

# KOKAKO 32

edited by

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&  
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**Kokako** is a magazine of haiku, tanka, haibun and related genres. It appears twice annually, in April and September.

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**Submissions:** We do not accept simultaneous submissions. Only one submission of up to 8 pieces per poet. **Haibun:** a word count of 400 is preferred. **Reviews:** a word count of 600, including title, publication details and quoted poems is preferred. Notification of acceptance will be made after the closing date of each submission period:

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**For Andre—  
always a smile**

deathbed . . .  
as always a smile  
and ready laughter

last breath  
the length it takes  
to say goodbye

horizon beckons  
a push from the shallows  
and you're on your way

a butterfly high over  
ocean waves  
knowing you're gone

losing a friend  
the wind trails me  
with a fallen leaf

curtain down  
the poet walks off  
with my applause

your kite  
forever colourful  
flies higher

*e-ripples Haiku Group - Barry Smith, Moira Cursey, Elaine Riddell, Jenny Fraser, Adjei Agyei-Baah, Mac Miller, and Celia Hope*

**André Surridge 19.01.1951 - 23.12.2019**

It is with great sadness that I share the news of André's death. Contributors and readers of *Kokako* will know André as a fine writer of haiku, senryu and tanka, but he was much more. André was a very engaging person: open, warm, encouraging, generous and humorous. He was loved greatly by his wife and family; his children and grandchildren appreciated his imagination and the fun they had with him. Family relationships often appear in his work, as in this tanka published in *Kokako* 30.

after speaking  
to grandpa on Skype  
the four-year-old  
says to his mother  
*I really like that guy*

André was born in the United Kingdom in Hull and spent most of his growing up years in Knaresborough. The Yorkshire connection emerged in his work from time to time. In 1972 he moved to New Zealand and lived mostly in Hamilton. His love of haiku, senryu and tanka developed after attending a haiku workshop with Cyril Childs in 2002. Until then André had been known mostly as a playwright. More than 20 of his play-scripts were performed, mainly in the 1990s. His road safety play '*Smashed*' was performed more than 250 times in high schools around New Zealand. André won a number of major awards including the Shell Playwrights' Award (NZ) 1984, the Lantern Theatre Trust Award (UK) 1987 and the Minolta Playwriting Award (NZ) 1995. From 1998 - 2000 André was President of the Playwrights' Association of New Zealand. He also published two small poetry collections in this period and was the founding editor of *Waikato Business News*.

I suspect most *Kokako* readers will know André from the period after 2002 when his writing of haiku, senryu and tanka blossomed. Over the years he was published in many journals and anthologies such as *Kokako*, *Atlas Poetica*, *Modern English Tanka*, *Presence*, *Magnapoets*, *Tanka Splendor*, *Eucalypt*, *Bravado*, *Simply Haiku*, *Prune Juice*, *Ribbons*, *The Heron's Nest*, *paper wasp*, *Modern Haiku*, *Acorn*, *Sketchbook* and *Take Five*. He was regularly placed in competitions and won major awards, including the Katikati Haiku Contest 2004, Elizabeth Searle Lamb Award 2007, Jane Reichhold International Prize 2010 &

2011 and the Janice Bostok International Award 2012. He was chosen as one of the poets featured in *A New Resonance 7: Emerging Voices in English Language Haiku* (Red Moon Press 2011). In 2016 André's tanka about his 'granddaughter in her new pink gumboots' was selected as the first in a 'Poems on Steps' project and was painted on a flight of steps in Moray Place, Dunedin (NZ).

André's writing reflects his personality. He was a careful observer of the natural world and the human world. He accepted people with their quirks and incongruities. Humour was often lurking, but it was laughter alongside, never ridicule. This tanka is from *Eucalypt 21*.

a friend says  
she's on a palomino diet  
I haven't the heart  
to correct her but my laugh  
turns into a whinny

Those of us in Hamilton who met with André regularly feel enormously privileged. We will miss his presence. He was generous and encouraging in commenting on our work and his insight improved our writing. Alongside his humour, there was a deep understanding of the vulnerability and mortality which are part of being human. For years he had to work around health and energy issues, but he was always positive. The following tanka was published in *Presence 64: July 2019*

didn't think  
I'd live long enough to see  
spring return...  
now so many birds  
singing in my heart

I am grateful that André was able to publish, in August 2019, *one hundred petals*, a collection of his haiku. The book launch was four months to the day before his death. I finish with a haiku from that collection.

reminding me that I am dust this shaft of sunlight

André, how we will miss you. You were yourself 'a shaft of sunlight.'

*Elaine Riddell*

first four notes  
the score in his own hand,  
Beethoven

*William Scott Galasso*

emerging  
from lake's mist  
a ballet of black swans

*Catherine Smith*

white and green  
again the snowdrops'  
elegant simplicity

*Giselle Maya*

button bright  
the spring dawn settles  
in a robin's eye

*John Hawkhead*

spring afternoon  
the sweet scent  
of cherry blossom

*Catherine Mair*

playground  
a tiny web catches  
the sun

*Nola Borrell*

nesting swan  
a crack of light seeps  
under our door

*Debbie Strange*

evening breeze  
the buck rabbit preens  
his whiskers

*Margaret Beverland*

spring tryst  
a jasmine tangle  
up the back fence

*Jahan Tyson*

fan dance  
two wattle birds  
catch the breeze

*Hazel Hall*

uncoupled  
the bluets settle on a reed . . .  
a cool breeze

*Chuck Brickley*

flowering frenzy  
the benefits  
of spring rain

*Julie Adamson*

mountain azaleas—  
every kimono rental  
cleaned out

*Sandra Simpson*

softening soil  
stone Buddha's  
tilt

*Anne Elise Burgevin*

mist—  
the wadi  
seething desert rain frog

*Lysa Collins*

a jumble of riverbank fairy wrens

*Gregory Piko*

afternoon sun  
on the wattle trees—  
yellow fire

*Keitha Keyes*

this urge  
to turn and walk away  
chokecherry

*Mary Kendall*

her new shoes  
click clack uphill . . .  
a magpie wolf whistles

*Tom Staudt*

checkout line  
she rocks her unborn baby  
waiting

*Glenys Ferguson*

restaurant  
mom's turn to eat  
pass the baby

*Ronald K. Craig*

two girls dawdle  
from the corner store—  
smell of warm bread

*Barbara Strang*

pigtails flying  
from beneath her helmet  
my telemark girl

*Marcyn Del Clements*

my wall's text student needed

*Linda McCarthy Schick*

breaking surf—  
a scent of wild freesias  
fills the dunes

*Lyn Reeves*

rustle in nikau . . .  
the same breeze  
brushes my cheek

*Jenny Fraser*

dawn chorus  
the thread of their melody  
remains all day

*Marilyn Humbert*

tui flies high  
after flax flower feed  
. . . instant fix

*Barry Smith*

castles of cloud  
an arc of sunlight spins  
from the propeller

*Elaine Riddell*

summer solstice  
new lock on the gate  
of a London square

*Marietta McGregor*

arrival hall—  
on a grey carpet desert  
the first Christmas tree

*Barbara Strang*

Christmas—  
tinsel on the  
parking building pay-station

*Cathie Bullock*

Christmas eve—  
refugees act out  
the role of magi

*Sandra Simpson*

peacock  
placed on stable rooftop  
Christmas crib

*Francis Attard*

unseasonal weather  
an unexpected find  
in my coat pocket

*Carol Reynolds*

rising sea levels  
salt spray  
on the roses

*Julie Adamson*

inrushing tide . . .  
a shoal of fish  
meet it head on

*Carol Reynolds*

dolphins twist  
and flap on the line  
batik sarong

*Celia Hope*

school holidays  
the dog wears a necklace  
of seaweed

*Joanne Watcyn-Jones*

kite board rider  
foiling on surf—  
sunset

*Moira Cursey*

dawn till dusk  
the park jumping pillow  
covered with kids

*Carol Reynolds*

on the trampoline  
your smile going round  
with the child

*Owen Bullock*

children's garden  
pulling carrots  
to see if they're ready

*Glenys Ferguson*

from the balcony  
the sound of laughter  
kookaburras

*Maira Cursey*

smoke-filled sunset  
tattooed women on the kerb  
erupt with laughter

*Sandra Simpson*

overripe banana  
in the windowsill  
waiting to become bread

*Nick Gutierrez*

heat wave . . .  
on bicycles they enjoy  
a head wind

*Celia Hope*

rather than photograph  
the red dust afternoon I read  
Japanese death poems

*Graham Bates*

river gums  
shadows deepen  
the dry creek bed

*Gavin Austin*

more comments . . .  
I water  
the cactus

*Linda McCarthy Schick*

essential oils  
. . . a butterfly unfolds  
its wings

*Cynthia Rowe*

swifts  
pepper the yard  
with their shadows

*Kristen Lang*

seeds ride the wind  
more things  
out of control

*Linda McCarthy Schick*

late in the innings  
dry sandwiches  
tea from a metal urn

*Tony Beyer*

**tennis ball**

*a sequence by Owen Bullock*

two sticks  
propping up the net today—  
hey, this is Wimbledon!

your voice  
15-30  
cross court

playing tennis  
the sun in my eyes . . .  
suddenly grateful

neither of us remembers  
who won the last point . . .  
we play it again

40-15 down  
Rod Laver goes past  
on a bicycle

it's all a glorious mistake . . .  
a cockatoo glides  
overhead

score at 5-6  
the long shadow  
of the tennis ball

\*\*\*\*\*

twilight added to the storyline crickets

*Francis Attard*

summer twilight  
seed pods drape the flame tree  
dried trepang

*Rohan Buettel*

parched berm  
a freshly cut stump  
first full moon

*Graham Bates*

under the path  
tossed over the path  
night echidnas

*Kristen Lang*

parched orchards—  
a hailstorm  
destroys the crop

*Beatrice Yell*

mist-wraiths  
rise from the pavement  
summer rain

*Marilyn Humbert*

cumulus clouds  
a stag looks up from the stream  
antlers dripping

*Chuck Brickley*

D.H. Lawrence  
opens the gamekeeper's trap—  
fox trots free

*Neal Whitman*

the night turns cold  
*Shakespeare In the Park*  
final act

*Roland Packer*

imploring ruru  
answers itself  
wind whistles

*Keith Nunes*

squall weather  
marram seedheads  
spook a seagull

*Marietta McGregor*

shag colony—  
from the highest perch  
the longest shadow

*Margaret Beverland*

your caress  
a turtle's shadow  
on the seagrass

*Gregory Piko*

our last trip  
through the mangrove swamp  
daylight turning on and off

*Lysa Collins*

driving  
against the wind  
back-seat argument

*Seren Fargo*

to find silence  
the astronaut cuts his cord  
. . . floats away

*Barry Smith*

this town  
now a whistle stop  
our teen's friends

*Ronald K. Craig*

missing kids  
on mother's day  
Eggs Benedict

*Jenny Fraser*

trying to stay calm  
searching my backpack  
for the car keys

*Marcyn Del Clements*

laugh-therapy class  
someone in the circle  
yawns

*Seren Fargo*

Hunter Valley break—  
visitors lulled to sleep  
by the new vintage

*Beatrice Yell*

wine glass  
held to her lips . . .  
jealousy

*William Scott Galasso*

another birthday  
where is the girl  
in the mirror

*Margaret Mahoney*

third time widow  
she sparkles  
at the eulogy

*Margaret Mahoney*

moving house  
I pack the last  
memory

*Julie Adamson*

family reunion  
my wife and I find ourselves  
on a creaking bed

*Adjei Agyei-Baah*

morning shadow  
slips across the bedroom  
and stretches

*Mac Miller*

butterfly  
in the football crowd  
neither team's colors

*David Oates*

late autumn haze  
three small blackbirds  
define it

*Bruce Ross*

bamboo rustles  
over its fading shadow . . .  
sparrows' last chirps

*David He*

on the slag heap  
ants moving the pile  
west again

*Kristen Lang*

sfumato clouds  
all the places  
I've never been

*Lyn Reeves*

London born  
can't swim or ride a bike  
moving on

*Mac Miller*

volcano viewing  
a woman on the bus  
offers tangerines

*Marshall Hryciuk*

leap year Galileo moon in orbit

*Francis Attard*

in the kitchen  
tragedienne slicing onions—  
more tears than on stage

*Aspandyad F. Daruvala*

**Found in Four Quartets, T.S. Eliot**

*i. burnt norton*

disturbing the dust  
on a bowl of dead leaves—  
autumn heat

*ii. east coker*

light falls  
across an open field—  
dahlias sleep

*iii. the dry salvages*

shattered lobsterpot  
and the broken oar—  
many voices

*iv. little gidding*

the uncertain hour  
before the morning—  
dead leaves rattled

*Neal Whitman*

a cat's growl  
shatters the stillness  
of a cold night

*David He*

the canada geese  
crane their necks  
a line of question marks

*Elaine Riddell*

the arc  
of a farmer's back  
a poplar's lean

*Anne Elise Burgevin*

ice-pellets  
in the forecast  
bright cone in the clouds

*Marshall Hryciuk*

freezing rain  
your footsteps  
here still

*Nick Gutierrez*

power failure  
a sudden loss of bearings  
in my own house

*Catherine Smith*

power outage  
peeling off long underwear  
by candlelight

*Joshua Gage*

winter fire  
dry twigs of garden sage  
burned for purification

*Giselle Maya*

St. Anthony statue  
catching wayward  
snowflakes

*Nick Gutierrez*

icicles grow  
from the ground up . . .  
rusted gutter

*Debbie Strange*

deep winter night  
through every bedroom window  
a bright star

*Bruce Ross*

deep winter  
not even a cat  
for company

*Joshua Gage*

bronzed shoes  
the Holocaust Memorial  
of those departed

*William Scott Galasso*

small cold chapel  
a lone mourner's breath  
in time with memories

*John Parsons*

vanishing sea grass—  
all that remains  
a dugong carved in stone

*Moirra Cursey*

nurse in uniform  
stands still behind his chair  
wedding photo

*Mac Miller*

after her note  
went through the washer  
he kept the blank paper

*David Oates*

dementia unit  
a resident tracks  
my leaving

*Nola Borrell*

her voice  
now silent  
I stroke my child's hair

*Ronald K. Craig*

the deep sweet  
of magnolia shade  
petals cup the light

*Jahan Tyson*

hall flowers  
the old pallbearer's shoes  
caked with mud

*Chuck Brickley*

country funeral the scent of mothballs

*John Soules*

funeral music  
from the old pipe organ  
an air of dust

*John Hawkhead*

family Bible  
two dates by every name  
but one

*David Oates*

nursing home  
deleting the number  
from speed dial

*John Soules*

finally opening  
mom's urn  
gold dust

*Kath Abela Wilson*

faded toys  
on the child's grave—  
magpie song

*Sandra Simpson*

clearing her effects  
another sweet wrapper  
in the bank statements

*John Hawkhead*

miniature railway  
lines rusting  
until spring

*John Parsons*

eastern brown  
sleeps it off till spring—  
drunkard in a log

*Tony Steven Williams*

waking  
under a kapok tree—  
the silvery vervet's breath

*Lysa Collins*

a lone swan  
beside a grey heron  
compare necks

*John Parsons*

low tide  
following the footprints  
of a gull

*Barbara Strang*

by the fish punt  
old man seal  
sunning his belly

*Lyn Reeves*

peekaboo  
at lovers in the park—  
moon peeping through clouds

*Aspandyad F. Daruvala*

Earth Day  
a car alarm's urgent call  
to no one

*Roland Packer*

Uluru dawn  
the dingo's cry  
trails into daylight

*Gavin Austin*

## Night Sky

(a haiku shuffle)

the colours  
of sunset  
rising together

pale pink and apricot  
a kink in my neck

rising together  
your star and mine

drifting in space

the milky way  
so many things  
need doing

I decide to straighten  
the southern cross

night sky  
the moon  
looks so earthly

drifting in space

sunrise  
is your star  
still there?

*Gregory Piko*

## Hastings Street

ritzy resort  
a beachcomber fossicks  
for lost rings

posh swimming pool . . .  
fake birds to keep  
real birds away

beach festivities  
he wears T-shirt & shorts  
with gold sneakers

fine dining  
mid-meal he talks about  
his health issues

seaside hotel  
one balustrade without  
a pied currawong

private jetty  
the night heron's  
private fishery

crossing the bar  
the tide running  
sideways

*Cynthia Rowe*

drifting cloud  
the wooden boat hoists  
a red sail

*Lorraine Haig*

## Salvos Red Shield collecting

autumn saturday  
a flush of gold  
under gingko trees

empty house  
patches of white paint  
here and there

manicured green lawn  
sounds of raised voices  
upstairs

sapphire eyes  
watch from front window  
persian cat

bronze wind chimes  
aromas of coffee  
and cinnamon

rosy cheeks  
a toddler peeps from  
behind mum's legs

*Catherine Smith*

\*\*\*\*\*

first winter  
kitten claims  
the warm spot

*Anne Elise Burgevin*

## Coleoptera

rediscovering  
a favorite trail  
white lady beetle

*my dance step to avoid  
the darkling beetle*

half-hearted swing  
of her bug net—  
tiger beetle

*scent of gin—  
a little bear beetle  
navigates the gnarled juniper*

tracing the gallery lines  
left by the bark beetle

*lazy drift of clouds  
the predaceous water beetle  
disappears*

Seren Fargo  
*Tanya McDonald*

\*\*\*\*\*

ancient rock face  
super highway  
for ants

*Tom Staudt*

## Wind Sonata

flute sound  
the soft notes  
of a raven.....GG

*wind chimes through willows  
whispering canyon wrens.....mdc*

she plays oboe  
for the  
old crow.....GG

*mockingbird sings  
most of the parts  
Bach Suite.....mdc*

violin solo  
the chickadee's first call.....GG

*wind sonata  
across sea-urchined bluffs  
cry of eagles..... mdc*

Garry Gay (GG)  
& Marcyn Del Clements (mdc)

\*\*\*\*\*

white noise  
between the walls  
alpine valley

*Barry Smith*

## Genoa snapshot

tapestry  
faded facades  
surround the harbour

a city's breath  
its heady mix seeps  
into our skin

umbrella shade  
gulls in an updraught  
eye our lunch

narrow streets  
the sun grazes  
a patch of pavement

bulging walls  
motor bike exhausts  
reverberate

14<sup>th</sup> century galleon  
its bow sprit  
casts a long shadow

African trinkets  
the boys loop and dance  
to catch an eye

heat shimmer  
the ghost of a sailing ship  
on the horizon

*Lorraine Haig*

in the underground  
train station  
images of a bridge

*Rohan Buettel*

town square alley  
on either metal gate side  
a sleeping cat

*Bruce Ross*

scorpion kebabs  
tails and pincers still wiggle  
in the night market

*Doc Drumheller*

tea ceremony  
a woman pours hot water  
on peeing monkeys

*Doc Drumheller*

Tiananmen Square  
writing a haiku inside  
my little red book

*Doc Drumheller*

climbing the Great Wall  
you must go further to see  
how far you can go

*Doc Drumheller*

## Unreal Times

children with placards  
in the streets on behalf  
of mother earth

vanishing rain forest  
blue rivers in the sky

weeping willows  
around the Avon  
still a place of respite

border crossing  
a searchlight scans  
weary faces

smoke from Aussie bush fires  
sending love back to our neighbour

starlit campsite  
refugees huddle around  
burning twigs

*Leslie McKay & Patricia Prime*

drought  
I rescue another beetle  
from the water bucket

*Cathie Bullock*

ongoing drought—  
an excavator moves  
mounds of dust

*Cathie Bullock*

joey

dry dam  
at dawn, its silence  
overflows

smoke haze  
life a lot less  
solid

tall-standing trees . . .  
in an instant the flames  
leap taller

joey  
wide eyes peer from  
a firey's jacket

bushfire sky  
my great-grandson says  
*when I grow up . . .*

a heart  
drawn large in the sand  
ash-filled tide

*Jan Dobb*

\*\*\*\*\*

trees  
without shadows  
fire trucks

*Joanne Watcyn-Jones*

more high rises  
along the pristine coast  
Country mourns  
remembering a time when  
softer footprints roamed this land

*Rachel Colombo*

heavy footprints  
decimate our corals  
as the oceans warm  
can we escape the boiling pot  
before it is too late?

*Rachel Colombo*

his brow  
is rutted  
as the parched land . . .  
hope flies with dust  
beyond his fenced despair

*Gavin Austin*

browning hills  
the Fire Risk sign  
a notch higher

*Cathie Bullock*

bushfires  
the crunch of leaves  
underfoot

*Cynthia Rowe*

for weeks  
bushfire smoke  
chokes the city . . .  
firefighters fall to their knees  
as our country burns

*Joanne Watcyn-Jones*

smoke haze  
and a blaze of bushfires  
between us  
our love arrows through,  
targeting your safe return

*Beverley George*

across the world  
quilting groups sew up pouches  
for orphaned joeys  
rescued from the fires  
that engulfed their mob

*Rachel Colombo*

firestorm . . .  
polishing gran's silver  
to forget

*Cynthia Rowe*

blackout  
down the tindery canyon  
Diablo wind

*Roland Packer*

## By bicycle to Elsie's

*caution: narrow path*  
a metal cross furrows cloud

in stalled traffic  
his peach-print gear and socks . . .  
we move forward

porch step  
chimes ask *may we meet?*  
two doors gauge

her cheekbones  
the contoured handles  
of knife-bright eyes

*Mira Walker*

## Diminishing Returns

an old painter  
starry night greets him  
everywhere he goes

*view from the window*  
*St. Remy to Yasaka*  
*one night, one sky*

Kuni Shimizu  
*Neal Whitman*

## Winter Stars

winter stars her freezing hands in fingerless gloves  
at lock-up time the padlock won't snap to  
just before the doors close with a crying baby shopping for  
nappies  
tears of hilarity at the Monty Python re-runs  
clay pigeon shoot man in the moon shows up with bow &  
arrows  
a hunter feeds his dogs with fish & chips

morning mist they jog around the park in tandem  
her wrinkled fingers caress their wedding photo  
viewing the Dorothea Lange exhibition slowly  
we give up hope on a 1000-piece jigsaw  
the audience bored by a pathetic number on the outside stage  
crowded with tourists our favourite swimming hole  
escape to the country they toast the success of their new B&B  
puss out in the straw licks her just-born kittens

something of life with a difference wolf moon in eclipse  
a quiet night before army service tomorrow  
hot sunrise steeping the black tea far too long  
morning sun and shadow across the herb garden  
fragrance and buzz in the flowering orchard grandpa  
a balloon vendor breathes spring air

*Patricia Prime (nz) 1, 7, 12, 17 ;*

*Dick Pettit (dk) 2, 6, 11, 16;*

*Marianne Kiauta (nl) 3, 8, 16, 19 ;*

*Vanessa Proctor (aul) 4, 9, 13, 18 ;*

*Francis Attard (mt) 5, 10, 15, 20.*

## Spring Ahead

*first day of spring  
i drink the scent of a thousand  
violets  
reciting poems, pruning roses  
water is abundant now*

my childhood  
spent smelling my mother's  
lilac bushes . . .  
flowers in the pink-lavender—  
blue range charmed our senses

*your hands  
and mine have created  
this garden  
of herbs and flowers  
pheasants and foxes visit us*

scent of roses  
and the song of a blackbird  
from branch to branch  
of the old apple tree  
once again full of blossom

*into the nick of time  
we spread our wings  
taking off  
spring meadows of  
unimagined connections*

a lemon butterfly  
settles on the violets  
growing in the yard . . .  
I pick a handful of flowerets  
to add to our April salad

*Giselle Maya & Patricia Prime*

## Creating Sunshine

each breath  
like shards of broken glass  
this morning  
out walking I count  
the days until Spring

*twin trees  
of palest pink blossom  
trunks encircled  
with white daffodils—  
crying from the double pram*

outside my window  
an act of urban terrorism—  
a mob  
of marauding sparrows  
on the newly seeded lawn

*“summertime  
and the living is easy”  
swimming along  
amused by the grandkids—  
seize the day, seize the day*

a small girl  
in rain hat and rubber boots  
splashes joyously  
creating her own sunshine  
—that’s what puddles are meant for

Jan Foster & Amelia Fielden

morning after rain—  
a wild boar appears  
pausing the frogs' song  
but the birds  
but the birds

*Adjei Agyei-Baah*

morning harmony  
shatters into drama  
feathers fly . . .  
leader of the pack  
fights for supremacy

*Crys Smith*

exam room  
distant squeals  
of luckier pupils  
playing tigg  
on the netball courts

*Tony Beyer*

hands around  
the bat handle  
captains choose  
their teams from  
better to worse

*Tony Beyer*

how I admire you  
leaning on your cane  
every muscle  
fights for territory  
defying the timelord

*Tony Steven Williams*

summer sun  
on my back—  
his bright smile  
on that brown face  
burned into my memory

*Tom Staudt*

crimson stamens  
blown into  
curbs  
Christmas  
without your spirit

*Jenny Fraser*

the birds  
got to the plums  
before us—  
evidence dropped  
all over our washing

*Keitha Keyes*

red light traffic  
a junky washes  
my windscreen  
with dirty water  
and ask for money

*Adjei Agyei-Baah*

green river stone  
kept in a bowl of water  
for thirsty creatures  
summer companion  
of a green clay frog

*Giselle Maya*

slow tide of night  
sweeps over  
you can hear  
the native birds  
hold their breath

*Keith Nunes*

tiger moth  
on the back door  
sleeps through  
each opening  
and closing

*Graham Bates*

a laughing frog  
from the sunroom  
there's no rain  
he must have moved with me  
in a pot plant

*Lorne Henry*

a tiny orange pansy  
decorates the plate  
adding joy  
to my choice of lunch  
—I smile back at it

*Crys Smith*

he waits  
by the supermarket door  
*goodbye mummy*  
small girl gets out of a car  
runs over and hugs him

*Celia Hope*

magic  
in your sweet heart  
rewarewa  
exhales a sentient thought  
“worship me” she says

*Ken Anderson*

taj mahal  
arises from our dirt road  
we laughed  
then it sold for millions  
. . . crows perch on for-sale signs

*Ken Anderson*

each evening  
black cockatoos feast  
on macadamias  
with dessert of nectar  
from silky oak blooms

*Lorne Henry*

women's voices  
echo in the stairwell—  
two octogenarians  
watch sundown  
from their armchairs

*Anne Curran*

our fingers  
scented with tobacco,  
we hand-roll  
mom's smokes and sing  
long into the night

*Debbie Strange*

three sisters  
wrapped in a quilt  
of belonging  
on the porch swing,  
we leave space for her . . .

*Debbie Strange*

had you lived  
we'd almost be twins,  
two sisters  
so close in time  
we nearly touched

*Mary Kendall*

beachcombers . . .  
we bow low  
as the sea  
surrenders  
a child's barrette

*Marilyn Ashbaugh*

I pluck another petal  
from my daisy chain  
of love and loss  
and bury it deep  
waiting patiently for rain

*Joanna Ashwell*

summer day's end  
sadness holds me  
regrets slip past  
the breeze promises  
an unknown

*Margaret Mahoney*

the petals fall  
from late summer roses . . .  
she struggles  
to the station with a case  
of carefully packed dreams

*Gavin Austin*

that song  
I knew I'd never forget  
what was it  
that entered my dreams  
but left my memory

*Lorne Henry*

time—  
it has gathered  
all our words  
and poured them  
into star-flowers

*Joanna Ashwell*

variegated  
life leaves  
its marks on us  
from beginning  
to end

*Kath Abela Wilson*

as silent as the mountains  
as deep as  
shadows of the night  
I hear her wisdom  
singing in my heart

*Anne Curran*

the slow hiss  
and sudden pop  
of a pinecone in fire—  
admitting the mistake  
is a first step

*Mary Kendall*

we fly  
down the streets . . .  
howling  
at the wolf moon  
we wander the stars

*Marilyn Ashbaugh*

rough sleeper  
packing case bed  
newspaper sheets—  
so many stories  
beneath their headlines

*Tony Steven Williams*

stars frozen  
in a black velvet sea  
this outback night  
the wind's song calls  
wanderers to corroboree

*Marilyn Humbert*

reflection  
after the service  
awakens ghosts  
flitting through earlier times  
. . . tears wring my heart

*Lois Holland*

great great  
grandfather's grave  
my son adds  
another great  
for his generation

*Tony Beyer*

driving past  
the foot of the mountain—  
I look up  
to see visitors bowed  
at headstones of loved ones

*Anne Curran*

snow squall warning  
on the weather channel  
tonight  
I set out the essentials  
axe, flashlight and corkscrew

*John Soules*

I carefully balance  
my snow globe  
the fragility of a tilt  
that releases wonder  
for both of us to share

*Joanna Ashwell*

## Wild Canaries

I'm travelling on the coach from Sydney International Airport to Canberra. Now in Australia. Drifting backwards in time. Still feeling not quite home.

September  
yellow wattles all along  
the highway  
that's speeding my return  
from summer in Seattle

between seasons  
between continents  
I've forgotten  
the eye-catching brightness  
of wattle trees in full bloom

Determined not to succumb to jet lag by taking an afternoon nap, I stroll with my dog around our suburban streets and parklands.

rebel wattle  
wavering, struggling to fly  
with spring winds,  
like a golden cloud  
of wild canaries

*Amelia Fielden*

\*\*\*\*\*

fanning out  
its yellow head-dress  
the cockatoo  
reaches forward to catch  
the dog's wagging tail

*Joanne Watcyn-Jones*

## For Creatures of the Wild

I am not  
a true believer  
yet I pray  
at this fiery time  
for creatures of the wild

long ago  
you saved each species  
in an ark  
how many will survive  
in this dense red smoke?

I'm told you see  
a tiny sparrow slip  
from the sky  
will you notice feathers  
singed as black as pitch?

you who know  
how a nail wound feels  
will you tend  
the smallest creatures?  
bandage blistered feet?

where are you  
when you're needed most  
still here?  
I'll think I've found you  
in human volunteers

*Hazel Hall*

## Autumn Days

Giselle Maya (Fr) &  
Jann Wirtz (UK)

ancestral village  
empty swallows' nests under  
Roman roof tiles  
have they flown South already  
I miss their graceful presence

*a sudden change  
oaks golden amid the grey greens  
the sky low and dark  
only the mulberry tree  
still bright in the cold rain*

red-blooming twigs  
of the pineapple sage  
no frost yet  
to wilt the white dahlias  
first oak wood fire to warm us

*the blaze  
of dogwood and sumac  
crackle of logs  
these melancholy months  
as we move away from the sun*

I pick  
a late-blooming calendula  
*ominaheshi*\*  
on the white rattan chair  
tiger cat with dew on his fur

*Aquadulce  
push through the earth  
Jackdaws  
on the great ploughed field  
face into the wind*

note: *ominaheshi* - the seven flowers of autumn

\*\*\*\*\*

## Questing

wingbeats airborne  
a Pacific Black duckling  
bellyflops . . .  
stripes bold then pale  
the mixed grace of a child

wood ducks  
mum and dad in block print  
watercolour chicks . . .  
still this tentative blur  
from my parents' hard lines

ink brushed swan  
her curve intent  
patterns stream . . .  
words ripple my page  
in an arc of meaning

*Mira Walker*

## Silent Tableaux

Anne Benjamin & Jan Foster

homemade pumpkin soup  
and conversation with friends  
on a cold grey day  
early wattle blooming  
along the railway track

*in the shade  
beneath the apple tree  
drifting  
I listen to the world  
adding nothing to its noise*

for one moment  
a silent tableau: young men  
shuttlecock mid-flight  
a flap of cockatoos  
stencilled on the sky

*a lone surfer  
afloat on his board  
watching  
dawn light whisper  
over the water*

each day  
she scrutinises  
the out-stretched branches  
for that first white blossoming  
faith in her recovery

## Afterwards . . .

two little girls  
watch their grandmother  
lowered  
into her grave . . .  
how much do they understand

her pretty slippers  
at the foot of their bed  
the widower  
can't bear to move them  
—a step too hard to take

how long  
is long enough  
to grieve . . .  
people tell me  
it's time to move on

*Keitha Keyes*

\*\*\*\*\*

suddenly  
you are no longer . . .  
starlings crowd the edges  
a searing scar  
shaken and salted with tears

*Marilyn Ashbaugh*

winter sparrows  
fill the bamboo  
with their thin song  
the twilight  
lights a flame

*David He*

## In Memoriam

**Steven Carter**  
**1943-2019**

Those of us who came to know Steven Carter well already miss his exuberance, virtuosity and warmth. Steven was extremely prolific, having published more than a score of books in just the past decade, primarily through Alba Publishing in the UK, and Red Moon Press in the United States. He took his materials from his personal experiences, which were wide-ranging indeed, including stints as a Fulbright scholar and university professor (in Europe and the US). He was son, husband, father and grandfather, wit, raconteur, polymath and oenophile. He was garrulous and friendly, and at the same time private and introspective. His concerns ranged from the concentration camps of Poland to his personal health, from his belief he was the reincarnation of Catullus to his boyhood on Emerson Street in 1950s Palo Alto, all of which and much else he turned into books of poetry, and in some instances several. Most of all, he did it with charm and grace, and left us wanting more. And we do.

*Jim Kacian*  
*Editor of Red Moon Press*

## Interlude I

*Steven Carter*

Full of repose, the pine grove behind our lake house impatiently waits for twilight to darken needles and branches, even the wind.  
Pale as moonflowers and as cold, tendrils of fog caress clear cut patches of pine-stumps down the Mission Mountain foothills.  
A birch log pops in the fire, loud as a gunshot. Outside, the last iridescent hummer of the day checks out a hummingbird feeder, dry for five summers.  
And my two-year-old grandson turns in his sleep, laughing.

my 68<sup>th</sup>  
pale violet  
morning twilight

From *book of dreams*, Red Moon Press, 2012.

## Godwit on Ruapehu

It will be a long journey south. You, kuaka, excited, have joined with friends. You form a group, talk, your common purpose understood—leave from the arctic when the pattern seems right—wind, the sun inclined, body primed. The day arrives and you reach into the air—climb, share the lead in a way that cyclists in a peloton understand, bills outstretched, pectorals pumping, arrowing forward—target ahead.

Day turns into night—night to day—night, day—you journey on—you become smaller—fat depletes. The long white cloud appears before you, your destination ever further south. The weather thickens, the air grows cold. You friends grow faint, appear and disappear—you call—there is no reply. You drive onwards. The wind buffets.

godwit flies  
in total whiteout  
. . . snow ahead

The mountaineer stops. Before him a bird, a corpse—its bill imbedded in snow. He sees its tatty feathers—its thin body—the story. He sheds a sigh.

*Barry Smith*

*Based on the paper, Battley and Horn (2006) A high-altitude bar-tailed godwit (Limosa lapponica) on Mt Ruapehu, North Island, New Zealand Notornis, 53: 381-383*

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the joy  
of reaching the summit  
is short-lived—  
bitter winds chase us  
off the mountain top

*Elaine Riddell*

## Whiteout

We're in the mist, plodding uphill through soft snow. It's winter in the Victorian high country and we're training for our first climbing trip to New Zealand. The tiger B is teaching us; the NZ Alpine Club is concerned that Aussie climbers are dying over there.

The slope flattens and doesn't seem to go up any further. I can only see a few yards; it must be the summit of Mt Feathertop. B is moving around. He says: "Hey look fellers, there's a cornice here!" Suddenly I am alone in the cloud; my laughing, chatting friends have disappeared. I'm lying in the snow on the edge of a white cliff. The cornice has broken off at my feet; I must have pushed my ice axe into the snow with a reflex action. Attached to it is the rope and on the other end I can just see my climbing partner.

She is about 20 feet down, sobbing and hysterical. I shout to her and somehow get her to scramble out. What to do now? The other three are gone. Should I go down the cliff and look for them? But N is shocked and getting cold. I decide to take her back to the hut, then go and search for the others.

So we walk down off the summit, keeping well away from the corniced ridge. At a saddle we pause to adjust something. Then through swirling mist and snow I see three dim figures moving slowly up towards us. We hug each other. They are bruised, their clothing is torn, and their rope has snapped. But they have survived a thousand-foot fall. We retreat down to the hut, and back to Melbourne.

Within a year or two we graduate and disperse. Decades later I read in the newspaper about a cornice "accident" at Mt Feathertop. A climbing instructor is buried under tons of snow, and his body cannot be found.

snow melt . . .  
bleached bones  
in the tussock

*Gerry Jacobsen*

## **Journey**

I travel over snow and ice, through deserts and forests. I fly or sail, ride or walk. At times my journey is easy, at others full of danger and difficulty. Rest and accommodation along the way is luxurious, make-shift or downright uncomfortable. I am either clean and refreshed or unwashed and aching.

I have trekked  
over mountains and plains  
braved seas  
camped under blazing stars,  
all in the pages of my books

How can I tell you of the companions I have met, the dear friends I have made and the sorrow of my partings with them? Books are priceless gifts. You can snatch quiet moments, leave dull routine, learn new things. How lucky can you be?

lost  
in another time  
or place . . . I unlock myself  
to new ideas

*Lois Holland*

## **Homeland**

They came in crowds. No fence, no barriers. They knew they were home. Then the paths over the hills right to the cliffs, the sea. Then the naming and pointing. Making history. Finally, barriers were set. Borders, hedges, walls, buildings, traffic on land and in the sky. Wildflowers . . .

deep in a garden  
the mourning dove  
never leaves

*Kath Abela Wilson*

## The Bach

The Catchpool Track is alive—not with birds—but walkers and runners, dogs and babies. A woman, dismayed in a powder-blue suit, fastens her eyes on the track. Orongorongo River gained, the crowd abruptly dwindles. The branching track, Big Bend, grows steeper. The river offers a more hazardous route to Mt Matthews. And there it is, *The Bach*, surrounded by summer-tired tawa, kamahi and ragwort hosting cadamin caterpillars. Bush-green and private with packed woodshed, ensuite basin at the door, concrete chimney a wonder. And up a long track, a dunny with a red seat, open to the view.

We pull off our boots, claim bunks, boil the billy, explore. Soon we have a collection of striated rocks, heart-shaped stones, a doubtful fossil. On the Whakanui track three dead possums, strangely beautiful, lie near the 'protect kiwi' sign. We make much of a lone morepork in the moonlight, a passing fantail. Somewhere, kiwi—we hope—but unseen, unheard. At night surrounded by stillness, we play noughts and crosses with quartz pebbles, make up new words to 'London's Burning', compete in rummikub and scrabble. The driftwood fire in the big fireplace is our centre. Two small blonde heads concentrate, long-handled forks clinging to trembling marshmallows and anticipation.

mantel hole  
a native bee closes  
the door

*Nola Borrell*

## Bees

Night falls into the ground. I walk through dark velvet, through the perfume of closing flowers. The children are waiting with stories for me to read of adventure and animals. Tonight, their parents move the bees into tomorrow's harvest. Night ticks tranquilly soft and warm. The bees are not disturbed.

the beekeeper's bride  
a taste of honey

*Catherine Mair*

## **Our Country**

The weather in Spain was hot. After 10 days we needed a laundry. We hoped there would be one at our country accommodation.

Our host handed us a bag and told us to have our washing to the front desk by 4 o'clock.

A woman from the village, Maria Jesus would collect that day, and return the following day. Just what we needed.

This would keep us going until we arrived home —

another prayer answered—  
on our lawn, banded rail  
and four chicks

*Margaret Beverland*

## **Travelling To Mauau**

Tauranga Harbour spread out—  
a blue satin gown  
sequined with sunshine.

**A good catch**  
glints in the eyes  
of the fisherman perched like a  
scarecrow on the bridge at  
Maungatapu.

*Catherine Mair*

## A Gracious Farewell

Our group of six travellers arrive late to Meiji-Mura theme park, in Inuyama, Japan. It's closing time, in fact. Our guide makes conciliatory gestures at the ticket office and we are admitted with firm warnings that we can walk in for only 15 minutes. Glimpse the place. Return another time.

The park incorporates buildings planned by various international architects. We learn that the large Imperial Hotel before us was designed by Frank Lloyd Wright and originally built in Tokyo. Later, due to the increasingly faulty conditions of soil and foundations, it was dissembled and painstakingly and accurately reconstructed here in this theme park.

So much to see, but for now, it is hurry, hurry. Look around you. Make the most of this unofficial time.

Thirty minutes have gone by. Forty-five.

No harsh bells ring. No whistles sound. Not one harsh voice is raised

the strains  
of "Auld Lang Syne"  
surround us,  
their unsung message  
clear and to be heeded

We walk back up the long sloping road to the exit and enter our minibus, smiling.

*Beverley George*

\*\*\*\*\*

wispy clouds in stripes  
across a sepia moon  
a Japanese silk print  
hanging on a  
shadowed wall

*Keith Nunes*

## Inevitability

I thought I would ask the question. “Would you be able to write a prescription for some anti-inflammatory tablets to ease my troublesome arthritis? I’m a reluctant ‘pill-popper’ but feel I need some help”.

My GP looked at me with kind eyes and said . . . “Unfortunately, we don’t recommend that medication for elderly patients because of the possible complication of kidney damage”. I was shocked. Not about the kidney damage but by the use of the term *elderly*.

“What is *elderly*?” I asked.

On looking at the date of birth on my records in front of him, he nodded slowly, smiled and said . . . “Sadly, you have reached that certain number when we consider the term clinically appropriate”.

impulse buy  
lace-trimmed knickers  
in black

*Glenys Ferguson*

## Prey

A silent chamber of Rome's Galleria Borghese. A dynamic tableau. The lithe young man overtakes a startled girl at a flat-out run. His expression is avid, expectant. She flinches away but he's determined. Clutches at her body with a predatory hand. Her appalled look. Her cry for her father. She's changing now. Her lovely slender form melting. Unfamiliar sinuous shapes—fingers into leafy twigs, toes rootlets, breasts cloaked in bark. In glowing translucent carrara, Gian Lorenzo Bernini catches the exact moment when Apollo thinks he has won. The horror on the river nymph Daphne's delicate white face shouts out she knows her life in human form is over and she will henceforth be a tree.

a horned owl  
mistimes its swoop  
night-dark laurel

*Marietta McGregor*

## Lingering

Of course I had to see him. The man who had nursed me, taught me to tell the time, ride a bike, ride a horse. Told me stories, showed me sunsets, travelled the back-roads, encouraged an appreciation of nature.

‘Don’t leave me here,’ he pleaded. His eyes a wet washed-out blue. ‘I have money for a taxi,’ he added urgently.

‘When you are stronger,’ I promised. ‘They will take good care of you. Just stay till then,’ I cajoled. My eyes velvet trustworthiness as betrayer and the betrayed faced off in crippling checkmate.

he lingers still  
where the evening star appears  
on the hilltop  
his voice soft in the light rain  
that gently veils the valley

*Gavin Austin*

\*\*\*\*\*

the ringing chorus  
of early rising birds  
cheers the day  
with crystal flute and descant—  
he can no longer hear them

*Lois Holland*

fallen  
beneath the jacaranda  
this azure carpet  
an annual reminder  
of my loss

*Jan Foster*

## Chic

Her wig is excellent. Braided beneath a black cap with leggings and a Wu-Tang tee, Marlia is Ghetto Fabulous. Not a visible trace of her year of torturous chemotherapy that failed. No evidence of the agonising radiotherapy that didn't quite take. Blastoma is a childhood cancer so her treatments are at the Children's Hospital; all primary colours and tiny, tired and pale faces.

She never discusses her treatments. We don't talk about our hopes for the experimental medication she will begin and no one notes the wig. It is taken for granted that her hair is darker, longer and regular in its weft. Our table conversation is light and loving but each of us recognises the fragile gravity beneath us feels like the floorboards are made of delicate glass.

his daughter's room  
a collection  
of wigs and new hats –  
chemotherapy chic  
leaving him dishevelled

*Jahan Tyson*

\*\*\*\*\*

outside I hear  
random carolling  
through the smoke  
the way that magpies  
live in the moment

*Hazel Hall*

my heart  
yearns for a new life  
as willows bud  
the rising sun  
warms my face

*David He*

## Reviews

### ***Summer Haiku, by Owen Bullock***

*Recent Work Press, Canberra, 2019, ISBN 9780648404279*  
(paperback), 60pp, \$A8.95

*Reviewed by Tony Beyer*

I don't seem to use the word *verve* very often in conversation these days, but it's the first one that springs to mind when reading Owen Bullock's haiku. He is an expert at using the simplest available means to ignite a sense of magic in his and the reader's regard for the world we all inhabit. While earlier books have shown him to be an acute observer and communicator, *Summer Haiku* more deeply engages the speaking self in the enactments it evokes.

Although he is without doubt one of the poets in the forefront of writing haiku in this part of the world, Bullock's characteristic utterance is as distinguished by its modesty as by its insight. These qualities make him an ideal model for beginning and established practitioners to listen to with care. None of his images is ever casual or perfunctory. His quiet, wry humour is nearly always deployed at his own expense.

hot pools  
the arms  
float

This is one of many examples which demonstrate Bullock's strategy of trusting simplicity to produce imaginative richness, allowing the reader in to participate in the experience, rather than offering a summary or recount. Other voices also have their place:

*the river went*  
*da da da da da all night long*  
the little girl says

The setting of a family camping in relatively primitive circumstances (the haiku were written over three summers), gives texture and occasion for the poems. Some of it is engagingly familiar:

fifth night camping  
we find  
the pillows

An atmosphere of openness, accessibility of mind and the five senses pervades the book and the experiences of its inhabitants, so the reader feels very readily included.

Excitement – which is possibly an Occidental term for enlightenment – arises invariably from Bullock’s accurate word choice:

under water  
the stream bed  
peppered with leaves

Here, the visual and the piquant are effectively combined by “peppered”. Other options like “scattered”, “mottled”, “flavoured”, or “dappled”, would cut out one or the other.

Bullock’s attention to the physical presence of words on the page is also refreshing; something new, too, stemming from experiments with other literary forms in his poetry. Sometimes, this is an opportunity for playful consideration, as in the stretched spacing of “i n c h w o r m”, or it is an adjunct to consistently reliable line breaks.

With agreeable eccentricity, the second section of the book is called ‘Winter Haiku’, but the alertness and vigorous presence of outlook is undimmed:

whispering  
so as not to disturb  
the stream

Carefully stepped in their layout on the page, the lines in this part of the book are more meditative than celebratory, although they echo and at times rephrase perceptions from the earlier haiku. Thus, the general and to some extent wistful

often  
as we get older  
tears in our eyes

is recalled more specifically by

she calls me cute  
tears come easily  
this winter holiday

Belonging to a community, accounting for other levels of intelligence at work, adds to the cumulative strength of the collection.

An attractive small book from Canberra's Recent Work Press, *Summer Haiku* is both a treasure to read, re-read and keep, and a primer of a fine haiku poet's absorption in the natural and human world. Its quirky moments

teeth marks  
in the soap  
hedgehog-sized

are matched by a profounder willingness to address the mystery and delight of existence

yellow butterfly  
from piece of air  
to piece of air

How exhilarating it is that the insect and the poet take us with them.

***Rough Cut: Thirty Years of Senryu by William Scott Galasso.***  
Galwin Press (2018). 137pp. Laguna Woods, CA, USA.  
ISBN: 978-1-7327527-1-9. Includes related material and photos.  
\$12.95 US via Amazon.com

*Reviewed by Patricia Prime*

William Scott Galasso's latest collection, *Rough Cut*, has the by-line "Thirty Years of Senryu". Senryu is a close relation to haiku, and Galasso uses the form to share his observations on human nature through its arc from birth to death and in-between. *Rough Cut* is an extraordinary work of over 125 pages from an original and gifted writer. It begins with the beautiful verse:

high school flame  
held to my heart

her baby sleeps

The senryu in the collection have a three-line form and tend to be presented in the short-long-short pattern, though there are one or two one-line poems. Several contain a seasonal indication, while others focus on the human element, such as this clear and direct poem in which the widow wishes to remember her husband's scent by sleeping in one of his shirts:

one-year widow  
she sleeps in his shirt  
for the last time

Galasso's senryu are refreshing, original and entertaining in their juxtapositions, as in these two examples:

Easter Sunday	crossroads . . .
her hand clasps mine	get home or
. . . resurrection	get gone

Several senryu made me smile and some use modern jargon:

bomb blast—  
peace proposal headlines,  
splattered with blood

The poet goes deeper in his more political pieces, such as we find in these two samples:

collateral damage  
words liberators apply  
to dead children

Memorial Day . . .  
beside cross, crescent, star  
same flag

Deeply skilled and forcefully honed, *Rough Cut* offers to take us deep into politics, the human psyche, and nature, continuously pointing out the beautiful but uneasy territory, line by line. This is a collection that addresses the author's concerns amid the complexities of the world, the sensuality of the present, and the anxiety of self deeply aware of his connection to the world. He expands the scope of the senryu genre with his wonderful recall and imagination that has created a book which will be useful for anyone interested in reading or writing this genre.

***a turn in the river by Brad Bennett, Winchester, VA., USA.***  
redmoonpress. (2019). Pb, ISBN 978-1-94271-44-9. Price: \$15.

*Reviewed by Patricia Prime*

For poet, Brad Bennett, the world is his oyster—the source of exploration, inspiration and creation. He uses it as his testing ground, taking his reader walking through conservation areas, wildlife refuges, national parks and Japanese gardens.

The following majestic haiku makes a connection between the silence of the poet's day and the presence of a single moth:

silence . . .  
a few dots  
on the moth's wing

The haiku *in a turn in the river* address a wide range of subjects, such as: a missing plank in a boardwalk, a toddler with a minnow bucket, a kiss, a nail gun, a crowded train and the changing seasons. Throughout the collection, Bennett's keen powers of observation and his responses to nature and human nature make for remarkable haiku, as in the following example:

the school garden scarecrow  
wears a tutu

The haiku that lends itself to the book's title is an insightful and subtle commentary on the interplay between the river and its swans:

a turn  
in the river  
preening swan

Several of the haiku feature children: a first grader, a child's grin, a fourth grader, the kids call, the baby's staring, and the delightful

spring recess  
the chains of her swing  
parallel the ground

The haiku in this collection are plainly yet profoundly expressed. From children to middle age, from memory to experience, there's a link on which this collection sheds its light. *a turn in the river* will be cherished by haiku readers, but also by anyone who appreciates brief moments of experiences of people, places and things.

***field of stars by Lyn Reeves. Tasmania, Australia***  
Walleah Press (2019). RRP: AUS\$29.50. Pb. 89pp.,  
ISBN: 978-1-877010-91-0.

*Reviewed by Patricia Prime*

The cover of Lyn Reeves' book *field of stars* shows an image of a landscape and the night sky full of golden stars. This delightful and beautifully produced book is a worthwhile read on several levels. It is a warm, finely observed and human account of life, nature and human nature.

Each page features one or two haiku, which may, or may not, reflect each other in some way. Reeves hints at this structure on the second and third pages where the setting of the haiku follows daybreak, a bush walk and the scent of freesias:

snow melt  
the scent of freesias  
opening

Reeves is at her best in those haiku relating to childhood and the garden:

the child shows me  
his secret garden—  
weeds in flower

Allowing only three lines in which to express ideas, the haiku exude wit and playfulness, as the poet's use of an assortment of images make the results seem effortless, as in the following haiku:

tea arbour  
the sound of running water  
stills all thoughts

Reeves' genuine passion for, and evocation of the Australian landscape, is evident in her haiku and *field of stars* takes this to a new level. At the heart of the collection are her observations on nature. Reeves presents us with material that could be gleaned from other sources, however, her connection with her subject matter is personal. She is light-hearted and informed in her language and style:

orphaned joey  
tries to climb into  
its mother's cold pouch

on the patio  
possum prints  
in apricot juice

The poet explores not only the language of nature but also her personal life, as in the following haiku:

goodbye hug  
her scent on my jacket  
all the way home

The book forms an engaging, evocative and emotionally charged summation of Reeves' experiences of nature, of ordinary and extraordinary scenes of Australian life and other topics. The collection is a wonderful summation of a poet's experiences and her powers of

observation. The reader is taken inside the experiences of this fine poet and her haiku and it is a helpful means of exploring her world. It's an easy read and there are many ways into the poetry. Their imagery is strongly sensual, accurate and personal. Reeves is a particularly keen and clear-eyed observer of nature and human nature. It is only when we are able to follow the complete arc of her writing in this collection, that we understand the scope of her talent.

***ostrich stride: 50 haiku by Kurt Westley***,  
Red Moon Press, Winchester VA, 2019  
ISBN 978-1-947271-47-0, 60pp, \$US15

*Reviewed by Tony Beyer*

A handsome small book as usual from Red Moon Press, *ostrich stride* (typographically intriguing title) contains fifty single-line verses, each set in the middle of the landscape-layout page. This format allows space around the text for individual consideration, but also suggests a cumulative continuity.

Whether in humour or haiku, one-liners place an extra burden of pressure on their originator: they have to be succinct and exact, bite fast, and remain in the memory. It's to Kurt Westley's credit that he shows his workings, groping towards if not always attaining these ideals.

He is strangely at his best when by spacing or punctuation he divides his line into a more conventional three-part haiku. For example,

where the path forked    the haiku I forgot to write    between the rattlesnake's tongue

is excellent, powerful and memorable, and incidentally one of several evocations of reptiles as representatives of estranged nature throughout the book.

Similar pacing recurs with

ice highway...injured red fox staggers upslope...distant sirens

In this case, the final ellipsis hints at further consequence or developing narrative. Quite often there is a sense of incompleteness, as if the lines are fragments of a longer work or unacknowledged sequence, rather than

independent pieces in themselves. Having it both ways doesn't always come off; sometimes Westley needs to join the dots.

In other places, problems arise from lines too packed with words, lines breaking down into telegraphese because of missing articles, and an occasional indulgence in distracting alliteration. At least two of these faults occur in

crow snatches a single red berry amidst the zoo's feuding flamingos...

This is all right as a colour swatch, but seems random in direction. Readers might prefer fewer words in

snapper shell ferries full moon across wet tarmac all night long...

I read this and several of its companions as a reasonable description, complicated by both too much and too little explanation.

Other reviewers have remarked on Kurt Westley's establishment of a unique, distinctive voice, which may be true, but not on this showing or in this awkward mishandling of genre. Poems of any sort need conciseness and precision, leaving out decisions about word choice before they reach final form on the page.

Readers may be left unsatisfied by such offerings as these:

headless minor league mascot dozing behind dimly lit outfield fence...

(which, if any, of the three premodifications of "mascot" is supposed to be significant?)

wolves' tracks snow-swishing towards coveted widow's hilltop house...

(imprecision here seems to derive from too much undigested plot)

rust-blistered coal cars rumbling right through hamlet's darker secret...

("darker secret" what? – the author is sometimes too inclined to ignore the possibilities of ambiguity).

The occasions and settings of these verses are vividly brought to life. They are opportunities begging to be developed. Yet there's also at times a pointlessness in observation, sounding portentous but not really delivering:

squinting at remote mountain through wash-line shirt's stray bullet hole...

This takes us uncomfortably close to North Americans' enthusiasm for putting bullet holes in nearly everything.

Towards the end, Westley's attention returns to the occupation of writing. The poems shift in viewpoint towards first person.

footsteps shuffling tinder dry leaves, haven't written a single word for hours...

fresh mosquito reminds me I'm just another organism filled with useless words

If this sounds more like self-pity than humility, it is in keeping with the book's admirable, if at this stage unrealised, struggle towards articulate vision. Silence can be worth being silent to listen to.

***Metamorphosis by D. L. Heather. (2019).***

*Pb. 48pp. ISBN: 978-0-578-54207-2. RRP:*

*Reviewed by Patricia Prime*

*Metamorphosis* showcases the breadth of Debra Heather's poetic vision. *Metamorphosis* is a biological process by which an animal physically develops after birth.

All the haiku in this collection are composed in three lines with the initial letter of each poem capitalised. The haiku are centred on the page and vary from four to two haiku per page. They are divided into four sections: Awakening, Love, Heartbreak, Longing and Healing. The book is illustrated with several drawings.

In these various sections the poems range from tears in Awakening:

Tearful emotions  
a new love, fond memories  
mirth and good fortune

to the beauty of the world in Love:

Beautiful world  
where she can see is visage  
exists between time

There are poems that hint at sorrow in Heartbreak:

Deafening silence  
deep down inside she wants to scream  
her eyes waste away

Heartfelt poems that never become sentimental in Longing:

The wind stirs in her  
a feeling, to be brave  
a longing, to be free

Poems that reconcile all these feelings and emotions can be found in Healing:

Time does not heal wounds  
she just learns to move along,  
deepened, ebb and flow

There are poems in this collection that will make you think, some that give insight into the life of the emotions and others that may be unfathomable, but the collection is never dull and always thought provoking. The haiku in *Metamorphosis* provide a breadth and depth that make this a book worth repeated readings.

**moon music by Bill Cooper. Winchester, VA. USA.**  
redmoonpress. (2019). Pb. ISBN 978-1-947271-45-6. Price \$15.

*Reviewed by Patricia Prime*

Bill Cooper has published several books of haiku and has had his haiku and senryu published in many books and journals. *moon music* is written with emotional power, truth and beauty. The poems are divided into the following sections: *nodding ferns*, *slow carousel*, *trombone smile*, *entering Bogalusa* and *a looping strand*.

The first haiku in the collection comes from *nodding ferns*:

a slight breeze  
through the fantail palm  
two flutes

I imagine from the haiku a spring walk where fantail ferns wave and the sound of birds is heard on the breeze. It could be almost anywhere in the world; it may be reality, a dream or purely in the poet's imagination. *slow carousel* contains this fine one-line haiku:

wavelet plating kelp onto an oyster shell

The poet's observation is intriguing. I get an image of the atmosphere of a wild beach where kelp has been washed up and piled on the sand, some of it contained within a shell. *trombone smile* begins with another mention of the beach, in which the reader may be reminded of the pollution of our beaches:

lapping water  
a toothbrush wrapped  
in coral

In the first haiku of the section *entering Bogalusa*, the author is dreaming:

dune dream interrupted by a ceiling chirp

This is only one moment in the poet's life, but it has lodged in his unconscious mind to be recorded later.

Then we come to the part entitled *a looping strand*, in which one haiku carries the title of the section:

first day of cursive  
a looping strand  
of pretzel

The haiku may remind us of school days, when we moved from printing to what we called "real writing". How grown up we felt! The haiku in *moon music* are sure to please. They show sensitivity to both the human and natural worlds.

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