku 48.2 – 2017

Deborah P Kolodji

**still tied to her
rear-view mirror
red paper poppy**

Bottle Rockets Press, issue #35

Jill Lange

**first snowflake
spins in the air
white noise**

Laughing waters

**snapdragon . . .
the bumblebee
takes its chances**

Failed Haiku - 9/30/17

Michael Lester

rain sounds
fill the room
i disappear

Mark Levy

**flowering dogwood—
mother's belongings all fit
into one suitcase**

First Place - 2016 Tokutomi Memorial Haiku Contest

Priscilla Lignori

first frost
I give a beggar
nothing

Frogpond 38:2, 2014

Anna Maris

**rain holding off
the split gunny sack
leaks mice**

British Haiku Society Contest, 2016, Honourable Mention

Marietta McGregor

ballad of the moon- virgins painted in primary colours

Stardust Haiku Issue 8, August 2017

Precious Oboh

rain...

my son doesn't know

why he's sad

Frogpond 40:1

Agnes Eva Savich

Thudding nutmeg the untold story faintly heard

The Mainichi, April 28th, 2017

Ken Sawitri

**mountain village
the endless solitude
of a lark's song**

Blithe Spirit 27.3

Iliyana Stoyanova

glassy lake
flocks of snow geese
pull up the moon

Autumn Moon Haiku Contest 2017 - 1st Place

Debbie Strange

**soul searching
a duck dives
into his shadow**

Prune Juice March 2017

Rachel Sutcliffe

**rainy morning—
a soaked cloud
in her empty tub**

Teen Ink - July 2017

Veerangana

**pan flute song –
woven with the sky's blue
romanian blouse tassels**

Wild Plum 3:1 Spring & Summer 2017

Steliana Cristina Voicu

**impending buds
yellow with caution
we cross the border**

Chrysanthemum #17

Scott Wiggerman

Features

A Letter to Maya

by Iliyana Stoyanova

Dear Maya,

We haven't chatted for a very long time – it seems almost an eternity from that cold December day when you left this world. Or maybe we have – in the quiet moments just before I go to sleep and all new ideas come in a flash but are gone by the morning; in the midnight hours when silence and the soft clicking of the keyboard is my only company; in the morning when half asleep over the coffee I try to sit down and write, write and write... When was it we last chatted? Let's have a chat now!

You must look down at me and think what does she want to chat about? Well, there are so many things I would like to tell you but it is your birthday so instead I am going to write about you.

flight school –
pushing the fledglings
out of the nest

We have been virtual friends for a couple of years when we finally met in person. It was a beautiful autumn day in Plovdiv, Bulgaria. Or as we call it in Bulgarian: 'golden autumn' (златна есен). I have organized a haiku workshop for 18-24 years old young people and we started talking about various things. We were both glad how haiku was becoming more popular in the country and more and more people were attempting to write it. We shared our skepticism that not every poet was a haikin and not every three-line poem was a haiku however we were both happy that the young people were open to haiku and willing to learn and even master this difficult genre. Anyway, the haiku workshop was a great success and I still treasure your photos from the event. Sometimes I just go through them quietly and I feel happy we shared something special:

old friends
it's enough to just sit
in silence

The first time we actually met was on Facebook after I read some of your poems. It quickly became apparent that this was by no means incidental. We started talking and realized we had similar perceptions of modern haiku, both Bulgarian and international, and all through those brief 3-4 years we felt like we've known each other all of our lives.

heat...
we strip a haiku bare
of adjectives

Although your health was problematic and you were facing a huge battle of wills with the big C, you never complained and found your inner strength in writing and helping others along their haiku journey:

cloudy sky...
the crow caws out
a sunbeam

A beloved mother and sister, a talented haijin, a translator and a photographer who did not give up until your very last breath, you did not stop writing, taking pictures, being a teacher, a mentor and, above all, a true friend. I do miss you terribly but I will always carry you in my heart as a friend and as a spiritual haiku sister.

f
a
|
|
among leaves on the path
a pair of wings

On your birthday I raise a glass of your favourite Mavrud wine and simply say: I love you, big sister!

In eternal haiku friendship – Iliyana
12 September 2017

An Interview with David Landis Barnhill

by Robert D. Wilson on April 4, 2011

(Republished with permission)

RDW: Thank you, Professor Barnhill, for allowing me to interview you. Your essay in Matsuo Basho's Poetic Spaces is insightful and lays to rest some of the myths prevalent in today's Blyth influenced Western English-language haiku community. You address the term *zoka*, which some scholars translate as nature, and tell us that translating *zoka* as nature can be misleading and, as such, doesn't address the term's true meaning, that the notion of nature is a cultural construction. What exactly is *zoka*? How is it different from the Western definition of nature?

DLB: In the West we normally think of nature as a collection of things: trees, toads, rocks, etc. Or we may think of it as a place, such as a wilderness area. *Zōka*, which I translate as —the Creative, does not refer to either of those. It is the vitality and creativity of nature, its tendency and ability to undergo beautiful and marvelous transformations. It is not a place or collection of things, nor is it something outside nature that is directing it or bringing things into being — thus the translation of —the Creator is misleading. *Zōka* is the ongoing, continuous self-transforming creativity of the natural world.

RDW: Basho's words regarding *zoka* are stern and unrelenting, warning poets not to ignore the *zoka* in their poetry, and to avoid poets who do not include the *zoka* in their artistic expressions. In essence, he calls this ignorance, the antithesis of refinement and beauty.

"Saigyō's waka, Sōgi's renga, Sesshū's painting, Rikyū's tea ceremony --- one thread runs through the artistic Ways. And this artistic spirit is to follow *zoka*, to be a companion to the turning of the four seasons. Nothing one sees is not a flower, nothing one imagines is not the moon. If what is seen is not a flower, one is like a barbarian; if what is imagined is not a flower, one is like a beast. Depart from the barbarian, break away from the beast, follow *zoka*, return to *zoka*."

If this were Basho's day, and he was alive now, would he approve of kigoless haiku?

DLB: I like the way you put this, stern and unrelenting. He is being extremely dualistic here: you are either working with (or within) *zōka*, or not. And the notion of beauty is crucial, and here he is being non-dualistic. Rather than the crude notion of pretty (flowers and moon), everything is beautiful, because everything is the transformation of *zōka*, so we should see everything as beautiful (flowers and moon).

I think Bashō would argue for the inclusion of season words, certainly for the seasonality of haiku poetry in general. A moment in nature is always a moment in a particular season.

To really see nature is to see it in a particular season. Of course American haiku is free to evolve according to its own insights, but we should realize how important seasonality is in Japanese poetry and why it is important. Then if we want to move away from it, OK.

RDW: As a follow up question, Professor, what does the above teaching tell us regarding the current day picture many in the Western world have of Basho? He speaks, in this passage, like a seasoned university professor giving a lecture, with confidence and authority.

DLB: I think in this instance he speaks like a Zen master admonishing a disciple. His sharp language is intended to emphasize what is at stake. Pretty ain't good enough. What is at stake is whether you have made the transformation so you can be fully part of the workings of reality — the reality of this world, which is ultimate reality. Whether it is religion or the arts in East Asia, the goal is to really, truly see how reality works and to harmonize with it – to participate in it. This is true of Confucianism and Daoism and Shinto, as well as Buddhism. You have to really see it, though, and then you really have to change. Being truly —natural — acting according to our true nature and the true nature of reality that we are a part of – is what is most difficult.

RDW: How complex was Basho's world? You state in your essay *The Creative in Basho's View of Nature and Art* that "meaning is not simply textual (confined to the text at hand)" but cultural and intertextual," that "we must consider those texts that shed light on the meaning of Basho's writing." R. H. Blyth and Kenneth Yasuda maintained in their writings that Haiku is a Zen poetic genre, yet as current day research has revealed, Basho's world view wasn't confined to Zen Buddhism, and included in the broader Chinese religio-aesthetic tradition, which includes Daoism and Confucianism, as well as aesthetic ideas and ideals in the Chinese poetry and painting. You also point out in your footnote that Basho also was influenced by Shinto and Ainu shamanic animism.

DLB: When you see religion as a Way, a path to follow, you look around for anything that helps in pursuing that Way. The West is such an either-or culture. Think of someone who says she is Jewish and Christian and Muslim – those traditions tend to be (but don't have to be) highly exclusivist. They are dealing with one God and one Truth. But for most in East Asia, religions are paths through life, which involve insight into reality and certain spiritual qualities and states of mind. So it is natural to incorporate more than one religion. But then each religion is itself a mixture. Zen Buddhism, of course, is highly influenced by Daoism. Neo-Confucianism brings together classical Confucianism, Daoism, and Buddhism. Shinto and Buddhism co - existed and intermingled for most of the last thousand years. I have argued in an article that we should see religions as cultural ecosystems, each one made of different cultural elements. Culture itself is an ecosystem, made of interrelated cultural elements, everything interpenetrating to one degree or another. Put differently, religions are —empty in the Buddhist sense of the term, empty of own-being, of discrete autonomy. Religions inter-exist

Besides, life is infinitely complex. Why should we think one religion has it all?

RDW: Since the *zoka* is ever shifting and never static, and Basho tells us that to ignore the *zoka* in our poetry is a barbaric act, what does this tell us about the art of haiku composition?

DLB: Lose yourself. If you are writing poetry out of will and desire and reason and emotional attachments, you will write barbarically. If you throw away all the junk that goes with being human (from a Gary Snyder poem), then you can write out of your true nature as it responds to the true nature of the ever shifting reality we are a part of. Important here is that —barbaric refers to what in the West we might consider civilized, particularly the rational will.

We tend to associate barbaric with being natural, as opposed to being cultured and civilized. For Bashō and East Asia (Daoism and Neo - Confucianism also), to be the most cultured is to be the most natural. This points to more issues and deeper complexities, because to be natural doesn't mean you drop culture but ingrain yourself with it. The natural, highly cultured poet knows the tradition and knows the old poems and the rules, because they (supposedly) reflect and direct the way to see reality and nature deeply. But you also have to lose yourself. The Jazz saxophonist Charlie Parker said, —you've got to learn your music, you got to learn your sax, and then you have to forget it all and just blow.

RDW: You state that Basho and the Chinese thinkers before him saw a parallel between art and the creativity of nature. In footnote 54, of your essay, you posit: "Basho's valorization of spontaneity can be seen in his distinction between a poem that naturally "grows" and a poem artificially "made" by the will of the poet." You go on to state that following the zoka in the composition of poetry transcends human design. Would you elucidate further?

DLB: Again, Bashō is being quite dualistic. You can try to make a poem, using your reason and will and ego. The result may be highly complex and polished, but it's a poem YOU made. The alternative is to enter into a state of intense concentration of both energy and consciousness, totally focus on the moment at hand, be fully open, and ... don't do anything. Let the poem come. One of the terms used is —wait. Zhuangzi (Chuang - tzu) talked about that long long ago, and that idea was picked up by poets in China, and Bashō. Waiting means don't act willfully; let your true nature and zōka working through you to bring the poem into being. That's a grown poem. I don't make my tomato plants grow, but I try to create the conditions in which they will grow.

Western writers also talk about this. Sharon Butala, the author of the book *The Perfection of the Morning*, has described her writing process this way. —When I was ready, I sat down at my desk and typed [the words] *The Perfection of the Morning*, then waited in that state of suspension of writers like me, of held breath, obliviousness to one's surroundings, the moment fraught with tension and with prayer, a kind of intense concentration not on some particular but on emptying oneself so that the right words might have room to form. And then, as so far has always happened, ideas began to flow, to shape themselves into words, sentences, paragraphs, as I typed.

The best statement about this that I am aware of is by the poet Denise Levertov, in her "Work and Inspiration: Inviting the Muse" (in the book *The Poet in the World*). Discussing what was wrong with a poem she was struggling with, she states, "...the words themselves were straining; instead of waiting in that intense passivity, that passive intensity, that passionate patience which Keats named Negative Capability and which I believe to be a vital condition for the emergence of a true poem, I was straining to find words; the word had not found me. Here's Bashō's distinction between a made poem and a grown poem. The key is to enter into the state of being totally focused and open.

But she makes an even more complex statement. She claims that in the case of a poem that has undergone revision over a period of time (those with a —known history), the same kind of spontaneity is at play as poems that come to you without any need of revision (—inspired poems). Revision can and should be spontaneous as well. —Poems come into being in two ways, she says. —There are those which are -- or used to be -- spoken of as inspired; poems which seem to appear out of nowhere, complete or very nearly so; which are quickly

written without conscious premeditation, taking the writer by surprise... There is nothing one can say directly concerning the coming into being of "given" or "inspired" poems, because there is no conscious process to be described. However, in considering what happens in writing poems which have a known history [with revisions], I have come to feel convinced that they are not of a radically different order; it is simply that in the "given" poem the same kind of work has gone on below, or I would prefer to say beyond, the threshold of consciousness. The labor we call conscious is... not a matter of a use of the intellect divorced from other factors but of the intuitive interplay of various mental and physical factors, just as in unconscious pre-creative activity; it is conscious in that we are aware of it, but not in the sense of being deliberate

and controlled by the rational will...

RDW: R. H. Blyth and Kenneth Yasuda, in their writings, call haiku a Zen Buddhist poetic genre. I see infused in Basho's poetry a conglomerate of belief systems that include, besides Zen Buddhism, other sects of Buddhism (Pure Land, etc.), Daoism, Confucianism, Shinto, and shamanic animism practiced by the Ainu. What gives? Blyth and Yasuda refused to budge in their beliefs regarding this area. How widespread was the influence of these beliefs systems on the poets of Basho's day?

DLB: It is simpler and sexier to say Bashō is a Zen poet. To talk about Pure Land Buddhism in his writings, or Shinto or shamanism, probably seems to some to dilute his Zenness, especially since our Western culture has a far lower view of Pure Land's pietism, or the earthiness of Shinto or shamanism, than of mystical Zen and its high philosophy. Yet all of these beliefs — more importantly their values, states of mind, personal qualities, and practices — were part of the cultural ecosystem of Bashō's day. But really, the same is true of the West. Our modern consciousness has a mixture of views from the Bible, Greek and Roman philosophy, Catholic theology, Protestant theology, and Freud (I could go on). It doesn't all cohere. We also have ruthless capitalist notions of individual autonomy and belief that in our system wealth goes to the worthy, and also communitarian views and care for others. All in the tasty soup of our mind!

RDW: One final question, Professor. Many English - language haiku poets are declaring that the need for a kigo in their haiku is not necessary. They also denounce the use of some Japanese aesthetic tools in the composition of their haiku, which are more object-biased than activity-biased. Professor Haruo Shirane says that many modern English language haiku are haiku-like poems written in the Imagist tradition. Your feelings, please.

DLB: Professor Shirane is right (and always worth reading). Americans are familiar with about 200 or so of Bashō' haiku – mostly those in the Imagist tradition. Or we might say the tradition of the modern haiku poet Shiki. Spend a long time with a wider variety of Bashō's poems, and you start getting a more complex picture. And spend more time with the seasonality and season words of his poems. In my translation of around 750 of Bashō's haiku (*Bashō's Haiku: Selected Poems of Matsuo Bashō*), I emphasized the season they were written in and listed the season word(s) in the notes. My original format for the translation was seasonal in the traditional Japanese sense: all his spring poems, then all his summer poems, and so on. A manuscript reviewer of that version rejected that format because we wouldn't be able to see how his poetry developed. Yes, that's true, but it shows how we focus on the person rather than seasons (which is nature combined with time). If the translation would have been arranged seasonally instead of

chronologically, it is the moment of the poem that would stand out, rather than the poet. So I regret the format of my translation became biographical, though there are good reasons for that, too. But at the least I would like to see any substantial translation of his poetry identify the season words. I think the more familiar you are with this part of Bashō's writing and of the haiku tradition, the less likely you are to dismiss it.

Another aspect of the diminishing of haiku is the rejection of titles or introductory notes. Those also are normally erased in translation, but they are part of the poetry that Bashō created. Without them we get less of the poetry Bashō gave us. But titles and introductions are not part of the Shiki-Imagist tradition. And so you virtually never find them in American haiku. I think that diminishes the genre. But we do have a growing respect for haibun, which can function like an extended introduction to a haiku. Haibun can be a particularly rich way to write haiku.

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