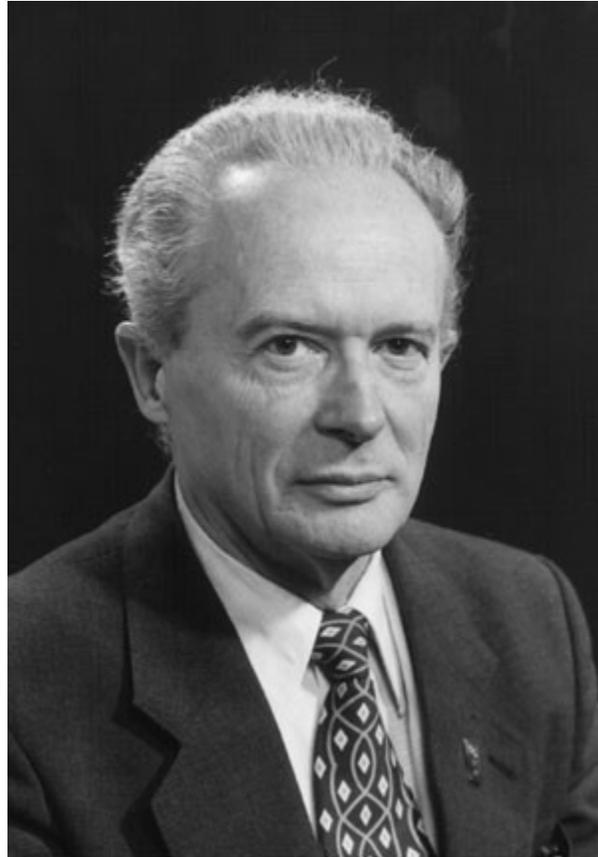


# Haiku poetry in Croatia

Darko Žubrinić, Zagreb 2008.

There are about fifty countries in the world where haiku poetry is cherished. One of them is Croatia. Surprisingly, Croatia is among the best ones, counting the number of published haiku in various anthologies throughout the world.



Vladimir Devidé (1925-2010)

The beginnings of the history of haiku poetry in Croatia are indelibly tied to the name of outstanding Croatian Japanologist and mathematician [Vladimir Devidé](#), a member of the Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts in Zagreb, born 1925 and living in Zagreb. For his contributions in popularization of Japanese culture he was awarded the prestigious Japanese *Order of the Sacred Treasure - Konsantō Zuihōshō*.



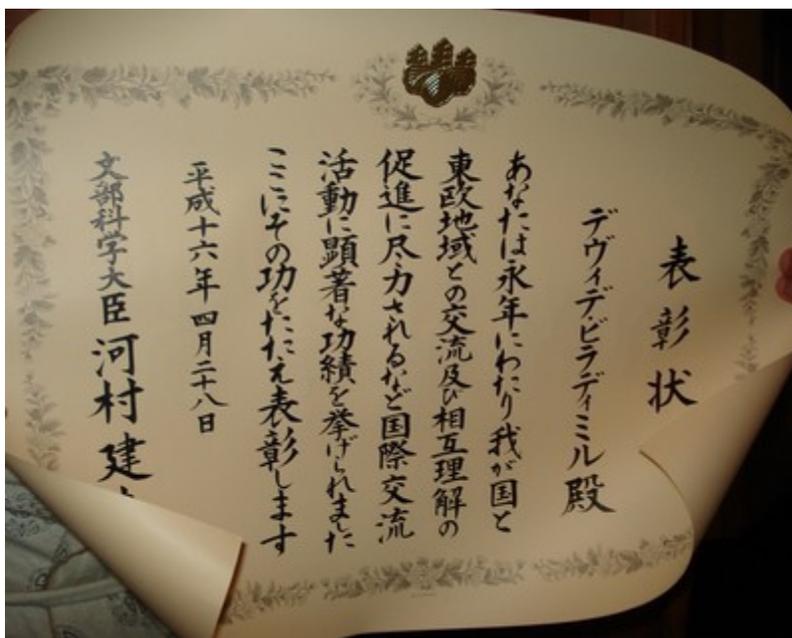
*Order of the Sacred Treasure* - Konsantō Zuihōshō, which Vladimir Devidé received from the Japanese Government in 1983



Professor Devidé's tireless enthusiasm over the past forty years, including numerous published monographs and hundreds of public lectures, resulted in surprising popularity of haiku poetry throughout Croatia and other parts of Eastern Europe. It is especially nice to see him surrounded with youngest haiku poets in Croatia, at the primary school age.

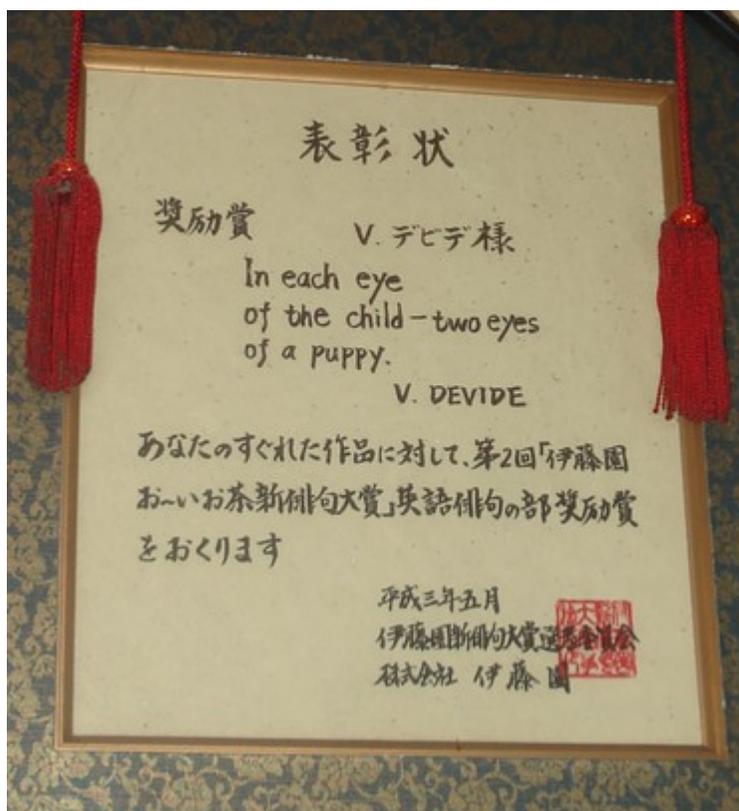


The Order of the Sacred Treasure - Konsantō Zuihōshō, is accompanied with the above diploma. In the middle there is the red seal of Japanese Emperor Hirohito, and on the left below is a smaller red seal of the Prime Minister Nakasone Yasuhiro, and still smaller is by the Chief of the Protocol.



Diploma of the Ministry of Culture of Japan which professor Vladimir Devidé received in 2004.

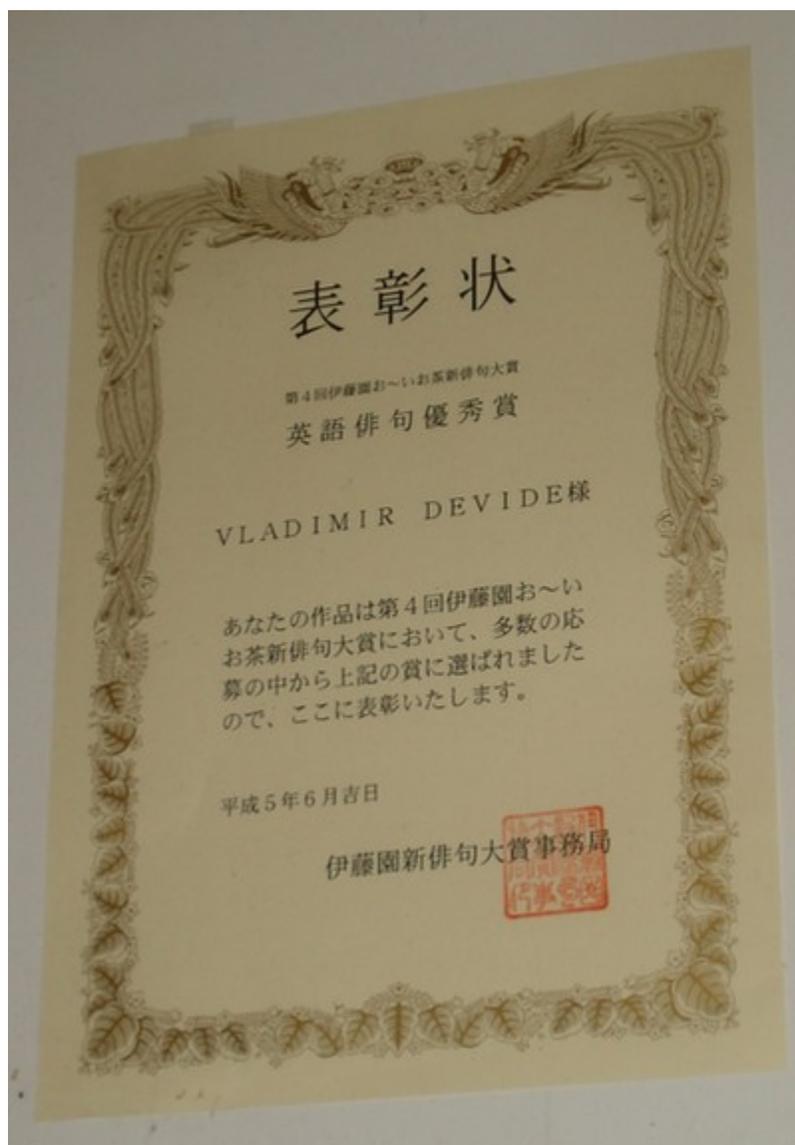
According to Professor Devidé, counting the number of prizes won at various international competitions, and in particular Japanese, Croatia can be ranked among three "haiku world superpowers", immediately after Japan and the USA!



Vladimir Devidé received 18 prizes on various Japanese international haiku competitions. Above is his earliest Japanese prize.

U svakom oku  
djeteta zrcale se  
dva oka psića.

In each eye  
of the child - two eyes  
of a puppy.



Another diploma which Vladimir Devidé obtained at the ITOEN haiku competition in Japan.

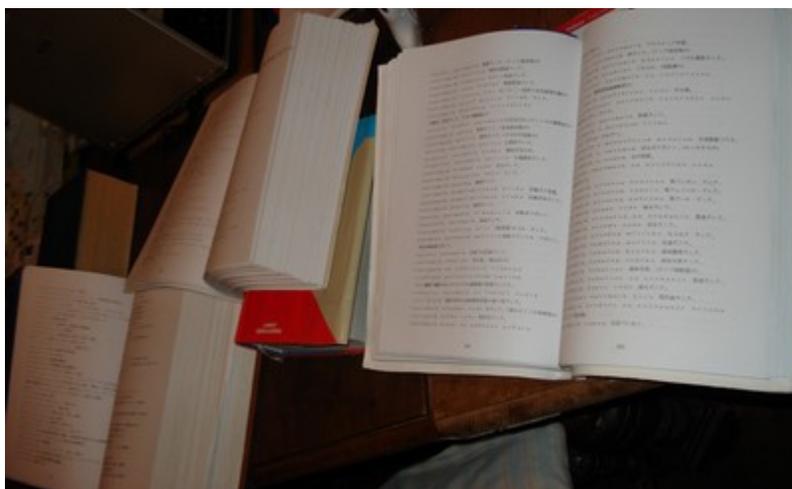
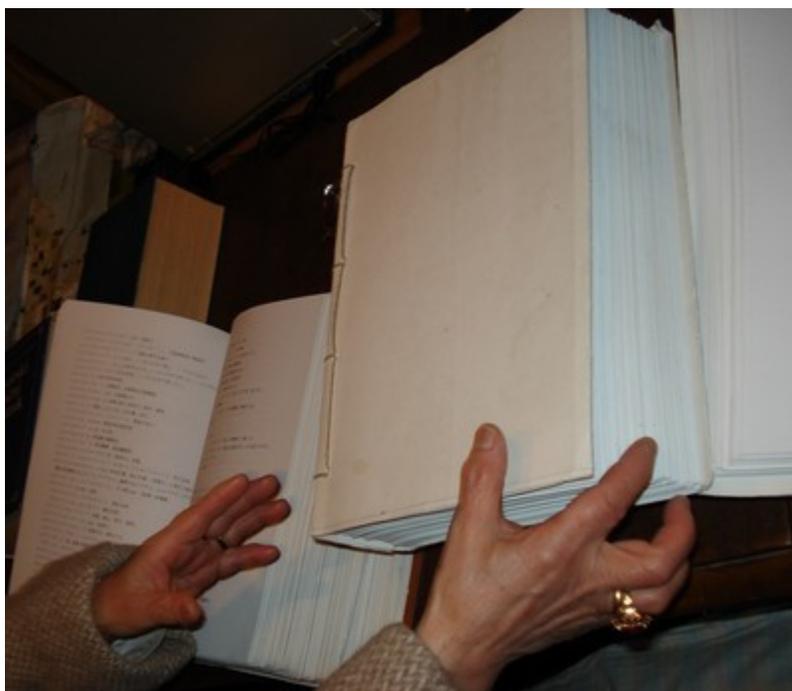


Professor Devidé is the author of the monograph *Japanska haiku poezija i njen kulturno-povijesni okvir* (Japanese Haiku Poetry and its Cultural and Historical Framework), issued in Zagreb in 1970, which had five editions, printed in altogether 15000 copies. His another important book is the one dealing with haiku in Croatia, entitled *Antologija hrvatskoga haiku pjesništva* (Anthology of Croatian Haiku Poetry), Zagreb 1995. His monograph *Haibun*, published in Zagreb in 1997, had a huge international success: besides in [Croatian](#), it was published in [English](#), [German](#) and [Japanese](#). This book contains about one hundred haiku. His other related books are *Japan - tradicija i suvremenost* (Japan, Tradition and Modernity), Zagreb 1978, *Japan - poezija i zbilja* (Japan - Poetry and Reality), Zagreb 1987, *Zen - ideje, umjetnost, tekstovi* (Zen - Ideas, Art, Texts), Zagreb 1989, *Japan*, Zagreb 2006.

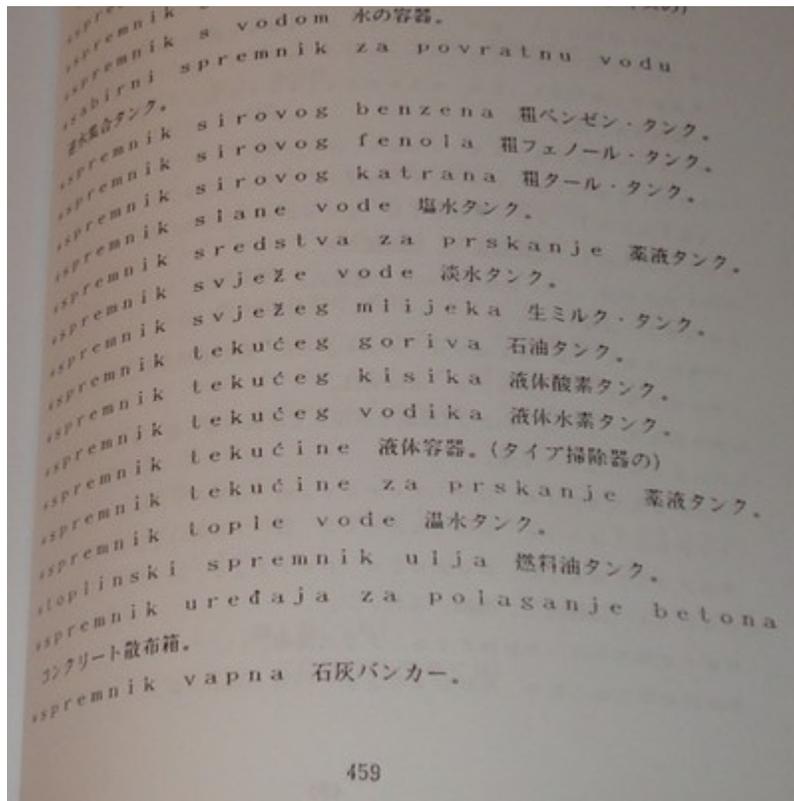


Japanese Princess Michiko, wife of Crown Prince Akihito (in 1989 they became Empress and Emperor of Japan), receiving a gift from professor Vladimir Devidé in Cavtat near [Dubrovnik](#), June 12th, 1976. The gift was his book *Japanska haiku poezija i njen kulturno-povijesni okvir* (Japanese Haiku Poetry and its Cultural and Historical Framework), issued in Zagreb in 1976, published in Croatian.

He is a honorary member of the German Haiku Society. Professor Devidé has a large collection of haiku books in his apartment in Zagreb. This is probably one of the largest personal haiku libraries in the world. His knowledge of English, German, French, Russian, Japanese, and Croatian, enabled him very interesting linguistic comparisons of haiku written in these languages.



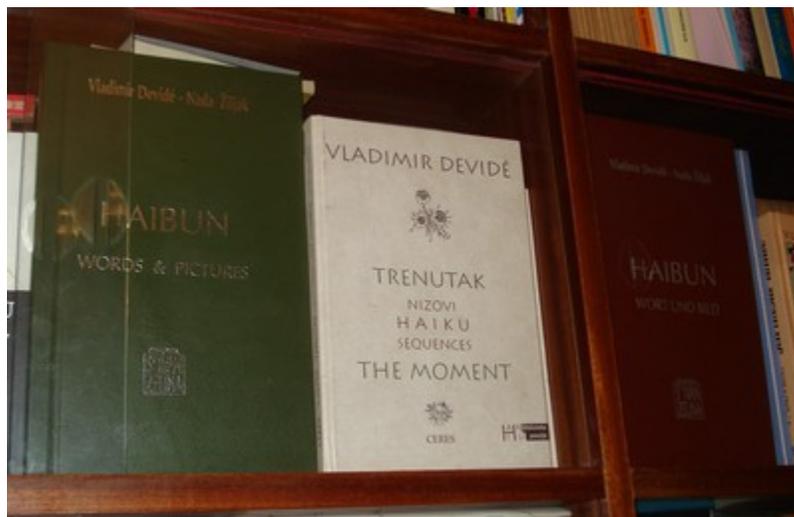
Vladimir Devid's wife Yasuyo Hondō is preparing a voluminous multi-volume *Croatian - Japanese Dictionary*.



Professor Devidé's wife Yasuyo Hondō is preparing a voluminous *Croatian - Japanese Dictionary*. She started with her painstaking work already in 1988, and the books in preparation are indeed amazing.

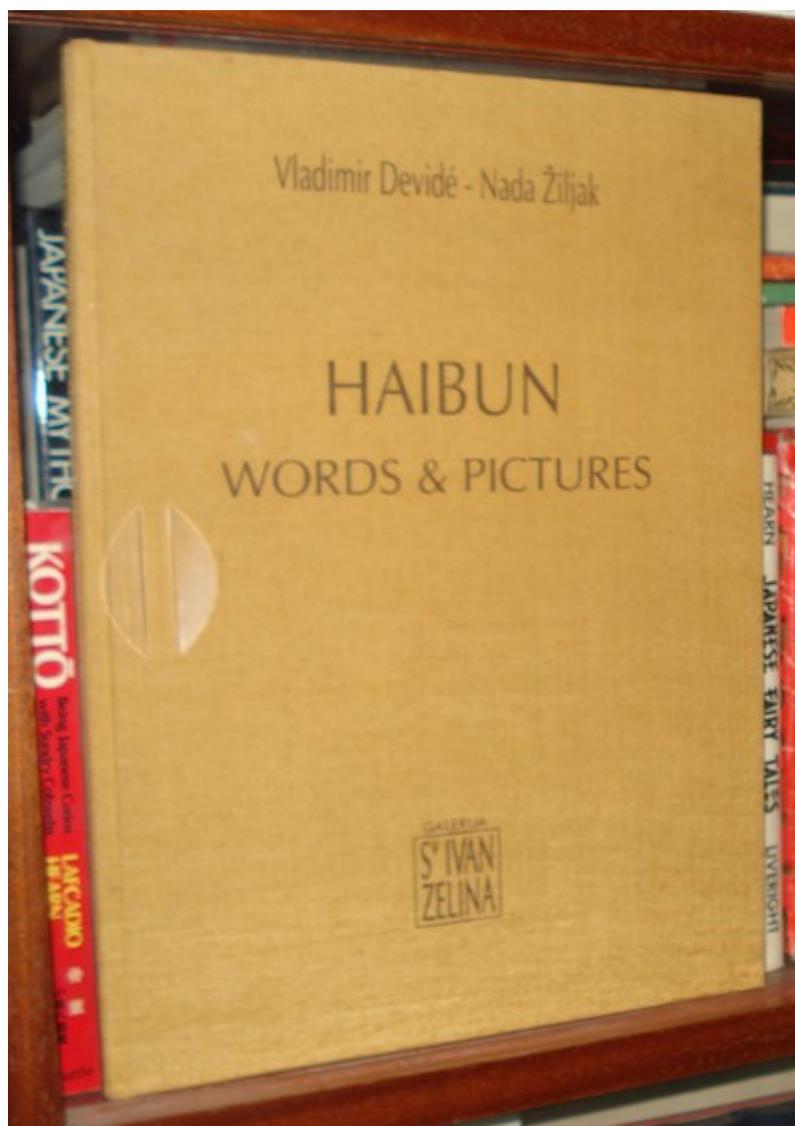


Vladimir Devidé with his wife Yasuyo Hondō, and with Željko Hanjš in 2006.





*HAIBUN - Words and Pictures* by Vladimír Devidé and Nada Žiljak, has been translated into Japanese by Yasuyo Hondō, wife of professor Devidé. The book has been published in Croatia.



*HAIBUN - Words and Pictures* by Vladimir Devidé and Nada Žiljak. Galerija Sv. Ivan Zelina:1997. Hard cover, 6.5 x 10.5 inches. Contact [Vilko Žiljak](#), Vukovarska 35 A / VII, Zagreb, Croatia, for ordering information and price.

Jane Reichhold 1997 ([source](#)): This is a very special book. Hard cover bound in green with silver embossed lettering, full color illustrations on every other page, of Nada Žiljak's artwork which is stunning, but the most special of all are Vladimir Devidé's haibun. Many authors think haibun are simply haiku with prose wedging them apart. Not so. It takes a very specific way of seeing to find the material for haibun and then the author must learn a new way of writing the prose so that it is prose and not poetry but poetry that dances just above prose. There is a very fine line and Devidé has found it.

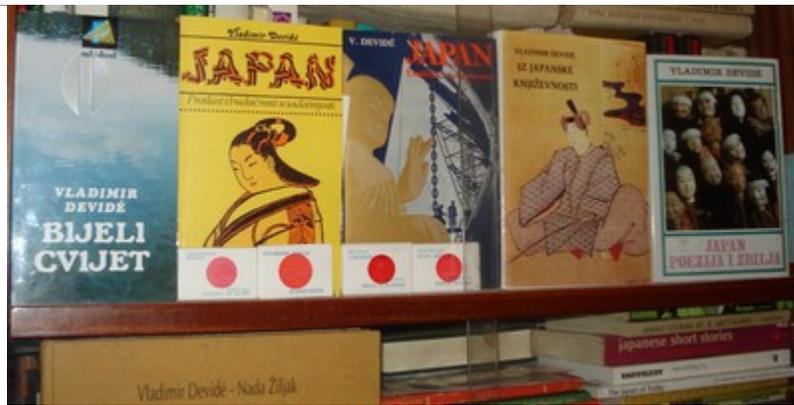
By learning first to write excellent haiku, he has applied these techniques to his prose which is not prose but really haibun.

In the same way that haibun gives only the "terminals" from which the reader's thoughts connect, Nada Ziljak's artwork functions in a similar manner. Full of light and air, the reader can recognize elements that definitely relate to the haibun, but it requires just the right amount of imagination to complete the pictures as the haibun do.

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*HAIBUN: Wort und Bild* von Vladimir Devidé und Nada Ziljak. Galerija S'IVAN ZELINA., 1999, Hardcover 6" x 11", 80 Seiten., farbige Illustrationen. Contactpersonen: Vladimir Devidé, Vinogradska 10, 10000 Zagreb, Croatia.

Source. Vladimir Devidé ist ein wohlbekannter Dichter in Europa. Er überraschte uns 1997 mit einem in Leinen gebundenen Band seiner Haibun, sehr künstlerisch farbig illustriert von Nada Žiljak. Nun hat er, kaum zu glauben, eine Übersetzung ins deutsche, wiederum als hardcover, herausbringen lassen. Professor Devidé schreibt eine vorzügliche Prosa und überblendet die Texte mit seinen besten Haiku und anderen Gedichtformen. Immer entsteht dabei ein in sich poetisch vollkommen neues, selbständiges Gebilde. Es sollte niemanden wundern zu sehen, daß Devidé's poetische Ideen nicht nur in Europa Schule machen werden. Seine Arbeiten bieten Anregungen in Hülle und Fülle. Man ist gespannt, ob auch in Europa sich Schriftsteller finden werden, die Prosa und Gedicht, ähnlich wie wir es in den USA erlebten, mit mehreren Personen gemeinsam schreiben werden mit dem Ziel, symbiotische Dichtung weiter zu entwickeln.



One of numerous shelves in apartment of professor Devidé in Zagreb.

## POTOK

Vladimir Devidé

Jednom sam, šeući se uz  
pokošeno sijeno pokraj ceste,  
izdaleka vidio djevojku s  
glatkom lanenom kosom; sa  
spuštenom glatkom kosom  
poput vode sto se preljeva  
preko obloga bijelog kamena  
u gorskom potoku kada god  
padne jača kiša ili u proljeće  
kad se topi snijeg u brdima.  
Ne znam je li bila lijepa;  
samo sam joj na trenutak  
vidio velike modre oči.  
Poslije je više nisam vidio i  
dugo sam, danju i noću,  
gledao tu djevojku s lanenom  
kosom.

*Niz obli kamen:  
voda gorskog potoka -  
kosa djevojke.*

Htio bih ubrati modrih  
cvjetova na livadi da ih  
upletem u lanene kose;  
cvjetove vodopije i modrih  
zvončića. Gdje li je sad ta  
djevojka s lanenom kosom? U  
Mliječnoj stazi još je uvijek  
samo odbljesak njezine kose.  
Samo je poneka vlat u zlatnim  
slamkama dozrelog žita.  
Samo se jedan pramen i sada  
slijeva preko obloga kamena  
u gorskom potoku, kada ga  
god probode mlaz zalazećeg  
sunca, što se probio među  
stablina omorika.

Izvor: [HAIBUNI Riječ i slika](#)

## A BROOK

Vladimir Devidé

Once, while walking by the  
road, past cut hay, I saw in the  
distance a girl with lank  
flaxen hair; with loose lank  
hair like water overflowing a  
round white stone in the  
mountain brook whenever  
there is heavy rain or in  
spring when snow is melting  
on the surrounding hills. I do  
not know whether she was  
beautiful; I just saw her big  
blue eyes for a moment. I  
never saw her again, but in  
my thoughts I looked for a  
long, long time, day and  
night, at the girl with lank  
flaxen hair.

*Over a round stone  
water of a mountain brook - a  
girl's hair.*

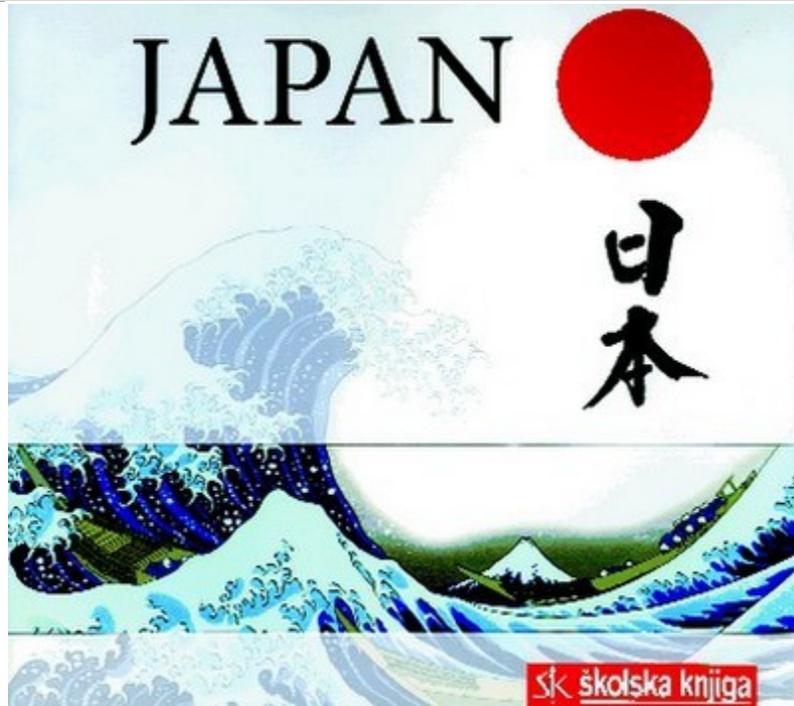
I would like to pick some blue  
flowers from the meadow to  
weave them into the flaxen  
hair, flowers of forget me-not  
and blue bell-flowers. Where  
is she now, that girl with  
flaxen hair? In the Milky Way  
there is still only a reflection  
of her hair. But there are some  
blades of it in the golden  
straw of ripe corn. Just one  
lock is still overflowing that  
round stone in the mountain  
brook, whenever it is pierced  
by a ray of the setting Sun  
bursting through the pine-  
trees.

Source: [HAIBUN](#)

## WORDS & PICTURES

Translated from Croatian by  
Višnja McMaster

Translations into [German](#) and  
[Japanese](#)



Vladimir Devidé: *Japan*, [Školska knjiga](#), Zagreb, 2007.

Here we mention an anthology of haiku poetry prepared by [Bart Mesotten](#), entitled *Duizend Kolibries* (A Thousand Hummingbirds), published in Belgium in 1993 in the Flemish language, where 33 countries have participated. Each country was represented by one chapter, except Croatia, which was represented by two chapters. One chapter was standard, entitled *Haiku Poetry in Croatia*, while another one was nonstandard, entitled *War in Croatia*. It contained haiku poetry related to tragic events in 1990s. As an example we provide two of them related to the aggression on Croatia, written in 1991 by professor Vladimir Devidé:

Spaljeno selo.  
Pas lualica njuši  
pougljene kosti.

In the burned-out village  
a wounded stray dog  
sniffing charred bones

Lokvica krvi -  
ubijene bombama:

A small pool of blood -  
Killed in air raid:

djevojčica i lutka

little girl and her huge doll



Professor Vladimir Devidé, behind him is the seal of the [University of Zagreb](#) founded in 1669

VLADIMIR DEVIDÉ rođen je u Zagrebu 3. svibnja 1925. Dipl. Ing. građevinarstva (1951) i Dr. Sc. matematičkih znanosti (1956). Redoviti sveučilišni profesor u miru i [redoviti član Hrvatske akademije znanosti i umjetnosti](#).

Na postdoktorskim studijima u Izraelu (1960) i u Japanu (1961-1963). Gostujući profesor na Monash sveuč. u Melbourneu, Australija (1968) i na Ohio State Univ. u SAD (1971). Sudjelovao na brojnim našim i međunarodnim matematičkim kongresima i simpozijima. Republičku nagradu "Ruđer Bošković" primio 1965, Nagradu grada Zagreba 1982, međunarodnu nagradu "Le Prix CIDALC" 1977 te

VLADIMIR DEVIDÉ was born in Zagreb on May 3rd, 1925. B.Sc. (Civil Engineering), 1951 and Sc.D. (Mathematics), 1956. Retired Full Professor of the University of Zagreb and [Full Member of the Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts](#).

Post-doctoral studies in Israel (1960) and in Japan (1961 - 1963). Visiting Professor at Monash University, Australia (1968) and Ohio State University in Columbus, USA (1971). Participated in numerous international mathematical congresses and symposia. Croatian "Ruđer Bošković" Prize for Scientific Achievement (1965), Prize of the City of Zagreb (1982), "Le Prix CIDALC" (1977),

Odličje japanske vlade "Red Svetoga Blaga" 1983.

Državna nagrada Republike Hrvatske za životno djelo na području prirodnih znanosti godine 2003. Posebno priznanje japanskog ministarstva kulture za istaknuti doprinos međunarodnom promicanju razumijevanja između Japana i Istočne Europe 2004. Dvadesetak nagrada na japanskim međunarodnim natjecanjima u haiku pjesništvu.

Iz područja matematike objavio 40 znanstvenih i oko 200 stručnih i popularnih radova i članaka te održao oko 60 javnih predavanja o rezultatima svojega znanstvenog rada i objavio 15 knjiga.

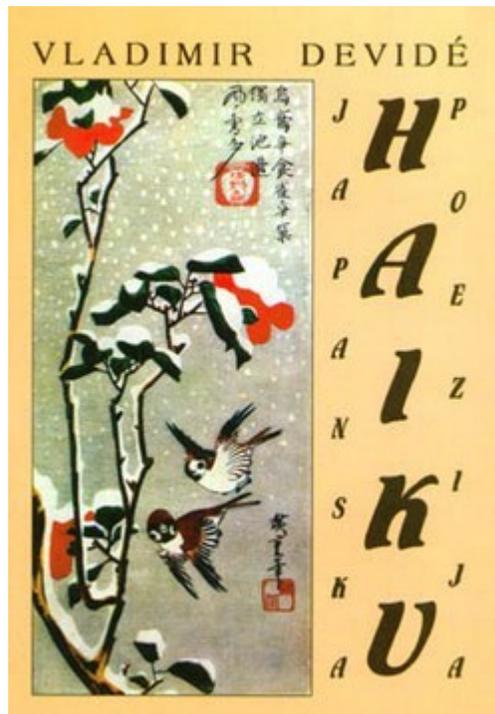
Iz područja japanologije i književnosti objavio više od 200 eseja, članaka i tekstova u našim, američkim, japanskim, njemačkim itd. časopisima i održao sličan broj javnih predavanja te objavio 16 knjiga.

and the Japanese Order of the Sacred Treasure (1983).

State prize of the Republic of Croatia for life work in the field of natural sciences (2003). Special recognition of the Japanese Ministry of Culture for outstanding contribution to international understanding between Japan and Eastern Europe (2004). Some twenty prizes on Japanese international haiku competitions.

In the field of mathematics he has published 40 scientific papers and about 200 essays and articles, and held some 60 public lectures about results of his scientific work. He has published 15 books on mathematics.

In the field of Japanology and literature he has published more than 200 essays and articles in Croatian, American, Japanese, German, etc., literary journals and magazines, as well as 16 books.



Concerning the beginnings of haiku poetry in Croatia, professor Devidé had a few predecessors that we should not forget. Already in 1961 Tonči Petrasov Marović (1934-1991) published his haiku poetry in the journal *Mogućnosti* (Possibilities), 1961. no 6, in the city of Split. Next to him is [Dubravko Ivančan](#) (1931-1982), born in Krapina near Zagreb, who published his first book of haiku poetry under the title *Leptirova krila* (Butterfly Wings) in Zagreb in 1964. Let us mention the monograph *HAIKU RIJEČ I SLIKA Dubravko Ivančan - Nada Žiljak*, issued in honour of Dubravko Ivančan, edited by Vladimir Devidé, with texts written by Vladimir Devidé and Đuro Vandura.

Some of the best Croatian haiku poets are:

- Tonči Petrasov Marović
- [Dubravko Ivančan](#)
- Vladimir Devidé
- [Tomislav Maretić](#)
- Robert Bebek
- [Darko Plažanin](#)
- Dubravko Marijanović
- [Marijan Čekolj](#)
- Milan Žegarac Peharnik
- [Višnja McMaster](#)
- [Boris Nazansky](#)
- [Anto Gardaš](#) (also [here](#))
- Luko Paljetak
- [Enes Kišević](#)
- Pajo Kanižaj
- Zvonko Petrović

etc.

tigrova sjena  
na zidu... mačić  
ispred svjetiljke

a tiger's shadow  
on the wall... a kitten  
in front of the lamp

Tomislav Maretić

In Croatia there are now about ten different centers throughout the country where haiku poetry is promoted via formal organizations, publications, journals etc. Some of them are: Zagreb, Varaždin, Samobor, Krapina, Kloštar Ivanić, Ivanić Grad, Rijeka.



*Haiku* - issued in Croatia since 1977, was probably the earliest European journal specialized in haiku.

## HAIKU

Časopis za haiku poeziju  
Izlazi četiri puta godišnje: u  
proljeće, ljeto, jesen i zimi

Godište I

Broj 1

Proljeće 1977

Izdavač:

Predsjedništvo SSOH Fakulteta  
organizacije i Informatike  
Varaždin

Urednički savjet:

Milorad Bojanić  
Boris Klarić  
Marina Orešković  
Petar Pliskač  
Emil Sontor

Uredjuju:

Branko Aleksić  
Antonio Andjel  
Aleksandar Bergstein  
Vladimir Devidž  
Željko Funda  
Aleksandar Nejgebauer  
Zorka Pejčić  
Zvonko Petrović  
Miloš Rotar  
Mihail Štebih  
Branko Žauhar

Glavni i odgovorni urednik:  
Željko Funda

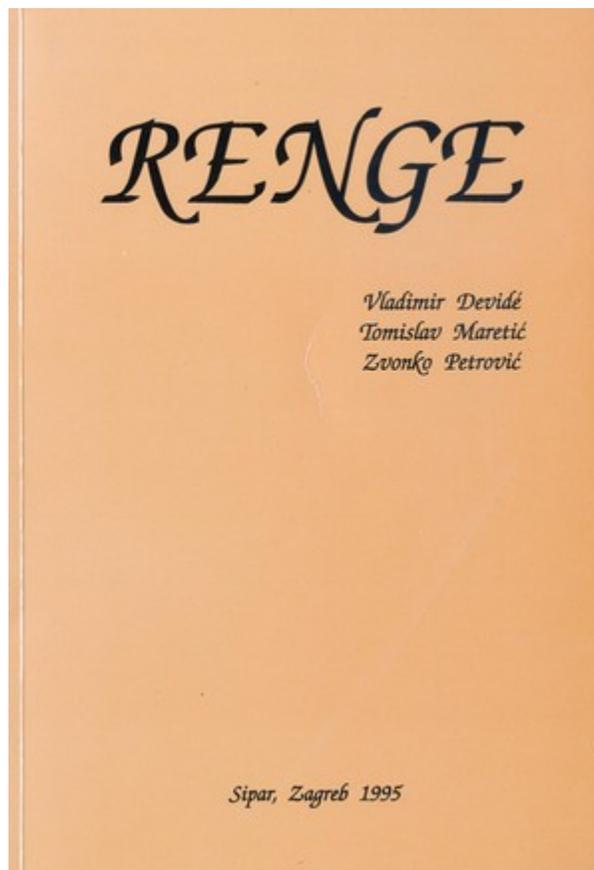
Vinjete i crtež na naslovnoj  
stranici izradio:  
Ivan Lacković - Croata

Tehnički urednik:  
Ivica Popijač

## SADRŽAJ:

- 3 Vladimir Devidž:  
HAIKU
- 7 Branko Aleksić:  
BIFTECI SEMAFORA
- 10 Vladislav Bajac:  
UZ BOL PUTOVANJA
- 13 Vladimir Devidž:  
JEDAN HAIKU  
EZRE POUNDA
- 16 Allen Ginsberg:  
O HAIKU  
JACKA KEROUACA
- 18 Ivan Golub:  
\*\*\*
- 20 Dabravko Ivančan:  
STVARI
- 24 Ratko Karabatković:  
\*\*\*
- 25 Aleksandar Nejgebauer:  
NA DOHVAT VETRA
- 27 Zvonko Petrović:  
HAIKU TRENUTAK  
- HAIKU
- 31 Daisetz Teitaro  
Suzuki:  
STUDIJE R.H.  
BLYTHA
- 33 Mihael Štebih:  
VLAK
- 37 Veseljko Vidović:  
OCVJETANA ZEMLJA
- 41 Dragan Vučetić:  
\*\*\*
- 45 Vladimir Devidž:  
NA LIVADI
- 46 Zvonko Petrović:  
\*\*\*

The journal *Haiku* issued in the town of Varaždin since 1977 was probably the earliest European journal specialized for haiku. It has been conceived by Zvonko Petrović, one of the haiku "veterans" in Croatia.



One of the haiku societies in Croatia is [Društvo hrvatskih haiku pjesnika](#) (The Association of Croatian Haiku Poets) in Zagreb. Its president is [Višnja McMaster](#), while professor Vladimir Devidé is Honorary President of the society.

### **Croatian haiku poetry at**

#### **[World Haiku Association](#)**

#### **Mugen Sekinin Chukanhojin**

President of the *World Haiku Federation* is Ban'ya Natsuishi, Japan, and one of the advisors of the Federation is Vladimir Devidé, Croatia. Other advisors in 2008 are Tohta Kaneko (Japan), Casimiro de Brito (Portugal), Kuniharu Shimizu (Japan), Kaj Falkman (Sweden).

Among eighty or so haiku poets included at [www.worldhaiku.net](http://www.worldhaiku.net) we can find more than twenty representatives from Croatia, see below (the figures are from 2008). This surprising fact is one of numerous indicators of quality and popularity of haiku poetry in Croatia.

1. [Tomislav Marijan Bilosnić](#)

2. [Zlata Bogović](#)
3. [Silvija Butković](#)
4. [Marijan Čekolj](#)
5. [Vladimir Devidé](#)
6. [Dina Franin](#)
7. [Franjo Hrg](#)
8. [Anica Gečić](#)
9. [Ljerka Poštek Jelača](#)
10. [Dubravko Korbus](#)
11. [Ivka Kraljević](#)
12. [Timjana Mahečić](#)
13. [Vjera Majstorović](#)
14. [Tomislav Maretić](#)
15. [Duško Matas](#)
16. [Rene Matoušek](#)
17. [Ivan Nadilo](#)
18. [Boris Nazansky](#)
19. [Ivan Pahernik](#)
20. [Dunja Pezelj](#)
21. [Stjepan Rožić](#) (also [here](#))
22. [Frano Vlatković](#)
23. [Željka Vučinić-Jambrešić](#)
24. [Đurđa Vukelić-Rožić](#) (also [here](#))
25. [Božena Zernec](#)

The first competition in Croatia in haiku poetry among primary school children was organized in 1986, on the occasion of the grand exhibition *Kyoto - cvijet kulture* (Kyoto - Flower of Culture) in Zagreb. About 500 children throughout Croatia participated. Kyoto and Zagreb are *sister cities* since 1972.

[Josefina Gerlach](#), a 5th grade elementary school pupil, was born in 1990 in Zagreb, Croatia. She has been writing haiku since 1998, and has, so far, won three first prizes in **Croatian children's haiku festivals**.

"Ever since my teacher introduced me to haiku," she says, "I understood that there is big life hiding in small moments." Josefina's haiku appeared from time to time on the Internet Shiki Haiku Salon, where some poets became rather fond of her poetry. She felt specially close to John Crook, who wrote to her letters of encouragement and was the first to make web pages for her. Her haiku and Smiljana's photographs [Smiljana is Josefina's mother, D.Ž.] are a part of John Crook's web pages, "Grains of Rice" at <http://www.haiku.org.uk>

Josefina's mother Smiljana Gerlach, a photographer and a haiku poet, started illustrating her daughter's haiku in 1999. On Feb.

4th 2002, their first joint photo-haiga exhibition was opening in Zagreb.

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[A Special Photo-Haiku Tribute to John Crook](#)

Haiku by Josephina Gerlach (daughter)

Photography by Smiljana Gerlach (mother), Zagreb

Josefina, born in 1990, is writing her haiku from the age of 8.

Haiku  
Dedicated to John Crook

Josefina Gerlach  
5th Grade  
Zagreb, Croatia

*razdvajajući  
vrijeme, sat tišinu  
čini nemirnom*

*dividing time,  
the clock makes the silence  
unsettled*

*razderana mreža -  
pauk izbjeglica još  
traži novi dom*

*a broken web -  
a refugee spider is still  
looking for a home*

*stabla se spremaju  
na bal pod maskama -  
sva su dobre vile*

*the trees make ready  
for a masked ball -  
all are good fairies*

Source: [WHC Haikujunior](#)

**Rene Matoušek (1958-1991)**

**Croatia**

We wish to introduce in a relatively brief format various haiku

poets, past and present, who are good but not so well-known. Called "Mini Haiku Treasure Trove" to distinguish it from the usual fuller size, the new format will seek to make as many of these hidden poets known to the reader as possible. We take up a tragic poet from Croatia who met a lamentable but heroic death in 1991 while executing his duties as a medical doctor in the war-torn country. His name is Rene Matoušek.

Tomislav Maretić, a fellow countryman and a haiku poet himself, has written a short but moving introduction:

Rene Matoušek worked as a stomatologist (dentist) in a small town in Dalmatia [on the south of Croatia, along the coast, D.Ž.]. In his spare time, he wrote poetry, haiku, short stories and other prose works. His other interests included Esperanto, working on the radio and writing his columns in various newspapers.



Rene Matoušek (1958-1991), photo from [www.matica.hr](http://www.matica.hr)

He was born in 1958 in a place called [Vukovar](#) [on the North-East of Croatia, on the Danube river; D.Ž.]. The war broke out in Croatia in 1991. When Vukovar came under attack, Matoušek returned there from Dalmatia to work as a doctor in a hospital. Vukovar fell. The day after its fall he was arrested at his family house. It was the 19th of November. He was tortured and killed on the 20th.

His elder brother who had also been arrested with him survived all this hell to tell us the sad story. Matoušek was a real humanist, creative writer and a fine poet. He was, above all, very nice, tolerant and interesting as a person. His courage was

genuine and much to be commended.

20th of November was the 12th anniversary of his death. It would perhaps not go amiss if we spent few moments to read some of Rene Matoušek's haiku poems in order for us to share his sensibility and sense of life's joy despite his tragedy. (Notes on localities below.)

Rene Matoušek

Ljetni pljusak.  
Vukovarski svodovi  
spas su psu i mački.

heavy autumn rain -  
a dog and cat without hostility  
under Vukovar's arches

Cijedi se Dunav  
domaćici iz torbe.  
Šaranov rep.

Danube dripping  
from a housewife's bag  
the tail of a carp

Čamac u zoru.  
Napuštena sandala  
plovi Dunavom.

boating at dawn -  
an abandoned sandal floats  
down the Danube

U vrtu dvorca  
kanonada kestenja.  
Prolaze đaci.

chestnuts cannonade  
in the Castle garden  
students, full speed

plavog leptira  
uspavala zrmanja  
na rogu ovna

blue butterfly -  
lulled to sleep by zrmanja  
in a ram's horn

pastrmka iskočila  
koza pobjegla od vrela  
promrzlom pastiru

leap of a trout -  
fleeing, a goat springs  
to the freezing shepherd

drhti vrana  
na grani čempresa  
bura je ragraktava

a crow shivers  
on cypress branches  
caws from the wind

svježi osmijeh djevojke  
dok se proteže na suncu  
Žegar poslije kiše

the fresh smile of a girl  
stretching out in the sun  
Žegar after rain

Prsten od Vuke.  
More i klizalište  
djeci sa Lušca.

the ring of Vuka -  
sea and skating rink  
to Lužac children

<p>Borovski dimnjak okružile sui vrane. Još crnji je dan.</p> <p>Stranac se čudi! Usred Vukovara se gnijezdi roda.</p> <p>Prolom oblaka. Vučedolski vinograd obrala tuča.</p> <p>Platana zimi. Prepoznaje imena starac pod stablom.</p> <p>djeca još spavaju - nježno, pekarskim loparom majka izvlači kruh</p> <p>Sred Vukovara sjedim na ušću Vuke pišem haiku.</p>	<p>Borovo chimney surrounded by crows the day blacker still</p> <p>a foreigner in awe in the middle of Vukovar a nesting stork</p> <p>a cloudburst - the vineyard of Vučedol plucked by the hail</p> <p>Plane-tree in Winter. An old man underneath recognises the names.</p> <p>children still asleep - gently, with a baker's peel mother pulls out bread</p> <p>in the middle of Vukovar I sit at the mouth of the Vuka writing haiku</p>
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Rene Matoušek

Notes to the above haiku of Rene Matoušek:

- Borovo - locality in Vukovar where is the factory of shoes.
- Danube River - the second longest river in Europe (2860 km).
- Lužac - locality in Vukovar near Vuka river.
- Vučedol - a well-known locality near Vukovar in which an archaeological site of prehistoric culture was discovered (Vučedol's culture 3000 - 2200 B.C.).
- Vukovar - a city located at the confluence of the Valkó (Vuka) and Danube rivers.
- Vuka - river which runs into Dunav in Vucovar.
- Žegar - a little village in Dalmatia.
- Zrmanja - a river in Dalmatia.

Source: [World Haiku Review](#)

Rene Matoušek

Rene Matoušek at Temps Libres:

Cijedi se Dunav  
domaćici iz torbe.  
Šaranov rep.

Danube dripping  
from a housewife's bag  
the tail of a carp

Cijedi se Dunav  
domaćici iz torbe.  
Šaranov rep.

le Danube s'égoutte  
du sac de la femme de ménage  
la queue d'une carpe

The second day after  
Vukovar's fall (Croatia),  
René Matousek was arrested  
in his family house (19  
nov.), tortured and killed on  
this day - 20 nov. 1991. He  
worked as a doctor in the  
hospital.

Le lendemain de la chute  
de Vukovar (Croatie),  
Rene Matoušek a été arrêté  
dans chez lui (19/11),  
torturé et tué le  
20/11/1991. Il était  
médecin a l'hôpital de  
Vukovar.

Source: [Temps Libres](#)

[Višnja MacMaster](#) (Croatia), *Haiku In Education: A Case Study in Croatia* - Haiku as therapy for war trauma, and as a means of encouraging free thinking in a new democracy

Source: [World Haiku Review](#) (WHR)

At the festival, Professor Zrinka Šimunović shared a report of her work using haiku toward language rehabilitation of children and youth with specific speech difficulties. She has been kind enough to allow World Haiku Review to publish her paper, as read at WHR2005, and the case report, along with a gallery of

wonderful haiga by her students.

## **HAIKU POETRY AS ONE OF THE MODES OF SPEECH AND LANGUAGE REHABILITATION IN A POPULATION OF CHILDREN WITH SPECIFIC LANGUAGE DIFFICULTIES**

**Zrinka Šimunović**

Summary. This address is about my experience in working with children on the rehabilitation their speech and dealing with their language difficulties through haiku.

I am a teacher in school for children that have speech and language problems. They come from regular schools and stay in ours until their language problems are solved after complex rehabilitation (through a special method invented and developed by [Petar Guberina](#)).

After spending some time in our school, most of them go back to their regular schools. They still need the help of a speech pathologist and are treated individually twice a week. In this way, they are continuously in the process of rehabilitation. Some children with speech and language disorders finish their education in our own primary school, and are integrated after that in regular grammar schools. The curriculum in our school is the same as in regular public schools, but adjusted to children's' abilities, and to a rhythm that is appropriate to a group of children with similar problems. The classes typically contain 7-10 children so that the teacher/speech pathologist can pay attention to each one individually. Their problems are:

- dyslexia - problems in reading and spelling (a problem in the phonological coding of the written language),
- slow reading or writing speed,
- poor reading comprehension,
- letter and number reversals,
- reduced speech, word-finding difficulties, language expression problems,
- attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD syndrome) -
- in general, language weakness.

If these problems are not recognized in time - by the first or second grade - and treated properly, they lead to other learning problems and difficulties in communication. These children are not mentally handicapped; IQ scores in non-verbal tests are in

the normal range, sometimes very high!

Two years ago, two girls from the elementary school at the SUVAG Polyclinic won first prizes for their haiku. This happened again this year in March at the 8th Festival of Children's Haiku Poetry 2005 in Zagreb. Their specific language difficulties obviously and in no way interfered with their ability to write haiku that were evaluated by the judges (Devidé, McMaster and Žiljak) as very good ones and worthy of winning first place.

Children are introduced to haiku in the 5th grade (aged 10) in the subject "Croatian language and literature". Even at first sight, the short haiku form is attractive to them. They are able to read and understand this poetic form without problems. For their homework, they then try to write haiku of their own. In our school, this leads to the creation of several interesting observations in verses; I wholeheartedly supported and encouraged their efforts to express themselves poetically.

It has been noticed that in children with language difficulties, the short and simple haiku form of expression is very close to their own language expression, which is sometimes terser in everyday communication, but, when oriented to a particular motif/motivation, can have the effect of a poetic image. During 3 school years, our children created numerous haiku inspired by the seasons of the year, certain changes and phenomena in nature, and by some specific situations in life which stimulated them to express their observations and emotions. At the "literary group", we read haiku poems and talk about the sensations that arise. Mrs. Višnja McMaster introduced us to "haiku cards," which are excellent didactic material and a good way to introduce children to an understanding of poetry, in general. Encouraging children to imagine the "poets' words" (images) by the senses of hearing, smell, taste, touch and even movement in space produces a polysensory experience of the "poetic image". In this way, the children "easily live in the poem" and have the poetic experience.

This way of "living in the poem" is very close to them; they are young and still live a great part in the world of the imagination. It is the first big step on the way to showing children how poetry is close to them, and how easily they can become direct participants in a poem. They like this method of "getting into the poem" very much, and enjoy talking about experiences they have had. Usually, these children don't talk very much because of expressive language problems, but want to speak about haiku

experience, because they are quite certain about what they have felt. Some of the children with language difficulties have problems in understanding longer sentences (especially, longer sentences with abstract nouns, prepositions and adverbs which modify the meaning of the words). In the very beginning of rehabilitation, it is very important to take care of the length and syntactic complexity in communication. That is why the short, simple haiku form is an ideal form for these children to express themselves; they memorize it easily and can use simple grammatical structures (subject, verb, object) as a pattern to express themselves in everyday communication. A haiku is a very good ground on which the language structure can be built gradually.

This school year, we began to write haiku motivated by the drawings of the "art group", of children that are hearing-impaired (in one department of our school there are classes for such a population of children, who learn to speak oral language, without gestures). These haiku inspired by drawings are excellent and are a new experience for us; at the same time children look at the same drawing and create different observations, through different perceptions and sensations.

Reading and writing haiku has become an integral part of the process in which effective attention is paid to insufficiently developed language expression in this group of children. However, this does not involve bald and monotonous special-purposes language material, but evokes creativity that confirms the children's own abilities, which is a crucial prerequisite. At the same time, the children develop their attitudes towards the environment and their awareness of the world and the phenomena of life and its manifestations. Hence it seems incontrovertible that writing haiku is one of the most creative ways of helping children with language difficulties to find their own means of expression.

A few Croatian haiku poets at [HAIKU sans frontières - une anthologie mondiale](#), in Croatian and French

The following Croatian haiku, written by Darko Plažanin, Samobor, earned the prestigious *Ehime Prefecture first prize 1990*, National Cultural Festival, Japan:

nakon oluje

after the storm

dječak briše nebo  
sa stolova

a boy wiping the sky  
from the tables

### Darko Plažanin

The town of Samobor near Zagreb is an important haiku center. Besides Darko Plažanin we mention the names of Marijan Čekolj, Milan Peharnik Žegarac, Marinko Španović, Nediljko Boban and others.

Darko Plažanin - his haiku translated into Hungarian

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Haiku in Catalan language, written by Llorenç Vidal, dedicated to Croatian painter Kristian Kreković:

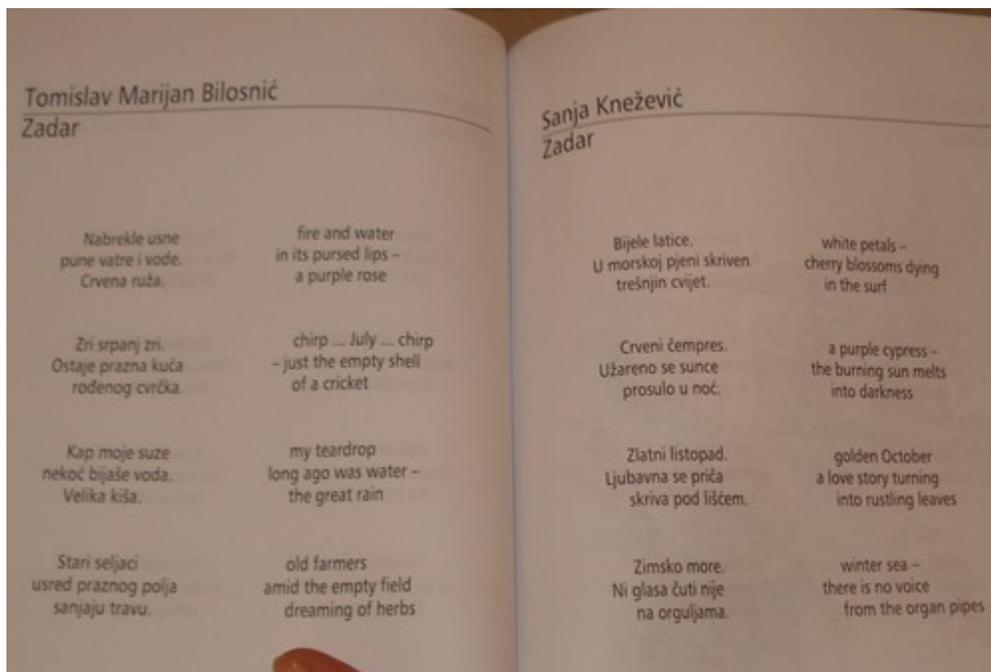
TITANICA  
Homenatge a K. Krekovic

Força titanica  
de pau i llum energica  
brolla dels olis.

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A part of Croatian haiku literature in the Scientific Library in the city of Zadar. Many thanks to professor Milenka Bukvic, director of the Library.



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[Razgovor s profesorom Devidéom](#)

[O jednom događaju vjerojatnosti nula, koji je prof. Devidé ipak doživio](#)

[www.croatia.org](http://www.croatia.org) - Croatian World Network

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