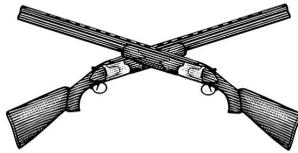


HAIKU NEWS

Anthology 2009-2011

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Edited by Laurence Stacey and Dick Whyte

LAWRENCE & GIBSON

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Haiku News Anthology 2009-2011

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Some of these poems have appeared previously in other journals and publications. Janet Lynn Davis: "the crackle and pop" & "months later" (*Wisteria*, July 2006); "nonstop footage" (*Moonset: The Literary Newspaper*, Spring-Summer 2009). Bill Kenney: "undocumented" (*Notes From The Gean*, June 2010). Robert Moyer: "pastry counter" (*Daily Haiku*, September 2009). Terry O'Connor: "autumn mist" (*The Heron's Nest*, March 2009). Michael Dylan Welch: "after the quake #1" (*Mirrors*, Winter 1990); "Valentine's Day" (Haiku Society of America, 2000); "after the quake #2" & "gridlock" (*Open Window: Haiku and Photographs by Michael Dylan Welch*, Brooks Books, 2000); "bending for a dime" (*Simply Haiku*, Autumn 2007). Dick Whyte: "round and round" (*Chrysanthemum*, April 2009). Juliet Wilson: "urban duck" (*A Handful Of Stones*, May 2009).

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Foreword

by Liam Wilkinson

For as long as it has allowed people to share their writing with the rest of the world, the internet has been bombarded with 'headline haiku' and attempts at combining current affairs with short-form poetry, often using the 5-7-5 model and therefore establishing itself as nothing more than a global word-game. It's the kind of thing to which serious writers, readers and students of haiku and related forms would have a strong aversion. Their authors are easy to spot – they're the ones at the office who, whilst scanning the online news, are counting syllables on their fingers and jotting down a three-line summary that has as much literary merit as a tabloid headline.

Whilst we can very easily dismiss these 'haiku' as tea-break puzzles, there is still something attractive about the idea of marrying haiku with current affairs. Any writer of haiku and related forms would agree that, from time to time, a poem might arise from seeing some harrowing story on the six o'clock news or, for those of us who are constantly looking for that first spark of a senryu, spotting some amusing article on a page of the local rag. How many of us considered picking up a pen shortly after the events of 9/11? Upon visiting New York's Tribute WTC Visitor Centre in 2008, I felt it only natural to leave a tanka in the comments box. Surely the coming together of haiku and

the news could still offer some interesting avenues for those who take our haiku, senryū, tanka and kyōka seriously.

Since its inception in 2009, Dick Whyte and Laurence Stacey's *Haiku News* – the newspaper written in the Japanese poetic form of haiku – has continued to promote the idea that “the personal is the political is the poetical”, allowing writers to share their personal reflections on noteworthy news items, presenting the current political climate in a new, often very personal light. And it is certainly no arena for cheap attempts at word-game haiku. This is a very serious literary journal that documents our times in the short form poetry of writers across the globe. Indeed, the poems that have graced the pages of this unique newspaper since 2009 have, with and without the stories that inspired them, presented some staggeringly exquisite and moving moments of micropoetry.

Thankfully, a selection of the finest of those poems have now been compiled in this exceptionally captivating collection. Whether inspired by earthquakes, wars, the global economy or the weather, these poems stand alone as fine examples of haiku and its related forms and to see them together in a single volume is nothing short of a treat.

Editor's Introduction

by Laurence Stacey and Dick Whyte

Haiku News officially started in June 2009. In hindsight, a more apt name might have been “haikai” news, since we were interested in publishing not only haiku, but also senryū, tanka and kyōka poetry. That being said, the amount of contention surrounding the definition of “haikai” would no doubt have over-shadowed the publication. Furthermore, haiku is the most well known style of Japanese short-form poetry outside Japan, and because we hoped to reach readers beyond the haikai community for better or worse we chose the name Haiku News.

Unlike most edited journals, who solicit work prior to their inaugural issue, we began with a few selections from our respective notebooks. In the beginning, Haiku News was supported entirely by our own poetry. We each submitted three or four poems a week to be critiqued by the other, with the aim of publishing one poem a day accompanied by an appropriate news headline. Thankfully, by the end of the first month, through word of mouth and the help of a gracious poetry network, we began to receive submissions from both new and established poets.

Over time this built into a robust community of poets, responding to world events on a personal, local, national and international scale through haiku, senryū, tanka and

kyōka. Some poets sent their poems to us, others we approached because we thought their work complimented the Haiku News ethos. Some wrote poems directly responding to news events, others didn't and we found appropriate news items to pair with their poems after the fact.

For the purposes of this anthology we have removed the headlines which originally accompanied the poems, because we believe each of these poems stand as quality examples of haikai, regardless of the news item the poem was paired with. In some cases it will be obvious what event inspired the poets, in others it will not. But in all cases we feel these poems will resonate with readers, and we hope that you enjoy reading them as much as we enjoyed selecting them.

Featured Poets

Michelle V. Alkerton
Melissa Allen
Ed Baker
Zofia Barisas
Kirsten Cliff
Armando H. Corbelle
Janet Lynn Davis
Garry Eaton
T.J. Edge/•••
Claire Everett
Laryalee Fraser
Jack Galmitz
Denis M. Garrison
Michael Goglia
Mark Holloway
Maya Idriss
Bill Kenney
Doug Kutney
Catherine J.S. Lee
Michael Henry Lee
Chen-ou Liu
Diane Mayr
Paul David Mena
Vasile Moldovan

Robert Moyer
Terry O'Connor
Jimmy The Peach
Michael Rehling
Judy Schattner
Joshua Sellers
Guy Shaked
Radhey Shiam
Paul Smith
Laurence Stacey
Tristan Steiner
Barbara A. Taylor
James Tipton
Bill Waters
Justin Webb
Michael Dylan Welch
Christopher A. White
Neal Whitman
Dick Whyte
Liam Wilkinson
Jane Williams
Juliet Wilson
Kath Abela Wilson
robert d. wilson

2009



wet newspaper
Iran bleeds
into commerce

seagulls scream—
when will Cheney be tried
for war crimes?

a camellia falls
her father's eyes the day they
closed the plant

factory strike
the newscaster pans
to a baby

evening rain . . .
the working girl
haggles her price

the last embers
of a makeshift campfire
burning out
17 homeless arrested
in Sacramento

Istanbul weeps—
its roads are rivers now
and still it rains

falling across
the islands of Samoa
Neptune's shadow

nonstop footage
of surge-battered homes
near our back door
a small displaced turtle
retreats into its shell

searching the stars
for intelligent life
so little of it here

merging lanes . . .
she explains why Obama
is a socialist

investment spread
my uncle buys
three lotto tickets

meteor flash
on Astronomy night
no extra charge

arguing health-care
my father forgets
his blood pressure

a few rowdy geese
heading south
I mute
the latest argument
over health care

today the wind blows
through our pockets too . . .
financial crisis

economic recession—
the sparrows dine on
cherry blossoms

Afghan conflict—
is there anywhere the leaves
don't fall in autumn

day moon . . .
she wonders how to tell
her children
their father died
for nothing

peace talks
just briefly
the moon through clouds

home
after eight years
in Iraq . . .
my brother now battles
bill collectors

first day of winter
the king of pop
is dead

termite tracks . . .
talk of Jackson's death
in whispers

take four . . .
accolades for star rapist
misdirected

dead pimp . . .
she gets her life back
without parole

Afghan war—
from east to west
shadows lengthen

is it spring
already?
mum tells me
my cousin is off
to Afghanistan

war memorial how cold the stone

camellias
turning brown
still
he has nightmares
of the war

fallen leaves—
the ghosts of Hiroshima
are listening

autumn mist
in the beggar's hand—
his empty stare

recession year . . .
he removes the
scarecrow's pants

countless stars
the beggar jangles
his change cup

months later
he still clutches
the bowling ball—
all he could salvage
after Katrina

October dusk
the groundskeeper steps
between graves

world hunger report
I turn the potatoes
a second time

coldest
day of spring
scientists
discover a fifth
state of matter

god particle . . .
she rolls a snowball
downhill

alone
walking the house all night—
moon festival

snowflakes
falling upon snowflakes
upon snowflakes . . .

the crackle and pop
of my breakfast cereal—
more news
about car bomb blasts
somewhere else in the world

twilight . . .
an egret's silhouette
between worlds

half moon
peering through
the fog
we discuss alternatives
to morality

beneath the sign
a look that also says
'closing down'

deepening recession
she spends twice as long
in half the shops

Church side door—
in a cracked hand
two coins

roadside beggar
the BMW
lurches forward

crop circle
in the rice field . . .
hazy moon

new moon—
searching for UFOs
on YouTube

rushing for the train
. . . usually I'd take care
to avoid a snail

accidentally
stepping on my neighbor's
shadow
he yells at me
illegal alien

early autumn
a pumpkin patch
newly ripe
I dream of seeing tanka
in the schoolbooks

perfectly still the kea and I

autumn arrives
less subtle
than last year
the time it takes my father
to stand up

gay wedding
his father gave him away
years ago

gay rights
immortalized in stone—
snow falls

extended hours for
Salvation Army bell ringers
winter solstice

short-changed
at the Save-Mart
winter solstice

5000 dead
35000 wounded
do the birds
mourn the passing
of summer too?

“I’ll be the soldier
and you be the terrorist”
two children playing

smart bombs?
what about the people
that use them

redeployed—
his children tell him
they'll be fine

troop buildup
the mountains know
no timeline

sex for sale
in the heartland too—
hazy moon

first day of spring
the prostitute forces
a smile

silverfish . . .
Hegel's argument
full of holes

Waffle House menu
the fly too
rubbing hands

after the snow
a large-winged seagull
fills the sky

gridlock
on the freeway
the skywriting drifts

Christmas eve
the storefront Santa
double-parked

Christmas morning
everybody
text messaging

Christmas morning
the old cat
waits by the bird feeder

opening gifts . . .
a sprig of red berries
in the brown field

shovels
down from the attic
my winter bones

year finally over
the old waitress
walks home alone

2010



New Year's Morning . . .
beside me in bed
a stranger

New Year's Day!
my house
looks just the same

after the miscarriage
she still eats
for two

fiftieth reunion
everyone still alive
shows up

soup kitchen . . .
the girl walks figure 8s around
her father's legs

pending layoffs
the janitor vacuums
a second time

Haiti in mourning
Gauguin's landscapes
replaced by graves

pulled from the rubble
a tiny face
moves the world

Gaza . . .
crying old tears
at new funerals

global unrest—
the warmth of spiced tea
at twilight

pre-dawn
the police station
in flames

after the marketplace
bomb explodes . . .
three children
tossing a head
of lettuce

overcast on every poster the same child

his street name
on the skid row wall . . .
winter sun

buyer's market
the realtor kept insisting—
till the bitter end

tax cuts for the rich
again
her kids ask
why do some people
have to be poor?

Valentine's Day—
she reminds me
to fasten my seatbelt

g-spot a myth
he probes
deeper

record Olympic ratings—
viewers go for gold
in the couch-potato

morning workout
my belt still hiding somewhere
beneath my stomach

Sunday morning
she checks out the priest's
Facebook page

final relief check—
the click of her rosary
grows louder

hotel rest room
her cry only goes
so far

for a long time
this has not been
God's home

all of us
created equal
I laugh
clenching my fist
around last night's tanka

sign stolen
from the entrance to Auschwitz
in its absence
a small patch of grass
through the snow

full moon—
a pan on the hob
boiled dry

and now . . .
the weight of a
thousand leaves

overtones
my head in a cloud
of mosquitoes

sunburst
the last swallow
of cud

apologies . . .
all afternoon
cicadas sing

so full
the moon sets
into the sea
our footsteps
washed away

custody battle . . .
a new pair of shoes
from Dad

weekend sale
at the antique market
her childhood
bargained down
to \$5.95

solo mum
cleaning her daughter's room
the barbie
has more shoes
than she does

even Barbie
must change careers . . .
economic slump

foreclosure . . .
the loan manager stares
at their hands

end of the month
adding up the zeroes
in my checkbook

a few rusty euro
dropped into the begging bowl . . .
ice moon

snow snow snow
the days
grow longer

winter coming
eating potatoes
with a single chopstick

shaking a paperweight
a flock of geese
between snowfall

pickup truck
his gun rack says more than
his bumper sticker

toy department
the little boy points a gun
at his mom

Moscow bombed—
my abdomen's solidity
goes missing

under the rubble
a pram's wheels
a torn blanket . . .

removing a tempest
from the teapot—
dojo sado

talk of Mars . . .
a hornet wanders
the wind chime

rape victim
the look on her face
says it all

his pleading eyes—
the nurse's
averted face

after the quake
adding I love you
to a letter

tornado rubble
the mailbox flag
still raised

into the oil slick
a pelican dives—
autumn dusk

seagulls
cry in unison
oil spill

politicians
blah blah blah . . .
snowflakes

so many gods
so little
time

Milky Way . . .
bit by bit I put myself
out of my mind

reading
about distant nebulae—
the room expands

“When Doves Cry”
the fossil record
played backwards

nano-walkers
dancing on
DNA

retired
watching OPRAH with my son
unemployed

morning coffee
checking my horoscope
TODAY

party over
the stripper tells me
her real name

night blossoms . . .
watching a bargirl
undress

more oil news . . .
I take my coffee
jet black

oilslicked ocean
too much time spent
washing hands

eleven workers dead
the CEO wants
his life back

card declined . . .
she pretends not to need
the milk

border state
what does illegal
look like

undocumented . . .
he shows me pictures
of his children

just finishing my day
the cab-driver
just starting his

a break in the heat
the cop lets me off
with a warning

Alzheimer's—
a dragonfly
goes and comes

spring—
my mother becomes
a child again

watering house plants—
the recent widower
rises

Mexican forest—
monarch butterflies
color the sky

urban pond—
the only duck
is plastic

climate change—
digging deep in the pocket
of conscience

dragon slayer
the buzz
fills my ears

hailstone
simply immense
red rivers

earthquake over,
the spider rebuilds
its web

after the quake
the weathervane
pointing to the earth

aftershock
under rubble
the doll
in its homemade
dress

first star
the infant's grip
tightens

a part of me
is missing too—
gibbous moon

66 years old
my tank a little big
for my top

birthday morning
a brand new set
of aches

waiting in Lingerie—
nowhere to rest
his eyes

flibanserin
the name is enough
to give her a headache

honeymoon over—
our new neighbors
unpack their baggage

snow moon
two porch chairs
facing each other

wind catches the cobweb catches the sun

outside my window
a cricket
counting stars

harvest moon . . .
flood survivors crowd
a tent camp

shantytown . . .
playing in a typhoon's
afterbirth

crescent moon the alley cat's thin miaow

sudden chill
an empty bird feeder
outside the nursing home

end of summer—
reading the names of the dead
at Ground Zero

9/11, a hoax?
yet somehow the dead
remain dead

my rejection letter
after almost a year—
four cents postage due

done
with real life
I borrow
a handful of dreams
from the library

childhood photo
a father
I don't recognize

parent teacher day
the class turtle
fends for itself

deep in the fridge
behind the chinese takeout
something growing

pastry counter
big buns looking
to get bigger

credit card bill
he tells his wife the massage
was medical

front porch
after the settlement
still an empty chair

window screen
the moth
tired of summer

summer's end
the children in and out
of shadows

not knowing
the moon phase
not knowing
the tides
not knowing

bending for a dime
two businessmen
bump heads

more layoffs
a stray cat drinks
from the gutter

don't ask don't tell
the senators
won't listen

autumn heat
my conservative neighbor
changes the subject

first light
a year after your death
snowdrops

at his deathbed
the TV still on
just softly
a show
he always loathed

nothing left
but the wishbone
November sky

this day
placed in her lap
rice, fruit, cloth

rattle
of dry pods
autumn wind

drought
the cows
still chew their cud

half moon
he repairs
the refrigerator

will I lose my job
come summer?
camellias
already
in bloom

roadside farm
the old mare blurs
into dusk

looking up
to see why the cat is
looking up

Alzheimer's...
together we watch the flight
of a dragonfly

ice on the pond
you forget my name
again

Salvation Army
the line outside longer
every day

benefit cuts
her letter to Santa
goes unanswered

out of work
he eats Christmas dinner
from a can

Christmas layoffs
she asks
the storefront Santa
for her mother's
job back

•••

Michael Henry Lee

beside his gravestone
nothing
between us

mother's day
something inside us
can't let go

December 2010

December 2010

the snow deepens
as I walk down the road . . .
nothing
stands between me
and the sickle moon

2011



morning seagull
sky
for breakfast

remember that day?
we folded down a corner
of sunset

eclipse
of the Long Nights Moon . . .
news of an earthquake

aftershock—
children scream
with laughter

wading through
the palengke . . .
heavy rain

winter river
in its stillness
a heron

empty carousel
even my kids
aren't kids any more

new moon
my eldest grandchild
turns four

winter drizzle
all the words you never say
I can't shake off

the childhood
my mother glosses over . . .
black ice

total lunar eclipse
BP issues
a denial

recession . . .
another million spent
explaining policies

Tea Party—
Obama is forced to sit
with Hitler

Arizona
democracy
in the cross hairs

first date
she pretends to like
the opening band

Lindy hop class
I get my bootie down
but not back up

morning email
Viagra ads attack
my manhood

returning spring
I knew her before
she was a virgin

daybreak
a glass bell
of wren song

seven or eight
sparrows
count them again

half-moon
above the snow fields
this morning
the distance
between us

spring skies . . .
a young Afghan couple
stoned to death

revolution in Egypt
I “like” their
Facebook page

lunch break
the ATM
eats my card

another day
in the rat race
I grind
my last mandarin
into juice

home invasion . . .
a Laughing Buddha sits
by the front door

autumn equinox
my baseball glove
right where I left it

writer's block
fresh footprints
in the snow

explaining tanka
to my 5th grade class
a pivot
of laughter
from the hallway

spring in the air
Discovery poised
for lift off

round and
round and round—
the moon

it's all I need
the crescent moon
traveling light

powerlines
mapping the night sky . . .
galaxies turn

sickbed . . .
in the hallway
a sunbeam

in the piano
all the songs
she never played

winter wind
a secret I wish
I never knew

gibbous moon
beyond the clouds
my unreturned calls

workers
deep in conversation . . .
the muddy river

a long day . . .
field laborers
fasten stars
to the under belly of
a snail shaped moon

giving birth . . .
the spent look in
her face
sowing stars from
a far away field

spring moon
moving closer
to a war

turning away
the soldier's face
deformed

ghosts from the past
shuffle along . . .
Lubyanka station

home from the war
everything the same,
except him

dawn moon—
the farmer checking
possum traps

snowdrifts . . .
the morning moon
is a fist

more snow
nobody notices
my two-day stubble

waning moon
I start to feel like
someone else

