

This Week's Montage

—*The Haiku Capital
of the Midwest*

Comparative Haiku

selected by

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It's surely a fact worth remarking that, according to the 2008 Membership List, there are more HSA members from the town of Dubuque, Iowa, (population 57,250) than there are from roughly half the states in the Union. What's going on here?! It all begins with one of the great names in the short history of English-language haiku: Raymond Roseliep, a priest, a poet, and a professor who taught haiku at Loras College, Dubuque, Iowa, starting in the early '60s. Among his many students was Bill Pauly, who later taught a haiku writing workshop at Loras himself for about twelve years. One of his finest students was Francine Banwarth, who never had the chance to meet Roseliep but as a dedicated non-traditional student served as a role model and inspiration to the younger class members. After Bill left Loras, Francine encouraged him to continue teaching his haiku workshops in informal settings, which continue each spring and fall to this day—the results speak for themselves. As Bill puts it, "We like to refer jokingly to Dubuque as 'the haiku capital of the Midwest' because of its high degree of haiku literacy and per capita incidence of committed haiku writers." This gallery honors the memory of Raymond Roseliep, "the John Donne of haiku," who was born on August 11th; it also identifies another haiku continuity (Roseliep to Pauly to Banwarth) and celebrates the notable achievements of Dubuque haiku.

Bill Pauly (b. 1942)

Raymond Roseliep (1917-1983)

Francine Banwarth (b. 1947)

still night
apple fall
miles away

the old man
awakened by
east moving shade

horn wind
moves the moon over
the poet's grave

noon
swallows
his shadow

branch to branch
the bluejay
brightens rain

silk stockings
rustle
on thistledown

son, the doublemoon's
dancing in our pond and sky:
let's go

from *Wind the Clock by Bittersweet* (High/Coo Press, 1977)

he removes his glove
to point out
Orion

"Old man" I whispered,
arms around my father:
no leaf moved

never expecting
the lilies in November
nor the small coffin

ordering my tombstone:
the cutter has me feel
his Gothic "R"

downpour:
my "I-Thou"
T-shirt

her hourglass figure
in
my father's watch

snow:
all's
new

1 from *Sailing Bones* (The Rook Press, 1978)
2-4 from *Listen to Light* (Alembic Press, 1980)
5-7 from *Rabbit in the Moon* (Alembic Press, 1983)

water calls them
out of the sky
wing-worn geese

river rising . . .
the trees almost touch
their shadows

moon blossoms...
her body prepared
for viewing

sun dogs
on the winter horizon . . .
another body count

spring dawn
in the wheelbarrow
some of the rain

autumn nightfall
dusk in her
silk stockings

slow with his answer
the autumn river keeps
changing colors

1 from *Frogpond* 32.1, 2009; 2-3 from *Modern Haiku* 39.3, 2008; 4 Washington Poets Association Haiku Contest 2007, First Place; 5 from *The Haiku Calendar 2008* (Snapshot Press); 6 from *Modern Haiku* 37.2, 2006; 7 from *Wisteria* 13, 2009, Pinewood Haiku Contest, First Place

Previous Montages

July 26: Birthdays (II)
August 2: Lifefulness

Next Week's Montage: Around the World

Ion Codrescu
K. Ramesh
Bob Lucky