The Red Moon Anthology 1997

The best English-language haiku of the year
The
Red Moon Anthology
1997

Jim Kacian ◊ Editor-in-Chief

◊ Editors ◊
Jan Bostok ◊ Tom Clausen
Maureen Collins ◊ Ellen Compton
Dee Evetts ◊ Yvonne Hardenbrook
John Hudak ◊ H. F. Noyes
Kohjin Sakamoto ◊ Jeff Witkin
Table of Contents

Foreword v
The RMA Process vi
RMA98 vii

Haiku 3
Senryu 67
Haibun 99
Linked Forms 117
Essays 125
Index of Authors 147
Acknowledgements 151
Foreword

There are more good poets writing more good haiku in English than ever before. This makes the task of assembling an anthology such as this one an increasingly imposing, and pleasurable, one. Consider that of the seventy five or so magazines which feature haiku in English, the larger publish more than a thousand haiku a year, the smaller from a few dozen to several hundred, and those in which haiku is only occasional, scores more. Nearly one hundred books of haiku, from the major publishing houses to authors equipped with typewriters and copy machines, were published last year. Contests abounded, with five hundred entries a commonplace. And the internet provided thousands more examples to consider.

It will come as no surprise, then, that the editors of The Red Moon Anthology 1997 nominated over one thousand two hundred fifty haiku, senryu, haibun, linked forms and essays for consideration for this volume. The resulting two hundred twelve selected works were chosen from thirty-four different magazines and newsletters, thirty individual books or anthologies, eight contests, and the internet. These were deemed to be the best of the best of 1997. It is our pleasure to present these to you here, and to wish you good reading.

—Jim Kacian, Editor-in-Chief
The RMA Process

During the past twelve months, over 1250 haiku and related works by nearly 800 different authors have been nominated for inclusion in *The Red Moon Anthology 1997* by our staff of eleven editors from hundreds of sources from around the world. These sources in the main are the many haiku magazines and books published in English around the world. Each editor is assigned a list of magazines, and the editor-in-chief is responsible for reading all sources (to assure that all sources are considered by at least two readers). Editors are, however, free to nominate any work, from any source, they feel is worthy of inclusion. Contest winners, runners-up, and honorable mentions are nominated automatically.

When the nominating period concludes, all haiku and related forms which receive nomination are placed on a roster, and considered separately, and anonymously, in a vote of the ten editors (the editor-in-chief does not have a vote at this stage of the process). At least five votes are required for consideration of inclusion in the anthology. No poem included herein received fewer than five votes, and most received more.

The editor-in-chief then selects from these the works that are to appear in the volume, and assembles them into the final anthology.
The Red Moon Anthology is an annual publication. Nominations are collected throughout the calendar year by each of the ten editors as well as the editor-in-chief for the subsequent volume. It is our stated goal to compile the best haiku and related work published or made available to a general readership in English each year.

Every attempt is made to be inclusive, and each magazine that regularly publishes haiku is assigned an editor. Nevertheless, thousands of haiku are published each year, and without your help it would be an impossibility to ensure that every haiku receive its due consideration. This is especially true for the many books which are published, and in particular self-published, every year. In an effort to be exhaustive, we urge authors to send two review copies (one for the editor-in-chief, and one for editorial assignment) to The Red Moon Anthology 1998, to:

Red Moon Press
P.O. Box 2461
Winchester VA
22604-1661 USA

Materials to be considered for The Red Moon Anthology 1998 must be received no later than December 1, 1998.
haiku
Nasira Alma ♦ United States

moist places
between graves—
the first violets

Kay F. Anderson ◊ United States

toughest part of town—
a cascade of pink roses
over the spiked fence
The Red Moon

Alexey Andreyev ◊ Russia

pausing
on the bridge—both ways
in mist

Jerry Ball ◊ United States

beginning of spring
the click of the dominoes
on a stone table
Laura Bell ◊ United States

summer vacation
my road map creased
in the same old place

Alice Benedict ◊ United States

this night of stars
his letter, on the desk
still unopened
Ernest Berry  ◊  New Zealand

on her kimono
billowing in the
moonlight
a heron takes flight

F. M. Black  ◊  United States

my ailing father
listening to the crickets;
last day of August
Naomi Y. Brown ◊ United States

morning walk
warbler's song
changes my route

Alexius Burgess ◊ United States

late autumn—
the butterfly lands
on what's left
The Red Moon

where the sky
touches the earth
thunder

dove
kite fluttering—
a young gull bends its wings
to the shape of the wind

Marijan Cekolj ◊ Croatia

James Chessing ◊ United States
the wind stirs
the windmill
stirs the wind

sleeping rough a leaf across the full
moon
The Red Moon

Tom Clausen ◊ United States

the snow
moves me
window to window

Pamela Connor ◊ United States

dryer broker. . .
smell of the sun
folded in
Autumn dusk—
walking away
from the creak of the swing

leaf in my palm
its stem extends
my lifeline
after years of silence
the monk sticks out his tongue
to catch snowflakes

migrating birds—
fields of pampas grass
show the way
Bill DiMichele  ◊  United States

The fiddle music
    carries it to the window—
    the smell of cut hay.

Fred Donovan  ◊  United States

crow’s caw—
    its shadow passes
    through mine
The Red Moon

Betty Drevniok ♦ Canada

the garden planted:
tossing frozen vegetables
into the soup

David Elliott ◊ United States

Timberline—
out of the trees
still in the fog
Jeanne Emrich diamond  United States

a weed
in her garden—
I stay my hand

Sandra Fuhringer  diamond  Canada

midnight rain
the vacancy sign
is turned off
damp morning
cash for a journey
warm from a machine

summer’s end
the quickening of hammers
towards dusk

thunder
my woodshavings roll
along the veranda
D. Claire Gallagher ◊ United States

awake at first light—
waiting in bed until
the bureau takes shape

Fred Gasser ◊ United States

dusk:
a toad loses its shadow
in mine
snow everywhere
and its stillness
inside of me

the echo fading. . .
a single night bird
fills the void
Jerry Gill  ◊  United States

autumn moon
sound of a rake
hitting a rock

Robert Gilliland  ◊  United States

autumn wind—
a brown bag still holding
the bottle’s shape
The Red Moon

LeRoy Gorman ◊ Canada

spring breakup
I hold my wife
a little closer

chris gordon ◊ United States

a dark gold hair in my black wool cap all that’s left
Lee Gurga ◊ United States

from house
to barn:
the milky way

his side of it.
her side of it.
winter silence

fresh scent—
the labrador’s muzzle
deeper into snow
daylight fading—
a curlew’s cry
lengthens the hill

bay in fog
the sailboat at anchor
comes and goes
moonless night. . .
as many crickets singing
as the stars

first snow
brought in from the suburbs
on the neighbor’s car
just a minnow
the granite mountain wobbles
on the lake

first light—
everything in this room
was already here
Frank Higgins  ◊  United States

painting the still life—
I take so long
the onions are sprouting

William J. Higginson  ◊  United States

musty smell
forgotten. . .deep
into the text
Ayaki Hosomi ◊ Japan

In my ordinary clothes
thinking ordinary thoughts—
peach blossoms

Gary Hotham ◊ United States

with the numbers
my daughter knows—
the stars counted
Elizabeth Howard ◊ United States

the creek rising
a snake skin surges
in the rock’s wash hole

John Hudak ◊ United States

in the dark
the outline of my wife
stargazing
Ippo ◊ Japan

Boy’s face
comes out
of the watermelon

Yatsuka Ishihara ◊ Japan

pulling light
from the other world. . .
the Milky Way
the river
    the river makes
    of the moon

after lightning
the tree's silhouette
still there

winter coals
breathing some life
into them
The Red Moon

Michael Ketchek ◊ United States

the sparkle
in the grass where
the creek got loose

Kôko Kâto ◊ Japan

night shadows
depen around
the firefly cage
Larry Kimmel ◊ United States

in the sprinkler’s rainbow
a wasp loses altitude

Patsy Kisner ◊ United States

cutting open
a bale of hay—
the smell of summer
Elizabeth Searle Lamb  ◊  United States

learning too late
he didn’t like bubinga wood—
sun strikes the urn

for PBL

David G. Lanoue  ◊  United States

worm
then
no
worm. . .
zen
master
finch
drought—
the sunflower’s bow
deepens

reflecting
the swallow’s swift flight
each roof tile
blue hydrangeas
down the mountain path
suddenly the sea

lightning
the knife goes all the way
through the fish
banana leaves sag
from their own weight
the long summer

at the funeral
familial embraces—
rain enters the lake
The Red Moon

Rick MacDonald ◊ United States

migrating herons
spill from the clouds
a gentle rain

John Martone ◊ United States

smelling the rain
reading the same
poem over
anne mckay ◊ Canada

vespers
that rush of wings
from the bell tower

Dorothy McLaughlin ◊ United States

summer cottage—
last year’s bookmark
still holding my place
Counting her cycle
three more nights of November
to fill the moon

rickety stairs—
honeysuckle clinging
to the banister
A. C. Missias  ◊  United States

Christmas Day
through the window
a snow-capped birdnest

Marianna Monaco  ◊  United States

early morning sun
just the tip of the dog’s tail
above the seagrass
throughout the blizzard
soft click
of her knitting needles

two buttons missing
on my old coat—
twinkle in the snowman’s eye
Patricia Neubauer ◊ United States

New Year’s dragon
dancing down the street
with the feet of men

John O’Connor ◊ New Zealand

night train—
the lit carriages
empty
The Red Moon
H. F. Noyes ◇ Greece

Christmas fir—
walking it home in the breeze
its’ little whisper

heavy snow fall—
seabirds on the offshore swell
drift in sleep

two in the boat—
the one who doesn’t fish
along for the silence
John S. O'Connor  ◊  United States

low tide
following the gull's cry
out to sea

Francine Porad  ◊  United States

bursting free
from a box-shaped pruning
forsythia branches
fading stars—
beyond the next hill
some other light

Red sunset—
the old barn’s single pane
catches fire
Anthology 1997

George Ralph ♦ United States

leaves falling
a butterfly separates
from its shadow

William M. Ramsey ◊ United States

pruning roses—
not earning money
not spending it
The Red Moon

windchimes
at riverside market
selling themselves

Jean Rasey ◊ Australia

night rain
I snuggle deeper
into the sound
David Rice ◊ United States

moonlight on the rug
hesitating
I step into it

Ce Rosenow ◊ United States

stream run-off
the bend of grasses
beneath its current
spring morning—
a goose feather floats
in the quiet room

Stars
he takes off
his hat.
glistening
in the oriole
nest—
audio tape

March rain—
the spider
withdraws
into the garden
faucet

a work glove
snagged in the chain-link
fence fog drifts through
on the tip
of every Braille point
winter’s first chill

summer breeze
the same shape
in every sail
Carla Sari ◊ Australia

my own breath one step ahead of me this winter day

Fred Schofield ◊ England

the feel of the chestnut
I failed to pick up
The Red Moon

John Sheirer ♦ United States

just beyond
the deer crossing sign
deer crossing

Karen Sohne ♦ United States

no moon tonight
our eyes are drawn
to the white chrysanthemum
Robert Spiess ◊ United States

wild roses. . .
tarrying beside one
touched by time

Ruby Spriggs ◊ Canada

snowflakes       I see the wind
clearing the mist
the old gate
in and out

frosty morning
the campers hatch
from their sleeping bags
Laurie W. Stoelting ◊ United States

ocean wind
wave lapping wave
in the wild grass

Neca Stoller ◊ United States

Spring weather;
I am perfectly dressed
for yesterday
edge of the marsh—
the wind from rising geese
in our hair

denver stull  ◇  united states

this heat—
my old dog’s tail
the only breeze
cabbage butterfly
in and out of nettlebeds
a girl’s laughter

tiny glittering
on the weeds—
dead wife
first snow. . .
knowing by the hush
before raising the blinds

Climbing over
her front-yard fence:
passion flowers
Canada geese
suddenly in the heart
the field takes wing

nearly dusk
the shadow of her tombstone
reaches his
The last trace
of birth steam in the meadow—
morning star

Slowly too
grass where we loved
realigning

The green tea
poured without a sound
our spring shadows
Cor van den Heuvel ♦ United States

hot day
a rock caught on a ledge
in the waterfall

Anita Virgil ♦ United States

that moment
when the night clouds give
back
a star
apple picking—
a feather blows
from the empty nest

Crow lifts free,
the sky becomes
smaller
Jeff Witkin ◊ United States

morning meadow—
a wren follows
the sunshine in

gloria B. yates ◊ australia

cows in the shallows drink themselves —
slowly
Takashi Yoshida ◊ Japan

walking against a winter gale
the same look
on every face

Ikuyo Yoshimura ◊ United States

spring thunder—
a potter’s fingers stop
at the wheel
SENRYU
piano practice
in the room above me
my father shouting

ai li ◊ England

a gift
on his 13th birthday
new voice

Roberta Beary ◊ United States

piano practice
in the room above me
my father shouting
Dianne Borsenik ☞ United States

the only cloud
in this perfect sky
nuke plant’s vapor

Jan Bostok ☞ Australia

stationary bus—
talking we visit places
within each other
Carlos Colòn ◊ United States

running
all the red lights—
funeral procession

At the hazardous
waste site
an eight-leaf
clover

chained to the desk
the shell
of a ballpoint pen
Postal strike
but as usual
a note from my neighbor

between the twirlers
and the marching band
the missing child
Richard Doiron ◊ Canada

his eager hand
rounding
a curve

Carrie Etter ◊ United States

kissing in the kitchen—
the dough
slowly rises
on the freeway
discussing the chocolate bar
in the trunk

however close
we push the beds together
the gap between us

in my face
the empty flour bag’s
last puff
all the cars
parked crooked—
family reunion

between each wave
my children
disappear
A box
full of wishbones
unbroken

intensive care:
from the new patient
a whispered damn
well-lit
the prominently
hung
award
for
energy
conservation

in the silent movie
a bird I think extinct
is singing
small town
names on the headstones
on the mailboxes

haiku conference
someone clears a frog
from his throat
Kevin Hull ◊ United States

unreasonable joy—
one foot in front
of the other

Robert Jenkins ◊ United States

childless couple
their pictures of projects
by stages
The Red Moon

Ken Jones ◊ England

Slipping out
for a breath of fresh air
the smokers

Rich Krivcher ◊ United States

Late afternoon:
the plumber and I listen intently
for the after-flush
seasoned chef
his hair and beard
salt and pepper

passing the jug—
the warmth
of many hands

after the wake
her shawl on the chair
unknits itself
driving lesson done
father and daughter run
fingers through their hair

a tipsy snooze
on a summer afternoon
dishwasher churning
Connie Meester  ◊  United States

afternoon symphony
holding your gaze
all through the crescendo

Sabine Miller  ◊  United States

shaved head—
the purple-haired girl’s
grinning father
Carol Montgomery ◊ United States

love letters’
post-it
“can we toss?”

Bill Moore ◊ United States

my father’s work gloves. . .
putting them on
to tend his grave
Patricia Neubauer ◊ United States

the last performance
the puppet master’s sadness
slips down the strings

H. F. Noyes ◊ Greece

falling in love
some botch we are making
of the tea ceremony
David Oates  ◊  United States

Valentine’s Day—
a paper heart hangs
over the condom rack

Zane Parks  ◊  United States

peering through
the microscope—
the fly’s eyes
Carl Patrick  ◊  United States

the night light glows
on the rim of
mother’s wheelchair

Francine Porad  ◊  United States

our dialogue
his eyes never leave
his reflection
Anthony J. Pupello ◊ United States

her brother’s enlistment
toy soldiers line
a dusty shelf

Geoff Richman ◊ England

After the silent film
we all talk at once
Emily Romano ◊ United States

interment:
his worry stone
also put to rest

Alexis Rotella ◊ United States

All Hallow’s Eve:
my broom
is missing.
Katherine Samuelowicz ◊ Australia

walking along the beach
guiding my shadow
still young

Karen Sohne ◊ United States

new address book
the ex’s number
in pencil
after cleaning my glasses
still not seeing
the point

in the breakdown lane
I contemplate
my life
alone . . .
a downdraft
stirs the ashes

over scrambled eggs
we discuss
separating
children’s ICU
beside the pay phone
a tissue box

eyes closed,
  showing him the face
  she’s never seen

morning after
his cold keys hanging
from the door
at their wedding
a new heir apparent

glancing at my watch
I am surprised to see
age spots
George Swede ◊ Canada

The beetle I righted
flies straight into
a cobweb

Brian Tasker ◊ England

undressing for love:
the click of our spectacles
folded together
Marc Thompson ◊ United States

alone . . .
standing in the mirror
touching the lump

Sue-Stapleton Tkach ◊ United States

Migraine headache—
removing the child-proof cap
with a claw hammer
Dianne Tomczak ◊ United States

parents coaxing
baby to eat
mouths open wide

Jeff Witkin ◊ United States

first date—
in the parking lot
our car doors touch
carrying their canes
two old women lean
on each other

early appointment—
the analyst’s office full
of yesterday’s heat
Fay Aoyagi  ◊  United States

Buddha Tree

parent’s day—
the scent of white powder
grandmother at the mirror

“Your grandmother was a kept woman,” Yoji said on the way back from school.
“What do you mean?” Toru asked.
“My Dad said she was a geisha.”
Toru shoved his friend’s chest, then ran all the way back to his house.

Toru was proud of his grandmother who looked young enough to be his mother. She always wore a kimono, even on the hottest day in the summer. She was different from other grandmothers, who smelled of pickles.

Toru seldom saw his mother. On his birthday last year, he took a train to a small town near the ocean. A woman in a white uniform handed him a paper bag, saying that it was from his mother. His mother, her long hair braided like a school girl’s, was humming softly to herself. Inside the bag there were seashells; none of them was in perfect shape.
At dinner, Toru asked his grandmother, “Do you know who my father is?”

“Eat more spinach.” She pushed a bowl toward him.

Toru put down the chopsticks.

a stray cat
out the window
its sagging pregnant belly

◆◆◆
Yesterday I was at a pow wow. Today, even though I’m not a Native, a gladiolus juts out of the ground with multiple buds, like a spear with many feathers that points the way to the heavens.

Thirty years ago, I had a turtle. I captured him and kept him in a box. I gave him food and water and thought he would love me and stay in my house. But the turtle wouldn’t eat. Finally, my father, who had said it was okay to keep the turtle, told me I had to let him go.

My father didn’t make me do this right away. I didn’t want to let the turtle go because I loved him. He seemed very old and very wise. He most likely was older than me. I thought the turtle had something great to tell me.

When my parents and I were on our way to go to the store, my father told me I had to put the turtle back where I found him. I placed him back under the very same bush. The turtle seemed in no great hurry to leave. I took this as a sign that the turtle loved me and would stay. Its problem was the box, not me. Now that the turtle was outside, he would choose to stay.
As we left in the car, my father said this was not true. The turtle will leave, he said. No, I told him. When we returned home, I looked under the bush. The turtle was gone. I looked under other bushes, then the yard, then the street. No turtle. I cried, thinking the turtle didn’t love me, that he had nothing to say to me after all.

friend gone
the silence
of untouched water

Yesterday I met an Iroquois man who told me that the earth was created on the back of a giant snapping turtle. The snapping turtle has twenty-eight plates on its underside, there are twenty-eight days between moons. There are thirteen plates on the turtle’s back—thirteen moons in a year, thirteen tectonic plates on the earth.

The Iroquois prophesied that, though they would be driven nearly to extinction, their way of life would form the laws that govern the entire earth and bring all the races together in peace. They prophesied that the trees would die from the top down. Acid rain has proven this prophecy true. They prophesied that all nations would come together as one on Iroquois land. The U.N. has proven this prophecy true.

Today, the spear-like flower points to the sky. Most of my race has become aware that the earth is not a pet we can keep in a box and cultivate the way we want. The animals will all die. The earth herself will not speak to us. I remember you, turtle.

hearing what you said
thirty years
after you said it
Or Is That God And Man?

The bend in the road
heading up the hill forestalls
a crash with the moon

The truck driving out of the moon was a different matter. Outside of a few of the chickens the truck was hauling no one was hurt.

Why not give
the damn things wings
and let them fly to market?

We set flares, and grouped to gripe. He said: “I hold you responsible for all damage to the truck, and each and every dead chicken. Selah.”

I said: “I will see you damned to hell first.”

I carried
a crowbar—he a strand
of chicken wire

He said: “I will counter-propose my own original proposal to avoid hell. You be responsible for every other chicken killed or injured, and every bit of damage to the truck, but we’ll make no mention to
the police of the pre-crash existing damage, dents, etc., so I can list them and collect.”

Not only
is he cunning but
he makes common sense

I said: “Your counterproposal is accepted only if you take moral responsibility for the crash and promise never to do it again. Do you agree?”

He nodded and said: “Yes, and thank you, Reverend.”

Lately I sense
a coming together
of man and God

◆◆◆
There was a black lump in the middle of my lane. Angry that an animal had been slaughtered senselessly, I thought about the point where technology meets nature and the destruction that results. I thought about ecological systems and the balance that we take for granted and destroy.

dead
in the road
a shoe

◆◆◆
Determined to Know Beans

I set the cold weather crops into the garden today—spinach, peas, cabbage, chard. The tomato seedlings, thin as hairs, nourish themselves in the window of the sun room. The rest of the seeds lie dormant in their packets, a promise.

planning season—
the greater heft
of the good seed

This turned earth seems cold and inhospitable, yet pigweed and shepherd’s purse have already sprouted in abundance. I pluck them up, and lay out the geometry of my small plot, long thin lines, not very deep into the blackness of the soil, into which I spill the tiny germs, and cover them. The peas go along the perimeter, up against the lattice where they will twine and climb towards the sun. I mark off the spaces for the tomatoes and squash that I will lay in, in the warmer days to come. There is a deep satisfaction I derive from these actions, something wordless within me which nevertheless binds me, returns me to it each year.
These are the ways in which we come to know the earth: one may settle, or one may rove. These disparate paths are at odds with one another. Cain, a planter and thus a sedentary, slew Abel, a shepherd and nomad, perhaps because the sheep had wandered into a cultivated field. One cannot plant without a sense of ownership of the land, and this cannot help but affect our beliefs, our aspirations, our sense of law, culture, our very selves. And ever since we have sided with the murderer: cities and fences proliferate. Access to the way has become a matter of negotiation and exception rather than a right of passage.

Those who have chosen to travel with the seasons regard us with deep suspicion, and our works as evil. The Tuareg avert their eyes from the settlements they skirt; Kurdish nomads shoulder rifles to ensure their passage over the steppes of Afghanistan; Mongols will cross the fierce Gobi rather than move their herds through settled land, if their usual way is blocked; the Romany who rove Iberia and France snub their brethren who have lost their way and have come to reside in the slums of cities. There is no arguing against a culture which identifies itself with the way, which lives so exclusively in the present.

In our own country and culture, migrant families drift in caravans up from Mexico and farther south along the California basin deep into Canada with the spring, and down again with the fall, banding loosely in camps outside of settlements, along rivers, beneath underpasses. From our vantage point in the darkness outside their circle, they appear as outlanders, wanderers adrift somehow within the perimeters of our cultural bounds, hungry ghosts cadging scraps—

hands to the fire. . .
shadows of men disappear
into the woods
—restless as weather, outside history. They are not garden people.

But if we live with the illusion of the importance of history, and less close to the edge, we have in return the consolation of the continuity of our designs. My predecessor at Six Directions has planted crocuses, lilies, irises in the rock ledge which runs alongside the house, and they point their tips to the angling sun. In a month this ledge will be a bloom with the architecture of that now-departed mind, and I will reap and share the benefits. Settled, we are the center of our universe, and open outward, where-as in wandering we always travel the circumference, moving about a center for which we must look in-ward. I have lived both at one time and another, and would be loath to sacrifice either way, either truth. Just now, however, not all the earth comes clean from beneath my nails, and I do not try too hard to dis-lodge it.
I am hiking high in the Blue Ridge Mountains. There are few trees here, mostly shrubs and bushes and a carpet of white wildflowers that seems to spread indefinitely. The trail is rocky and my eyes stay mostly on the path and the flowers close to it. Suddenly a whoosh of air causes me to stop and look upward. An eagle has come over the ridge. I catch sight of it fifteen feet over my head as it rapidly glides by and vanishes seconds later among the treetops below me.

stillness of the air
the moment before
and the moment after

◆◆◆
Out early for coffee. Sheets of rain in the murky dawn and moments of absolute calm, the air is clean as that coming off snowmelt during spring back in Illinois—I recall its coolness on the hands and face, how it seems to reach across the prairie from white vastnesses in Canada. A copy of Jay Parini’s biography of John Steinbeck is under my jacket, where it will stay dry. I have learned from the book that my neighborhood was a favorite of Steinbeck’s during student days at Stanford, hanging out weekends on Bush Street, on Van Ness. A gust of wind: for a moment my umbrella becomes testy and unmanageable. My trousers are soaked through from the knees down; no matter, it is one of those mornings in San Francisco when you can taste the rain, the fresh air. I enter Caffe Espresso, Sutter and Powell, and find only a few other customers. Louis smiles—pleasant fellow that he is—and serves me at the stand-up counter, takes my dollar bill, tells me how excited he is about his new voice teacher. I sit at the window table looking out on Powell Street. The wind-blown puddles outside are alive in reflections of neon and the lights of a few passing automobiles.
A cable car angles up Nob Hill; bell silent, the conductor lets the rain do the talking. The soggy trousers glove my legs in a chill; my socks are wet, but what the hell. . .warm coffee, warm place. I open the book to 1930, and join Steinbeck and Ed Ricketts as they make the rounds of waterfront joints in Monterey.

reading of steinbeck
reflections in rain outside
on streets he walked

◆◆◆
HIROSHIMA—9July1996

I moved on to Hiroshima, where I visited the site of the atomic bomb drop.

by the Peace Park
willows hang low
over the river

One of the most moving parts for me was a minor exhibit—a wall displaying all the telegrams written by mayors to heads of major states and institutions to protest nuclear testing. There was a telegram in opposition to every single test that has been planned and executed in the past fifty years. Each one ends with the hope that it would be the last such telegram. A powerful overall effect to see them collected—like an immense exercise both in futility and in deep commitment to principle.

so many pleas—
on this latest one
the ink still wet

◆◆◆
we leave the highway
our argument so small
in the Colorado canyon

About sunset, we make camp on the flood plain. Somewhere close to the tent, the smell of damp silt and willow. The river moves past in its ruddy silence. Light leaves the evening sky. The stars come forward, one by one, until the sky is also a river. We find a boulder above the campsite and lay our backs against it. Alongside each other we watch the night, starry upon us.

◆◆◆
A great wave breaks and fills the shore cave, lighting every corner with foam, then pulls back, its sucking power filled with coarse sand, and small rocks and sinuous seaweed. My awed and fearfull self, tentative at the edge of this roiling strength with its seductive pull to greener, darker depths, hesitates, and leaping back as if I had not been tempted, I watch the giant breakers and look far off to the fathoms of deep that meet the horizon, where soon the sun will drown, and resurrected will drown again tomorrow, and I will come back, tomorrow.

long sunrays reach me
depth into the shore cave
shadows in my footprints

◆◆◆
LINKED FORMS
pillows touching. . .
that curve between his shoulder blades
where my chin fits

a love note
tucked beneath the sheet

same half of the bed. . .
surrounded by his scent
as our gazes merge

snug against his chest
I linger in our embrace—
heart rhythms

lips kissing fingers
memories of wedding cake

side by side
in the morning light. . .
his breath out, my breath in
dark awakening
the window bars shine
in soundless rain
again, no mail
door too heavy to slam
in anger
art therapy
the patient’s house on a hill
has no windows
pinochle
*I Never Promised You a Rose Garden*
on the radio
across the hall
a door closes behind them
shock therapy
in OT
building my own whatnot shelf
without the pattern
evening meds
she swallows eleven pills
one by one
his protests
as they bathe the man
who won’t shower
my private game
sliding into a tight bed
no new wrinkles
Shooting Star

new moon
through the pinyon pines
bat’s cry

meteor shower
Grand Canyon
growing deeper

outhouse
mosquitoes
keep me company
  a flashlight’s beam
  up
  to the Milky Way

unseen
the seventh sister
of Pleiades

flying
through the galaxy
in a sleeping bag

shooting star
can haiku
change the world?

yawning
Orion fades
into the twilight

the sun bursts
above the South Rim
I shake him awake
her arthritic fingers
rub the rosary beads—
another novena

\[ a \text{ bend in the mountain path} \]
\[ \text{placing my stone on others} \]

Easter morning—
the fragrance of fresh lilies
at the grave site

\[ \text{the cardboard box} \]
\[ \text{after pouring her ashes} \]
\[ \text{into the wind} \]

with a soft trickle
refilling the holy water

\[ \text{tearing bread} \]
\[ \text{from the center of the loaf} \]
\[ \text{Eucharist} \]
Beyond the Bridge

just beyond the bridge
clouds pass through
the motionless trout

breeze enters
a white lotus bud

moving so quickly
the dragonfly’s wings
become the air

hummingbird. . .
the transparent flutter
of notes from a flute

the slaps of a stone
skipping on the surface

a splash of water
my reflection returns
with a smile
ESSAYS
Haiku is a 5-7-5 fixed form verse with season words. It is relatively easy to explain the fixed form, but it does not seem easy to explain the roles of sea-son words. However, if we know what season words are, our understanding of haiku will at once become much deeper.

In the early stages of learning haiku, even Japanese seem to have difficulties in getting to know the functions of season words. We tend to regard a sea-son word as one of the various words in a haiku, and to think any verse is a haiku only if it has a seaon word. However, a season word is not simply one word in a haiku, but implies various seasonal mean-ings. It is the diverse expressions and the heart of seasons that support haiku. By superimposing them over the heart of people a short haiku manages to say a lot.

The four seasons in Japan are clearly marked, each with its distinct characteristics. Let us think about each season a little. Seasonal changes can be compared to people’s lives. Spring is the time of birth. Trees bud, birds and insects are born, and the earth comes to life. Summer is the time for growth. Grasses and trees are rampant, the strong sunbeams beat down, and the vitality of all nature fills to the brim.
Autumn is the season when maturity begins to wither. Crops are harvested, and mountains are tinted with red leaves, which will soon begin to fall. Winter is the time to perish. Mountains and fields are withered, and most insects come to the end of their year-long lives. Animals go to sleep for the winter, and the desolate earth is like a dead world. In other words, spring is infancy, summer is adolescence, autumn is the prime of life, and winter is the elderliness of life.

In addition, the four seasons have their respective feelings. There are the feelings which the season itself gives forth on its own, such as the overflowing joy of spring, the bright openness of summer, the forlorn-ness of autumn, and the despair of winter. Or some might say this is what people have handed down as common recognition over a long period of time. However, since we live with cosmic nature we must be perceiving its cycles in our hearts. These feelings have been taught by nature, not by people.

Spring and autumn are both between cold and hot seasons, and have similar weather conditions such as average temperatures, but are exactly reversed in reality. Spring, which has been released from the dark world of winter, and autumn, which is heading toward the season of decay, are completely opposite.

There are two season words: “spring melancholy” and “autumn absorption.” Both express lamentation, but “spring melancholy” is a sentimental feeling without knowing why, and has a scent of sensuality somewhere. On the other hand, “autumn absorption” can be referred to as more speculative melancholy, such as lamenting on life and nation.

Let me here quote some haiku as examples.

shuncho no yubi todomareba koto moyamu
(spring day / when fingers cease / so does the koto)

Nozawa Setsuko
A woman who had been playing koto suddenly stopped playing. It is natural that if the fingers cease playing, we stop hearing the sound. But this haiku reminds us of a somewhat languid expression of a woman, and a hollow atmosphere comes across like the koto sound stopping a little behind the fingers’ halting. This results solely from the effect of the season word “spring day.” “Spring day” implies the glittering sunlight, and the warmth to make us perspire in late spring, permeating ennui through-out the verse. This feeling is unique to “a day in spring” and does not apply to “a day in summer” with its scorching sunlight, or “a day in autumn” with its limpid sky, or “a day in winter” blessed with sunny nooks.

\[
\text{natsukusa ni kikansha no sharin kite tomaru} \\
\text{(summer grasses / the locomotive’s wheels / come to a halt)} \\
\text{Yamaguchi Seishi}
\]

This must be a locomotive which came into a switch-yard. It braked to a stop, emitting white steam, which looked as if it had been stopped by the surrounding overgrown summer grasses. It is the force of rank summer grasses that convinces us of what is unrealistic to the effect that the rankness of the grasses overcame the locomotive which is a mass of steel.

But it is the work of the vitality of the summer season as well. This haiku dating back more than sixty years still retains its freshness in modern times when locomotives are no longer seen.

\[
\text{akibare no dokoka ni tsue o wasure keri} \\
\text{(autumn clear day / a walking stick left behind / somewhere)} \\
\text{Matsumoto Takashi}
\]

Leaning heavily on a walking stick, a man took a long ramble tempted by the clear autumn weather. Then
he felt so fine that he forgot his walking stick. This haiku seems to express only a pleasant feeling on the surface, but the latent desolateness of the autumn season is behind it. The sky is blue all over, and the air is completely lucid. Placing oneself in this vast space, one cannot help being dismayed at how small human existence is. The autumn season makes us feel the original loneliness of human beings accompanied by a feeling of loss. Is it not an internationally common feeling that autumn is sad?

fuyu no mizu isshi no kage mo azamukazu
(winter water / not deceiving the shadow / of even one branch)
Nakamura Kusatao

The water of a winter pond mirrors the sky, and a big tree nearby. The tree has shed its leaves, and its fine forked branches are beautiful. These are all reflected in minute detail on the water. Autumn water is clear, but winter water is unique in giving out a metallic radiance. It symbolizes a severe cold winter season in which even time seems to have frozen.

As stated so far, season words comprise only an ordinary object or an insignificant event, but behind the words lies a wide world, reflecting the heart of seasons. It is due to the power of season words that this little poetic form can sometimes depict a world equivalent to a short story. Knowing season words is the very way to the true understanding of haiku.

◆◆◆
Haiku is a short fixed form of verse made up of 5-7-5 onji (one Japanese letter stands for one sound). General use of the term haiku for this form began with Masaoka Shiki, at the end of the nineteenth century, when he separated hokku from haikai no renga. For this reason, the history of haiku does not exceed one hundred years.

However, composition of haiku independent of longer forms had been done long before. For instance, Bashô Shichibushu, consisting of kasen (a form of haikai no renga which Takahama Kyôshi later called renku), and hokku written by Matsuo Bashô (1644-94) and his disciples (the shômon or Bashô school), can be called a rich anthology of hokku. In addition, besides gyohai (professional haiku poets) like the Bashô school and yuhai (haiku poets who entertain themselves for leisure), tsukinami haikai (regularly monthly haikai or stale haikai), which was popular in the nineteenth century among zappai (miscellaneous haiku) that was mainly written for entertainment and prizes, also promoted verses written in 5-7-5 onji.

We do not need a detailed explanation to say that the tanka form of 5-7-5-7-7 onji had been established as the primary form of Japanese poetry by the time of
the time of the Man’yôshu which was compiled in the eighth century. This form was divided into two parts of 5-7-5 and 7-7 onji phrases, which resulted in the development of renga in which several people linked verses. Haikai no renga emerged from renga, and soon became predominant. Famous haikai masters successively appeared on the scene; Matsuo Bashô in the seventeenth century, Yosa Buson in the eighteenth century, and Kobayashi Issa in the nineteenth century.

The 5-7-5 onji verses have been independently written for a long time, but for a much longer period of time Japanese poets have been familiar with the 5-7 rhythm prosody which encompasses this 5-7-5 onji form. Because of this, the 5-7-5 onji form is so imprinted in the Japanese gene that it even matches the natural speech rhythm of young boys and girls, who can enjoy expressing what they think and feel from an early age in this form.

my heart is running ahead of me

Okuda Mitsunori

living things all mumbling voices in spring

Abe Ikuko

The reason why haiku has been loved for such a long time by so many people is exactly because of its brevity and fixed form. As it is short, we can easily make haiku any time, anywhere, and write them down like memos. Since haiku can be easily written down, they can be easily shared with anyone. Empathy among haiku devotees is nurtured through writing and sharing haiku.

Moreover, this fixed form creates tension and adds musical quality to what would otherwise be just a short piece of writing. Rhythm fuses with the flavor of words to create rhyme, resulting in prosody with a compact, powerful and conclusive quality which can be called reverberation.
lifetime just once blossoms falling incessantly
Nomiyama Asuka

If this concept is put into prose, it is simply what it says, but, because of the form, reverberates.

The Hanshin Awaji Earthquake in the winter of 1995 was a major disaster causing over 5400 casual-ties. The haiku written by the sufferers, which are brief with deep resonance, move us as readers.

Kobe, where has it gone? Kobe in the coldest winter
Horiguchi Chihoko

The musical quality of the prosody which the fixed-ness of the form creates spring from an intense mass of words, which is perceived as a pattern, as here:

the orb of moonlight shatters and scatters winter cherry blossoms
Ishihara Yatsuka

War and on the tatami a fan
Mitsuhashi Toshio

To achieve this tension among words, efforts are made to omit redundant words, or occasionally con-dense extra parts. This results in the creation of a work of art with extremely brief form and prosody, from which springs forth infinitely abundant con-tent. This is the reason why people even claim that haiku is metaphor.

Moreover, this content can subsume even worlds of higher-orders. This can be compared to the Buddhist idea of Mt. Shumisen contained within a poppy seed. That is to say, the tiny form of haiku is capable of embracing the grand peak which is the center of the Buddhist universe.

Shiki captured cockscombs from his sick bed in his final years as follows:
cockscombs there must be as many as fourteen or fifteen

This haiku contains an eerie sense of existence of a band of cockscombs lurking in the inner depths of this seemingly trivial description, which consistently makes us feel the reeking melancholy of his life.

I would like to conclude my speech by making two more brief points.

First, we have to remember that haiku still shares some of the attributes of the *hokku*, and we need to reconfirm this point now. The practice of observing *kidai* (seasonal topics) has been respected for the sake of greeting, and I feel this greeting is also an important ingredient in haiku. I do believe that we should recapture the whole of *haikai*, including the importance of greetings, in order to enrich our haiku.

Second, I propose that a fixed form should be taken into account in western haiku. However, I am not sure if the Japanese criterion of 5-7-5 *onji* can be applied as such, because the amount of information conveyed in one syllable in English is considerably different from its counterpart in Japanese. The same applies to *kanpai* in China. I am looking forward to seeing the evolution of haiku forms in different languages around the world.

◆◆◆
When Is A Haiku

“Poetry springs out of its own when you and the object have become one, when you have looked deep enough into nature to see the hidden gleam.”

Bashō (1644-1694)

There are unexpected moments which occur in the ordinary course of everyday life which draw one up short, give one pause, make one inspire—take a breath—at some thing or things which evoke an instant emotional response. Inspiration. . . a new meaning? No, just the origin of the word.

It happens to us all. It makes one say or think or feel “ah!” as we suddenly see the ordinary in a new light. It is a moment of intuition, an insight into the “vital inevitability” of things as R. H. Blyth calls it. It can be a glimpse of the beauty or cosmic humor of life, of pathos, of poignancy or paradox. It can be intensified awareness of natural phenomena which reflect human emotion. One does not wish to lose this moment. One wants to share it with someone or re-cord it for one’s own enjoyment. Whatever the impe-tus, these moments serve to point up our aliveness and connection with the world, our brief time upon this earth: they point to our very humanity. They draw into their scope things which share one parti-cular place at one particular time. Large or small,
“important” or “unimportant”—the grandeur of the clouds or the efforts of an ant—either can be worthy subjects. All barriers break away for an instant, all culturally ingrained notions of “value” alter, and there comes a sudden unity, a oneness between ob-server and observed which causes one to experience a sort of reverence—awe, Emily Dickinson chose to call it—that is the essence of poetry. In a flash, it is gone.

Because it is so brief, this moment of truth, it is usually lost. By the standards of most poetics, it is not enough to make a poem. But it is all one need capture to create a haiku. The ancient Chinese understood the value of concision. They felt that if one could not say a thing in a very few words (ten, was it?), then it was not worth saying. Most efforts at verbalizing experience are but a circling around the core of truth, that most elusive thing. But when it is arrived at, when all the nonessentials are sheared completely away, the most insightful of us know it in their very gut. The greatest possible impact is there. The illumination is there. The acute perception occurs. One responds with it, vibrates to the overtones of it, re-experiences what, in a way, one has always known but now knows anew—and more deeply.

The haiku poet locks in on these moments of intense perception “in which,” Blyth tells us, “the vast is perceived in one thing.” His skill involves the degree to which he is able to hone away all that stands between the ‘event,’ I shall call it, and the perception of that event. Anything extraneous blurs, vitiates the emotional response resulting from the event. And so, in the writing—re-creating—of the haiku moment, the greatest effort must be made by the poet to avoid interfering with the pure essence that first touched him. He must trace back to only that which stirred
him. He must erase anything which tends to creep in after-the-fact—an almost unavoidable contamination which arises the minute one mulls over the experience, begins to sort it out, review it with the intellect. Yet one must use that same capability to identify and control the desire to “intellectualize” the experience, else the haiku is destroyed. Paradoxes. As many haiku are paradoxical. But, the ultimate result of the successful effort is artless simplicity in which the hand of the poet is invisible and the poem takes on a life of its own.

The art of haiku writing involves acute observation and merciless editing. It is the art of not “putting words between the truth and ourselves” Harold G. Henderson tells us in his *Introduction to Haiku*. When this is achieved, the haiku poet allows the reader to participate, to discover this truth for himself. He presents only the barest elements of the emotion-evoking experience, but does not tell the reader what to feel about them. His skill in selecting what to present ideally brings the reader to the same emotional level he, the poet, originally experienced.

![By a great stream,](image)

*Buson (1716-1784)*

Buson does not have to speak of the mysterious quality these elements produced in him. The poem delivers grandeur and loneliness, a sense of space and timelessness, a beauty derived from significance.

Try to change the poem. See what happens to it if there is one house, not two. Change the weather and the quality is gone. Relocate the houses in rain. Put them by a small stream. The grandeur and wetness and loneliness disappear. The unique significance of
these three co-existing elements put together in this way are all the poet needs to share. This special moment to which the poet responded emotionally is forever preserved. The images are as vivid today as they were over 200 years ago when Buson experienced them!

summer afternoon
watching the sun move
in a water-drop

*Michael McClintock (1970)*

Here the languor and heat, the glaring enormity of sun is reduced to infinitely small proportions, and with a delicate touch of humor, this world-in-a-grain-of-sand poem delights the senses with its sweep and glitter.

The spring day closes,
Lingering
Where there is water.

*Issa (1763-1827)*

The reluctance to let go of this new and evanescent beauty, that of spring, reflects itself in this poem. Our childlike nature shows in this delicacy by Issa, the poet of great humanity. Without likening this reluctance to anything but a clinging to this beautiful hour, the suggestiveness, the overtones, bring to mind many things which make such a poem reverberate with associations—other things one hates to take leave of.

Thus one can begin to see that though the poet’s hand is restrained regarding direct expression of personal feelings within the haiku, still he is able to achieve that end in a manner which involves the reader more completely than in any other kind of poetry. What the haiku implies, its reader must
discern. What the haiku initiates, the reader is required to complete, extend. To lead his reader to a specific emotional response, the haiku poet must exert utmost concentration upon choice of elements with which to evoke it, for the haiku is not intended to befog images but to indicate in the manner in which a drawing indicates the existence, say, of a hand without rendering it complete in every detail. The sure, powerful selection of line is what brings it forth, produces the solidity without so much as a shadow set on paper!

Fleas, lice,
The horse pissing
Near my pillow.

*Bashô* 4

This poem, written May 15, 1689, appeared as part of a journal written by Bashô on his journey to the deep north of Japan, *Oku no Hosomichi*. One need not speculate upon the accommodations to imagine what the poet is communicating in this poem. It should be noted that the subject matter here, as it is part of ordinary life, is acceptable material for the haiku. In the painting of “The Good Samaritan,” Rembrandt depicts Christ preaching while a child scribbles inattentively in the dirt and a dog defecates nearby. The commonplace, all artists know, exists side by side with the sublime. The haiku poet is open to these moments, wherever they occur.

above the summer meadows  autumn mountains

*John Wills* (1980) 5

How many times has one passed this sight and never seen the contradictory truth in it until now? Change, subtle and ever with us, is perfectly portrayed in this poem so quietly and grandly it nearly escapes
our notice once more. In contrast, the poem below, written by another American haiku poet, sings with aliveness:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{a poppy} \\
\text{a field of poppies!} \\
\text{the hills blowing with poppies!}
\end{align*}
\]

Michael McClintock (1970)

We speak of perceiving the vast in one thing. We speak of selection that is evocative. In the following poem, by merely focusing upon the pupils of a cat’s eyes, the poet brings us to a microcosmic confron-tation of life and death, without comment, just the way it is. And, as in Sylvia Plath’s poem “Death & Co.,” we know “Somebody’s done for.”

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Darkening} \\
\text{the cat’s eyes:} \\
\text{a small chirp}
\end{align*}
\]

Anita Virgil (1974)

The cold of winter is captured in mere gestures in the following poems and we are humbled by recognition of the creatures who endure:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{A bitter morning:} \\
\text{sparrows sitting together} \\
\text{without any necks.}
\end{align*}
\]

J. W. Hackett (1969)

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{In the winter storm} \\
The cat keeps on \\
\text{Blinking its eyes.}
\end{align*}
\]

Yaso (?)

Sometimes, the unexpected combination of disparate elements occurring together strikes a chord deeper than the separate elements could. The one
resonates off the other somehow and an entirely new entity arises from it as in the following two poems.

The long night;
A light passes along
Outside the shoji.

*Shiki* (1867-1902)

Of this one, Blyth says: “Outside the paper screens, a light is moving; someone is passing by with a lamp or lantern in his hand. Who it is, why he or she is passing, where they are going, will never be known. The poet realizes once again the mystery of life, the way in which we are separated from one another not only by ages of time and vast realms of space, but by moments, and by the thinness of a paper screen.”

**An autumn evening:**

Without a cry,
A crow passes.

*Kishu* (?)

Here, too, the bird on its way, passes the poet. The total lack of connection between these cohabitants of the earth is startling, sobering. The more so on an evening in the season which soon draws near to winter’s isolation. The absolute solitariness of the individual is heightened by the silence of the bird.

In the next poem, it is the sad sound one bird makes which touches the poet and mysteriously expands a twilight of narrow focus into the infinite.

**A phoebe’s cry...**
**The blue shadows**
**On the dinner plates**

*Anita Virgil* (1974)

More concretely we confront what are apparently odd juxtaposed images in the Basho poem
Azaleas in a bucket
And in their shade, a woman,
Tearing up a dried codfish.¹³

Yet, how perfect a moment in which to show the casual and marvelous zest for sustenance within us all: there is no lesser need for the glorious azaleas than for the smelly tough cod! This is the sort of beauty one cherishes in the haiku. One values it above all the cherry blossom and moon-viewing poems so often written by the Japanese.

The “hidden gleam” is in all these poems. Its hid-ing places are so obvious, so pervasive, we hardly notice them. But we can train our senses to be aware of them. The haiku poet can point the way. In a bed of parsley (seri) Buson ends a poem which breaks the heart, which dares only hint at that unutterable sadness we all share:

This is all there is:
The path comes to an end
Among the seri.

Buson (1716-1784)¹⁴

A close examination of all these poems will reveal not a single word naming the emotions they evoke. Each poem contains precise images—almost as though taken by a camera. Yet, because of the poets’ ability to recognize significant moments, isolate the sensory input which gave rise to them, then put them together in such a manner as to bear out the impact the experience had on the poet, an enormous range of human emotion is pulled from us by these haiku. The reader must adjust to the fact that, in the main, haiku present him only with the starting points for correspondent emotional response; he will then attend carefully to that which is given. If he does, if he places himself in the immediacy of the haiku (a poem always
written as a here-and-now experience), allows himself to experience what the images unfold, chances are he will share in the wealth of human feelings they capture without being told what these feelings are. These poems, like the old adage, only lead a horse to water.

For contrast, let us take a look at a poem by William Wordsworth which, in approach, is the total antithesis of the haiku. In it you will find anthropomorphism, editorializing, simile, metaphor, didacticism, rhyme.

**UPON WESTMINSTER BRIDGE**

Earth has not anything to show more fair:  
Dull would he be of soul who could pass by  
A sight so touching in its majesty:  
This City now doth, like a garment, wear  
The beauty of the morning; silent, bare,  
Ships, towers, domes, theatres, and temples lie  
Open unto the fields, and to the sky;  
All bright and glittering in the smokeless air.  
Never did sun more beautifully steep  
In his first splendour, valley, rock, or hill;  
Ne’er saw I, never felt, a calm so deep!  
The river glideth at his own sweet will:  
Dear God! the very houses seem asleep;  
And all that mighty heart is lying still!

*Wordsworth* (July 31, 1802)

Let there be no mistake: Wordsworth’s hand is heavy here. He does not allow his readers to experience this dawn panorama and share what he describes as a “calm so deep.” He assaults them with what to see and how to see it. For the one trained to appreciate the subtle beauties and restraint of the haiku, it is an odd way to have you appreciate something which made the poet feel calm. The haiku poet would present his reader with a poem which embodies calm.
The idea for the aesthetic approach of restraining the writer’s inclination to obviously direct the way in which his audience should respond is probably one of the most influential ideas to come from East to West. It is clearly expressed in the following passage written around 1720 by the revered Japanese drama-tist, Chikamatsu.

There are some who, believing that pathos is essential to a puppet play, make frequent use of such expressions as ‘it was touching’ in their writing, or who when chanting the lines do so in voices thick with tears. This is foreign to my style. I take pathos to be entirely a matter of restraint...When one says of something which is sad that it is sad, one loses the implications, and in the end, even the impression of sadness is slight. It is essential that one not say of a thing that ‘it is sad’ but that it be sad of itself.16

“That it be sad of itself.” Or calm. Or lonely. Or mysterious. Or any of the myriad emotions man is capable of—within the limitations of a certain restraint: haiku, in general, do not deal with violent emotion—but that is implicit in the idea of enlightenment which haiku impart: one cannot undergo impassioned feelings and simultaneously be sufficiently objective to gain insight into the working of the world. Violent subjective feelings must be left for other types of poetry to contain.

Haiku is a poetry which reflects the acceptance of life as it is, of things as they are. (This attitude may be why some speak of haiku as a way of life.) It tries to capture the specific qualities inherent in each object it portrays with the telling line, the one that can give back directly to a reader those sensory stimuli which brought forth an emotional response in the heart of the poet. “The object becomes truly a felt-object, rather than one around which the poet’s feeling flow,
more or less haphazardly adhering to it."17 The most difficult thing of all to master is this ability to melt into one’s material and absorb its characteristic features. Only in this manner is it possible to again convey the initial experience. In Basho’s famous words:

Learn from the pine about the pine, from the bamboo about the bamboo. But always leave your old Self behind, otherwise it will get between you and the object. Poetry springs out of its own when you and the object have become one, when you have looked deep enough into nature to see the hidden gleam. No matter how well-worded your poems may be, if the feeling is not natural, if you and the object have not become one, you poems are not true haiku, but merely imitations of reality.18

This holds with what Chikamatsu tried to tell us. If one is to make one’s readers feel the emotion triggered by one or more of the senses being stirred, then one must accurately create the same set of realities in the haiku in plain language. That way the haiku becomes for the reader the you-are-there experience it was for the poet. After all, it was just those things in themselves that stirred him. Therefore, the poet must not give in to the temptation to impart qualifiers to the experience. That is the intellectu-alization process which begins to move one, step by step, away from the original experience. That is what usually occurs when one resorts to metaphor, simile, personification, any subjective commentary.

In haiku, things are not like other things: they are simply themselves. Cat is cat. Cold is cold. A pine is a pine and not a maple. Morning is morning—not a garment worn by a city, and so forth. This is what constitutes the absolute shock of pure imagery within the finest haiku. What at first may come across as a
A depersonalized approach is, in actuality, a scrupulous adherence to the truth of the particular thing rendered. It is variously referred to as the “thusness of things,” the “thing in itself,” sono-mama (just so). Probably this is what is responsible for their timeless quality, despite the fact that these poems range over a three hundred year period. So, the apparent absence or down-playing of man in most fine haiku is really the selflessness, the lack of need or desire to project his personality upon the objects portrayed. It is an enforced objectivity for the sake of allowing the elements of the poem to speak for themselves.

“When” connotes time, and timing is essential to the haiku: the time when natural phenomena encountered in ordinary life are suddenly seen with fresh insight and become for the poet something more than the sum of their parts; the specific or implied time of year (season—which lends overtones to the poem) when it occurs. When the ordering and sound and selection of the words the poem is couched in accurately bear out the event which sparked heightened sensory response and emotion in the poet, you have a haiku. You have presented simply “what is happening in this particular place at this particular time,” as Basho said, and “you have looked deep enough into nature to see the hidden gleam.”

INDEX
Index of Authors

ai li...69
Alma, Nasira...5
Anderson, Kay F...5
Andreyev, Alexey...6
Aoyagi, Fay...101

Ball, Jerry...6
Beary, Roberta...69
Bell, Laura...7
Benedict, Alice...7
Berry, Ernest J...8
Black, F. M...8
Borsenik, Dianne...70
Bostok, Janice...70
Brown, Naomi Y...9
Burgess, Alexius...9

Cekolj, Marijan...10
Chessing, James...10
Childs, Cyril...11
Clark, Ross...11
Clausen, Tom...12
Colón, Carlos...71
Connor, Pamela...12
Conti-Entin, Carol...119
Conway, Jocelyn A...13

Dawson, Patricia V...72
Davie, Helen K...13, 119
Day, Cherie Hunter...122
DeCarteret, Mark...14
Deming, Kristen...14
Detrick, Bruce...72
DiMichele, Bill...15
Doiron, Richard...73
Donovan, Fred...15
Drewniok, Betty...16

Easter, Charles...103
Elliott, David...16
Emrich, Jeanne...17
Etter, Carrie...73
Evets, Dee...18, 74

Feldvebel, Alex...75
Fraticekelli, Marco...75
Fuhringer, Sandra...17

Gallagher, D. Claire...19
Gasser, Fred...19
Gay, Garry...76
Giesecke, Lee...20, 76
Gilbert, Joyce Austin...20
Gill, Jerry...21
Gilliland, Robert...21
gordon, chris...22
Gorman, LeRoy...22, 77
Gourlay, Caroline...24
Greenhill, William...105
Greer, Thomas J...78
Gurga, Lee...23

Hardenbrook, Yvonne...24, 78, 120
Hare, Brian...107
Harter, Penny...25
Heitmeyer, Doris...25
Herold, Christopher...26
Higgins, Frank...27
Higgenson, William J...27
Hosomi, Ayaki...28
Hotham, Gary...28
Howard, Elizabeth...29
Hudak, John...29
Hull, Kevin...79

Imaoka, Keiko...121
Ippo...30
Ishihara, Yatsuka...30

Jenkins, Robert...79
Jones, Ken...80

Kacian, Jim...31, 81, 108
Katô, Kōko...32
Ketchek, Michael...32, 111
Kilbridge, Jerry...112
Kimmel, Larry...33
Kisner, Patsy...33
Krivcher, Rich...80
Kuntz, Rick...123

Lamb, Elizabeth Searle...34
Lanoue, David G...34
Lent, Jack...35, 82
Little, Geraldine Clinton...35
Louvière, Matthew...36
MacDonald, Richard...38
Makiko...37
Marsh, George...82
Martone, John...38
mckay, ann...39
McLaughlin, Dorothy...39
McMurray, David...40
Meester, Connie...83
Miller, Sabine...83
Mills, Daniel...40
Missias, A. C...41, 114
Monaco, Marianna...41
Montgomery, Carol...84
Moore, Bill...84
Morcom, Jeanne...42
Moreau, June...42

Neubauer, Patricia...43, 85
Noyes, H. F...44, 83

O’Connor, David...86
O’Connor, John...43
O’Connor, John S...45

Parks, Zane...86
Patrick, Carl...87
Porad, Francine...45, 87
Procsal, Gloria...46
Pupello, Anthony J...88
Purning, Carol...46

Ralph, George...47
Ramsey, William M...47
Rasey, Jean...48
Rice, David...49
Richman, Geoff...88
Romano, Emily...89
Rosenow, Ce...49, 122
Ross, Bruce...50
Rotella, Alexis K...89
Rudginsky, Marlene...50
Russell, Timothy...51

Sakamoto, Kohjin...52
Samuelowicz, Katherine...90
Sari, Carla...53
Schofield, John...53
Sheirer, John...54, 91
Sohne, Karen...54, 90
Spiess, Robert...55
Spriggs, Ruby...55
Stanford, Susan...56
Stefanac, R. A...92
Stein, Art...94
Stevenson, John...56, 93
Stoelting, Laurie J...57, 115
Stoller, Neca...57, 94
Story, Ebba...58
Stull, Denver...58
Summers, Alan J...59
Suzuki, Ryo...59
Swede, George...95
Swist, Wally...60

Takah, Shugyo...127
Tasker, Brian...95
Tico, Tom...60
Tipton, James...61
Thompson, Marc...96
Tkach, Sue-Stepleton...96
Tôhta, Kaneko...131
Tomczak, Dianne...97
tripi, vincent...62
Trumbull, Charles...61

van den Heuvel, Cor...63
Virgil, Anita...63, 135

Waldteufel, Eugenie...116
Watsky, Paul...98
Welch, Michael Dylan...64
West, John...64
Within, Jeff...65, 97, 123

Yates, Gloria B...65
Yoshida, Takashi...66
Yoshimura, Ikuyo...66
Acknowledgements

’ai li’—“a gift” Raw NervZ 1:4; Alma—“moist places” Modern Haiku XXVIII:2; Anderson—
toughest part of town” frogpond XX:1; Andrevey—“pausing” Mainichi Daily News 1997
Haiku Contest; Aoyagi—“Buddha Tree” Raw NewVZIII:4; Ball—“beginning of spring” Geppo
20:3; Beary—“piano practice” Woodnotes 31; Bell—“summer vacation” Modern
HaikuXXVIII:3; Benedict—“this night of stars” Geppo 20:5; Berry—“on her kimono” Spin 28;
Black—“my ailing father” British Haiku Society Haiku Contest 1997; Borsenik—“the only
cloud” frogpond XX:1; Bostok—“stationary bus” Sparrow 1997; Brown—“morning walk”
Haiku Tapestry, Yucca Books 1996; Burgess—“late autumn” North Carolina Haiku Society
Contest 1997; Cekolj—“where the sky” Heart of Silence, Croatian Haiku Society 1997;
Chessing—“kite fluttering” North Carolina Haiku Society Contest 1997; Childs—“the wind
starts” Spin 28; Clark—“sleeping rough” Paper Wasp; Clausen—“the snow” Haiku Canada
Newsletter; Colon—“reflecting” frogpond XX:1; “at the hazardous” Haiku World, ed. Higginson,
Kodansha 1997; “chained to the desk” Clocking Out, Tiny Poems Press 1997; Connor—“dryer
broken…” Mayfly 23; Conway—“Autumn dusk” North Carolina Haiku Society Contest 1997;
Conti-Entin—“Snug” frogpond XX:1; Davie—“leaf in my palm” Harold G. Henderson Haiku
Contest 1997; “Snug” frogpond XX:1; Dawson—“Postal strike” Blithe Spirit 6:4; Day—
“Novena” Northwest Literary Forum 24; DeCarteret—“after years of silence” black bough 9;
Deming—“migrating birds” Mainichi Daily News Contest 1997; Detrick—“between the
twirlers” In the Waterfall Spring Street Anthology 1997; DiMichele—“The fiddle music
Hummingbird 8:1; Donovan—“crow’s caw” South by Southeast IV:2; Doiron—“his eager
hand” Raw NervZ 4:1; Drevniok—“the garden planted” Raw NervZ 4:1; Easter—“Turtle
Spirit Dance” 1997; Elliott—“Timberline” South by SoutheastIV:1; Emrich—“a weed” frogpond
XX:1; Etter—“kissing in the kitchen” frogpond XIX:3; Evetts—“on the freeway” however
close” “in my face” “damp morning” “thunder” “summer’s end” all from endgrain Red Moon
Press 1997; Fraticelli—“between each wave” Haiku Canada Newsletter 11:1; Fruinger—
“midnight rain” Haiku Canada Newsletter 10:3; Gallagher—“awake at first light” frogpond
XVIII:4; Gasser—“dusk” Mainichi Daily News Contest 1997; Gay—“A box” HPNCNewsletter
6; Giesecke—“intensive care” “snow everywhere” frogpond XIX:3; Gilbert—“the echo
fading…” frogpond XX:1; Gill—“autumn moon” Point Judith Light Winter 1996; Giland—
autumn wind—“Modern Haiku XXVIII:3; Gordon—“a dark gold hair” Cicada 23; Gorman—
in the silent movie” “spring breakup” Haiku World Kodansha 1997; “well-lit” Modern Haiku
XXVIII:1; Gourlay—“small town” Blithe Spirit 7:1; Greenhill—“Or is that God & Man?” Raw
NervZ III:4; Greer—“small town” frogpond XIX:3; Gurga—“fresh scent” “from house” his
side of it.” In & Out of Fog Press Here 1997; Hardenbrook—“bay in fog” “haiku conference
Senses of Green ed. Welch, Press Here 1997; “Psych Ward” Cicada 23; Hare—“Haibun
Modern Haiku XXVIII:2; Harter—“moonless night” 16 Haiku From Here Press 1997;
Heitmeyer—“first snow” New Cicada 10:2; Herold—“just a minnow” Woodnotes 31; “first
light—” From a Kind Stranger ed. Stevenson, HSA Members’ Anthology 1997; Higgins—
painting the still life” frogpond XX:1; Higginson—“musty smell” Harold G. Henderson Haiku
Contest 1997; Hosomi—“In my ordinary clothes” A Hidden Pond ed. Katô, Kadokawa Shoten
1997; Hotham—“with the numbers” Woodnotes 31; Howard—“the creeks rising” Modern
Haiku XXVIII:3; Hudak—“in the dark” In the Waterfall Spring Street Anthology 1997; Hull—
“unreasonable joy” “still light, still shadow” White Heron Press 1997; Imaoka—“Shooting Star
Raw NervZ III:4; Ippo—“Boy’s face” Azami 43; Ishihara—“pulling light” Red Fuji trans.
Konô and Higginson, From Here Press 1997; Jenkins—“childless couple” Woodnotes 31;
Jones—“Slipping out” Blithe Spirit 7:2. Kacian—“after the wake” “passing the jug” Still 1:1;
“winter coals” Persimmon 1:1; “seasoned chef” Spin 28, “the river” Mainichi Daily News Haiku
Contest 1997; “after lightning” Modern Haiku XXVIII:3; “Determined to Know Beans”
frogpond XX:1; Katô—“night shadows” A Hidden Pond ed. Katô, Kadokawa Shoten 1997;
Ketchek—“thinking about” frogpond XX:1; “the sparkle” Raw NervZ IV:1; Kilbride—
“Steinbeck” Northwest Literary Journal 25; Kimmel—“in the sprinker’s rainbow” Nor Easter
5:1; Kinsler—“cutting open” frogpond XX:1; Krivcher—“Late afternoon.” Modern Haiku
28:2; Kuntz—“Beyond the Bridge” HPNC Rengay Contest 1997; Lamb—“learning too late”
Ripples Spreading Out Tiny Poems Press 1997; Lanoue—“worm” Modern Haiku XXVIII:2;
Lent—“drought” Mayfly 23; “driving lesson done” Gerald Brady Senryu Contest 1997; Little—
“reflecting” Soseki Haiku Contest 1997; Louvière—“lightning” Parnassus Literary Journal
21:1; “blue hydrangeas” Soseki Haiku Contest 1997; MacDonald—“migrating herons”
Shiki Internet Haiku Salon List 1997; Makiko—“at the funeral” Piedmont Literary Review XX:3; “banana leaves sag” Modern Haiku XXVIII:2; Marsh—“a tipsy snooze” Blithe Spirit 6:4; Martone—“smelling the rain” Modern Haiku XXVIII:3; mckay—“vespers” a matter of wings Wind Chimes Press 1997; McLaughlin—“summer cottage” Haiku Head-lines 10:5; McMurray—“counting her cycle” Rose Mallow 1997; Meester—“afternoon symphony” Hawaii Education Association Haiku Contest 1997; Miller—“shaved head” Modern Haiku XXVIII:2; Mills—“rickety stairs” Mayfly 23; Missias—“Christmas Day” Hiroshima Journal Shiki Internet Haiku Salon List 1997; Monaco—“early morning sun” Scratch and Sniff 1997; Montgomery—“love letters” Modern Haiku XXVIII:2; Moore—“my father’s work gloves…” frogpond XX:2; Morcom—“throughout the blizzard” frogpond XIX:3; Moreau—“two buttons missing” North Carolina Haiku Contest 1997; Neubauer—“New Year’s dragon” Soseki Haiku Contest 1997; “the last performance” Sipar Winter 1996; Noyes—“Christmas fir” frogpond XIX:3; “falling in love” Paper Wasp 3:3; “two in the boat” Woodpecker 1997; “heavy snow fall”—South by Southeast IV:1; Oates—“Valentine’s Day” Woodnotes 31; O’Connor, J.—“night train” Spin 28; O’Connor, J.S.—“low tide” Mainichi Daily News Haiku Contest 1997; Parks—“peering through” Still 1:1; Patrick—“the night light glows” In the Waterfall Spring Street Anthology 1997; Porad—“our dialogue” Hawaii Education Association Haiku Contest 1997; “bursting free” All Eyes Vandina Press 1997; Proscal—“fading stars…” frogpond XIX:3; Pupello—“her brother’s enlistment” In the Waterfall Spring Street Anthology 1997; Purington—“Red sunset”—Haiku Headlines 10:5; Rath—“leaves falling” Woodnotes 31; Ramsey—“pruning roses” Modern Haiku XXVIII:2; Rasey—“night rain” Azami 42; “windchimes” Paper Wasp 1997; Rice—“moonlight on the rug” Beneath Cherry Blossoms ed. Welch, Press Here 1997; Richman—“After the silent film” Blithe Spirit 7:2; Romano—“interment” frogpond XIX:3; Rosenow—“stream run-off” Persimmon 1:1; “Novena” Northwest Literary Forum 24; Ross—“spring morning” Silence 1997; Rotella—“All Hallow’s Eve.” Still 1:4; Rudginsky—“Stars” Still 1:3; Russell—“a work glove” “glistening” black bog 9; “March rain…” NLAPW Haiku Contest 1997; Sakamoto—“on the tip” Canadian Writers Journal Fall 1996 “summer breeze” frogpond XX:2; Samuelowicz—“walking along the beach” Paper Wasp 3:3; Sari—“my own breath” Famous Reporter 15; Schofield—“the feel of the chestnut” Sway Hub Editions 1997; Sheirer—“after cleaning my glasses” “in the breakdown lane” Home Sick from Work Tiny Poems Press 1997; “just beyond” Geppo March 1997; Sohne—“new address book” In the Waterfall Spring Street Anthology 1997; “no moon tonight” Haiku from Home 1997; Spiess—“wild roses.” . . Noddy Modern Haiku Press 1997; Spriggs—“snowflakes” Raw NervZ III:4; Stanford—“clearing the mist” Soseki Haiku Contest 1997; Stefanac—“alone.” . . South by Southeast 4:1; “over scrambled eggs” frogpond XIX:3; Stein—“at their wedding” frogpond XX:2; Stevenson—“children’s ICU” Modern Haiku XXVIII:2; “eyes closed” Modern Haiku XXVII:2; “frosty morning” Haiku Headlines 10:1; “morning after” Woodnotes 31; Stoelting—“ocean wind” Flows Down the Mountain ed. Welch, Press Here 1997; “route 128” frogpond XX:2; Stoller—“spring weather” frogpond XX:1; “glancing at my “watch” Still 1:3; Story—“edge of the marsh” Modern Haiku XXVII:2; Stull—“this heat” Spin 28; Summers—“cabbage butterfly” Hobo 12/13; Suzuki—“tiny glittering” Modern Haiku XXVII:3; Swede—“The beetle I righted” Harold G. Henderson Contest 1997; Swist—“first snow…” Modern Haiku XVIII:2; Takaha—“The Heart of Seasons” frogpond XX:Supplement ed. Kacian, HSA Publications 1997; Tasker—“undressing for love” Still 1:2; Thomson—“alone.” . . Raw NervZ IV:1; Tico—“Climbing over” frogpond XX:2; Tipton—“Canada geese” South by Southeast 4:1; Tkach—“Migraine headache” Haiku Headlines 10:1; Tohta—“The Expressive Power of the Shortest Fixed Form” frogpond XX:Supplement ed. Kacian, HSA Publications 1997; Tomczak—“parents coxing” Gerald Brady Senryu Contest 1997; tripi—“Slowly too” “The green tea” “the last trace” between God and the pine 1997; Trumbull—“nearly Mars” Soseki Haiku Contest 1997; van de Heuvel—“hot day” In the Waterfall Spring Street Anthology 1997; Virgil—“that moment” Pilot Peaks Press 1997; “When is a haiku?” South by Southeast IV:2-3; Waldeufel—“Haibun” Modern Haiku XVIII:3; Watsky—“carrying their cares” Gerald Brady Senryu Contest 1997; “early appointment” South by Southeast 4:1; Welch—“apple picking” Northwest Literary Forum 25; West—“Crow lifts free” Hobo 12/13; Witkin—“first date” Gerald Brady Senryu Contest 1997; “morning meadow” Raw Nervz IV:1; “Beyond the Bridge” HPNC Rengay Contest 1997; Yates—“cows in the shallows” Paper Wasp 1997; Yoshida—“walking against a winter gale” Rose Mallow 1997; Yoshimura—“spring thunder” Spring Thunder Rainbow Press 1997.

★★★
is a new compendium of the finest haiku, senryu, haibun, renku, sequences and theoretical articles published in English in the past calendar year. Over 800 nominations by more than 500 different authors have been evaluated by our staff of 11 editors from hundreds of sources from around the world. The resulting 175 works included in this volume are a tribute to the international spirit of this form, and its many variants. It is on this basis that we can declare haiku a poetry of the whole earth.