



# Roadrunner Haiku Journal

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May 2005 Issue V:2

Welcome to the Roadrunner Haiku Journal. Roadrunner is a international quarterly online journal that publishes quality English-language haiku and senryu. We chose Roadrunner as the name for the journal because we want it to be at the forefront of haiku thought and practice with a regional flavor. For more details about the journal, go to the '[about roadrunner](#)' web page.

Jason Sanford Brown, Editor

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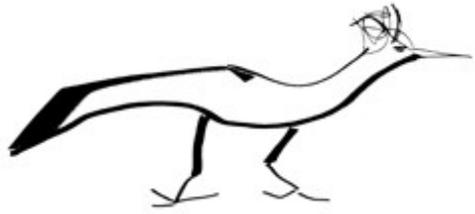
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## **Special Features**

This special feature section will highlight exceptional works or features that do not fit within Roadrunner's normal format of haiku/senryu.



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## Haiku/Senryu

**paul m.**

coming nor'easter  
all the coins  
younger than me

we walk in silence  
a sea stone  
not there at high tide

winter parting...  
the man in the moon  
still eludes me

**Jörgen Johansson**

boy on a tricycle  
carefully inspecting  
spring

cold Sunday—  
walking by myself  
with her

heathaze—  
two grebes diving  
i hold my breath

**Richard Stevenson**

school of catfish —  
bigger, blacker shadow  
than osprey's wings

wedding by the lake —  
two synchronized kites  
dip and dive

chrysanthemum moon —  
my reflection wavers  
in the water flow

**Deborah P Kolodji**

Dungeness pots  
on Fisherman's Wharf  
claws still moving

a grayer fog  
trying to navigate  
dementia

warmer days  
he tells me the fifth season  
is mud

**Allen McGill**

sunset  
my shadow washed  
by a wave

graveside flowers~  
talk of lesser things  
around me

distant islands  
diffused by the mist  
an empty pier

**Dietmar Tauchner**

unknown sound...  
opening the door  
to the moon

midday bells  
a patch of snow melts  
between graves

daybreak  
the snowplow clears  
my nightmare

**Kate Steere**

evening rain  
another tall tale  
with wine

roasting apples  
the ashes  
of a love poem

day old snow  
a dusting of  
plum blossoms

**Robert D. Wilson**

cold night  
my reflection  
sipping coffee

bowl of udon—  
a steamy whisper  
this moonless night

early spring—  
the rock i lean on,  
dissolves into spiders

**Laryalee Fraser**

leaden sky  
a sunflower leans  
on the fence

spring rain  
a rusted chevy planted  
among the weeds

distant thunder  
a crow loses  
its shadow

**Scott Metz**

empty playground—  
all of the flowers  
they couldn't reach

mountain road—  
the ocean and cicadas  
trading curves

a packaged squid  
and the impression  
from its own ink



# Roadrunner Haiku Journal

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## Southwestern Haijin Spotlight

### Miriam Sagan

Miriam Sagan started writing haiku in the 6th grade, where her teacher attempted to teach her to write and to spell (failing at the latter). She was born in Manhattan, raised in New Jersey, educated in Boston at Harvard University and Boston University. She ran away to San Francisco in her twenties, discovering Zen Buddhism, massage and Polarity therapy, and her first husband Robert Winson. During half a year spent on the island of Martha's Vineyard, she rediscovered haiku as a part of the path of poetry. In 1984, she moved to Santa Fe and discovered through a change of address card sent to *Frogpond* that she was neighbors with Elizabeth S. Lamb.

With Robert she had one daughter, and lived for a hundred days in a remote monastery in the southern Rockies, chronicled in the joint diary *Dirty Laundry* (New World Library). Robert Winson died as a young man. The story of widowhood, and re-marriage to her high school boyfriend Richard Feldman, is told in *Searching For A Mustard Seed: A Young Widow's Unconventional Story* (Quality Words in Print). Winner of the 2004 Independent Publishers Award for best memoir. Miriam edited Elizabeth Lamb's work in the volume *Across The Windharp* (La Alameda). Her most recent book is a collection of poems, *Rag Trade* (La Alameda). She runs the creative writing program at Santa Fe Community College.

My mother-in-law  
Borrows my cane  
Rustling pampas grass

purple-haired girl  
smelling  
apple blossoms

Broken windbell—  
How many years  
Have passed...

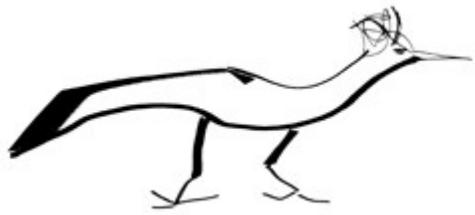
Sound of the fountain  
In the courtyard—  
Headlines of war

After all these years  
Cholla cactus fence bursts  
Into pink blossoms

crabapple blossoms  
fill the word MELANCHOLY  
carved in the sidewalk

Golden pavilion  
Reflected almost perfectly  
In the water...

even in this  
suburban neighborhood—  
wild scat



# Roadrunner Haiku Journal

August 2005 Issue V:2

## The Scorpion Prize for Best Haiku/Senryu of ISSUE V:1

It is an honor to be asked to adjudicate the first of what I hope will be many Scorpion Awards for Best of Issue for the journal *Roadrunner*. Scorpion is an interesting choice for such an award: a powerful presence, with an unmistakable attitude, certainly not to be identified with the most traditional of haiku values. As *Roadrunner* seeks to find a new edge in this ancient art, this seems an appropriate choice, and I hope my selections and comments reify this direction. And, to mark this inaugural award, I would like to recollect some appearances of scorpion in the annals of haiku literature, none, as you will note, from its most mainstream aspect:

and a scorpion  
jacking off to commercials  
the words of power

D. A. Levy

flying Pope  
often takes a pinch  
of fried scorpion

Ban'ya Natsuishi

sand storm  
the scorpion's stinger  
aiming at the wind

William Cullen Jr.

And now to the first award:

It was pleasing to note that there were several strong contenders for this first award. My finalists were the following:

yesterday's shirt  
tumbling in the dryer  
I hum a Bob Dylan song

Fay Aoyagi

over the crest  
the wet road snakes  
sky-blue

Sue Stanford

airport queue  
a security guard  
separates our family

Joann Klontz

reading *Chrysanthemum Love*  
I start from  
the back of the book

Raffael de Gruttola

alone, the mare  
faces the mountain,  
one foot tucked

Marian Olson

After living with these poems for a few days, two in particular seemed to sustain their energy and my interest. The first, Joann Klontz's, is the more topical, and has, if it may be so characterized, more of the scorpion's sting to it. In a year or a hundred the peculiarities of our current social and political malaise will seem either ludicrous or like the good old days, but there will always be a certain strong-arming of the populace (always with the best intentions, of course), so I don't fear that the poem will lose its import. An admirable and telling poem which would have made for an excellent first prize.

However, in setting the tone for this award, I didn't wish to emphasize the political or social at the expense of that which I believe haiku best presents: the personal. There is an ongoing debate about the importance of the name attached to the poem, especially in a work so brief as a haiku, where the name can amount to fully half the text. Raffael de Gruttola's poem takes this further, and argues for the importance of the attached intelligence which accompanies knowledge of the name of the poet: if we don't know that *Chrysanthemum Love* is a recent collection by Fay Aoyagi, offered with her characteristic acerbic vulnerability and oblique justesse of images, then we will miss a great deal of the enticement which de Gruttola feels. It is a natural enough temptation to know "how things turn out," to flip to the end of, say, a mystery. But this is a book of poems, and what expectation there is to be found must be manifested by knowledge of the circumstances brought about by the title, the look and feel of the book, and yes, by the name of the author. While I was more "disciplined" than de Gruttola in this instance, I recognized the same impulse in myself in approaching this work, an impatience to know that the poet was all right in the end, a kind of fraternal protectiveness come upon me. This is a tribute to the quality of the body of work which Aoyagi has created, and the sort of empathy which her name

therefore triggers. The present poem, then, works on several levels: a simple statement by the poet of his reading practice in this circumstance; a paean to the mentioned book and poet; a recognition of the basic human impulse to know how things end; and a strong argument that "name matters" when we approach an unknown work. This last need not be seen as a negative: respect is earned, and it is by approaching new and especially difficult work with respect, and thereby a willingness to grant the benefit of the doubt and to work harder, that art remains vital. This attitude seems to me to embody the utmost the Scorpion Award can aspire to achieve, and in this spirit I award this poem the first such prize.

Jim Kacian

March 2005

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