

*This Week's Montage*

—*The Little Truths*

*Comparative Haiku*

selected by

*Allan Burns*

We patronize [animals] for their incompleteness, for their tragic fate of having taken form so far below ourselves. And therein we err, and greatly err. For the animal shall not be measured by man. In a world older and more complete than ours they move finished and complete, gifted with extensions of the senses we have lost or never attained, living by voices we shall never hear. They are not brethren, they are not underlings; they are other nations, caught with ourselves in the net of life and time, fellow prisoners of the splendour and travail of the earth.”—Henry Beston, *The Outermost House* (1928)

“Her haiku voice strikes me as one of an observer speaking the little truths of the observed, but always with a certain added quality of affection.”—Paul MacNeil, “Foreword” to *Shaped by the Wind* by Ferris Gilli (Snapshot Press, 2006)

*Kobayashi Issa* (1763-1828)

*Ferris Gilli* (b. 1943)

*Cherie Hunter Day* (b. 1954)

Having slept, the cat gets up,  
yawns, goes out  
to make love.

Don't worry, spiders,  
I keep house  
casually.

Don't kill that fly!  
Look—it's wringing its hands,  
wringing its feet.

Nursing her child  
the mother  
counts its fleabites.

All the time I pray to Buddha  
I keep on  
killing mosquitoes.

The pheasant cries  
as if it just noticed  
the mountain.

Insects on a bough  
floating downriver,  
still singing.

from *The Essential Haiku*, edited by Robert Hass  
(The Ecco Press, 1994)

wooden bridge  
a nuthatch creeps  
toward its reflection

company coming  
I nudge a little spider  
into its hole

night heat  
nothing moves  
but the gecko's eyes

scorched field  
tufts of rabbit fur  
dot the barbed wire

leafdrift  
the chipmunk's cheek  
full of seeds

the female cardinal  
lowers her crest  
twilight rain

water lapping  
at the path's end  
murmur of moorhens

1 from *The Heron's Nest* 1.1, 1999  
2-4, 6 & 7 from *Shaped by the Wind* (Snapshot Press,  
2006)  
5 from *The Onawa Poems, 1999-2008*, edited by Paul  
MacNeil (Ship Pond Press, 2009)

twilight—  
a mud dauber strokes  
the weathered board

mole crabs  
in the palms of my hands  
the retreating surf

swollen stream  
a tick on new grass extends  
both front legs

a skull no bigger  
than my thumbnail  
jasmine in bloom

her first fossil  
the curve of the creek  
in springtime

spring dark  
pivot in the flight  
of barn swallows

shorter days—  
kink in the end  
of a lizard's tail

1 from *Modern Haiku* 27.1, 1996  
2-5 from *The Horse with One Blue Eye* (Snapshot  
Press, 2006)  
6 from *Frogpond* 29.1, 2007  
7 from *The Heron's Nest* 9.4, 2007

*Previous Montages*

*September 20: Autumn Colors*

*September 27: New England Sketches*

*Next Week's Montage: Looking with the Universe*

Lee Gurga  
Robert Spiess  
Charles Trumbull