

This Week's Montage

—*Fall Migration*

Comparative Haiku

selected by

Allan Burns

For many of us, birds not only enrich our lives, they put our own existence into perspective. In an instance birds can take us away from our self-centred world, and the more that we experience and understand them, the better we become able to know ourselves, the more vividly we appreciate time and place, the more in tune we become with our planet and our own wild selves. The images of birds we carry with us in our minds and hearts amount to much more than their sensory appearance, much more than their colours and songs. The mere mention of a Barn Owl can evoke the memory of a long, warm summer day finally fading into dusk, suddenly given focus by the glimpse of an owl hunting for voles along a brook. Yet the dramatic and the ordinary, the seemingly significant and insignificant, are equally important. If we manage to take a moment out of our own busy lives, how can we deny the humdrum Starlings caught in the autumn rain, each intent on doing its own thing, each intent on surviving, yet each inextricably connected to the others, and to ourselves?"—John Barlow & Matthew Paul, from the "Introduction" to *Wing Beats: British Birds in Haiku* (Snapshot Press, 2008)

Carole MacRury (b. 1943)

Martin Lucas (b. 1962)

Allan Burns (b. 1966)

brown bird
on a bare brown branch—
but, oh, what a song

lake dusk—
moonlight drips
from the loon's wings

snow geese
break formation
bitter wind

beach nap—
my youth
in the gull's cry

high in the cedar
the third crow
makes such a fuss

60th birthday—
a bird whistles
from the hedge

this paper crane . . .
a death poem released
on the wind

from *In the Company of Crows* (Black Cat Press, 2008)

long shadows
through the quiet schoolyard
the killdeer's cry

facing fine rain
on the upturned boat
a heron, hunched

greener than autumn light
on wind-bent reeds
the teal's wing

twilight: across the lake
distant reeds take the shape
of a bittern

night falls
on the mountain road—
a murder of crows

in and out
of the light between pines
autumn swallows

still screaming
as the fire fades
the swifts

1 from *.. click ..* (Hub Editions, 1998)
2 from *darkness & light* (Hub Editions, 1996)
3–4 from *Wing Beats: British Birds in Haiku* by John Barlow & Matthew Paul (Snapshot Press, 2008)
5 from *Earthjazz* (Ram Publications, 2003)
6–7 previously unpublished

a red-tail's echo . . .
the reservoir the color
of surrounding pines

blue heron
standing at the edge
of the falls

bitter wind—
a crane lands among
thronging cranes

the flycatcher's *wheep*
last sliver of sun
on the ridge

mountain glade
dusky grouse fade
into wilderness

carillon bells
a wedge of cranes
flying south

final ascent
a stonechat lifts
from the heather

1–2 from *New Resonance* 6 (Red Moon Press, 2009)
3 from *The Heron's Nest* 8.2, 2006
4 from *The Heron's Nest* 8.3, 2006
5 from *Simply Haiku* 6.4, 2008
6 from *The Heron's Nest* 10.1, 2008
7 from *Presence* 36 2008

Previous Montages

August 30: One-Liners
September 6: California Dreamin'

Next Week's Montage: Autumn Colors

Natsume Sôseki
vincent tripi
Carolyn Hall