

LYNX
A Journal for Linking Poets

XXII:1 February, 2007

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BOOK REVIEWS

Special for this issue: Vogeline the complete English translation of Silva Ley's book of haiku and tanka, Vogeline published in Dutch in 2006 by A3 Books.

BOOK REVIEWS by M. Kei

Slow Spring Water: The Life Poetry of Melissa Dixon by Melissa Dixon. Introduction by Michael McClintock. Slowspringpress, 213-2075 Milton Street, Victoria, BC, Canada, V8R 1N8. ISBN 0-9780815-0-1. Perfect bound, 61 pages 5.25 x 7.5 inches, \$10.00 US / \$12.00 Canada.

Modern English Tanka, 1:1, Fall, 2006. 252 pages, trade paperback, color covers, b/w interior art. Denis M. Garrison, editor; Michael McClintock, contributing editor. Available through Lulu.com.

17 Minutes by Matthew Hupert. Neuronautic Press, 332 E 74th Street, Suite 5B, New York City, NY 10021 USA. Paper, saddle-stitched, 18 pages, 4.25 x 5.5 inches.

but then you danced. Jeanne Lupton. Oakland, CA: 2006. Saddle-stitched 4.25 x 5.5 in., 60 pages, black and white cover with an interior illustrations by the author.

Blue Night & The Inadequacy Of Long-Stemmed Roses by Larry Kimmel. Winfred Press, 364 Wilson Hill Road, Colrain, MA 01340. Comb-bound, 6 x 9 inches, 95 pages, \$11.95 USD. ISBN: 978-0-9743856-9-3.

Utamaro: A Chorus of Birds. Metropolitan Museum of Art. Akamatsu no Kinkei, ed. Kitagawa Utamaro, illus. James T. Kenny, trans. New York: Viking Press, 1981 [Tokyo, 1790]. Accordion fold art book, color interiors, unpaginated. Out of print. Perhaps available online as used or rare book.

Obon: The Festival of the Dead by Terry Watada. Thistledown Press, 633 Main Street, Saskatoon, SK S7H 0J8 Canada, ISBN 978-1-897235-14-0, \$15.95 CDN / \$14.95 USD. Perfect bound, 94 pp 5.5 x 8.5 inches.

BOOK REVIEWS by Jane Reichhold

Ferris Wheel: 101 Modern and Contemporary Tanka translated by Kozue Uzawa and Amelia Fielden. Cheng & Tsui Asian Literature Series: 2006. ISBN: 0-88727-494-3. Perfect bound, 5 x 8 inches, 132 pages, bilingual Japanese & English with biographies.

The Pleiades at Dawn: A tanka Collection by Jeanne Emrich. Lone Egret Press, Edina Minnesota: 2006. Perfect bound, 5 x 8 inches, 72 pages, US\$14; Canada \$16, add \$2 for postage and handling in USA and Canada; \$4 elsewhere.

BOOK ADVERTISEMENTS

Sweeps Of Rain a haibun book about dementia, published in the Netherlands as Vegen van Regen by Geert Verbeke. Now available in English ISBN - 81-8253-06-87. Paperback A5, 128 pages, US\$ 18. Publisher Dr. Santosh Kumar Website: India. Geert Verbeke, Leo Baekelandlaan 14, B-8500 Kortrijk, Flanders - Belgium - Europe.

Fire Pearls: Short Masterpieces Of The Human Heart. Edited by M. Kei. Trade paperback, 160 pages, \$14.95 USD. Available from Lulu.com or M. Kei, P. O. Box 1118, Elkton, MD, 21922-1118 or major

booksellers.

Cherry Blossom Epiphany " the poetry and philosophy of a flowering tree "
a selection, translation and lengthy explication of 3,000 haiku, waka, senryū and kyōka about a major theme from I.P.O.O.H. (In Praise Of Olde Haiku). By Robin D. Gill. Paraverse Press 0-9742618-6-6 13 digit 978-0-9742618-6-7 Perfect bound. 740 pages, \$39.

Tree Reisener's new chapbook, Liminalog a collection of ghazals and sijo, is now available. If you'd like Liminalog as a free e-book, just visit the website and blog with her.

You can read Silva Ley's complete translations of her book, Vogeline, first published in Dutch as a supplement to this issue of Lynx.

PARTICIPATION RENGA

by AB - Alice Benedict; CC - Carlos Colón; CF - Vikki Celeste Fannin; cg - Cindy Guntherman; CSK - Carol Stroh Kemp; dht - Doris H. Thurston; DPK -Deborah P. Kolidji, DR - David Rice; DWP - Darrel W. Parry; EF - Eric Folsom; ESJ - Elizabeth St Jacques; FA - Fay Aoyagi, FP - Francine Porad; FPA - Francis (Paul) Attard; GD - Gene Doty; GM - Giselle Maya; GR - George Ralph; GV - Geert Verbeke; JAJ - Jean Jorgensen; JC - Jeanne Cassler; JMB - John M. Bennett; JR - Jane Reichhold; JS - John Sheirer; JSJ - Joyce Sandeen Johnson; KCL - Kenneth C. Leibman; LCG - Larry Gross; LE - Lesley Einer; LJ - Lael Johnson; MHH - Madeline Hoffer; ML - Minna Lerman; MM - Marianne Marks; MWM - Mary Wittry-Mason; N - Nika; NA -Nasira Alma; PC - Penny Crosby; PGC - Pamela Connor; PJS - P.J. Sharpe; PS - Pat Shelley; R - Ronan; RF - Robert Flannery; SCH - Suzette Hains, SD - Simon Doubleday; SMc - Steve McComas; TLG -Terri Lee Grell; TV - Teresa Volz; TW - Tundra (Jim Wilson) Wind; WEG - Elliot Greig; WR - Werner Reichhold; YH - Yvonne Hardenbrook; ZP - Zane Parks.

This issue of **Lynx** is dedicated to
FRANCINE PORAD

She was the former president of the Haiku Society of America, founder of the Haiku Northwest group, longtime editor of the haiku journal Brussels Sprout, painter, poet, and friend, was a major force in haiku, tanka, and renga poetry. We will miss her buoyant, encouraging, and nurturing spirit.



Detail of "Sunlight Comes and Goes" #4
Watercolor by Francine Porad © 2004

You can read her renga in past issues of Lynx done with Marlene Mountain or her many renga listed in the index of Werner Reichhold's online book, Symbiotic Poetry.

In this issue, in the Participation Renga, Carlos Colón had this link in her honor in the poem "Blackout"

food bowl cat's date of birth added in calligraphy Francis P. Attard
the shaky hand painting mountains Jane Reichhold

flora
fauna
francine Carlos Colón

SOLO WORKS

GHAZALS

THE SADDEST BIRTHDAYS IN DECEMBER

Dedicated to someone that knows herself

Sammer Al-Mashaqbeh

Few days, and I'll be twenty four ...
In my life's calendar, they are twenty four after the fifty...

I got tired more than any time before...
Years of pain and sadness have been passed, just like a tour...

Six of them were passed fighting my fears...
Spending the remaining, a little by little, sinking in my tears...

She has been dead, leaving me alone...
But I still feel her smile, her cry, her laugh tone...
I miss her, I long to be beside her so soon...

I'm coming, year by year; it's just a game of days...
And on each December, I'll sing with blue jays...
The song of the saddest birthdays...

CRUMBS

CW Hawes

Sweep away, sweep away the crumbs from this feasting!
But shouldn't we gather the crumbs and feast again tomorrow?

For days on end I walked down road after road;
the crumbs I dropped to mark my way, eaten by robins.

Sitting at dinner, only fragments of her talk do I catch;
my fork pushes crumbs around my plate, my mind looking for patterns.

The loneliness of this big old house and the loneliness of that busy shopping mall;
"Which gnaws the heart more?" I ask the toaster crumbs of breakfasts past.

Checking the recipe yet again for the tuna noodle casserole,
I reduce dried, hard bread to a pile of crumbs with the rolling pin.

Walking along the bank of the muddy river, rain threatening to fall;
there, scattered amongst the pebbles, the crumbs left by the geese.

Akikaze puts another log on the fire and pulls the comforter about him; the tea cup is drained and the cookies are gone, crumbs remain.

MACCRIMMON'S LAMENT

Ruth Holzer

No more, no more forever, MacCrimmon
will return, MacLeod's piper MacCrimmon.

A fateful moon rises over the " /Isle of Skye -
he writes his last tune, Farewell to MacCrimmon.

Boats knock together as they set out upon the water.
Pipes on the ramparts blare and fade for MacCrimmon.

Not for silver or gold will he march home.
Not in wartime or peace will come again MacCrimmon.

Ruth, can you hear his red-haired sister lamenting?
Who would remember the Rout of Moy, were it not for MacCrimmon?

THE DARKNESS OF A DEEP WELL

Kevin Paul Miller

A simple gaze beneath the veil instructed me - what must be done.
An invitation, such as this one, should not be taken lightly.

Leaving chapbooks in the pews to get another word out.
Ruffled feathers and the squawking of intolerance ensue.

There's no stained glass to tint the harsh light of these days.
Survival is a lonesome search for the pathway to tomorrow.

The darkness of a deep well can mean many different things.
Is it a wellspring of truth or a reservoir of continued sorrow?

If a spoke of light should land nearby, we'll take it as a sign.
The sound of hopeful notes would be welcome and sustaining.

BUTTERFLY TATTOO DREAM

Kevin Paul Miller

Keep the surface of the notes round and cool and dry.
Always heat the rhythm to a rolling boil and hold it there.

The glass hive filled his rear view mirror, as he broke through to an
open space, where he could breath and see the horizon.

They were saddened by the news of another lover's leap, and watched
reflections of a gull sweep across a somber sea.

The shimmering embers of a dying star grow faint as dawn arrives.
A million years ago, one final stellar breath fades into the night.

She watched the world with eyes that matched the sky at noon.
Was the tattoo of a butterfly just a modern poet's dream?

SUCH

Jane Reichhold

this isn't much; a windy day such
as clear ice under a wobbly crutch

seeing these tulips beside the cast
in the flat landscape of the Dutch

plates and pitchers inspired by blue
and white on the unpainted hutch

distant as a memory's cold steel
the potter's wheel that knows my touch

if there was a raging forest fire
as I ran what would I clutch?

a few words in three lines at best
you know, haikujane, it isn't much

HAIBUN

AVE MARIA
CW Hawes

Two days after Christmas, I am sitting at my desk listening to "Ave Maria" by Joaquin des Prez. The slowly undulating lines of music, intertwining to create harmony out of polyphony, present a sound somewhat alien to the 21st century ear so thoroughly steeped in the 18th century harmonics of Bach and Handel, Mozart and Beethoven; yet, on this quiet night when the fading remnants of "peace on earth, goodwill towards men" still linger, the strange harmonics of another world, when belief was the Alpha and Omega of society, flood me with a feeling of peace, instill a sense of tranquility.

the crèche
decorating the mantle
where's the baby Jesus

TRESPASS
Gary LeBel

The afternoon of a South Georgia summer day finds its zenith at around six o'clock when the heat is beginning to wane and sunlight spills with abundance through leaves and down the spines of grasses.

The surrounding woods are stitched together by miles of dirt roads called 'fire-breaks' used mostly by their owners to access their interiors (and for trespassers like me). They're also frequented by striking yellow-legged orb-weaving spiders whose long prisms of leaders you must duck under to miss.

Following the power lines part way, new roads open to the east; the dog seems to agree with the one I've chosen to explore. Before long we find an old field—what did they grow here, and how long ago? Directly across begins a trail, more a footpath than a road.

For a few moments we simply stand in front of it— something lurks there: a feeling is poised on the edge of the nerves, vague but every bit as real as a blush. Captivated as if we were about to pass through the Ishtar Gates, we take our first steps into the cool shade within. The quiet is all-pervasive but punctured by a subtle barb of expectancy, as if the forest were holding its breath. Lined with red needles, the path is luxuriantly soft with footsteps being muffled to little more than slipper-sounds. Still black waters release a stagnant tang before its faintly trickling runoff can be heard. The dog goes straight for it, dropping his head through a ball of gnats to drink.

While I wait for him to finish, I listen as his tongue shatters the water's surface. Evening sunlight streams with a white blinding intensity over the leaves of trees that mark the end of the path, one of the most beautiful sights a forest glade can convey and possible only at this hour.

While he continues to drink, goose bumps begin to erupt over my arms and I have the odd impression that I'm actually within an enclosure of some kind, with a brook for a kitchen, a living-room of pines and spikes of palmetto, carpets of dry, fragrant leaves: a place at once separate but not—I entertain the absurd idea that I've stumbled into the house of a woodland god. After all, I reason, is this any more

irrational than one's belief in a Christian god at Sunday worship?

With that same unmistakable certainty you have when someone has just left the room you're about to enter, there's a strong ripple of recent presence. I search about for a sign despite one half of my brain scolding the other.

In this strange moment of suspension, Hesiod and Ovid are beginning to make sense and they launch a smell of those mythic worlds marooned just across the ether of my rationality, the sacred hectares of Claude Lorraine, the lonely crumbling twilights of Caspar David Friedrich, the flesh and bone souls of Etruscans. It was all here, in this patch of woods and picking its way amid the cracks in my so-called rational mind...but with all the internal debating, the feeling begins to slither away. With the dog peering obliviously up at me, I decide we've trespassed long enough, though in truth I wanted to leave the fruit and take the seed to plant another day.

As we leave the shaded path and reach the field again, I look back at what I'd imagined earlier as a kind of gate, more to chide myself for being tricked so easily by a simple stand of trees and a poor imagination, but it feels just as it did at the start, and I wondered at what hour and from what embrace the woodland god would be returning.

across the god's threshold
traipsing in old sneakers
a mortal's gaunt shadow

From a work in progress – Blue Are The Life-Giving Waters

SIGNALS

Roger Jones

The first night I get to know my future-wife, I ask about her fiancée, whom I've heard about from others. She looks down at the carpet. "He's really into his work these days." For a moment, we're both quiet.

on and off
behind the venetian blind
a firefly

COMMON THEME

Sheila E. Murphy

Nomadic pesticides equate to boundaries unless a fickle avenue tenses half to blue. The several overt migration theories tend to wax. Why am I telling you? Eternity costs the same as fiberglass if you purchase sweeping canopies. Cacophony de-veins the silk rubbed to osmosis. I half conceive dormant vicissitudes. Are you among my briars thatched? I guess it is worm worn to be holding tanks.

Eventually stars will splinter into crispy light. At which point homogeneous throwbacks may take flight.

Coffers filled, exhilarating premises, once your home

DOVE LIGHT
Sheila E. Murphy

You have not been my child until this day when recitation channels sense of slight. My skin has not been thick enough to bear you. In an instant everything I learn is true to taste still holding you alive. A wilderness remains left center of shared pulse. This momentary lapse into fulfillment tenses blossoms that appear relaxed. Listen for tone preferred but learned. The glyph absorbing speech removes doubt shaped to glean capacity.

Granularity a form of clear good feeling, daylight confused with sliver of a moon

MONITOR THE MORNING
Sheila E. Murphy

When able wheels are not (mis)placed beneath me I distinguish surface from the resonance of stones. No room for pebbles on the page. I think to you, with certainty of prayer. Pressed duck, rucksack, beyond-the-limit-searing scratch. The lack of flurry draws forth synonyms or homophones or objects that occur on either side of equal sign. This painting will amount to broth unless you frame it. And walls that once seemed gray recall that time occurs at once.

Shoulder to should, anachronism if mismatch there be

MIMI
Zane Parks

My mother's mother was named Willie Mae. All her grandchildren knew her as Mimi. I have dim memories of her trying to walk on crutches. But mostly I remember her in a wheelchair. Her arms and legs bent. Her hands and fingers gnarled. No touch more gentle and loving. She lived with us off and on throughout my childhood. Her love was the sweetest kind -- unconditional.

foggy morning
wafting from the church
amazing grace

COMMUTE
Zane Parks

I ride the train to work. My fellow passengers tend to be nondescript.
People-watching affords little amusement. So, I read.
Today I leave my seat early and stand by the door to await my stop.

low-cut dress
can't keep my eyes off
her reflection

A MINUTE'S PAUSE Patricia Prime

postie
she hands me a parcel
tied with gold string

I open the gift. A book: blue cloth bordered in scarlet and green smelling of India. A tree-within-flame logo is stamped in gold on the cover. The thin pages are filled with poems in Bengalese calligraphy. I leaf through them not able to understand the words and a sound like rain or a light breeze ruffles the pages, while I discover, as if by accident: uproar, silence, shouts, smells, poppies, dandelion clocks, scent of evening in an exotic place – the cosmic mandala.

solitude –
plum blossoms
on the summer sky

TE WHAHAPU BAY Patricia Prime

summer storm
beneath the nikau palms
a dry spot

After the cyclone we drive to the bay and walk its shelly margin. The bright mirror of the ocean reflects sullen clouds. Lives that have brought us here are etched forever into the sand of Te Whahapu Bay. Feathery birds cross the sky and shells shine like drops of honey. Fishermen slowly drag their trembling boats out of the westerly wind. The sun flares at last. We have this current . . . a momentum only, pulling us together. The sea is a full, tight net, gathering us in its embrace.

pocketful of shells
each has a story

an undertow

SEQUENCES

PISA

Gemma Bristow

behind the tower,
the morning's white –
already, it is August

the siren wakes early;
for one moment,
on the steel bars,
dew

viewing dawn,
the Master's poorest student
should be fortunate

half-blinded with sweat
and remembering old words;
geese over the ricefields

the heron stirs;
mist unfolds
along the shoulder of Taishan

black shadow, sharpening –
the soldier asked
Are you a poet?

in the death cells
an orange box
is a good table

the paper moves;
wind
from the orange trees of Italy

walking in the grove,
the disciple who stumbles
tries to go unnoticed

blossom falls;

the dirt floor
deep in pages

one after another
the swallows
leave the tower

ENTER JULIA ALOFT
after a speech of Romeo's, William Shakespeare
Christopher Barnes

I'm love-groggy, green,
Pockmarks of mother wit, unpussed angst.

Blue-ointment lantern light
In Julia's functional arch.
It is the whishing-bone, she a sunflower.

Crane that head, scent the Gothic moon, White mountains peaky.

Your sulphur-headed sparks
Char moon to sun.
Fuss, coo it off. Love.

ENEMY NO.1
Christopher Barnes

The drowned Code-Breaker's disk
is a solemn plot
to agents of influence,
negative vetting.
Unutterable is his varnished arias.

Will flower-of-age teens
swell lungs for daddy?
Daisy squirms up FM atmospherics,
feeling down a peg
at the tent's ropes.

She pods him like bloated dough
in a grave-green groundsheet –
a parody of Jocelyn the cook.
Sugar-candy quickscents, mouth-watering, tumble from the pit of her gut.

THE QUARREL

John Daleiden

Remember our first dance
in Spring moonlight beneath the stars?
We quarreled one summer day –
a broken tea cup on the floor.
The first leaf fell in autumn –
you are gone – will you return?

Each winter night I watch
white snow fall on frozen ground.
No one knocks on my old door –
I listen day and night for you.
This Spring I'll dance in the dark,
my shadow, my only comfort.

AUF WIEDERSEHEN:

For Ben and Martin in celebration of departure

John Daleiden

We travel highway ribbons
singing the songs from our time.
Tomorrow, you fly away
to your homes far across the sea.
At dinner, we raise our glasses
to memories we share.

We'll meet again in a place
on distant shores in a strange land.
In that land we'll see new sights –
in wonderment we'll sing songs.
Recall the nights we watched the moon
cross the skies fading at dawn.

Neither sea nor distant roads
fade memories of sunny days.
When your hair turns white like Queen Ann's Lace
think of me, an old, absent man.
Then raise your glass, smile again
and say "for auld lang syne!".

2 samples from the book of sequences, Baubles, Bangles and Beads, to be published in March 2007
IN THE YEAR OF THE DOG
Amelia Fielden

thunderstorms
all night long one dog
under our bed
the other's ears restless
in my dangling hand

leaping
from the wet jetty
at dawn
my Labrador smashes
a flat plate of gray lake

Konni races
to fetch her ball again
and again
I don't know what I want
until I don't get it

pet hospital –
a woman and her son
both weeping
walk out of the surgery,
empty collar between them

together
along the low-tide beach
footprints pawprints –
first hard lesson I learned,
the lifespan of a dog

HOLY COMMUNION
Amelia Fielden

Good Friday
pellucid green lagoon
tiny fish
slipping between my toes,
distant chant of the surf

meditation
on a white lily
each petal

perfect for this church
on Easter Sunday

"let us pray
the longings of our hearts" –
ah, those longings
no less, just different
in my sixty-fifth year

now her sermon –
ambulance sirens go
screaming past,
the rector pauses
our candles gutter

brass censer swings
incense into sunlight
beaming through
stained glass beside the Cross:
"Christ is Risen"

GREEN FLASH
Ruth Holzer

first day of summer –
waking
without a plan

sun's warmth
on the back of my neck –
the raven's croak

San Gregorio –
we hop out
for a flea market

music festival –
a hundred bikers
drown the quartet

Seal Cove –
some of them
streaked with blood

eye to eye

with the pelicans –
dip of the wave

ocean sunset –
a solitary man
on his phone

the green flash –
will we see it
this time?

YEAR OF THE FAWN Elizabeth Howard

woods to pond
the spotted fawn
undaunted

wildflower meadow
a fawn
leaps its shadow

autumn orchard
young deer
nibbling windfalls

light snow
deer tracks
in my morning path

THE PATRIARCH Thomas Land

Since I was young, I've been the youngest
and worshipped Venus in the sacred
and fragrant colonnades of even
her humblest serving maids.

Some of the time I've managed to
ignore the silly rules, and valued
a graceful poem higher than
a contract of employment.

And thus I've spent my life surrounded
by books and children. Now my grandson

advises me to act my age.
Outrageous innocence!

Poor stranger, I've been younger than you
for longer than you would remember.
I've celebrated life so long
I am too old to change.

NEW YEAR'S DAWN
M. Kei

a fresh leaf
white in the winter
of a new year;
it seems a shame
to mar it with words

Donald Keene
shares my cup of tea
this new morning
we talk about the death
of tyrants and of poetry

raw and painful
this old blister;
if only our hurts
would change with
the calendar

this journal,
bound in black,
a suitable coffin
for all the words
I have written

cold it is,
and colder still,
this dawn in
a new year
in an old house

in a few hours
I must face the sun—
without the grace
of age or humor,

but only memory

do they wake
to new hope
or old despair,
so many poor people
in this spinning world?

on this new day,
the iron cricket
doesn't sing

CARVE AN EXISTENCE

Sharon Cooper

This is the season
of life that
saturates my mind,
every sense,
a work in progress.

Rhythms creep
across mind membranes,
effortlessly drift,
carve an existence that gives
my project substance.

Reality frolics to waltz
with the wind
and surges to meet
a new morning,
then soars in the air
and burns with fire.

I follow my imagination,
it is the stuff of dreams
and realization is empowerment.

NEEDS CHOKE

Sharon Cooper

needs choke
on feelings under rice paper skin,

cellulite gathers like bee stings
on lumpy legs,
once long and slim.

Hands knot like dried apples,
belong to another, with veins
raised like distended road maps,
blue with angleworms.
Days, steal my time.

Now complete, I live again
with thoughts for myself,
past journeys belonged to others,
constant care for them, gone.
I was always last in line.

The circle of life sweeps
back to childhood in many ways.
I want more for the invisible me,
crave substantially...
as a child requires selfishly.

So...do not agree with me,
just understand my needs,
they must be the same for you;
some semblance of self.
Your silence spurs me on.

SILENCE OF WINTER

Sharon Cooper

The white silence of winter
swept the innocent vastness,
bloated clouds hung, sliced
the heavens with their hoard.

Bitter cold slipped
between layers of clothing,
stole precious warmth
as snow settled like
a powdered wig on my head.

Wind spit snow in my lashes
and rime glazed my boots

with slush, half frozen into ice.
Toes curled to hold the heat
but frost won the battle.

The white silence of winter
swept the innocent vastness
and I longed for a roaring fire
and a steaming cup of chocolate.

RIVER BEND
Linda Papanicolau

star trails
the bear turns over
in her sleep

again I dream
I'm in my childhood home

Independence Day
we sign with sparklers
on the night

the neighbor's beagle baying
at a moonless sky

nicotiana
a large moth on the inside
of the screen
as my lantern dims
foxfire

TWENTY-FOUR HOURS
first part: 12 o'clock am to 1 pm
Werner Reichhold

The night with no address in her silk gown flex it brushes the glass bowl

I am making sketches
with pulses from the carp's mouth

a deep sea dream calling motion unidentified in disposition

names become shifted
locations metastasized

on piano keys one finger moves on to c b holds

only half a step lower
black space heard in a pause

like a heron in no action upstream dozing a raftsman

spilling some gin some spasm
Midsummer over willows

pebbles in my sponge like tears on an albatross I greet the fetal shoreline

as if there will be learning
on the longitude of sailors

the light house keeper his goal seems about fixtures and wattage

he dares to touch the switch
at this early hour

perhaps tea he thinks green innocent this sweetness

since the port looks oily
it's for the behavioral science

this loose laughter feather-light vibrations on April Fool

from a far country side
the donkey I hear

stage-time rehearsal warriors hanging around their theological warfare

when a plastic horse opens
out jumps the clown

tightly shut like a white fur in winter his airmail letter arrives

the postman waves
but why is everything floating

on our bikers' course with the seventh gear up hill we're loosing weight

on a cliff inward
outward only curves

to a Marina in the pool a dolphin is balancing the only ball left

couldn't we also let dance
ourselves on noses

FOUR SEASONS OF LOVE

Natalia L. Rudychev

trout fishing
on a calm autumn day
brings no catch
just the feeling
that it makes you happy

putting your gloves
on my frozen hands
I have the heart
that warmed them
at my fingertips

plum blossom
caught in your hair

falls down
when you pick me up
to carry over the mud

laying beside you
on a fresh pile of hay
for the first time
I forget to count
the calls of cuckoo

MARITAL TENSION R.K.Singh

Years of home
in three suitcases:
deep breathing

With his crying baby
he moves in the train's passage:
marital tension

Smoking woman
under a naked tree:
moon garden

Night's passage
on the beach with her –
silky sting

Orange streak
through the clouds –
seat belt fastened

Fortune melting
with change in the wind –
summer-end

WINTER MEETS SPRING Barbara A Taylor

frosted
stems erect
frozen in time

melting
emerald shoots
to the sun

falling
icicles drip
the snowflakes disappear

motions
twigs, feathers
home-sweet-home

fledglings
gape, stretch
ready for flight

mysterious
adventures ahead
soaring through blue

flirting
found friends
start over again

UNTITLED
robert d. wilson

slumbering snail . . .
if only yesterday
had waited

i saw you
standing in line this
afternoon
at the post office . . .
winter came too fast!

waiting for me
with yesterday, a
snail blowing words

i talk to
you night after night
catfish . . .
and still this
gentle tugging

i too sleep
alone in winter,
brother cricket

i stir the
the new year in a
cup of coffee,
plucking words from
clumps of cloud

returning dawn
to the moon . . .
cherry, blossoms!

to be a
butterfly again . . .
wintering
in dreams, waiting
to unveil myself

your sandals,
moon, sewn
of cloud

clouds swim
upstream into autumn's
mouth, leaving
me to reinvent
what could have been

sunrise . . .
a deer bowing
to blossoms

alone in
his shell to dream,
what will snail
write when the clouds
form words made of leaf?

include me in
your dream, marmot . . .
i'm lonely

the haiku
you'll write, snail,
when words
inside you burst

into stars

in the morning,
dew drops scented
with you

new year's eve
a middle aged man
sketching spain on
the bathroom wall
with miles davis

new year's eve . . .
an old man painting thoughts
on his window

celebrating
the new year on my
back reading
kijo's haiku
in a whisper

reeds in winter . . .
a heron listening
to herself breathe

in his loneliness,
the bay mocks him with
giggles of light

even darkness
can't discolor the clouds . . .
a long winter

even in
darkness, the clouds
misbehave

new year's morning . . .
my shadow beats me
to the restroom!

the walls, this
evening, spray painted
with winter

your seed, this
morning tree, in a
damp tomorrow

BOTTOM OF THE BARREL

Jane Reichhold

the year wintered
in the rings of a fir tree
they say blood
of the bedrock's river roar
mushroom and mud the days

secretly water
walked arm in arm with trees
some thought of rain
but it was the edge of thunder
urging moss to put down roots

the foolish moon
traditionally the rain's slick ghost
sloping hillsides
all the way to the sea debris
smothered the sky with birds

changes to move
religion lived as new creatures
little goddesses
wearing red socks and bibs
from the pure heart of rivers

in the painting
appears the summer heart
north of the raven
the misted morning cut holes
so songbirds could nest

early birds
sing to dominate the trees
to a hungry cat
passing roses and raspberries
are the thorns on bare stalking

giving away
deer-proof butterfly bushes
the geranium
choked out by scotch broom's yellow
beware of exotics in your home

helix serpentine
following a river of leisure
heredity has inside
the way we lie together in bed
the way notes lay on the lines

the clock struck
yet the numbers stay stuck
in the boy's throat
a knife cuts into a fruit
the silver full of hunger

under sunny skies
snow falls a radio away
bits of history
living several lives at once
in my pockets life and death

SINGLE POEMS

ELEGY FOR ALAN GINSBERG Christopher Barnes

Inhaled as vaporous light
You tiptoe through this pageant
Off all things loosened.

I worry about you
there in that distant place
not knowing
beyond these trees and hills
and just these hopes for comfort

CW Hawes

standing on the bridge
gazing at the frozen creek
snowflakes start to fall
so long ago it seems
that summer day we kissed

CW Hawes

like that snow
which softly falls and covers
everything
is this longing which has me
staring off into space

CW Hawes

boiling tea
with evaporated milk
and cardamom
getting used to the taste
of her culture

CW Hawes

red sky this morning
these skittering leaves for travel
companions

CW Hawes

this morning
I find myself driving into
the golden moon

CW Hawes

August sun
streams through the window
the picture in my cube

CW Hawes

back from Iraq
in time for apple harvest
no hands

CW Hawes

the white moon
all the white faces
in the white coffins

CW Hawes

like scrap yarn
these left-over thoughts
never to be knit
into anything useful
except to comfort me
Jeanne Emrich

milky blue –
our last hours together
the veins in my wrist
return like rainwater
to the sea
Jeanne Emrich

flesh weeps, bones sigh
loyal to water, to stone
though the dirt path
erodes beneath my feet
I follow it
Jeanne Emrich

that cliché
of how old age tells
on a person –
still, if you halt the whirling dance,
I'll reveal what old age tells me

Sanford Goldstein

Sanford Goldstein

I work my way back
to those early Zen days,
and I recall
the master's keisaku stick:
said or not said, thirty strokes!

Sanford Goldstein

angry
overtheday life narrow-s
with a g/ e,
ev-en these fi-ve linesdow
n/splintered lefandright

Sanford Goldstein

on a Zen
scroll seen in an old
house,
this chestnut, it tells me,
contains the entire world

Sanford Goldstein

learning
that chewing is an art
for health,
I manage 71 even on an

inch of carrot

Sanford Goldstein

dreaming
of cherry blossoms
yet so reluctant
to make plans
for this long voyage

Giselle Maya

face
touching bark
I listen
to the heart
of the great oak

Giselle Maya

in the presence
of dahlias
I hear
people singing
and clapping their hands

June Moreau

my bed and pillow
are made of sleep
I pull the blanket
of sleep over me
I am sleep itself

June Moreau

he brings me red roses
and so much more
have you ever known
the sun to keep
its shine to itself

June Moreau

on a narrow road
wandering self away
eyes and mind alert
the brush takes flight
in an open sky

Kevin Paul Miller

can you hear them
typewriters...
jazz...
no sober poet wanders
beneath these city lights

Kevin Paul Miller

AGE
R.K.Singh

My legs
heavy with pain
don't move:

sit still, await
someone to lift

summer – noon –
curling up with a string
of thoughts

Gautam Nadkarni

palm tree
shadow of a finger
pointing at me

Gautam Nadkarni

vertigo
a vulture climbing
through the sky

Gautam Nadkarni

spring morning
learning the art
of saying bonjour

Gautam Nadkarni

spring equinox
the blossoms
are quiet this year

Gautam Nadkarni

withering the shadows
of redwoods...
these strong winds

Gautam Nadkarni

SYMBIOTIC POETRY

WHEN VENUS IS ENOUGH

suhni bell

hortensia anderson

midnight my fingertips tangled in venus amazons in the amazon the pleasure of heat

sweet almond dripping into her mirage falling into a dream between silk sheets

your thighs spread slowly across moonlight butterfly wings enfold me in powdery darkness

entwined shadows the rhythm of cicada we undulate to the endless waves

glistening lips pressed against your name wordless translation between our tongues

here & there a whisper of amber the scent of you now imprinted forever

BANDANA UITATA – FORGOTTEN BANDANNA

BRIEF FOREWORD

We would like to present a traditional summer kasen renga written in Romanian. We don't claim it to be the first, because we lack information on the matter. It's safe to say, however, that such experiments are rare, although Romania is, for instance, a haiku-loving country, with hundreds of established haikin. For the benefit of the worldwide Lynx readership we present the English translation alongside each ku. However, we are aware that does not solve all cross-cultural issues such a daring step (the publishing of a Romanian poem in an English-speaking medium) involves. We therefore explain all geographical and cultural references through footnotes. Also, we use footnotes to explain the discrepancies which often appear between Romanian and Japanese kigo. Technically, we strived, in the Romanian version, to keep the 5—7—5 pattern (which we mostly managed to do) but in the translation we tried to be just as scrupulous about the meanings.... There was one license which we allowed ourselves, as utter beginners, and it regards the "non-repetition rules" of renga. We did repeat some nouns, but only when the verse's focus did not fall on them (cf. our use of "window"). As for the "insects-only-once" rule, we adapted it and used insects: once as a kigo, once as a non-seasonal reference, and twice figuratively (i.e. when not the actual insect was meant). This was not in an attempt to "reform" renga, but rather to avoid unwarranted stress and to discover the convivial sweetness of this poetic and human experiment. Enjoy reading our kasen, then, as we enjoyed writing it!

BANDANA UITATA – FORGOTTEN BANDANNA

Written in Romanian with added English translation

Cristian Mocanu (Deva, Romania/Romania)

Dana-Maria Onica (Petrosani, Romania/Romania)

Daniela Bullas (Chichester, Marea Britanie/UK)

primele caise—
o bandana uitata
pe malul garlei

the first apricots—
a forgotten bandanna
down by the stream

departe, un curcubeu
unind un deal cu altul

far away, a rainbow
from one hill to another

plapuma neagra
peste satul adormit
se lasa noaptea

a black counterpane
over the sleeping village
the night is falling

sar din somn in mansarda:
focuri de artificii!

I wake up in the penthouse:
Fireworks display!

ploaia alunga
luna de la fereastra
ai toti greierii

rain chases away
the moon from my window
and all the crickets

‘la revedere’si tie
pasare calatoare —

goodbye to you, too
migrating bird/

invesmantate
in ceata diminetii—
ramuri se intind

wrapped up
in the morning fog—

branches stretching out

când a și trecut un an?
în urma ta, doar bezna...

how did this year fly by?
after you, just the darkness...

spartura în nori —
mereu se-mbujoreaza
când îți vorbește

a break in the clouds—
his cheeks always grow red
as he speaks to you

ficiorul de la munte...
de la targul de fete

the mountain laddie
at the Girl Market

licitnd pe ebay—
o cutie de Ice Tea
nedesfăcuta

bidding on ebay—
a tin of Ice Tea
still not opened

prin fereastra deschisa
sunete de titera

through the open window
the sounds of a zither

doi lupi haulind—
un cerb carpatin
sub luna de iarna:

two wolves howling—
a Carpathian stag
beneath the winter moon/

a-nghepat °i mangalul
în săla°ul pârāsit

even the charcoal's frozen
in the derelict shelter

seara tarziu —
cu pisica in brate
si gandul aiurea

late at night—
with the cat in my arms
and my thoughts elsewhere

doar purecii bantuie
televizorul aprins

just the "fleas" are plaguing
the TV set still on

imi intorc ochii
de la raza de soare:
floarea-pastelui!

I turn away my eyes
from the sunbeam:
the pasque flower!

forfota de carabusi
in lumina lanternei

cockchaffers crowding
in the flashlight spot

cate un zambet
spre ciresul de la geam-
concurs scolar

the odd furtive smile
to the outside cherry-tree:
school contest

semn, pe cartea-mi deschisa
o pana dusa de vant

book marking my page
a feather blown by the wind

pe lacul Siutghiol
regata-i amanata:
se joaca table

on Siutghiol Lake
the regatta is postponed:

people play backgammon

un batran zdrentaros
cautand in gunoi

a ragged old man
searching through the garbage

în vale, fata
culcata-n iarba-nalta
ceru-l prive^ote

down in the valley, the girl
laying in the tall grass
is watching the sky

in preajma manastirii
lumanari si gratare

near the monastery
candles and barbecues

drumetie—
muscand din acelasi mar
iti simt aroma

out hiking—
biting from the same apple
I can feel your fragrance

o dragoste nebuna
ca dintre soare si zi

madly in love
like the sun and the day

email de la ea—
orice rand, o sageata
muiata-n miere

an email from her—
every line is an arrow
dipped in honey /CM

cu ochii-nlacrimati
printre fotografii vechi

with the eyes full of tears
surrounded by old photos

plina de sine
in luna a noua, doar
luna gravidă

so full of herself
in the ninth month, only
the moon is pregnant

băiatul cu umerase
admirand gutuile

the coat-hanger boy
admiring the quinces

cam aglomerat
restaurantul japonez:
primii taipei!

rather crowded
the Japanese restaurant:
first buckwheat noodles!

"Spargatorul de nuci"
mi-a dat dureri de cap...

"The Nut Cracker"
gave me some headaches...

în depărtare,
transformata-n licurici
o stea cazatoare

far away
it turned into a firefly
a shooting star

pasi grabiti prin balarii,
aducand...ce fel de vesti?

swift steps through the weeds
bearing...what kind of news?

in palma ta
pe linia norocului
un ghiocel

in the palm of your hand
right on the fortune line

a snowdrop

un martisor agâbat
de sufletul—pereche

a „Martisor” pinned
on the twin soul

TRIPARSHVA RENGA:

WHAT HAVE YOU DONE WITH MY HEAD?

Norman Darlington (Ireland): 3, 9, 12, 14, 22

Kala Ramesh (India): 4, 5, 8, 13, 17, 21

Moira Richards (South Africa): 2, 7, 11, 16, 20

Brian Zimmer (Canada): 1, 6, 10, 15, 18

Ranzan (18th century Japanese master): trans. Darlington 19

1
arms outstretched
scarecrow presents his stubble
to the moon

2
eagle owl's soft whooo
atop the old pine

3
grandad and me
chatting about autumn
then and now

4
kneading dough
she pauses to tie her hair

5
on the roses
on the calendar
dew in this dry heat

6
six months and not one regret
about moving

7
I wonder that

little pluto orbits
still his ellipse

8
a hilltop silhouette
in yoga asan

9
pints all round
for the lads who've just
come in off the site

10
the mirror asks
whatcha do with my head?

11
my baggie is all packed:
thermal undies
moonglo condoms

12
his hot tears melt
the freshly fallen snow

13
down an empty stairwell
the last echo
of your footsteps

14
from east to west a riot
of persimmons

15
squirrel fur thickens
these longer nights
in leafy nests

16
the election oiled
his slide inside Iraq

17
oarsmen's guttural cries
urge the snake boats
swiftly past

18

no hymn, no clergy
the Quaker meeting is gathered

19
like a travel journal
with every step
something new unfolds

20
she strews her patch
with a mix of veggie seeds

21
gentle drizzle
moistening my cheek
parijat blossom

22
the twitch of frogspawn
in a far-off mountain pool

This poem is dedicated to Kala Ramesh's father, Dr. N. Krishnaswamy (86 years), a practicing doctor and allergy specialist at Chennai, and to her mother, Mrs. Kalyani Krishnaswamy (75 years), an inspiring Tamil poet, and to their love of parijat blossoms and respect for Mother Nature.

AFTER FIREWORKS

Carol Purington
Larry Kimmel

After fireworks
and patriotic music
the strong smell of smoke
to live now aware that fear
can quickly cloud a blue sky

While I mow the lawn
my neighbor barbecues -
suburbanites
assured of our clover
and honeybee routines

A well-laid pattern
of deer tracks in the garden
no corn this summer
but now and then a glimpse

of a light-footed neighbor

Stitched together
by the clack of spiked heels,
the surf of traffic
and the shrieks of children playing
in the park

First day at the beach
in and out of the sharp-green water
too cold
to build anything
but a tipsy castle of dreams

Dropping the broom
I outdistance the angry wasps
with ease -
a memory, only a memory,
yet this sudden sting to the brain*

*"Dropping the broom ..." was published in Gusts no. 4. Fall/Winter 2006

A BLOSSOM RETURNING TO ITS BRANCH

Betty Kaplan

Max Verhart

Moritake (with excuses for using his stanza without consulting him)

lingering day —
a garbage can lid
becomes first base

for the occasion dad changes
himself into a gentleman

outdoor cafe —
the sunset turns
the tables orange

was that a blossom
returning to it's branch?
ah! a butterfly moritake (1472-1549)

slowly a tree grows
on the canvas

summer in the city
using the Wall Street Journal

as a fan

16-19 November 2006

GNATS

Patricia Prime

Catherine Mair

mosaic wall plaques - the sun's smile

rosemary - the bees remember

"I'm a believer" from the fire officer's 4-wheel drive

"prickles no more" - the cheetah machine

on the lawn an outcrop of miniature pansies

looking at the sky disc through a cloud of gnats

in front of the open garage a gardening glove

past No. 51 - a cherry blossom petal drifts

from the aerial, the bird's warble

accomplished - the changeover of annuals

CYBERCAFE

Zane Parks

Lorin Ford

CW Hawes

cybercafe

my cursor winks

at a pretty blonde

a SHELL station

with the S unlit

crossing the saltflat

the motorcycle sputters

to a stop

SPIDER WEBS

Alexis Rotella

Carlos Colón

Spider webs
in the stairwell —
hypnotherapy.

Chinese fortunes —
care to trade?

MSG —
I feel like Alice
in Wonderland.

Queen of Hearts
under your King.

Friend's three closets —
one for each
dress size.

Old Frogponds —
riding the ripples.

Mardi Gras route
the street lined
with Port-O-Lets.

Dresses from the 30's —
fabrics my mother knew.

ACT
circles filled
with a crayon.

Stars for a block —
sidewalk chalk.

Caution-tape yellow
the color of
her new blouse.

A wind-up bunny

on the cardiologist's desk.

Booster shot
a lollipop rises from
the treasure chest.

Cutting our lawn,
a masked man.

View from
the balcony
Saturday serial.

Wisteria fragrance —
3 a.m. and still no sleep.

First day of summer
weeping willow next
to the gas station.

Champagne white —
the pimp's Cadillac.

Ditch digger —
from his mouth
tropical bird whistles.

Another month
of silence.

A botched
tracheotomy —
Mercury retrograde.

Neighborhood streets
furniture clogs an artery.

Home from the store,
another tomato
has turned red.

Locked doors
dead son in the child seat.

A bride
on her side
in the coffin.

Long-awaited lilies

already gone.

On dialysis again —
Uncle with
his Purple Heart.

Spoon stuck
in frozen butter.

Giving giving giving
so everyone
will like her.

Hand over hand over
hand.

Free dance lesson
the fear
in my feet.

Climbing climbing
morning-glories of autumn.

Empty house
one eightieth
of a chandelier.

City crowd —
get me out of here.

Russian dinner
a mile
from Arkansas.

The pickle lady
all wrinkles.

December 22, 2005 - December 31, 2006

SILENT EXPLOSIONS
Joan Payne Kincaid
Sundiata Acoli

explosions of life
animals and plants re-born

in bird choruses

season cycles back anew
coming forth in restlessness a

gardens bloom
sunflowers stretch
too fast to believe

slowly noticed yet intense
swallows harken thoughts of it

under a shady tree
night heron listens
in rising light

she sees shining stars
and sings a song of sighs

the sea is calling
stronger than a lover's charm
deeper wading waits

shining surfboards and wetsuits
magic tunnels spin

candlelight and cake
casting shadows to and fro
fireflies dart about

listening to cricket songs
sleigh-bell crescendo

iron dialogues
discourse bars in flesh and blood
white deer fades to blue

coolness of dawn
reading truth in
clouds

silver disk above
tolls the years gone by encaged
summers hot and long

lives circle a vigil
Sunday bells will gong

vistas of the soul

peer into the pains of yore
heat rides in the wind

powerful visions appear
swirling on silent dew

scent of daffodils
waft into the room upstairs
vernal spells return

down on the lawn
petals of violets vibrated purple

nodding by the temple
a violent need of sleep
sipping dandelion wine

couples glide to trumpet's bleat
begging joiners to the
floor

in his gilded coupe
floating along the concourse
listening to iPod music

pomp disturbs the starving hordes
moving to a birthday beat

arriving at Mardi Gras
eat drink and be merry
order more of everything

ice reigns all around the globe
work-call breaks the interlude

the doors slide back
on a single signal
hear a sudden lute and cello concert

love is key to the new world
sharing hurt and joy alike

kissing her wish- ring
she leaves the yellow lounge
dressed in an olive velvet gown

racist war haunts New Orleans
killing color and the poor

in the round pale light
near a scenic lake
listen to high pitch katydids

Blackwater brings Halloween
shooting survivors on sight

a slip of the
mask exposes disaster plans
fall arrives early

softly sliding psychedelically
posed in dark re-entry

chickens scratch in the mud
earthworms laze above the ground
in receding gales

global warming scorcher
dull haze surrounds the sails

morning glories sprout
nature's eternal cycle
begins once again

creatures come and go
turning returning ornaments

Date started: 5.24.01- Date finished: 10.8.06

POST GONDWANA: A CHAIN REACTION

Moira Richards (South Africa)

Barbara A Taylor (Australia)

cast to the seas
my three short lines
in a cape wine bottle

two tropes per day
keeps kangaroos at bay

ostrich feathers
for every occasion
tickled pink

before each dawn
kookaburra laughs
her mate says g'day

tourist snapshots
lioness gives a huge yawn

a chain reaction
too hot, dry continents
linking here to there

.

FACING THE TRUTH

Barbara A Taylor (Australia)
Moira Richards (South Africa)

at self-reflections
her mother smiles
in the mirror

iris plants irises
admires the beauty each spring

good looks gone
no botox baby here
it's all natural

the swell of ripe hips
when rose's bloom is lost
vitamin c

sweats on the treadmill
catching up on time

does she love
pulling daisy petals
does she love herself not

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Barbara A Taylor (Australia)
Shayla Mollohan (USA)
Moira Richards (South Africa)

a bowl of rice

brightens brown eyes

three women bend
rinse grape peels from their feet

beetroot and garlic
to keep the AIDS at bay

our daily bread
scraping off the mold

crab apple raid
from bitter fenced-up trees

shades of envy
her pesto recipes

old sweet tubers
building kitchen castles

church pantry hams
lend moms Christmas hope

that smile
chocolate on our tongues

A RIPPLE OF SHADOWS

Frank Williams
Andrew Shimield

early autumn...
a ripple of shadows
stirs the net curtain

a leaf catches
in the chain-link fence

under a huge moon
newly released pheasants
rush for cover

nebulae still hurtling on
as the universe expands

eerily still,
as we stand on the rim
of a dead volcano

will she still kiss me
with that zit on my nose

after the snip
being told just
how brave he is

perfect teeth on the MP
seeking re-election

ghosts hover over
the row of neat graves
speckled with snow

the dachshund sporting
a Burberry coat

practicing guitar
he dreams of opening
at the Albert Hall

found in a boot sale
dad's lost watch chain

every Sunday morning,
who's getting up
to make the tea

last night in a dream
she spoke to Ernest

silhouetted
against the moon
moth at the window

from the quiet suburb
a blood-curdling howl!

hot milk
slowly bubbles
in the saucepan

waiting to be paid
the chimney sweep

fresh blossoms
cover the new van
in a layer of pink

a furled umbrella drips
on the hallway floor

Composed via email - 19 September, 2006, to 29 October, 2006

PAST THE BROKEN GATE

Frank Williams

Doreen King

spring twilight...
four wagtails seem to float
on the flat wet roof

tipped up stone pool
is losing stars

in the ornate church
an array of statues
surround the flock

door of my small room
open to summer solstice

through your telescope
each crater visible
on the gibbous moon

watching giraffe at the zoo
our first kiss

buying lingerie
for his partner
a gauche fifty year old

for the garden party
hair as red as leaves!

at the gallery
such pride when viewing
her exhibits

out-of-town walk
all the shapes of trees

unheeded,
comments about the report
and the storm warning

all that's left of the pier
are the foundation posts

past the broken gate
to the quiet yard
covered in ice

for Sid's birthday
a fold-up walking stick

3 months dead
he stops the car
because of rain

their windshield mirrors
the moon in a black sky

from the outhouse
a hedgehog views
its first April

outside the hacienda
a monster prickly pear

I can laugh now
my green mac gets a shower. . .
of cherry blossom

children fish for tiddlers
in the slow-moving stream

Composed via e-mail 12 June, 2006 to 24 September, 2006.

ARTICLES

CIRCLING THE PIVOT AGAIN

Jane Reichhold

Several months ago, I got an e-mail from a long-time tanka author asking me to explain "the pivot" to him. I sent off a packet of bits and pieces of published articles I had written on the the subject over the years. Then recently I read an article explaining the structure of the tanka. Nowhere in the six single-spaced pages was the pivot mentioned or acknowledged. It seemed to me the time was right to revisit the importance of the technique called the pivot and attempt to demonstrate how it works.

The pivot is a phrase, an image, or a thing that forms a bridge between two other phrases, images or things. As on any bridge, one can go only in one direction or the other, but while standing on the bridge there is the option of going in either direction. If you go one direction you will encounter a very different scene from the one at the other end of the bridge. There is some indefinable point on the bridge where you stop coming from one place and begin going to another. The bridge is securely anchored on two different places that have one thing in common – the bridge. The bridge is neither this land, nor that country, but is its own self that touches both of them.

The idea of a bridge is an easily understood horizontal explanation of a poetical phenomenon that is not often considered. The pivot, even rarer, is vertical expression of the bridge between the two parts of a tanka.

Since men have been writing their deconstructive discussions of tanka poetry, they have made clear that they saw the tanka (at that time called uta – song) as having two parts. They called one half of it the kami no ku – god of the verse or upper stanza, and the lower portion shimo no ku – the second or bottom part of the verse. There is a valid reason for this clarity in their reason.

One of the earliest known poetical devices is the parallel. Readers of the Bible who can quote the 23rd Psalm have been saying a poem written in parallels:

The Beloved is my shepherd
I shall not want

He leadeth me beside the still waters
He maketh me lie down in green pastures

Even in the valley of death
I shall fear no evil

The use of the parallel technique spread from culture to culture circling the Mediterranean, on to India, across to China and finally to Japan. In Persia and other Arabian lands parallel poetry was given the name ghazal – and written yet today with increased refinements and accepted difficulties. Still, the two line form is still retained and easily seen.

The Chinese eagerly accepted the use of the parallel for their songs and it was the basis for much of their most beautiful poetry. The parallel technique is also evident in the sijo in Korea and yet today there is the question of whether the two parts should be printed on one line with punctuation to delineate them or to give each part of the parallel its own line.

It is often popular to give the Japanese culture a put-down by explaining how good and important ideas and practices were all borrowed from China or Korea. If for no other reason, the tanka form of poetry should be held up as an example of how they were given the parallel poem, and with a genius not often recognized, the Japanese created a masterful new poetical technique now known as the pivot.

They added a third element to the parallel that made the writing of the poem much more difficult for the writer, but added worlds of wonderment for the reader. Instead of juxtaposing one idea beside another and letting the reader make the leap between them – it is in this leap, using any technique that poetry resides. Poetry is not in the poem but in the leap the reader or listener's mind makes when it rises up to give thought to the unthinkable.

When writing in parallels the two parts must relate closely enough so that the reader's thinking can make the connection between them. This is fascinating until so many parallels have been made that the reader is no longer challenged enough to enjoy figuring them out.

This where the Japanese, bless them and may their tribe increase, made an important discovery. If the author added a third element – a bridge or a point on which the poem could swing – one could make the two parts of the parallel much farther apart! The pivot would act as a bit of common ground to join the two very uncommon ideas, elements, or even feelings.

By finding some rare point shared by two distinct and different images the sense of the poem could open up new vistas as does a gate that swings both ways. Following this example the easiest way to find a pivot is to see one right in the middle of the poem. In this tanka, this occurs in the middle line.

the black negligee
that I bought for your return
hangs in my closet
day by day plums ripen
and are picked clean by birds

Margaret Chula

Winner in the Tanka Splendor Awards 1997, also published in *Always Filling, Always Full*, 2001 and *The Tanka Anthology*, 2003 p 31.

The word that bridges the first two lines and the last two is "hangs" – both the negligee and the plums share the activity of hanging. If you could read the first two lines as:

the black negligee that I bought for your return
day by day plums ripen and are picked clean by birds

Without the pivot the two ideas are too distant for the reader to make the leap from one line to the other. By adding "hangs" the reader can see the negligee is hanging in a closet the same way a plum hangs on a tree. Now the parallel becomes clearer as the plums ripen to take on the color of the black gown. This step allows the author then to show, by the birds nipping away at the plums, her hopes of sharing the gown with her lover are diminished in a painful way as if the birds were tearing out, not only chunks of plum, but bits of her own body.

For the painful ideas and emotions in the poem, the pivot of "hangs" is perfect because the author is also hanging – suspended in her waiting and as defenseless as a ripe plum. She herself becomes the lovely gown awaiting a lover and the ripe plum torn by birds. It is no wonder this poem has been so often published.

If this were all one could do with the tanka pivot, it could fascinate readers and writers for years to come. However, experienced tanka writers, those who write many, many poems in the form, discovered how easy it is to learn this technique and they have gone on to explore other ways of disguise the pivot by placing it in other lines rather than in the middle.

If Thelma Mariano had written only:

it glides towards me as I sit at the harbor
in our time apart trying not to think of you –

the reader would feel that something is missing. The pivot that bridges the leap from a scene in a harbor to a woman missing someone she loves absolutely needs "the sailboat without a sail" which she wisely saves to be the last line. Thelma Mariano's complete poem is:

it glides towards me
as I sit at the harbor
in our time apart
trying not to think of you –
the sailboat without a sail

Thelma Mariano in *Fire Pearls: Short Masterpieces of the Human Heart*, p 83.

By saving her pivot until the end, Mariano forces the reader to reread the poem to establish the two parallel portions and to see how they are joined by the sailboat. Both the thoughts about the lover and the sailboat arrive in the harbor without visible means of locomotion and volition.

A sailboat without a sail not only satisfies the connection between the two parts of the poem, but stands, in the end, as metaphor for the writer. This conjures up ideas that both she and the boat are not functioning at their very best, with "the wind in their sails," but passing through life with just a motor.

It is possible to place the pivot in any of the five lines and a small group of English writers are currently engaged in this exploration. At the same time they are taking the tanka to another level of difficulty. There the pivot is not contained in a line between two other sets of lines, but is hidden within the lines at several points.

a simple meal
earth boiled in potatoes
scripture
taken from the salmon's spine
buttery grass of the cow

Jane Reichhold

Jane Reichhold, *Geography Lens*, p 24.

Here you can see that the tanka qualities have been absorbed so completely that the author is able to control and define the pivot in a new way. This is still a tanka because it contains the all-important pivot in every image.

In fact, if anyone asked what makes a tanka a tanka, I would have to say that it must have a pivot. The other defining factor is the requirement that the poem makes, with the pivot, a change in voice, time, or place. It is fairly easy to understand moving the poem from a closet to a plum tree or from the past to the present or future, but it is something else to use a change of voice – which means the author is no longer the one who is speaking. This was fairly easily to accomplish in Japanese by quoting a famous poem or saying. In English we lack the treasure and examples of this, so very few modern tanka employ the technique. It is one worthy of more exploration.

If when reading a tanka you feel it is not "working" or not "right," check to see if there is a change in time, place or voice, as well as a showing pivot between the two main images. Usually you will find one or the other or both are not there and the poem is simply a sentence broken up by arbitrary line breaks to follow the form. There are enough examples of this, but to protect the innocent, I have made up this one.

dog days' morning
the puppies spraddle out
on the grassy lawn
raising not even an eyebrow
to a neighbor's passing cat

It is somewhat cruel to say, "that is not a real tanka," but one can say, "that is not a tanka I want to use as an example for my work."

Before leaving the discussion of the pivot in tanka, perhaps it would be helpful to see how the pivot was, and still is, used in renga writing. As you probably know, renga writing developed out of expertise with the tanka form. Where in tanka, both the upper and lower portions of the poem were written by one person, the Japanese also had the genius idea of collaborating so that one person wrote one part of the poem and someone else finished it. This divided version became so fascinating that the popularity of writing renga overtook the tanka around 1100 and remained so until the 1800s when Shiki declared that it was NOT literature. It was during Bashō's lifetime, 1644 – 1694) renga poem form was shorted from being 100 – 10,000 verses long, to the briefer kasen renga or 36-link version. This was again truncated so that only the first three portions of the beginning poem remained in what was to be later called the haiku.

This brings us to the idea that pivots are also employed in haiku. Remember the Japanese who pioneered the haiku form were either tanka masters or renga masters first and thus were thoroughly familiar with both linking and pivoting.

In a renga the pivot would often appear as the third line in a 5,7,5 verse which was used by the following verse. An example would be in the beginning "A Farewell Gift to Sora" as written by Bashō, his friend and traveling companion Sora, and Hokushi – a poet they stayed with on their travels to the Far North. Hokushi starts with *uma karate / tsubame oiyuku / wakare kana –*

renting a horse

you follow the swallows
as we part

Sora adds: hanano midaruru / yama no magarime –

a field of flowers disturbed
the turn of the mountain

However if one "reuses" the third line of the previous verse, one gets:

as we part
a field of flowers disturbed
the turn of the mountain

Trans. by Jane Reichhold

Here you can see how the pivot is used to create the "twist" so popular in haiku. If one begins with the last line of the previous link the reader is given the idea that the parting of two people is so upsetting that the flowers in the field are disturbed, and then the sense twists around to say, no, it is bigger than that – it is the curvature of the mountain that divides the field of flowers. Notice how there is a change of voice in the combined two links so that in the beginning the author is addressing a person and in the second link there is a description of a scene.

Because our terms pivot and twist are similar, it is too easy to confuse the pivot in the tanka with the twist in a haiku. Perhaps it is easier to see the pivot as an image capable bending up and down, as in the exercise where one reaches as high as possible with the hands and then bends over to touch one's toes, and the twist as a spinning around. The pivot lends its information to the making of two separate ideas about an image.

The twist happens when the reader is being led to think about an image in a certain way, and then Bam! with additional information in the next line, the reader's thinking must do a complete turn around. This technique was used, explored, and exploited by the maekuzuki. Here, most often the reader was led to think the author was saying something risqué so that thoughts wandered in that direction.

By making an about face, the author could almost laugh at the reader by saying "you thought I was writing about homosexuals, but the poem is only about cats." An example would be Bashō's:

his wife too
has whiskers
cats in love

Trans. by Jane Reichhold

The image of "whiskers" could be thought of as the pivot but you can see how it is used to make a twist. The pivot is joining the two parts of the poem, but in haiku it is given an additional, and important, movement to twist the thinking of the reader. One rarely finds this technique used in contemporary tanka, but it certainly has possibilities.

This is another example of how studying, and practicing techniques of one Japanese poetry form, can inform and enrich the author's facility with another.

LETTERS

LETTERS

LETTERS

Dear friends,
Francine Porad passed away in the company of her family at Evergreen Hospice in Kirkland on Thursday evening, surrounded by love. Service and graveside burial will be held at the Butterworth-Arthur Wright Chapel, 520 West Raye Street, Seattle, at 11:00 AM on Friday, September 29, 2006. You are also welcome at 6:00 PM services Friday, September 29, at Temple De Hirsch Sinai, 1511 East Pike Street, Seattle. Condolences may be sent to the family in care of: Laurie Porad, 14616 NE 44th Street, #M-2, Bellevue, WA 98007. Remembering Francine with gratitude and joy, - Connie Hutchison

. . . Thank you for the note on Francine's passing. She was a dear friend and spent a week at our home back in 1994 of my wife and me. We first met her in Alymer, Canada at a Haiku Canada weekend in 1992. She will be missed by the many who knew her and who were published in Brussels Sprout. She was an inspiration to young haiku poets many of whom she printed before they were known in the Haiku World. My contact with her was back in 1988 when we did a renga together along with Patricia Neubauer and Fred Gasser with the theme of painters and painting. The first two links were:

beside blue flowers
Blue horses--
old woman sips absinthe RdG

occupational hazard
paint on her nightgown FP

Raffael de Gruttola

Although I wrote this many years ago it came to mind earlier today when I got news of Francine's death.

moonless night –
in the harvested wheat field
i, too, am empty

Johnny Baranski

. . . Here is the website address for the renga "Snapping Field Peas" that I wrote with Francine Porad several years ago: The renga "Snapping Field Peas" was published in LYNX, XIII: 1, 1998. Best wishes, - Lenard D. Moore

. . . I went to the funeral service for Francine today, in Seattle. Connie Hutchison spoke at the service, reading a short selection of Francine's haiku. One of the poems she included was "occupational hazard / paint on her nightgown." Other haiku poets present were Christopher Herold, Doris Thurston, Tenzing Wangchuk, Ruth Yarrow, Bob Major, Marilyn Sandall, Kathleen Decker, William Scott Galasso, and perhaps a few others I may not have seen. The sky was stunningly blue, and if you know Francine's poetry, or her painting, you'll know she had a special fondness for blue. Francine Porad, a former president of the Haiku Society of America, founder of the Haiku Northwest group, longtime editor of the haiku journal Brussels Sprout, painter, poet, and friend, was a major force in haiku poetry in the northwest region of the United States, and beyond. I will miss her buoyant, encouraging, and nurturing spirit. – Michael Dylan Welch

. . . Happy new year to you and Jane. Robert and I hope the two of you are doing great. We were happy to see 2006 hit the road and pray that the world can know more peace in 2007.

New Year's Eve -
a candle shot
through a rifle.

Alexis Rotella

I am an active member of the Friends of The Oregon Symphony, an active participant in the Well Arts Institute devoted to Mental Health, Words Of A Woman Net Society, poet-in-residence at The Argonauts' boat and soldiersheart.org and very much a today's woman. An astrological Leo, this lady thrives on poetry and music. I've had several chapbooks published online in 2004 by Tamafyhr Mountain Poetry, Mood Magic and A Slice Of Life. The chapbook Reach Beyond was winner of the 2005 International Chapbook Competition. In April 2005, twenty-three of my poems were presented in the play, Soldier's Heart in Portland, Oregon. to SoldOut audiences and recorded on DVD. My poetry has appeared in numerous International, hard copy and internet magazines. - Sharon Rothenfluch Cooper

. . . [report on]DO ZEN 1: material in for 7 of the 13 pages.. and overflowing into issue 2, and 3 AND DIG MY horrorscope for today (below: For Thursday, August 24 -A dense fog of people, places and dates will be something you'll need to clear up today -- so think about the details.

This task will also require you to take advantage of your excellent communication skills; diplomacy isn't something that intimidates you, so you will get the job done with a smile. As you play middleman, you should also encourage folks to get together on their own. Connecting polar opposite personalities could be considered your specialty.

) been advised to just go with what is when here..

sure is 'great' not being a lit gang critic mavin..

first issue will probably have some lean towards Cid..

however.. PLAY is the plinth ..

and, instead of "us" making Cid "rich and famous" and read, he will make "us" "rich and famous", and red (sic)

now, as soon as Micah and Evie get home FROM WORK ! I will figure out how to get things printed as, as all of a sudden it ain't working.. and how can I "edit" without paper pieces to cut and paste an shyffle..

TIRED OF SEEING SO MANY ON_LINE?ZINE ZENES all look alike..

not like tel let's site.. or Bare Bones BONZE feel like chucking this whole fucking computer.. it's too slow. not nearly as "cool" as my old underwood 1930-ish upright

am including John Phillips.. but, since I never hear'd from him, so I deleted his e-male address can find it noh where in particular

Aries March 21 - April 19

going "nuts" here..mostly raw, unsalted pee-nuts I cannot find your broadside.. it is still in the envelope..

maybe I accidentally dropped it in the mail-box yesterday ?

it wld be neat to "piggy-back" it in DOZEN.. give it a free ride?

about 6 of the 13 pages of issue DOZEN 1 now set..

not yet hardened.. but the 'crete is set when I get enough good stuff will go with it with whoever gets to here with..and the sooner the better..don't like dragging things out.. as there is no future..as, when you get there..there is yet a future-future..act/play is in The Moment.. and requires no fear..and dropping perfections, wants (desires)...etc now thinking of "featuring" a single artist/person/poet .. give them an entire 13 page issue?..

going to do that in DOZEN 2 as a learning 'thing'

would really like to see SG produced.. but, 500 + pages!?!.. just stick the ms (5 vols) in my trunk.. with the other mss..

nor meat
nor beer
now
for

six weeks
more energy

and
always eating
yet
never
hungry

most my age (65) 'retire' into their new career: ILLNESS. later, Kokkie-san aka Ed Baker

Please find attached the issue #6 of our newsletter. Feel free to send any haiku, essays, articles or information (web sites, competitions, publications, events...) relating to haiku for the next issue - haiku ireland - official site. All the best in haiku spirits, Gilles Fabre

Tanka Poets Announce New Publishing Venture

Poets M. Kei, Michael McClintock, and Denis M. Garrison today announced the formation of ~Seamark~, a publishing venture 'For Poets, by Poets.' McClintock, well-known in the English-speaking world as one of the foremost tanka poets of the day, is also a co-editor of The Tanka Anthology and President of the Tanka Society of America. Garrison, a poet and the well-known editor of Haiku Harvest and several other poetry journals, recently established a new journal, the 3 x 5 Poetry Review. M. Kei is a young tanka poet and editor who is the Moderator for Kyoka Mad Poems. The new anthology from Seamark is his brainchild. All three poets will continue their established associations and responsibilities as well as taking on the duties of running the new publishing house. Seamark's first project is Fire Pearls: Short Masterpieces of Love and Passion. A call for submissions will be made later this summer. Poets should not submit until the call is made as the editors are very busy finalizing plans for the new anthology. Submissions made before the opening date will not be read. For more information, visit the web site at: www.seamark-house.org

July's FireWeed is complete and ready for your inspection: Poetry, interview, Houdini, Scotland, experimental, War, Peace and Everything in between supplemental, and feature - Jon Hayes. Terrie Relf, editor, invites you to come on over and enjoy. And also go to blogspot.com/. The blog owner's (Michelle Buchanan) goal is to post a memorial poem to each of the military killed during the Iraq war - 2615 as of the end of June. Please add yours. – Gary Blankenship Gary's book, A River Transformed.

Haiku Constantza Society, Center Of Japanese Culture And Civilization, The Direction Of Culture And Patrimony, The Worship And Culture Ministry, Constantin Bratescu Lycee And School "Nicolae Tonitza", No.39 Constanta- Romania

We want to inform you that we have decided to organize a haiku congress in Constanta, between 10th-15th May 2007. We want to have a celebration on the 15th anniversary of existing the Haiku Society of Constanta, Romania. We'll be very honoured to have you as a participant. There will be organized trips in the Danube Delta, museums and monasteries in Dobrogea. The calendar of activities will consist of : 11th, 12th, 13th-days with conferences on sections: -haiku in education; -renku-literary workshop; -haiku and fine arts; -theoretical considerations on the Nippon Creation. There will also be :book

presentations, exhibition of books and artistic products by pupils and teachers; presentations of authors: books and activity. If you have other suggestions we are open at any of them. If you want to participate please let us know until the 10th January, 2007, and if you want to have a paper at the conference, please send it or the summary of it before the 1st of March , 2007. The location will be at Park Hotel, Mamaia, near Constanta. You'll have their address and you may reserve a place at WWW.HOTELPARK.RO. We'll remain into info-touch. Yours, The Haiku Society Staff from Constanta. Ms Laura Vaceanu

Poets and friends:

After some hesitation, I've decided to suspend The Ghazal Page until the first of the year or shortly after. I have some good poems on hand and fully intend to publish them. However, I'm over my head with work and need some time to catch up on correspondence and to do my own writing. My own work has suffered this year, and I want to make up for that. Please email me with any concerns you have. If I have any poems of yours on hand, you should here from me sometime in the latter part of December. If you want to withdraw a submission, let me know--but I'd much rather you didn't. Thank you, Gino Peregrini Ghazal Page.

My new chapbook, Mud on the Wall is out and selling well...go to the webpage and order your copy...only 100 numbered copies made. All the best, Jörgen Johansson

The following poems are selections from my new chapbook Old Soldiers Fading Away (ISBN 1-58998-409-9), just published by Pudding House of Columbus, Ohio, USA. It is an anthology of previously-published haiku, senryu, haibun and sequences dealing with veterans, especially Vietnam veterans.

war crimes trial
the defendant tries to suppress
another yawn

- Frogpond XXV:1; reprinted in pegging the wind: The Red Moon Anthology of English-Language Haiku 2002

Vietnam Memorial Wall
an ex-Marine recruiter
salutes three names

- Modern Haiku XXVIII:1

VA hospital
a tree in the courtyard
scarred by lightning

- Acorn, issue 13

Battlefield Memento

I recently learned of a Vietnam veteran whose battalion was overrun during a battle in the Ia Drang Valley. His company suffered a casualty rate of over 90 per cent during a 24-hour period of hand-to-hand fighting. In the early 1990s this man and a few other Ia Drang veterans returned to Vietnam and walked that long-ago battlefield. He wanted to find some memento of that conflict, such as shrapnel or a shell casing, to leave beside that panel of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial - "The Wall" - that contains the names of his comrades killed during that battle. But he found no war relics. Over the years nature had effaced all traces of that horrendous engagement. Beautiful flowers now bloomed where men had once died. Still, this veteran wanted some memento to put at The Wall panel listing his fallen comrades.

next to names of war dead
pressed flowers
from their last battlefield

- published in Modern Haiku XXXI:3; received Favorite Haibun of Issue Award

for ordering information, drop me an e-mail. John J. Dunphy

Dear Tanka Poets,

Yellow Moon Seed Pearls 2006 results are now up. Click on competitions, then results, then Seed Pearls. 220 tanka were entered in this competition, judged by Janice Bostok. (All were numbered for anonymous selection.) 1st prize for tanka: Kirsty Karkow Waldoboro Maine USA 2nd prize for tanka: Linda Jeannette Ward Coinjock New Jersey USA. Yellow Moon congratulates these two fine poets and everybody who participated. Beverley George, PO Box 37, Pearl Beach NSW 2256, AUSTRALIA.

Just letting you know the haiku section of Aha! Poetry is listed on the links page of Liquid Haiku, a newly launched section of my website, Illumination Gallery. - Peter Schmideg

Greetings haiku Friends Worldwide: Editors Jim Kacian, Bruce Ross and Ken Jones are pleased to announce the December issue of Contemporary Haibun Online under it's new domain name. December Contributors are: Hortensia Anderson, Colin Barber, Marjorie Buettner, Yvonne Cabalona, Garry Eaton, Jim Fowler, C.W. Hawes, Roger Jones, Frances Ruhlen McConnel, Dustin Neal, Zane Parks, Ray Rasmussen, Lynne Rees, Natalia L. Rudychev, John Stone, Richard Straw, Julie Thorndyke, J. Marcus Weekley, Jane Whittle, -Ken Jones, Jim Kacian, Bruce Ross.

hello all, i am very pleased to announce the launch of the new red moon press website the site is the result of more than two years of effort, primarily that of web designer dave russo, who has insisted for years that red moon press needed a web presence, and who dedicated himself to the task of making it happen i can't thank him enough for his diligence and hard work to make this come about the site will incorporate more features as time goes along, but for the moment it is a site where all current red moon press products are available, and which offers some information about us and our mission we hope you'll be interested in having a look around, and we invite you to check us out at and to tell your friends about us as well thanks for your wonderful support in the past, and we look forward to being able to do even more for the haiku community in our new incarnation take care, and happy holidays – jim kacian, red moon press

I am the publisher of the new print journal, Wisteria devoted to publishing haiku, senryu and tanka.

Thanks for your time and devotion to these often neglected forms of poetry. Best, Tony A. Thompson

I am a tanka-poet, Mariko Kitakubo, living in Tokyo Japan. I want to introduce my tanka-web site. While composing poems is the primary thing to do, I want to continue expressive activities by means of reading performances in and out of the country. I feel it meaningful to vibrate Japanese traditional rhythm sounds, consisting of units of 5 and 7 syllables, in front of Tanka lovers whose native language is not Japanese. Also, I am willing to actively collaborate with activities of other media, such as paintings, music, photographs and video images. -Mariko Kitakubo

Dear Werner, Thank you for the acceptance. I'll give Carol a call this morning and let her know. I hope to send you more of the kind of thing that Sheila Windsor and I were doing last year. We're talking about doing more. Not the same, but along those lines. To have a place to showcase this kind of work is wonderful. I don't know where else we could. I'm learning how to use the Lulu print-on-demand site online. Challenging, but it is a way of putting out professional looking books that are affordable and don't leave one with a lot of books in boxes around the house. I'm hoping this might work out for future Winfred Press projects and also as a way to keep some of my collections in print. We'll see what happens. Take care, Larry Kimmel

Denis boswell1776@yahoo.com has invited you to join the Tanka Roundtable group with this message: TANKA ROUNDTABLE is TankaCentral.com's elist for poets, scholars, and others interested in tanka to discuss techniques, trends, prosody, and other topics of interest. The scope of discussion includes the entire waka/tanka tradition, including subsets such as kyoka and the use of new set forms for tanka. Historical matters, current affairs, and speculation about the future of tanka are all on the menu. Workshopping is not a primary activity of this e-list, but discussion of specific poems will be frequent. I do not expect this e-list to really compete with any existing tanka e-lists. Tanka Roundtable is not so much for workshopping as for more scholarly / professional poet discussions. I hope you will join it. best wishes, -Denis Garrison

BOOK REVIEWS

Slow Spring Water: The Life Poetry of Melissa Dixon by Melissa Dixon. Introduction by Michael McClintock. Slowspringpress, 213-2075 Milton Street, Victoria, BC, Canada, V8R 1N8 ISBN 0-9780815-0-1. Perfect bound, 61 pages, 5.25 x 7.5 inches, \$10.00 US / \$12.00 Canada.

Slow Spring Water: The life poetry of Melissa Dixon, is a professional looking chapbook of 61 pages. It features tanka, haiku, tanka sequences, and haibun. It covers diverse subjects such as the poet's childhood on the plains of Canada, her migration to the coast of British Columbia, and her visit to an abandoned monastery in India.

Dixon is at her best when she is at her most personal. In her haibun, "The Conspiracy," she writes about taking her son's ashes to spread on the sea — prohibited by law, but a law honored more in the breach than the observance. Her son lost his life on New Year's Day and the family scattered his ashes in May.

winter of waiting

first blossoms touched
by frost

The family enacted its private ceremony and returned, accompanied by seabirds. The astonishing spectacle of thousands of seabirds pacing the boat provides the poet and her family with relief and the restoration of faith in the beauty of the world. As such it is a fitting closure for the haibun. Unfortunately, the last haiku is not strong enough to satisfy.

sooty shearwaters –
wings spread wide
in the field guide

While all of her poems are well-crafted and lyric, her strongest poems are those in which she speaks her heart directly. These are generally tanka, and it is fortunate that tanka make up the bulk of the chapbook.

in my palm a rosy stone
wet-scented by the sea
how right I was
to catch a train and leave
the plains behind

And also:

keening Manitoba winds,
snow piling towards the roof –
wordlessly
my English mother
sets the kitchen table

Both of these tanka paint moving portraits of women, causing us to believe that we have glimpsed something essential about each woman. We cannot help thinking that if we met them in person, we would experience the flash of recognition, I know you.

The power of the known also shows up in her haibun 'The Caves of Kanheri,' written about her trip to India. The prose is lively and engaging, full of the wry wit of a wise woman who knows how to ingratiate herself with her fellow travelers.

"Traveling alone in a strange land may be perilous for anyone. But for a woman it can at times work in her favor. She could, for instance, find herself escorted by kind fellow-countrymen to the hidden heart of that land, where no buses go. They tend to trust her. Does she not speak their language? Is she not reasonably dressed, courteous, interested? Yes, she is company, a friend."

The prose description of her travels with her newfound companions is delightful, but alas, once she reaches the caves and must grapple with the work of monks long dead, her haiku is not equal to the occasion.

Nonetheless, although her haiku are not as strong as her prose and tanka, occasionally they are perfect. One of my favorite poems from the book is a haiku:

worn doorstep
all that's left of the old house
in the windy field

The image is limpid, original, and powerful. It resonates with all the associations of old houses, loss, and abandonment that the reader has ever seen or experienced. It presents us with a moment that might have been found in a Wyeth painting, but wasn't; we believe that the poet actually encountered this particular step in this particular field. Although we know she might have made the whole thing up (how could we ever know when a poet is making use of poetic license?), we are convinced that if we went there, the scene would be exactly as she made us see it.

The poetic persona that comes through the book is that of a charming and ingratiating older woman, the kind of person we are pleased to discover sitting next to us on the train or ferryboat. *Slow Spring Water* is a pleasant interlude between the 'here' and 'there' of our busy world.

Reviewed by M. Kei

Modern English Tanka, 1:1, Fall, 2006. 252 pages, trade paperback, color covers, b/w interior art. Denis M. Garrison, editor; Michael McClintock, contributing editor. Available through Lulu.com.

I just received my copy of *Modern English Tanka*, Fall, 2006, the inaugural issue of a fine new journal of tanka in English. Edited by Denis M. Garrison, who previously edited *Haiku Harvest* for six years, it's a major addition to the world of tanka in English. Containing approximately 500 tanka, several of which are taiga (tanka and art), plus essays and articles, it presents established and emerging tanka poets. Each poet is invited to send up to 40 tanka from which the editor selects zero to forty. Most poets are represented with one to ten tanka while a handful of poets are presented with twenty or thirty tanka. This provides ample opportunity to enjoy the various voices in their many moods and nuances.

The non-fiction articles educate the readers about various aspects of tanka poetry and are making an important addition to what is a rather small body of literary criticism and analysis of tanka in English. Much more scholarship of this sort is needed; it is not sufficient simply to write tanka, we must talk about the craft and history of tanka and the ways in which it is or could be practiced in English. In this regard, although tanka has been written in English just as long as haiku has, haiku scholarship is far ahead of tanka scholarship.

At 252 pages, *Modern English Tanka* is a satisfyingly solid trade paperback with an understated yet handsome full color cover. It's a journal any poetry lover would be delighted to own, and from which any tanka poet could learn.

Reviewed by M. Kei

Cherry Blossom Epiphany " the poetry and philosophy of a flowering tree "
a selection, translation and lengthy explication of 3,000 haiku, waka, senryū and kyōka about a major theme from I.P.O.O.H. (In Praise Of Olde Haiku). By Robin D. Gill. Paraverse Press 0-9742618-6-6 13

digit 978-0-9742618-6-7 Perfect bound. 740 pages, \$39.

If the solemn yet happy New Year's is the most important celebration of Japanese culture, and the quiet aesthetic practice of Moon-viewing in the fall the most elegant expression of Pan-Asian Buddhism=religion, the subject of this book, Blossom-viewing "which generally means sitting down together in vast crowds to drink, dance, sing and otherwise enjoy the flowering cherry in full-bloom." is less a rite than a riot (a word originally meaning an "uproar"). The major carnival of the year, it is unusual for being held on a date that is not determined by astronomy, astrology or the accidents of history as most such events are in literate cultures. It takes place whenever the cherry trees are good and ready. Enjoyed in the flesh, the blossom-viewing, or hanami, is also of the mind, so much so, in fact, that poetry is often credited with the spread of the practice over the centuries from the Imperial courts to the maids of Edo. Nobles enjoyed link-verse contests presided over by famous poet-judges. Hermits hung poems feting this flower of flowers (to say the generic "flower"= hana in Japanese connotes "cherry!") on strips of paper from the branches of lone trees where only the wind would read them. In the Occident, too, flowers embody beauty and serve as reminders of mortality, but there is no flower that, like the cherry blossom, stands for all flowers. Even the rose, by any name, cannot compare with the sakura in depth and breadth of poetic trope or viewing practice. In *Cherry Blossom Epiphany*, Robin D. Gill hopes to help readers experience, metaphysically, some of this alternative world.

The standard measure for selection in haiku, as in any literary art, is excellence; but excellence by itself can be terribly boring. The ku in this book have been selected for the information and evidence of natural or cultural history they provide, their rarity value in filling out a poorly exemplified sub-theme, suitability for translation and/or explanation, wit, precedence and dozens of other reasons among which excellence is only one of many. The practical challenge was not to sort ku on a scale from best-to-worst, but to find a way to organize thousands of them! and hundreds of older 13-beat waka (unlike, sea cucumber, which became a subject for poetry with haikai, cherry blossom poems go back over a thousand years). The main categories developed are 1) The blossom-viewing sequence (waiting-for-the-bloom, the viewing, return-trip, etc.); 2) Environmental phenomena (cold, rain, wind, etc.); 3) Types of cherries (single-petal, double-petal, pendulant, etc.); 4) Types of people (blossom guards, vendors, children, etc.); 5) Activities (drinking, singing, eating, etc.); and 6) Concepts (patriotism, woman-as-blossom (and vice-versa), conservation, etc.). The plot loosely follows the first category, chronology, with other categories woven in as needed to treat the reader to variety and complement the neighboring chapters.

More info is up at paraverse.org. Translator friend Masako thought the following was a good appraisal of the situation:

"Robin D. Gill's previous anthologies of translated haiku and natural history were highly acclaimed for raising the bar of translation (Japanese-English) while being fun to read for all who love ideas.* Yet, he remains unknown outside of narrow haiku and scientific circles, either for lack of publicity or because few book-buyers were willing to give the benefit of the doubt to the warty sea cucumber and pesky bug, respective protagonists of *Rise, Ye Sea Slugs!* and *Fly-ku!* With his latest work, *Cherry Blossom Epiphany*, Gill takes up a subject that is not only less grotesque but lyrical if not romantic. Anyone who appreciates flowers, drinking (blossom-viewings are not tea-parties) and thinking is a potential reader. It remains to be seen, however, whether 740 pages with 3000+ poems and multiple translations will prove the exception and sell in a culture where short books rule.

Advertised by Robin Gill

17 Minutes by Matthew Hupert. Neuronautic Press, 332 E 74th Street, Suite 5B, New York City, NY 10021 USA. Paper, saddle-stitched, 18 pages, 4.25 x 5.5 inches.

In this aptly named chapbook that takes about seventeen minutes to read, author Matthew Hupert has provided a number of short poems: haiku, tercets, tanka, limericks, and free verse. He mixes urban and the natural worlds with a distinctly modern funk that finds haiku-like details in all that he surveys, including what he sees from his fifth floor 'patio' (his neighbor's rooftop). When Hubert resists the urge to tell us what he's telling us and eschews clever rhyme and wordplay, his poems have a stark power.

Love Poem

"No," you said
unequivocally.
I hadn't asked a question.

Some of his longer poems manage to maintain this succinctness to good effect:

When your eyes shark me

I dart
into the shoals of my
petulance
clam shelling a safe
place made from old scars
and known pains
inkjet arguments obscuring
my retreat so
I won't
be your lunch
today

In 'When your eyes shark me,' there is no need for the poet to belabor the situation or to linger over his emotional state; the images are effective metaphors for a domestic dispute and its repercussions. There are no unnecessary words here; the poet trusts his art and his reader.

Unfortunately, not all the poems are this strong. Hubert reminds me of one of my other interests: minor league baseball. There is talent and hard work here, but errors, too. Part of the appeal of an emerging poet like Hubert is the hope you will get to see him grow before your eyes, then get promoted to the major leagues.

Reviewed by M. Kei

but then you danced. Jeanne Lupton. Oakland, CA: 2006. Saddle-stitched 4.25 x 5.5 in., 60 pages, black and white cover with an interior illustrations by the author.

An attractive chapbook on good quality paper, but then you danced presents tanka poetry one per page interspersed with occasional illustrations by the author. The quality of the poetry is excellent, and evokes the 'tanka spirit' we all admire so much. Lupton's keenly observed details of her life serve as a lens focusing greater human truths; she is not just a woman, but Everywoman. She journeys through her life with the intensely emotional but never sentimental heart of a poet, faithfully recording her truths that speak to all women.

your touch
unshrouds the radiance
at my center
I catch my breath
reborn

Lupton speaks the immortal power of love with eighteen short syllables. In this miniature masterpiece nothing needs to be added and nothing needs to be taken away. She perfectly captures the illuminating joy of requited love, its breathtaking awe, and radiant beauty.

how green the green
in the grey light after the storm
how lake the lake
and thistle, thistle
in these hills how me I am

In this verse Lupton utilizes the power of repetition to evoke the such-ness of each item named, and in so doing, evokes the such-ness of the poet herself. The beauty of the scene after the storm becomes much more than a symbol of the poet after whatever travail from which she has just emerged, it becomes a cosmic truth to be celebrated with joy. The natural, the personal, and the universal resonate through this poem, doing what tanka does best.

autumn dusk
not even a favorite
old sweater
takes the chill off
my life alone

Lupton's joy is tempered with loneliness, regret, and the awareness of the fragile ephemeral of human existence, characteristics which when taken together the Japanese call aware. Few Western poets can evoke aware well, finding it all too tempting to slide off into moralizing, symbolism, sentimentality, or simply overstating their moment. Lupton evokes the chill of the season and the chill of loneliness with the deftness of a sumi-e painter.

The illustrations are simple and understated and suit the poet's mood and style, but are not always as strong as the poems themselves. Even so, they are never a liability. There are many other poems in but then you danced which I enjoyed and the overall quality is excellent. There is much here to recommend to both the reader of poetry in general and to young poets seeking a role model. In short, of the myriad books of tanka that have been published in recent years, this is one of the best.

Reviewed by M. Kei

Fire Pearls: Short Masterpieces Of The Human Heart. Edited by M. Kei. Trade paperback, 160 pages, \$14.95 USD. Available from Lulu.com or tM. Kei, P. O. Box 1118, Elkton, MD, 21922-1118 or major booksellers.

This handsome new anthology of nearly four hundred tanka, kyoka, cinquains, and free verse by more than fifty poets from around the world includes both well known and emerging voices, arranged into five seasons that explore the human heart through its many manifestations of love and passion.

"Fire Pearls will be quite a surprise for those who are frequent readers of tanka, the five-line poem with a 1300 year history. For newcomers to tanka, the poems should be a challenge and a delight. The last section, entitled 'Fifth Season,' is a tour de force. To journey through this anthology is to experience key moments of our lives." — Sanford Goldstein, co-translator of Tangled Hair: Selected Tanka from Midaregami

"What a magnificent anthology . . . it weakens, heartens, humbles, enlarges, and delivers so many poetic truths that I just am so glad to see this come to fruition." — Tom Clausen, author of Growing Late

Excerpts from Fire Pearls:

between sun and shade
a butterfly pauses
like none I've seen—
who ever falls in love
with someone they know?

Michael McClintock

the tilt
of her head to undo
an earring—
fortresses crumble into
winter moonlight

Larry Kimmel

rain-furled hibiscus—
in the slow refolding
of our secret places
we draw even closer
than at passion's zenith

Beverley George

White birch
with black-streaked trunk,
How many Russian girls
have hugged you, crying for their long
lost loves?

Zhanna P. Rader

mourners assemble
after Joe's funeral—
they come
to pick widow Green's apples
and press out the amber juice

John Daleiden

The above, the advertising of the book, was written by M. Kei.

Blue Night & The Inadequacy Of Long-Stemmed Roses. By Larry Kimmel. Winfred Press, 364 Wilson Hill Road, Colrain, MA 01340, . Comb-bound, 6 x 9 inches, 95 pages, \$11.95 USD. ISBN 978-0-9743856-9-3.

Blue Night & the inadequacy of long-stemmed roses are two books in one by Larry Kimmel, well known as a tanka poet and editor of Winfred Press. Blue Night is a collection of short poems, but the inadequacy of long-stemmed roses is subtitled 'a collage of cherita', each of which takes up about one half the book. Inadequacy. . . was previously published in 2001.

Blue Night presents various short poems, including free verse, tanka, free verse tanka, tanka sequences, haiku, and others. Generally speaking, Kimmel at his best in the shorter forms. Some of his longer poems, such as "Night Journey," lack sufficient tension to justify their length. The same scene was treated more briefly and more effectively in cherita #72:

a streetlamp

casting a path over snow-melt
where five pines stand

that's all it takes
one moment an insomniac

the next a tourist in Faery

Kimmel is an excellent tanka poet and many of the tanka in the book treat romantic and erotic themes along with their inevitable disappointments.

stark from the shower
to answer the phone,
she dons a robe
of the finest distance
—the girl with the spring desire

Several of his romantic tanka have already been published, but some of the tanka I had not seen before were some of his best. They were striking not only for their quality, but for treating subjects not frequently seen in contemporary English-language tanka, such as the following:

we did what we could
read their letters, figured their taxes,
good neighbors they -
now just a cellar hole
and the lilacs in spring

Included among the poems are several short lyrics of sijo that add a pleasant variety:

Two carved their names, enclosed them in a heart,
And still their love grows deep by beechen art,
Though they've been twelve and twenty years apart.

The cherita is an invented form named a few years ago by ai li but started by Elizabeth St. Jacques. My previous encounters with it had not impressed me; it seems a fad among poets to create new poetic forms and give them excessive rules and exotic names. Yet in Kimmel's capable hands, the cherita offers poetic dignity worthy of serious consideration.

A form of one line, followed by two lines, followed by three lines, it has something of the cinquain's melody, but is more flexible about syllable count.

a bead curtain sways

long long stockings climb
a dark stairway

when I was a lad
and prince among
the apple carts

Kimmel's cherita are very tankaesque, selecting 'tanka moments' (if there is such a thing) to present in a short image full of emotional resonance. Many of his cherita feel very much like tanka formatted in six lines.

blond red mustang is an engaging set of short poems presented in a simple chapbook format. Light and serious verse in various forms such as haiku, senryu, tanka, and free verse are arranged in thematic groups. Each has its merits.

The lighter poems are an agreeable diversion and make up a large portion of the book. Stein is particularly good at capturing the humanity of a moment with an apt turn of phrase; the following senryu are typical.

with great deliberation
she chooses
a fortune cookie

prepared for
my new garden
a woodchuck

His tanka are generally more serious. They are often what the Japanese would call 'dry,' which is to say, lacking an overt human presence. The following verse from the tanka sequence 'Winter Beach' is an example:

green margin
along the tide line
rope of rack
realigned daily
as the moon directs

This is an acute observation of the natural operations of the sea and its margins, a subject often celebrated in poetry, but usually with a romantic rather than an honest eye. As a poet of the water myself, I appreciate the accuracy of his vision, as well as the poetic quality of the scene. Yet this tanka can be read deeper, taken as a metaphor of the human existence (or at least the author's existence).

The tanbun are also interesting and avoid the very common problem of simply using the prose to explain the poem or the poem to summarize the prose. At first glance there is no apparent relationship between the tanka and its prose, as in the "Babe Magnet," an observation of an elderly farmer's charismatic influence on diner waitresses. The tanka that accompanies it is:

lifting off
the river shallows
slow wing beats
a great blue heron
rises

The pairing of the great blue heron and the flirtatious old farmer grants a gravitas that satisfies the reader's interest. Stein masterfully imbues the old farmer with a roguish dignity that leads us from bafflement to humor to admiration; both for the character and the poet's skill.

Several of Stein's longer poems are accompanied by envoys, usually in the form of haiku, but sometimes as tanka. Regrettably, these longer poems with their consciously poetic language fail to please. They contrast well with the starkness of their envoys, providing an interesting interplay between

the two, but ultimately fail to satisfy. Nonetheless, the attempt heightens the interest of the poems and inspires a poet to try the technique for himself.

Stein's greatest skill is the way in which he juxtaposes his subject matter within and without the poems. Similar poems are grouped together to seduce the reader into a particular frame of mind, but not so many that the reader becomes weary. They alternate with other poems that invite a different perspective and so refresh the reader's attention and interest. The pacing is excellent, leading the reader through a journey on the micro-scale of the poems themselves and on the larger scale of the chapbook taken as a whole work. Would that more poets paid as much attention and did it so well as Stein.

Although not all the poems are to my taste, this chapbook is one I'm setting aside for further study because there is much to be learned and much to appreciate. The journeyman poet and the reader wanting something more complex than the usual pretty poetry books will each find something to reward their attention.

Reviewed by M. Kei

Utamaro: A Chorus of Birds. Metropolitan Museum of Art. Akamatsu no Kinkei, ed. Kitagawa Utamaro, illus. James T. Kenny, trans. New York: Viking Press, 1981 [Tokyo, 1790]. Accordion fold art book, color interiors, unpaginated. Out of print. Perhaps available online as used or rare book.

A Chorus of Birds is the only book of kyōka (humorous tanka) to be translated into English, which makes it of interest just because it is the only book of kyōka accessible to English speakers, but above and beyond that, the book features beautiful illustrations by Utamaro, one of Japan's most famous woodblock artists. Most famous for his *bijin* - beautiful women pictures, Utamaro shows himself to be a master of the natural world. The birds are highly accurate, enabling their species to be identified. Latin, Japanese, and English names for the birds are included in the caption descriptions.

The book is one of many special editions that were ordered by kyōka circles active in the 18th and 19th centuries. Kyōka, 'mad verse' or 'comic tanka' were present as early as the 8th century and appear in the *Man'yōshū*; the first kyōka collection, *Hyakushū Kyōka – Kyōka On One Hundred Brands Of Drinks* was edited by a priest named Gyogetsu who lived 1265-1328 AD. His book features kyōka parodies of famous literature as kinds of drinks.

By the early 18th century, kyōka was popular in the region around Kyoto and Osaka, then spread to Edo. It branched off and became its own independent genre during this period and was immensely popular; a key element of its appeal was that it did not conform to the restrictions on language and content that applied to waka. Thus any educated person could compose and appreciate kyōka whereas waka was confined to a rarified atmosphere of those families who were skilled in understanding the archaic language and intricate rules that dominated waka of the time.

Arguably, much of our modern English-language tanka with its emphasis on colloquial language and ordinary life is kyōka rather than tanka. It is no surprise that kyōka nearly died out in the late 19th and early 20th centuries when tanka poets threw off the restrictions of the old waka and began writing more direct and personal tanka in ordinary language. Surely the immensely popular kyōka must have shaped

the thinking of Japanese poets who reformed tanka, but the influence of kyoka has never been explored in English.

Generally speaking, kyoka in English is understood to be ‘humorous tanka.’ It frequently parodies tanka and has therefore been conceived of as a kind of ‘anti-tanka,’ an erudite game that could be played only by people well versed in tanka itself. Yet the kyoka of A Chorus of Birds belie that. Humor is present, and parody, but many of the verses are so gently romantic that the English reader would be hard-pressed to explain how y differ from what he understands tanka to be.

Yamadori no
Horo horo namida
Sekiwabinu
Iku yo kagami no
Kage mo miseneba

The copper-headed pheasant
Cries and cries
And sheds tear to no end;
For too many nights
Have you stayed away.

--Miyataka no Tsukinara

The poem above with its natural image and subjective response giving voice to a romantic plaint is a staple of the tanka genre. What makes this poem kyoka instead of tanka is that it was written in the colloquial language of the day by a person who was most likely a commoner or low ranking samurai, and not in the rarified literary language by a courtier or government official.

Other poems in evince the humorous parody which is the hallmark of kyoka. Consider the following verse:

Na ni tachite
Koi ni ya kuchin
Kitsutsuki no
Tsukikudakaruru
Hito no kuchibashi

True to his name,
The woodpecker
Pecks and pecks away,
Never stopping to listen
to what people are saying.

--Shino no Tamaoke

This parody works on two levels. First, there is the commentary on human nature – which of us hasn’t encountered a person who resembles the woodpecker of the poem? Ostensibly a bird poem, it is really a commentary on a human foible of the sort well-loved in senryu, the other genre that was immensely popular at the same time as kyoka. The other level of parody is a literary one. The natural image sets up

an expectation of the usual romanticized and idealized emotional response, but instead delivers a frank criticism of an unattractive human trait. The expectations of the tanka form have been simultaneously adhered to yet violated, making this poem delightfully fresh.

Kyoka also ventured into territory that was a little risqué compared to the restraints of waka. The poem below has a titillating quality that would have been considered vulgar and unacceptable in courtly waka.

Noki chikaku
Fufu to tsuguru
Hitokoe wa
Waga koinaka o
Mita ka uguisu

Near the eaves
I hear the warbler
Sing a song of envy:
He must be watching us
My lover and me.

--Nori no Suiyu

Malice, too, animates some of these verses, again, on a romantic theme.

Taka naraba
Ukina no hoka ni
Hatto tatsu
Kotori mo ono ga
E ni shinarubeki

If I were
A hawk,
I would make a meal
Of the little birds
Spreading rumors.

--Akamatsu no Kinkei

All in all, the poems are enjoyable, the illustrations beautiful, and the prefaces and notes useful. A Chorus of Birds can be found through various secondhand book dealers at reasonable prices. It is an excellent addition to your tanka library.

Reviewed by M. Kei

Sweeps Of Rain a haibun book about dementia, published in the Netherlands as Vegen van Regen by Geert Verbeke. Now available in English ISBN - 81-8253-06-87. Paperback A5, 128 pages, 18 us\$ Publisher Dr. Santosh Kumar Website: Cyberwit India. Geert Verbeke, Leo Baekelandlaan 14, B-

8500 Kortrijk , Flanders - Belgium - Europe.

GEERT VERBEKE: Born in Kortrijk, Flanders (Europe) on 31 May 1948. Children: Hans (1969), Saskia (1972), Merlijn (°1984) & Jonas (°1986). His soulmate: Jenny Ovaere is an ex-teacher, now companion for Joker adventurous travelling. Geert Verbeke is the author of a meditation book, poetry albums, fairy-tales, a book on jazz, books on playing cards, books on singing bowls & 7 haiku (haibun) books. Free thinker & democrat. Recorded 11 cd's with relaxation music on singing bowls.

SWEEPS OF RAIN: A light shiver happens to you, when you open this remarkable diary. Oh, please, no... poetry about the illness dementia? Yet, the first page already will grip you. No clinical picture, but an example of the art of living slides along. Day after touching, humorous, sometimes very heavy day. A surprising, intense 'dialogue' between Sarah de Boeck and her son and 'coating care provider' John, supported by his wife Mia. Sarah suffers from Pick's disease. First it affects your personality, then your memory and at last your total health. The author notes down this process of gradual changing and losing almost playful and light. In a rich, sometimes rough, associative language. But in the haiku sadness sounds through:

touching her toys –
all in the past
embracing included

John conquers his daily pain by tactic and creative reactions. It cannot be denied that mother and son are cast from the same mould. Their exuberant fantasy always wants the free rein. That's why John let his mother go on living in her own house and art gallery as long as possible. Close to her piano, in her own atmosphere of artist and potter. There she can feel safe, surrounded by the treasures of her travels, especially from ancient cultures. John takes a difficult daily walk with her. Included is the risk that she tears loose and runs into a shop or building, that was once the slaughterhouse. She was a great narrator but gradually her stories relapse to a childish jabbering. Dates, details and events become snippets in a sort of language – in – between. John stimulates her memory by practice in front of a mirror. He perceives that touching and caressing relax her most of all. The day comes that Sarah can't longer stay alone. She is moved to the nursing home. Difficult for John. There he sees 'a procession from the world of Jeroen Bosch. Fear for life, fear for death.' Sarah falls in apathy, but gradually she feels better, surrounded by solid structure and kind care. Finally John is able to weep, 'though the universe is generous, in spite of all the waste away.' His coping with grief is shown by pages long roaming in his mother's house, taking all the beautiful items in his hand. He remembers her trips and events in a poetical avalanche, her favourite music on the background. The last hours need no words...

After her death John decorates Sarah's photo with a crockery scarab - the morning figure of Re - as a grave gift. Because 'death is a mild final chord'.

My conclusion: 'Sweeps of Rain' consists of as many fits of sun. The 85 haibun, not longer than one page, are constructive, in variety of contemplation and anecdotes. A book to approach in averse and appreciate after reading. Silva Ley for LYNX.

Sent by Geert Verbeke as advertising for his book.

Obon: The Festival of the Dead by Terry Watada. Thistledown Press, 633 Main Street, Saskatoon, SK

S7H 0J8 Canada, ISBN 978-1-897235-14-0, \$15.95 CDN / \$14.95 USD. Perfect bound, 94 pp 5.5 x 8.5 inches.

Obon: Festival of the Dead is the third book of poetry from Canadian poet, Terry Watada. While it stands independent of the previous books, *A Thousand Homes* and *Ten Thousand Views of Rain*, those books provide a context, detailing the poet's family of origin, their experience of internment during WWII, and the psychological devastation of being an alien in the country of his birth. *Obon* is both lament in which he pours out his frustration and rages over the dying, despair and self-loathing of Asians in Canada and the United States, and redemption in which the power of the sacred dance permits the ghosts of the hungry dead to be welcomed, acknowledged, and ultimately redeemed, the poet along with them.

The poems are composed of many short lines, reminiscent of *tanka* in their imagery and subjective content, but they are not *tanka*. The previous books do include *tanka* by Watada and his relatives, but Watada, torn between his Japanese roots and modern Canadian reality, searches for means of expression in jazz, the black man's music with conscious irony.

Unfortunately, when he wanders too far in this direction he slides into urban angst, which aside from the color of the prostitutes and junkies and the Chinatown setting, looks pretty much like other poems by angry young men of color. Perhaps that is the point - grown-up crack babies with coffee-ring circles under their eyes look pretty much the same regardless of race.

His relationship with his family and culture is mixed, part of love and part of loathing, yet he finds the strength to hang onto the good parts and to accept the imperfections of his family and community with wide open eyes.

Haka Omairi

the letters
 blacken
 the names
brought back to life
the incense smoke
curls
 sutras chant
so that ghosts can form
in the august heat
and visit those
 they themselves blessed
with life
 the Buddha is always near

Watada's poetry is a powerful antidote to much of the japonisme that afflicts modern English language *tanka* and *haiku*; here is no romantization of an exotic Other at whose poetic feet we can sit, seeking wisdom (as long as there's not too much work required); for Watada, the Buddha is not a Zen concept to be meditated upon, but a living deity who sleeps and only occasionally awakens to the agony of his worshippers. Amidst all the suffering and angst is the unspoken cry that has afflicted many a searcher, "Why does the Divine Goodness allow such things to happen?" Just as the question is never articulated in so many words, so to does the answer remain unspoken, and Watada must dance his own dance of

the dead and find his own personal redemption.

Reviewed by M. Kei

Tree Reisener's new chapbook, *Liminalog* a collection of ghazals and sijo, is now available. If you'd like *Liminalog* as a free e-book, just visit the website and blog with her.

You can read Silva Ley's complete translations of her book, *Vogeline*, first published in Dutch as a supplement to this issue of *Lynx*.

Ferris Wheel: 101 Modern and Contemporary Tanka translated by Kozue Uzawa and Amelia Fielden. Cheng & Tsui Asian Literature Series: 2006. ISBN: 0-88727-494-3. Perfect bound, 5 x 8 inches, 132 pages, bilingual Japanese & English with biographies.

Kozue Uzawa, professor, poet and translator has recently become the editor of *Gusts*, the journal of the Canadian Tanka Society. From her unique position, she brings a valuable look into the situation of Japanese tanka written in the last century. Not only does the reader get an impression of where these writers are emotionally and poetically, but also through the collection, a vision of what kind of tanka Kozue Uzawa admires.

The title is taken from:

ferris wheel
go round and round!
memories last
one day for you
a lifetime for me

Kyoko Kuriki

In the Preface, in both English and Japanese, Kozue Uzawa writes that this book is the result of her saving poems she liked in a notebook over ten years. Her object was to introduce English readers to these authors and at the same time give Japanese readers, especially those in universities, lessons in translation.

The poems are presented first in English, without caps and sentence punctuation, but with commas and dashes. Then the kanji, horizontally dissects the page in the middle. Below, in five lines is the poem in romaji.

In the translation there were many times the line order was disregarded when the original could have been maintained in the poem and the English could have then retained the short, long, short, long, long pattern of the lines. For this reason, English tanka writers can be led astray if they attempt to use these translations a models for their own work. Also, the majority of the poems chosen for the collection presented the flattest, simplest examples of tanka — those with clichéd or traditional techniques and images. This statement does not disparage the heartfelt sincerity of the authors or the quality of their

work, but only points out how far the tanka form has moved in the last century.

There were gems of lyrical and imaginative images such as in:

looking at
the Noh mask of a young woman
I feel white arrows
silently flowing
under the faraway ocean

Kimihiko Takano

Ferris Wheel contains a valuable bibliography and short biographies of the authors so the reader who discovers a writer of interest, can find more of that poet's work. Ms. Uzawa was assisted in the English versions by the acclaimed translator, Amelia Fielden.

Reviewed by Jane Reichhold

The Pleiades at Dawn: A tanka Collection by Jeanne Emrich. Lone Egret Press, Edina Minnesota: 2006. Perfect bound, 5 x 8 inches, 72 pages, US\$14; Canada \$16, add \$2 for postage and handling in USA and Canada; \$4 elsewhere.

Since first knowing Jeanne Emrich's haiku, and her lovely handmade books it has been a joy watching her discover tanka. Now, at long, last readers have a collection of 56 of her best tanka to enjoy between the shiny covers of a book that would be at home on any bookstore's shelves. It has been like watching a very, very talented child come into her own as an adult. Finally the tanka form is capable of portraying the multiple layers of her poetry.

As Amelia Fielden writes in the Foreword: "The Pleiades at Dawn, while being a thoroughly modern collections, fits beautifully within the love tradition. Its very title poem echoes the legacy of longing and loss from Japanese court poetry of more than 1,000 years ago."

how was I to know
it would end like this?
the Pleiades at dawn
and your hand come to rest
on the small of my back

Jeanne is accomplished enough to have other poems in her collection — ones showing much more complicated use of the pivot such as:

how long has it been
since we parted?
snow has come
and I'm learning from geese
how to fall from the sky

Jeanne Emrich is also an accomplished artist of the brush and a Chinese ink drawing graces the cover of *The Pleiades at Dawn* as well as many of her haiga. For four years she has edited and published *Reeds: Contemporary Haiga*.

Reviewed by Jane Reichhold

PARTICIPATION RENGA

Remember - only add on to the links in bold italic.
We have two renga ended now. Who will start a new one?

GENTLY WIPING DUST

Alternate 3-line and 2-line links for 100 lines

Theme: impermanence, transitoriness

gently wiping dust from grandmother's photograph october windsong TW
warm fall days chill at sunset BJ
last rush of color outdoing itself virginia creeper PC
nights behind closed eyes images in red float by JR
taps at sunrise opening daylilies on their graves PC
flowers of our youth gone – everyone MM
mind wasting memories disappear one by one JAJ
haiku eagle gliding in a sea of chance LCG
meteorite streaks across the night sky sudden cool breeze MWM
morning sun on a bayou mist KCL
first snow already melting dancing barefoot JAJ
thinking of Tundra buying new shoes TLG
breath suspended overhead, the northern lights in slow dance JAJ
father and son pause for a long moment RF
SOFT SHOULDERS warning he glances at his wife their 50th year GR
finishing the school of hard knocks YH
digital display counting the failing heart GD
she tries to add up all the good times YH
battery low the calculator reads "ERROR" GD
the new player late for the first game RF
dealing cards to an empty chair careless of how they land GD
face-down \$10,000 poorer CC
richer for the experience bottoms up YH
"How do you stop a wino from charging?" CC
at the end of that rainbow no credit card cg
back to the diner waiting tables JSJ
old woman slips jelly packets into her purse cg

mistaking a condom / for a condiment GD
runs her tongue / over red lips, / snaps her purse shut cg
Quiet out at sea the boat sinks JMB
hot songs melt the wax from sailors' ears GD
listening to a star leaving the lake WR
heaving light beneath the wave JMB
fingerprint in the pink birthday frosting cg
watching a cow's spittle only eating grass WR
smell from next door something stronger than just tobacco JAJ
ashes as the police leave burning marijuana WR
flick. . . flick . . . flick stench of lighter fluid GD
dust behind the radio stiff rubber band JMB
neither shrinking nor growing my 8-track collection CC
returns in a dream rock face I photographed with no point in mind FPA
the sandstone nose washing away JMB
on a postscript warned of insomnia waves pound a hunter's moon FPA
my old manual the barely legible letters CC
h lf wh t e s id w as it ching JMB
literacy job applicant the misspelled words CC
seasonal sign along the interstate: "grape's for sell" GD
roadside vendors Barney pats his holster CC

a cell phone rings
but in whose
pocket or purse? GD

~*~

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battery low the calculator reads "ERROR" GD
the new player late for the first game RF
dealing cards to an empty chair careless of how they land GD
face-down \$10,000 poorer CC

richer for the experience bottoms up YH
"How do you stop a wino from charging?" CC
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hot songs melt the wax from sailors' ears GD
listening to a star leaving the lake WR
heaving light beneath the wave JMB
fingerprint in the pink birthday frosting cg
watching a cow's spittle only eating grass WR
smell from next door something stronger than just tobacco JAJ
ashes as the police leave burning marijuana WR
flick. . . flick . . . flick stench of lighter fluid GD
permeating . . . a stick of sandalwood CC
patchouli reek his receding ponytail GD
rainbowed the new bag of rubber bands CC
round and round the vase roses CF
steps I make moon by moon without sandals WR
in the direction of a skein of geese FPA
morning meadow a herd of sheep making an ewe turn CC
rockin' merrily around the Christmas tree FPA
neither egret nor heron the paper bag CC
pages of old books cloud patterns on a beach stroll FPA

brown stains trace
the rain's passage
through the roof GD

tide laps my toes
polyhedron
of footprints CC

~*~

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ashes as the police leave burning marijuana WR
flick. . . flick . . . flick stench of lighter fluid GD
dust behind the radio stiff rubber band JMB
neither shrinking nor growing my 8-track collection CC
returns in a dream rock face I photographed with no point in mind FPA
the sandstone nose washing away JMB
oh-oh-oh snuff-snuff-snuffle caShoo GD
the red moon pales as it rises above the pollution GD
brownout at the chocolate factory CC
girls giggling fingers between each other's hairy shoulder blades WR
the apes find pleasure in grooming each other JR

"here – this tiny
delicacy, crack it
with your teeth" GD

"And. . ."
she reminds him
"No monkey business" CC

~*~

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heaving light beneath the wave JMB
fingerprint in the pink birthday frosting cg
bubblegum smack across her face JAJ
wiping her feet at heaven's gate Pat Shelley CC
"wind do not muss my hair" calm skies on the day of her death JR
the dropped marble rolls out of sight GD
Lew Marie: "Give me Marvin Gardens, or give me death!" CC
eminent domain: dog cringing from master's foot GD
bouncing off the rim clipped toenail CC
says she hates cobwebs the cleaning lady FPA
guests leaving she stays with pearls WR
idling engine I restart it CC
hybrids have it up the hill a standstill WR
ooo's and ahhh's my new rhyming dictionary CC
looking through my slang dictionary for the right word GD
on the tip of my tongue the truth trips me up JR

woman size
she will give her acreage
abutting his WR

caged fox & I
unaware of each other's names
ignorance is bliss FPA

~*~

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first snow already melting dancing barefoot JAJ
thinking of Tundra buying new shoes TLG
breath suspended overhead, the northern lights in slow dance JAJ
father and son pause for a long moment RF
breeze changing course weeds in the dark field bend again GR
up ahead another hidden curve ESJ
SOFT SHOULDERS warning he glances at his wife their 50th year GR
finishing the school of hard knocks YH
digital display counting down the failing heart GD
she tries to add up all the good times YH
was never very good at math MHH
one more short story attempt into the waste basket GR
sharp edges cutting through the trash bag shadows leaking out GD
thickening juice from the black beans can JMB
long time on shelf honey crystallizes sticky jar JSJ
mustard seeds pop in hot oil GD
it will be a cold day in July when I cook again YH
even the firecrackers refuse to light – a rainy fourth! dht
indoors all afternoon two boys play Civil War one gray; one blue RF
refugee children / strangers to laughter PGC
stray sniffing / stranded starfish – / gray sky's cold FPA
mackerel clouds reach every horizon piling the sea JR
broken thermometer poisonous mercury scatters everywhere JAJ
driving through a school zone spray of sparrows RF
waiting at the end of the block police speed trap JAJ
another hole in the cheese CC
small tear in the yellowed love letter folded, refolded cg
anthrax scare the office smart-aleck CC
we go to bed goose pimples appear wanted WR
bare feet find the linoleum CC
grano coffee ground heel thought JMB
sijo* jogging his memory in Central Park CC
as night falls still the fires of the two towers WR

unfiltered dust the masks of the rescue workers CC
disaster on TV close the windows GD
leaping the fence every pocket filled with apples CC
inclined to follow paw prints of a cat WR
excited the dog sniffs the grass in a widening circle GD
that voice is time unraveling CF
pink azaleas a "sweater girl" pops a button CC
the guided missile goes astray again JR

just the top
of his head
above the bunker CC

WHEELING ALONG
5-liners, verse or prose
ends with 12 links

a wheel keeps spinning
the hamster long dead
on its path
on my path
an inaudible breeze WR

closing eyes
against the sea that
swallows the sun
the ache of being diminished
by a most marvelous day JR

following
dotted lines
another mile closer
to my daughter's
final flight CC

I wanted to enter light
so I am planting a wildfire
and everywhere mad
there's hardly anything left
a sudden rain sweeps up petals JR

I see the color questions
unfurling in fern tops
pearl drops
the moon face
giving in WR

the day
my mother looked at a lake
I was conceived
my original mind came
from the pure waters JR

Narcissus
your reflection reflects
your egotesticle nature
"Have Mistletoe;
Will Travel" CC

~&~

a wheel keeps spinning
the hamster long dead
on its path
on my path
an inaudible breeze WR

bands spiral by
the bright round moon
languid luminosities
whisper of
the coming storm EL

opens our eyes
with a wake of destruction
flooding
left by the hurricane
seems to be endless tears JR

Astrodome
a sea of cots
but back in Louisiana
the slow-moving tsunami
of budget cuts CC

just talk-words
seeping into the evening
childhood again
that man's hands on me
unable to speak still JR

mimosas, magnolias,
and the lone, tall elm
I am young again
golf club in hand
each tree a hole CC

first for a short time
then more intense
birdsong from her house
and white smoke curling up
guess after burning letters WR

her ivory nakedness
lion greatness in her bed
yielding as a grave
pushing off all the riff-raff until
the captain looked just like him JR

~&~

a wheel keeps spinning
the hamster long dead
on its path
on my path
an inaudible breeze WR

April 15
hardly any time
left to meet
the deadline
for links CC

with poems
paying my taxes
the IRS
has nothing to do with
a goddess named Iris JR

flying
on wings of five lines
I expect landing
on noh grounds
the verse without me WR

see how she flies
and bestrides the dogmatic realm
of suffering
in infinite space where rays diverge
I'll move like cautious sunlight – open JR

golden-haired –
Supergirl soaring
through outer space
her future as bright

as blue Kryptonite CC

coffee latte
for the sportive couple
in a bubbling hot tub
the laptop announces a rockfall
when her friend lands at Mars airport WR

casting off their hearts
the highest hills blaze into mist
at the edge of ether
stripped of dignity they harden
forever talking with surfaces JR

VANILLA RENGA

A plain ol' renga with 2 / 3 lines for 12 links
Add your links to finish this renga. Ends with the next round.

smoothing the sea
sunset's metallic gold
hammered flat Jane Reichhold

coin awakes
pulls the sheet up JMB

my river
your ocean
gone fishin CF

once before when two
alone felt united WR

he said
"your enemy is my friend"
and smiled JR

swabbed off its flank
lion's anesthetic pinch FPA

best part of the show
the film begins with the roar
of Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer JR

better haiku if . . .
I only had a brain CC

scarecrow and the tin man

between them the wisdom
of the natural world JR

the food on the table
made of rocks CC

dozing through Orion
hounds in a dream
forgotten soon after FPA

~&~

smoothing the sea
sunset's metallic gold
hammered flat Jane Reichhold

the chocolate and strawberry
carefully removed CC

on her back
running down the spine
whipped cream WR

Reddi or not
here I come! CC

sundae or son day
a confusion of words
is my delight JR

the players argue:
who cut the cheese? GD

barking spiders
the raspberry sound
joins laughter JR

all the red of sunset
in my watermelon WR

afterglow
its wash of purple
thistles in bloom FPA

~&~

smoothing the sea
sunset's metallic gold
hammered flat Jane Reichhold

crumpling the foil
to make a ball for the cat GD

recycling
junk mail
a new poem JR

plagiarized
punch line CC

copycats
serving the drink designed
by Martha Stewart JR

a chip in
the china plate CC

the sake cup
made valuable by the crack
gold-filled JR

Rudolph the red nosed-reindeer
one foggy Christmas Eve guides FPA

the idea of gift-giving
learned from the three wise men
paid by plastic JR

I turn my last card
it's a joker WR

frogs in chorus
intransigent voices
transience FPA

~&~

smoothing the sea
sunset's metallic gold
hammered flat Jane Reichhold

crumpling the foil

to make a ball for the cat GD

catch –
the door bell
and hers mingling WR

soles of sleep
pooled beneath JMB

the knitted sleeve
mended with knurled fingers

the same old dream JR

on my winter window
breath becomes frozen thistles WR

the flower
you bring me only
at night JR

on her back tattooed
fruits I dare to touch WR

smiling
she offers a taste
of her peach GD

fuzz
the scattered hippies CC

in the basement
infringements
of mice FPA

a gust
disperses
unlinked verses GD

~&~

smoothing the sea
sunset's metallic gold
hammered flat Jane Reichhold

the chocolate and strawberry
carefully removed CC

on her back
running down the spine
whipped cream WR

Reddi or not
here I come! CC

sundae or son day
a confusion of words
is my delight JR

country store checkerboard
between two barrels CC

old men's lies
about fish never caught
women not kissed JR

square hole
in the ice CC

my straw finds its way
to the warm red
of a cherry WR

~&~

smoothing the sea
sunset's metallic gold
hammered flat Jane Reichhold

crumpling the foil
to make a ball for the cat GD

recycling
junk mail
a new poem JR

plagiarized
punch line CC

copycats
serving the drink designed
by Martha Stewart JR

"The quality of mercy
is not strained, -"etc., etc. FPA

furrin accent
my kingdom
for a hearse CC

mid-summer breeze
Snowman's sneeze FPA

it'snot rain
the clatter of hailstones
on the window JR

I see my ground plan
only lead under my feet WR

dawn's early light
even the toy soldiers
bogged down CC

~&~

smoothing the sea
sunset's metallic gold
hammered flat Jane Reichhold

crumpling the foil
to make a ball for the cat GD

recycling
junk mail
a new poem JR

plagiarized
punch line CC

copycats
serving the drink designed
by Martha Stewart JR

a chip in
the china plate CC

the sake cup
made valuable by the crack
gold-filled JR

four lanes of interstate
heading north CC

roads
leading us along as if
they knew something JR

obsidian we dare to touch
in fear of more fire WR

running from
sparks buried in rocks
the volcano erupts JR

~&~

smoothing the sea
sunset's metallic gold
hammered flat Jane Reichhold

Firestone shredding
its tread CC

grating cheese
on the chopped vegetables
April lunchtime GD

Hellman's left
in the fridge CC

squeeze-bottle
collapsed on its
sticky innards GD

smell circles outward
from the skunk roadkill JR

the perimeter
if where I boxed
myself in CC

the bright light of opportunity
comes in the shine of gold JR

still at the death bed
eyebrows
waving from a surfer WR

hang ten

vigilante posse CC

justice in these days
sending the protest letter
by e-mail JR

› These renga are ended. š
Just read and enjoy. Do not add on more links.
Thanks to everyone who participated. ý

BLACKOUT

Rule: 3 / 2lines alternating
ending with 12 links
Theme: loss, frustration, deprivation

after the blackout
eating all the ice cream quickly
before the power returns Gene Doty
no light plenty quiet JMB
loud mouthed the talking scales CC
automated checkout – "please ask for cashier assistance" GD
condom dispenser a hatchet-faced clerk JR
discarded in the fallen leaves - a moment of passion GD
the budding tree reminds him of her JR
dropping puzzle pieces in her lap a picture forms GD
in swaddling clothes the calendar girl FPA
low-cut jeans reveal the dragon – faded tattoo GD
risen sun lowered expectations CC

counting his cigarettes
again, dividing by the hours
of the night GC

~&~

after the blackout
eating all the ice cream quickly
before the power returns Gene Doty
no light plenty quiet JMB
dream time when I see words unmasked WR
unguarded mirror returns light slowly GD
a magnet breaks into two equal magnets CF
one blitz only then no more light after radiation WR
trying to understand nations why anyone would drop a bomb JR
allergic skin flushes under the mistletoe FPA

"Kiss me, I'm Irish" –her surprised blush GD
a bird is passing I too leave with wings of words WR

when flight fails
one must walk GD

in the hired service department
cuckoo clock strikes twelve FPA

~&~

after the blackout
eating all the ice cream quickly
before the power returns Gene Doty
no light plenty quiet JMB
dream time when I see words unmasked WR
stuck in traffic again dancing alone CF
land locked the wave I hear on cliffs WR
finding a key made of sand JR
we furnish the room in the kelp castle a sunbeam the bed WR
in the darkness between covers, we dream GD
in the white of beaches night-black steps WR
four walls & on each a picture of great promise but there is no door FPA

four walls, no door
no ceiling or floor GD

~&~

after the blackout
eating all the ice cream quickly
before the power returns Gene Doty
no light plenty quiet JMB
dream time when I see words unmasked WR
unguarded mirror returns light slowly GD
the ocean and the suburban both homeless GV
the term "mother" names cover them JR
attached she sends me a koan plus a virus WR
opening the attachment – nothing displays but the code GD
fogging the empty screen no sound of drumming fingers WR
screech of the chair my parting comment about the job JR

rewriting
the reference letter GD

a long train journey
paper a war chronicle FPA

bill collector

a few old schoolmates CC

~&~

after the blackout
eating all the ice cream quickly
before the power returns Gene Doty
no light plenty quiet JMB
loud mouthed the talking scales CC
hear the wasps walking on your hat JMB
she says I am glad your eyes don't sting WR
Back for the Louvre - I'm asked if I've met the Mona Lisa FPA
the mile spread behind her hips JMB
in the meadow we can build a snowman FPA
harbored perhaps the chord of a scheme in cat eyes WR
in white shirts at the usual chess party FPA

the queen flees
the bishop, falls
to the knight GD

rolling in a circle
the toppled
king CC

~&~

after the blackout
eating all the ice cream quickly
before the power returns Gene Doty
no light plenty quiet JMB
loud mouthed the talking scales CC
automated checkout - "please ask for cashier assistance" GD
condom dispenser a hatchet-faced clerk JR
discarded in the fallen leaves - a moment of passion GD
the budding tree reminds him of her JR
dropping puzzle pieces in her lap a picture forms GD
in swaddling clothes the calendar girl FPA
low-cut jeans reveal the dragon - faded tattoo GD
a tight hold of her real self "& now, would you like some tea?" FPA

listening
to a wave
through the ear of a flint WR

~&~

after the blackout
eating all the ice cream quickly

before the power returns Gene Doty
no light plenty quiet JMB
loud mouthed the talking scales CC
automated checkout – "please ask for cashier assistance" GD
condom dispenser a hatchet-faced clerk JR
discarded in the fallen leaves - a moment of passion GD
washed into dawn I am holding on to half a moon WR
pale sky waits for a cloud to paint its silver lining FPA
dawn comes to a world of rain dropPING jr
osprey lifts with prey dripping their reflections FPA
leaving the nest all those days of caring fly away JR

milk-white mail
moon-stamped her answer WR

~&~

after the blackout
eating all the ice cream quickly
before the power returns Gene Doty
no light plenty quiet JMB
dream time when I see words unmasked WR
sensory deprivation chamber unplugged CC
black air feeding from the dark an owl WR
waterfront beacon Maigret's pipe FPA
the glow that doesn't warm a ho's smile JR
at the distance it seems two who won't come closer WR
sea slug wedge of waning moon FPA
snow-light crystals hardening the view WR

quibbling over gender
toothpicks for its chin stubble
winter scarecrow FPA

~&~

after the blackout
eating all the ice cream quickly
before the power returns Gene Doty
no light plenty quiet JMB
dream time when I see words unmasked WR
unguarded mirror returns light slowly GD
the ocean and the suburban both homeless GV
the term "mother" names cover them JR
attached she sends me a koan plus a virus WR
"The moon sets at midnight I walk alone" Shoushan meta
the wealth sack shadows carved in stone light to carry FPA

the journey home brightened by the many good memories JR

hawk's hurl & gliding
stitching ozone
Sunday walk FPA

~&~

after the blackout
eating all the ice cream quickly
before the power returns Gene Doty
no light plenty quiet JMB
dream time when I see words unmasked WR
unguarded mirror returns light slowly GD
a magnet breaks into two equal magnets CF
one blitz only then no more light after radiation WR
trying to understand nations why anyone would drop a bomb JR
spirit so simple only the mind gets confused CF
snake house speaking in whispers FPA
decapitated still the rattler strikes JR

old wishing well
a key under the bucket CC

~&~

after the blackout
eating all the ice cream quickly
before the power returns Gene Doty
no light plenty quiet JMB
dream time when I see words unmasked WR
unguarded mirror returns light slowly GD
the ocean and the suburban both homeless GV
the term "mother" names cover them JR
attached she sends me a koan plus a virus WR
two turtle doves & a partridge in a pear tree FPA
opened Christmas card the squeaky music of my past from a tiny computer JR
in the royal gardens snowman's buckled shoes FPA

New Year's Day
a hubcap shaped
from an old crown CC

~&~

after the blackout
eating all the ice cream quickly
before the power returns Gene Doty
no light plenty quiet JMB
dream time when I see words unmasked WR
unguarded mirror returns light slowly GD
the ocean and the suburban both homeless GV
the term "mother" names cover them JR
attached she sends me a koan plus a virus WR
decades old now? computer message haiku CC
food bowl cat's date of birth added in calligraphy FPA
the shaky hand painting mountains JR

flora
fauna
francine CC

SWARMING

6-word links on the Theme: swarming
18 links

storm a hand, shape of wind - John M. Bennett
carrying the birds' idea of food JR
news of doughnuts in the break room cg
the case of the pedophile priest CC
memories of a my own shame JR
that I couldn't count to six JMB
a handful of ideas to touch JR
cough glue thighs love gland uh JMB
basil and a pinch of nutmeg CC
birds of prey osprey and kite FPA
vultures on bended knees as nuns JR
fire extinguished but seldom blown out WR
the poem submitted to another contest JR
the words reversed the title air JMB
ignores DOG Santa enters the garden FPA
earthly god giving until it hurts JR
ground above the cat a cross CC

digested in asceticism mantis's last meal FPA

~&~

Storm a hand, shape of wind - John M. Bennett
carrying the birds' idea of food JR
news of doughnuts in the break room cg
the case of the pedophile priest CC
memories of a my own shame JR
your daydreams crowding out the cobwebs CC
water the window dry the face JMB
the hokku with one thousand links GD
fantasies given hydraulic help by pills JR
the brain curves vertical landing fields WR
sci-fic novels pile by my bed JR
chewing then choking yellow sea slugs WR
face in plate a dripping spiral JMB
cool moon wears a bright halo FPA
plastic sun-burst clock clicking dark minutes GD
the automobile license plate: "BUS STOP " CC
photos of poets crazed by light GD
at the red-light district flowering plum FPA

the child layers color on color GD

~&~

Storm a hand, shape of wind - John M. Bennett
carrying the birds' idea of food JR
news of doughnuts in the break room cg
the case of the pedophile priest CC
memories of a my own shame JR
your daydreams crowding out the cobwebs CC
water the window dry the face JMB
deafening the music of your eyes CC
we'll swim until death parts us WR
center of the storm – paradise island JR
cosmic beach Milky Way all lit FPA
flaring match lights the electric bill CC
no moon standing between wind chimes CF
a sound in the dark – bright JR
clouds seeing us as curious animals CF
reincarnation – the trip around the block JR
police sirens street barricaded with furniture CC

a bomb hidden for the occupier WR

~&~

Storm a hand, shape of wind - John M. Bennett
carrying the birds' idea of food JR

news of doughnuts in the break room cg
the case of the pedophile priest CC
memories of a my own shame JR
your daydreams crowding out the cobwebs CC
water the window dry the face JMB
deafening the music of your eyes CC
we'll swim until death parts us WR
center of the storm – paradise island JR
cosmic beach Milky Way all lit FPA
flaring match lights the electric bill CC
no moon standing between wind chimes CF
a sound in the dark – bright JR
clouds seeing us as curious animals CF
reincarnation – the trip around the block JR
raised top desk used in childhood FPA

my name in wood not lights JR

~&~

storm a hand, shape of wind - John M. Bennett
carrying the birds' idea of food JR
news of doughnuts in the break room cg
the case of the pedophile priest CC
memories of a my own shame JR
that I couldn't count to six JMB
a handful of ideas to touch JR
cough glue thighs love gland uh JMB
basil and a pinch of nutmeg CC
birds of prey osprey and kite FPA
vultures on bended knees as nuns JR
fire extinguished but seldom blown out WR
the poem submitted to another contest JR
"Hm," she says, "another honorable mention." CC
a "horrible mention" he corrects her JR
teacher runs out of red ink CC
leaving school with the last laugh WR

the degree I never got – attained JR

~&~

Storm a hand, shape of wind - John M. Bennett
carrying the birds' idea of food JR
news of doughnuts in the break room cg
the case of the pedophile priest CC
memories of a my own shame JR
your daydreams crowding out the cobwebs CC
water the window dry the face JMB

deafening the music of your eyes CC
we'll swim until death parts us WR
center of the storm – paradise island JR
cosmic beach Milky Way all lit FPA
flaring match lights the electric bill CC
no moon standing between wind chimes CF
pretend the wind and power vanished CC
trees trash leaves into the street GD
in a dirt hole – clean gophers JR
and no president without a bomb WR

more troops more war less hope JR

FINIS