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Welcome to - haiku ireland - newsletter

We hope you will find this newsletter informative and user-friendly.

The aim of this quarterly bulletin is to give news and information on haiku and forthcoming haiku events in Ireland and in the world and obviously share some haiku.

- **haiku ireland** - newsletter is an open space for any haiku poet or association in or outside Ireland, so feel free to send us haiku or any item relating to haiku (collection of haiku, essays, web links, information, etc.) for publication in this newsletter.

Please note that due to space limitations, all items received may not be published in the next immediate issue.

Thanks in advance for forwarding this newsletter to anyone you know who may be interested in its contents.

Next issue will be published in September 2007.
Send any item for publication by mid-August 2007 at
info@haikuireland.org

about - haiku ireland -

- **haiku ireland** - is a group of haiku poets who share the same aims that are primarily to foster the writing of haiku and its related forms to a standard of excellence and in a manner which reflects both its origins and best contemporary practice and to contribute to the development of haiku in Ireland and internationally.

Another objective is to develop and sponsor cooperation between the Irish and the international haiku community and we hope this newsletter will help achieving this goal.

- **haiku ireland** - organises regular haiku events, such as workshops and ginko that are open to all. For further information on our group, to attend our events or to join us, please visit our Official Site at **www.haikuireland.org** that also contains haiku written by members and the previous newsletters and publications that may be downloaded.

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news

calls for submissions / competitions

Matsuo Basho Poetry Offerings

English Haikus wanted: original submissions or unpublished work for a Haiku competition to be held during the Basho festival on October 12th.

How to Apply

If applying by postcard, please write your compositions on the back of the postcard and your name, address, nationality, and telephone number on the front. If you want you can also include your poet's pseudonym as well. For simplicity's sake please keep haiku submissions to two per postcard.

If applying by e-mail please be sure to include the same information as above (Name, address, nationality and telephone number) when you submit your entry.

A maximum of 10 haikus per person are allowed.

The Basho poetry offerings supervisor/ Basho-o Kinenkan
(The Basho-o memorial museum)
Ueno Marunouchi 117-13,
Iga city, Mie prefecture
JAPAN - 518-8770

Judge: Koko Kato

Deadline: Tuesday July 31st, 2007

Entry fee: Free

Prizewinners will be announced at a ceremony during the Basho festival in Iga on October 12th, as well as on the city's website.

Contact Details

Tel: +81 (0595) 21-2219 (Basho-o memorial museum)

URL: <http://www.ict.ne.jp/~basho-bp>

E-mail: basho-bp@ict.ne.jp

And <http://www.ict.ne.jp/~basho-bp/english.htm>

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bottle rockets press

bottle rockets press will be publishing two different mini-anthologies of haiku and senryu in the bottle rockets book series. One will be about "fireflies" the other about "amusement parks/carnivals/country fairs".

Send up to 20 poems (previously published or new as long as they are free and clear) for each anthology. Do NOT combine submissions. Include bibliographical info. Please include SASE for reply. No e-mails submissions please for US residents. Cover letters for new poets is highly recommended.

Deadline for submission is Sept. 1, 2007.

For any questions please contact Stanford M. Forrester at:
bottlerockets_99@yahoo.com

Mail separate submissions to:

bottle rockets press
amusement park anthology
P.O. Box 189
Windsor, CT 06095 USA

bottle rockets press
firefly anthology
P.O. Box 189
Windsor, CT 06095 USA

Ludbreg 2008 International Haiku Contest

HAIKU CALENDAR LUDBREG 2008

Deadline July 1, 2007 / No entry fee

Awards: First Prize: \$ 100 Second Prize: \$ 50 Third Prize: \$ 20
Honorable Mention Awards (10-15): souvenirs, paintings and books

Submit entries by Snail mail:

Zdenko Orec, Petra Zrinskoga 49, 42230 Ludbreg, Croatia

Or E-mail them to: **mirko.varga@vz.t-com.hr** or **boris.nazansky@zg.t-com.hr**

Regulations

- The contest is open to the public
- Entries (haiku in English) must be original, unpublished, not currently submitted elsewhere
- There is no limit to the number of entries (haiku)
- Send two copies of each haiku on separate cards; on the back of one card print your name, age, occupation and address
- No entries will be returned, so keep a copy

Notification

- Winners will not be announced till the end of December 2007
- All others wanting the results please send self addressed envelope (SAE) + two international reply coupons (IRC)

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The 4th Kokako Haiku and Senryu Competition

The 4th Kokako Haiku and Senryu Competition is now International!

Closing date: 31st October, 2007

First Prize: NZ\$200

2 Runners-up prizes NZ\$50 each

Judge: Catherine Mair

Send entries to:

The Kokako Haiku Competition

Patricia Prime, co-editor

42 Flanshaw Road, Te Atatu South Auckland 8

New Zealand

Please make cheques out to Kokako/Overseas entrants may send cash at their own risk

Conditions of entry:

1. Haiku must be previously unpublished and not under consideration elsewhere.
2. Entry fee is NZ\$5 for every 3 haiku; for overseas entries, US\$1 per haiku.
3. Send two copies of each haiku, or group of haiku, with your name and address on one copy only.
4. Winning haiku and commended entries will be published in Kokako 8 (April, 2008).
5. Winners will be notified by mail.
6. Any theme is acceptable.

Any queries, email: pprime@ihug.co.nz

Submissions for Noon: Journal of the Short Poem

Dear readers and correspondents,

This is to let you know that I have started reading for the next NOON (#5, due out in September), and that I expect to be able to accept submissions until approximately the end of June. Feel free to send via email if that's more convenient for you.

Best wishes,

Philip Rowland, editor

Noon: Journal of the Short Poem

Minami Motomachi 4-49-506

Shinjuku-ku

Tokyo 160-0012

Japan

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CHRYSANTHEMUM

Chrysanthemum is an internet magazine for modern verse forms in the tradition of Japanese short poetry.

The first issue of the international online haiku magazine Chrysanthemum is out now and can be viewed at **www.chrysanthemum-haiku.net**

To subscribe to/unsubscribe from the Chrysanthemum Newsletter, please e-mail to:
dietmar.tauchner@aon.at

Deadline for the spring issue is the end of February and for the fall issue at the end of August but submissions are welcome at any time.

Please send up to 10 haiku/senryu at a time for consideration to Dietmar Tauchner at **chrysanthemum@gmx.at**
Include your contribution in the body of the email; no attached files.

All submissions must be unpublished and not under consideration elsewhere. All contents are copyright by the authors. All rights revert to the authors upon publication in Chrysanthemum.

For more information, please visit **www.chrysanthemum-haiku.net**

Editorial Team: GERD BÖRNER- GABI GREVE - KILMENY NILAND - UDO WENZEL –
KLAUS - DIETER WIRTH
Managing Editor DIETMAR TAUCHNER

Message from Haiku Reality:

Dear haiku friends,

I'd like to call you to submit a couple of your haiku (published or not) to Haiku stvarnost/Haiku Reality.

As you know, from now on three best haiku of the issue will be judged by an'ya (USA) and Jasminka Nadaskic-Djordjevic (Serbia).

Thank you.

Best wishes,
Saša Vazić

v.sasa@ptt.yu

Owner and editor of Haiku Reality

English pages: **http://www.geocities.com/ana_vazic/indexeng.htm**

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The 10 th Annual Suruga Baika Literary Festival

CALL FOR HAIKU ENTRIES

Three haiku from each writer. Additional haiku may be submitted but must be sent separately with required information and entry fee (if required). Prizes will be awarded as follows.

Prize of Excellence- Baika Literary Prize / Senior Division (college age and up):
Two winners will receive the Baika Literary Prize Certificate, commemorative goods and copy of the published book containing all winning haiku...

Junior Division:
Two prizes- same as above.

In addition, Awards of Merit will be given to ten people in each category. Each person will receive a certificate of merit as well as memorial goods.

SUBMISSION

Send all previously unpublished Haiku to Daichuji Temple. (Limit 3 Haiku per person)
We will accept entries only through Internet till December 15. (Entry from only foreign countries)

Send by e-mail to:
baika@daichuji.com
URL : **<http://www.daichuji.com/>**

By mail to:
Daichuji Temple Baika Office
457 Naka-Sawada Numazu-shi, Shizuoka-ken
JAPAN 410-0006

All entries must include the following information:

- 1) Full name, address and phone number
- 2) Date of birth
- 3) Occupation
- 4) Haiku group affiliations, if any.
- 5) Nationality

Entries from within Japan must be accompanied by a 2,000 yen entry fee. International entries are not required to submit an entry fee.

All publishing rights for prize winning entries revert to Daichuji Temple.
Additional categories in Japanese include Modern Poetry, Haiku, and Waka.
All award winners will be notified by early February 2008.

AWARD CEREMONY:

To be held at Daichuji Temple on February 11, 2008.
Winners unable to attend will receive their awards by mail

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11th annual Mainichi Haiku Contest!

Entries open from April 11 to Aug. 31, 2007

We look forward to receiving original Japanese, English or French entries that will help add a touch of inspiration to the world of haiku.

How to Submit Entries

The Mainichi Haiku Contest consists of three Sections:

1. General Section
2. Children's Section (for haiku composed by those of junior high school age and under)
3. International Section (for haiku composed in English or French)

Applications are easy and can be posted or made over the Internet through the online form provided below. For the blind, applications can also be submitted in Braille.

Entries must be original haiku and must not have been published or submitted anywhere else. Double submissions will not be accepted. The release and publishing copyrights of any of the entries that are published in subsequent haiku collections will remain with the Mainichi Newspapers.

Those taking part in the International Section can submit a maximum of two haiku. International Section entries, Children's Section entries, and entries in Braille are free. Refer to the notes below for details on the cost of entering the General Section.

Together with your haiku, please include your name, age, address, telephone number, and the name of any haiku organization to which you belong with your entry. Also indicate which Section you are applying for.

To apply over the Internet, simply fill out the online entry form.

Prizes

In the International Section, the Children's Section, and the organization and school categories, certificates of merit and mementos will be awarded. Please note that no monetary prizes will be awarded in any of these Sections or categories.

The overall winner in the General Section will take home the grand prize of 500,000 yen, while the runner-up will receive 300,000 yen. Two other prizes of 100,000 yen will be awarded for distinguished compositions in the General Section.

Announcement of Winners

Results for the winners of the International Section will be announced on the Mainichi Daily News Web site in January 2008. Other winners will be announced in the Mainichi Shimbun and Mainichi haiku publications, in January 2008.

Entries in the General section cost 2,000 yen for each pair of haiku. Money for general section entries should be sent by postal transfer to the Mainichi Haiku Taisho Jimukyoku (Mainichi haiku contest head office), account No. 00140-0-404438.

For further information, please e-mail the organizers: **miki.n@mbx.mainichi.co.jp**

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The R. H. Blyth Award

HAIKU IN ENGLISH OR IN ENGLISH TRANSLATION COMPETITION

You are cordially invited to participate in the above competition.
The deadline for the Competition is Sunday 30 September 2007.

Category

Haiku poems in any form, style, subject or convention but rooted in tradition. Each poem will be judged on its own merit. Works showing originality, newness or something different will be preferred. You are free to add any explanation to each of your haiku, if you so wish.

Language

English (Haiku written in any other languages must be translated into English).

Standards & Quality

Highest standards and quality will be sought in this competition.

Eligibility & Copyright

Open to everybody in the world. Your works must be new, original, unpublished and not being considered elsewhere.

By submitting your works, you shall be deemed to have agreed to give permission that the works may be published in WHC's announcement, publication or any other use which WHC deem fit. The copyrights shall revert to the authors once their works are published.

Submission of Works and Fees

You can submit up to 10 haiku poems.

The fees are £5, or US\$ 10, or Euro 8 or Yen 1,000 for the first three haiku (it will be the same if you submit only one or two haiku) and £1, US\$ 2, Euro 2 or Yen 500 for each subsequent haiku. No other currencies will be accepted.

Payment

In cash (sending banknotes by normal letter post) is the preferred method to avoid high bank commission costs (no problems have been experienced so far, but make sure to put the banknotes within at least two sheets of your folded letter paper) but this will be at the sender's risk. Otherwise, obtain International Money Order in British pounds, or sterling cheque drawn at UK banks, payable to "World Haiku Festival". (Please make the denomination in British pound sterling)

Send your works with your payment by snail mail to:

The World Haiku Club HQ, Leys Farm, Rousham, Bicester, England OX25 4RA.

In addition, send the same works also by e-mail to:

susumu.takiguchi@btinternet.com

Publication

The best ten and other short-listed works of merit will be published in World Haiku Review, the WHC's world-wide comprehensive haiku magazine, and will also be widely shown via WHC's lists and other world-wide communication network.

<http://www.worldhaikureview.org>

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haiku conferences and events

Haiku North America conference in Winston-Salem, North Carolina

The Haiku North America 2007 conference will take place from Wednesday, August 15, to Sunday, August 19, in Winston-Salem, North Carolina, USA.

The impressive list of presentations and presenters for HNA 2007 is available on the Haiku North America Web site together with a draft schedule that lists the night-time events and a few other details.

Please see the HNA 2007 section of the HNA Web site:

http://www.haikunorthamerica.com/hna_2007.html

Hope to see you in Winston-Salem this August!

Lenard D. Moore, Bob Moyer, and Dave Russo
Local organizers for HNA 2007

The 4th World Haiku Association Conference (WHAC4)

Theme: *Haiku beyond Differences*
Date: 14-16 September 2007
Location: Tokyo, Japan
Venue: Suigetsu Hotel Ohgaisou & Meiji University Liberty Tower

Scheduled Programme

Friday 14 September:	Welcome Party (Short Speech & Haiku Reading)
Saturday 15 September:	WHA Meeting, Speech 1~6 "Haiku beyond Differences", Presentation of International Haiku Publication, Haiku Contest Results & Haiku Reading
Sunday 16 September	Walking around Ueno & Farewell Haiku Reading

For more information, visit the WHA website at **<http://www.worldhaiku.net/>**

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The Second European Haiku Conference in Vadstena, Sweden

8-10 June 2007

The conference will take place in the premises of Vadstena Folkhögskola (The Vadstena College for Adult Education).

Registration fee per person is 1.800 kronor (165 Euro), including a single room with shower and toilet for two nights and the following meals:

Friday 8 June dinner and evening coffee;

Saturday 9 June breakfast, lunch and dinner;

Sunday 10 June breakfast and lunch.

(Double rooms are available)

The conference language is English.

The Swedish Haiku Society hopes that many haiku poets from Europe will come to the conference as well as some special guests from Japan and USA.

VÄLKOMMEN, WELCOME!

Kai Falkman

President of the Swedish Haiku Society

Mobile +46 (0)70 910 9971

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WRITING FROM WITHIN
HAIKU and the SPIRITUAL DIMENSION
WORKSHOP with
MAEVE O'SULLIVAN and KIM RICHARDSON
14th to 21st July 2007



Anam Cara Writers' and Artists' Retreat, Eyeries, West Cork,
Ireland

'Whatever art or knowledge a man gets by an external means is not his own, nor does it intrinsically belong to him; it is only those things evolved out of his inner being that he can claim as truly his own. (D T Suzuki)

6 Questions about WRITING FROM WITHIN to Maeve and Kim

Q1: How did you come up with this concept for a haiku workshop?

We decided that we wanted to offer a haiku workshop which would not only focus on the "technical" writing skills, but also include a spiritual dimension. The haiku form already has a strong spiritual focus, with its roots in Zen Buddhism, and its requirement for the writer to be in the moment - something that is sometimes easier to preach than to practise!

Since both of us have a strong interest in spiritual matters as well as in the technical craft of haiku, and also have some skills in that area, we thought it would add an extra and - hopefully - welcome dimension to the workshop.

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Q2: What are the main differences between your proposed workshop and a "traditional haiku workshop"?

Haiku that are written for the eye are generally three lines long. Haiku that are written for the ear are designed to be read in one breath, and often focus on sound as well as visuals.

Of course a good haiku can fulfil both requirements, but it can be useful to consider both. The incorporation of breathing and meditation exercises into our workshop will help to anchor our participants in the present moment, and to increase their awareness of the beauty of nature which is abundant evidence at Anam Chara. We hope that this will facilitate the experience of "haiku moments".

The traditional workshop element will then help the participant to translate the "moment" into a haiku, as well as giving them a historical context for haiku and introducing them to examples of work from the canon and from contemporary literature. They can also learn about syllable considerations, line breaks and metaphor in haiku, inter alia.

Q3: You will cover a lot of forms and activities relating to haiku (haibun, ginko...). How do you see these forms/activities being useful or usable for participants who are not haiku specialists/followers (main stream poets, writers, journalists...)?

The idea is to introduce the participants to forms that are related to haiku such as tanka, haiga, haibun, renga, etc. Since this is a weeklong workshop, we do have the luxury of time in which to do this. We don't plan to give an in-depth workshop for each form, just to give them a "taster" of each. If a participant feels drawn to any of those forms, they could then explore them in greater depth in their own time during or after the workshop.

Q4: Do you envisage any issue/difficulty in your ambition to accommodate both haiku "specialists and novices"?

"In the life of the spirit, we are always at the beginning" - Ralph Blum.

We don't envisage any major difficulties with this, perhaps that is naïve of us! I suppose our approach is more spiritual than technical in that regard.

As in a yoga or meditation class, it's always good practice for an experienced practitioner to go back to first principles, and we believe that haiku is no exception.

In addition to group classes, one-to-one tutoring sessions with each participant are planned, so individual needs can be catered for as the week progresses. We also hope that the more experienced participants may be generous enough to advise the less experienced ones, as so often happens in group learning situations.

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Q5: What are your main objectives as "facilitators"? What do you expect?

I think 'hope' may be a more apt verb than 'expect' in this context! We hope to engender in the workshop's participants an interest in, a passion for, some knowledge about, and some aptitude for, the wonderful haiku form, all of which we ourselves are privileged enough to have.

Q6: and finally what is your expected outcome for the participants?

We believe that a process-oriented approach is more appropriate in this context than a goal-oriented one. We wish our participants an enjoyable and fulfilling learning experience in their week at Anam Chara. It will be up to each individual to decide whether they want to make a lifelong commitment to writing haiku afterwards, like we have, or whether they want to apply the techniques learned to other forms of writing, or both!

We also hope that they enjoy the breathing and meditation exercises, and that they might also consider continuing that dimension in their lives, if they find them useful.

In the meantime, for further information about this workshop, contact Sue Booth-Forbes at **anamcararetreat@eircom.net** or visit **www.anamcararetreat.com**

See page 42 for more information on this event

site related to - haiku ireland -

www.haikuspirit.org

Haiku Spirit is a bilingual site (English and French) managed by - **haiku ireland** - member **Gilles Fabre**, named in tribute to **Jim Norton**'s late Irish Journal of Haiku, containing selected haiku from the 20 issues of Haiku Spirit, a technical introduction to haiku (definitions, guidelines to write haiku, bibliography, e-workshop...).

www.haikuspirit.org also features hundreds of Japanese classic and contemporary haiku translated into English and French as well as contemporary Western haiku (in French and English).

The site has a guest section for haiku submissions in English and French.

to find your (haiku) way on the net

Visit **http://dmoz.org/Arts/Literature/Poetry/Forms/Haiku_and_Related_Forms/** for an Open Directory under the supervision of William Higginson and the links page managed by Mark Alan Osterhaus at **<http://my.execpc.com/~ohaus/haiklink.htm>** to find links to most existing sites of haiku poets, associations, publishers, journals, forums...

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related forms

haibun and tanka

Tanka

Message from Michael McClintock

I am contacting you directly about *Streetlights: Poetry of Urban Life in Modern English Tanka*, to be published as a trade paperback by Modern English Tanka Press in Fall 2007.

Streetlights is intended as a companion anthology to *Landfall: Poetry of Place in Modern English Tanka* (due for release in Summer 2007) and will be a selection of tanka having an urban or suburban setting and which reflect upon all facets of life and experience in the modern city, town, and suburbia. Specifically, we seek unpublished and previously published poems with settings in the office, the supermarket, the apartment building, the bar-room, the restaurant, the daycare center, the jazz club, the theater and concert, the sports event and arena, the laundromat, the city bus and commuter train, the street and the subway—poems that weave into their lyrics the places and “things” of modern life: its harmonies and dissonance; its quiet sanctuaries and noisy intersections; its headlines, politics, popular culture, and issues.

Please send submissions of up to forty tanka in the body of an email (no attachments) to me at **mchlmcclintock@aol.com**. Denis M. Garrison and I will jointly edit the anthology. Be sure to include in your subject line: *Streetlights---Submissions---Your Last Name*. Also, make sure that the author's name is included under EACH poem submitted, even if submitted as a set. This will greatly assist us in keeping your poem and name together as we go through the processes of sorting, editing, compiling, and layout of the volume's sections. Please do not include credits for previously published work in your initial submission; you will be asked to supply this information when final selections are made. We will require only one-time rights to print publication; this book will not be available online as a digital edition. Payment: One dollar (\$1.00 USD) per poem is the sole payment for accepted submissions for this anthology. Single tanka count as one poem; titled sets and sequences, etc., count as one poem; for purposes of payment.

The *Streetlights* submissions period is April 1st to July 31st. An open Call for Submissions will be published on May 1st, also with the same July 31st deadline. We plan to publish *Streetlights* during Fall 2007.

Poems that are definitely not selected for publication (“first cuts”) will be returned to poets on a flow basis. Poems that make the first cut will be held until final acceptance decisions (“final cuts”) are made on all the poems for the particular anthology.

We hope that you will contribute some of your best work to *Streetlights*, the third of a series of tanka anthologies to be published by Modern English Tanka Press.

Sincerely,

Michael McClintock, *Streetlights*, **MchIMcClintock@aol.com**

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Haibun

Message from Ken Jones, Editor Contemporary Haibun
<http://www.contemporaryhaibunonline.com/>

Dear Irish *haibuners*

I suspect that the haibun talent in Ireland may not be adequately represented on the world stage. After publication (or not, as the case may be) please do consider e-mailing to the quarterly Contemporary Haibun OnLine (redmoon@shentel.net).

If your piece receives even only one vote of the three editors it will be published there. Two or more votes will take it into the more select print annual Contemporary Haibun. This is an international volume of record for posterity. For this also we will consider previously published haibun, though on a case by case basis.
With thanks and good wishes.

The Annual British Haiku Society Haibun Anthology 2007 Entries are invited for this prestigious international event, the purpose of which is to help raise the quality and range of the haibun genre, which combines poetic prose and haiku.

Entry fee: £5 (cheque made out to 'British Haiku Society') or US\$8 (in dollar bills), plus £2/\$4 for every additional haibun.

Conditions of entry: Open to all. Entries must be written in English, and between 100 and 2000 words long, including haiku.

Work must be unpublished and not under consideration for publication elsewhere. Each haibun should be given a title. Entries will not be returned. Copyright reverts to the author after publication in the Anthology.

Submission details: Three copies of each haibun, with each copy starting on a 'separate A4 sheet. One copy should show your name, address, telephone number and e-mail address (if applicable). The other copies should carry no identification. If you require acknowledgement of receipt of your entry, please either request an e-mail acknowledgement or send an SAE or, for those overseas, an IRC stamped by the originating office.

Address for entries: BHS Haibun anthology, 95 Winns Avenue, London, E17 5HD, UK.
Closing-date: In hand by 1 August 2007.

Assessment and appraisal of entries: The process of assessment and appraisal will be undertaken by Colin Blundell (ex-editor of *Blithe Spirit* and haiku writer) and Helen Robinson (haiku, tanka and haibun writer).

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renku

An Introduction on Renku, from *WWW.HAIKUSPIRIT.ORG*

Introduction

A renku is a collective poetry composition, a collaborative linked verse.

Renku, and its parent genre Renga, go back nearly a thousand years as a tradition in Japanese poetry, reaching its zenith with Matsuo Basho in the 17th century.

It is a sequence of linked verses (usually 36 in Basho's time), composed by a group of poets writing alternately long and short verses (of 17 and 14 syllables respectively, when written in Japanese). Traditionally the poets would follow certain codes and rules: each verse might have a set theme, or season; certain stanzas should mention the moon or flowers, or different aspects of human nature and philosophy. Such rules have more or less been generally adopted or adapted in the practice of renku in the West.

While for many, haiku is considered as “the poetry of the truth” (i.e. written from a real experience), renku has more to do with fiction and story-telling, with the possible exception of the first verse (hokku) which is technically a haiku. The participants are required to invent events, evoke emotions and moments, and the use of the first person does not necessarily imply the poet but rather the part played within the narration. Renku fully tolerates fiction and imagination.

When completed, a renku should offer a mosaic of images and emotions expressing a broad range of themes, subjects and moods that are independently addressed or treated by each verse.

Composing a Renku

Composing a renku is a group activity and as such should be treated as an enjoyable and social experience based on discussion and exchanges, even when composed via email or snail mail. A renku may be organised to celebrate an event or a special guest.

As it is closely related to haiku, renku also provides a perfect opportunity to practice the art of this short form of poetry, reflect on haiku challenges as well as exchanging views, tips and reviews on specific issues that may be raised during the composition.

There is usually a facilitator or lead poet (*sabaki*) who will guide the participants and may also act as judge to determine which verses are selected for inclusion in the poem. Obviously the facilitator should be experienced in renku and haiku composition, and have good communication skills as well as being tactful or diplomatic, as this person should initiate the discussion on the verses, but all participants should also voice their feedback, and it will eventually be the lead poet's decision to select or amend a proposed verse.

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Format and Content in English

Given the 7/5/7-syllable principle for haiku is not an absolute rule in English (or most other Western languages), poets composing in English do not usually follow the 7/5/7 or 7/7 rule in renku.

It is however usually appropriate or recommended to alternate between 3-liners and 2-liners, that is to write in a format of 3-liners and 2-liners.

The 3-liners will usually be similar to a haiku in style and spirit (but without a caesura or major break) while the 2-liner should be haiku-like in its style (economy, moment...) and impact. The 3-liners should have 6/7 stresses (which should make out approximately 14 to 16 syllables) and use concrete imagery, while the 2-liners should have about 5 stresses (which should make out approximately 11 to 13 syllables).

It is considered appropriate to start with a verse of the current season, as it provides a structure and a narrative opening.

The rules of classical renku in Japan may seem very strict, as participants were obliged to deal with some specific themes and insert verses about love, the moon (for instance) at particular places in the renku but these rules are more or less followed in modern and Western renku - as it is the case with the 5/7/5 or 7/7 rule. However, it may be worth considering and deciding beforehand to treat and insert some themes. These predetermined themes may then act as reminders, landmarks or benchmarks and provide the participants with a thematic checklist for the renku to progress smoothly.

Generally speaking, participants should write in the present and keep concrete imagery; the language should sound and read fairly natural and simple. As for haiku, it is recommended to use the right word rather than the nicest word and to look for clarity in avoiding contrived vocabulary, grammar or structure. Words (but also subjects or themes) should not be repeated from one verse to another, or later on in the renku.

Technical Principles

The core principle of renku is “link and shift”.

“Link” signifies that each verse links somehow to its predecessor and “shift”, by contrast, means that each new verse must shift away from the previous-but-one verse, and have nothing in common with it.

Thus, in any three consecutive verses A, B and C: B is to link to A and C links to B, but crucially C shifts right away from A.

As a result, the poem will be non-narrative, without any central or specific theme and, rather than being about something in particular, will be as far as possible, about everything.

— haiku ireland —

n e w s l e t t e r

Links (Connections)

Each verse is “linked” to the former one as each poet writes his verse in response to the “fragrance” of the previous verse but each verse is still in a sense a separate entity. Thus, although there is a connection between the preceding and following stanza, each verse must have its own theme and subject.

This connection is the “challenge” in the composition of renku as it must be neither too obviously nor too remotely linked to its predecessor (and so forth). It is essential to remember at all times to avoid any link with the so-called uchikoshi, the previous-but-one verse.

It is also important to mention that this connection does not have to be logical or chronological in its essence.

Shift

The other principle of renku relates to shift. Each verse is somehow connected to the previous one but should also move on and introduce new topics.

In this way, there is a progression in the narrative. For instance, a season, or a specific time in a season may be sustained for a couple of verses. Where there is a shift from one season to another in the renku, such seasons are normally separated by one or more ‘seasonless’ verses.

The First Verse

The first verse is called hokku and it is worth mentioning that this opening verse was later isolated, as an entity that stands on its own, and became what is known now haiku (term created by Shiki about 100 years ago).

The lead poet would traditionally invite the guest of honour to write the first verse. In the west, it will more frequently be chosen by the group, and it is generally perceived as an honour to have one’s haiku chosen as the hokku; it is worth somewhat more than one verse when it will come to “sharing” verses in a renku. Originally in Japan, the hokku could then be published or inserted on its own in anthologies or collections. In any case the hokku should be selected for its sheer quality as it will be the starting point of the poetic narrative and should consequently be positive and forward-looking.

The hokku should have some reference to the season of composition and, ideally, to the environment or occasion of the event. Like for haiku, the seasonal reference is made through a season-word (kigo). There are direct references (snow, sun...) and indirect or cultural possibilities (such as cherry blossoms for spring, Christmas for winter...).

It will be in three lines and with about 6/7 stresses (which should make out approximately 14 to 16 syllables), containing concrete imagery.

— haiku ireland —

n e w s l e t t e r

The Second Verse

The second verse is called wakiku and should be a 2-liner including a reference to the hokku's season but must avoid any repetition of the hokku's imagery or vocabulary. It should have about 5 stresses (which should make it approximately 11 to 13 syllables).

Obviously, and this is the challenge, it must have a link with the hokku (see principles above) and the success of this link (and of every other link in the renku) will affect the overall quality of the poem.

The Third Verse

The third verse is called daisan and may somehow be considered as the first real verse of the renku, given it will be the first instance that has both a link to the second verse (wakiku) and a shift away from the first verse (hokku).

It should resemble the hokku in form (i.e. 3-liner, number of stresses, though avoiding a caesura so it should read straight through) but must avoid any link (subject, theme, word...) with the first verse. It usually is free of any seasonal reference, and though it will bring a new subject or theme, its link to the second verse should be close enough.

The Fourth Verse

The fourth verse may be seasonless or make reference to another season than that of the first verse (hokku). It may unroll the narrative, that is continue the story from the preceding verse, or have a "lighter" link to this previous verse.

However, it must avoid using or relying on topics, subjects or themes already used in the previous three verses.

The Next Verses

Depending on the decision to insert some specific themes or not, the next verses will basically follow the rules as set out above.

The Last Verse

The last verse is called ageku and obviously concludes the renku.

Echoing the situation of the hokku (first verse), it may be decided to ask a certain person (the host or an invited guest) to compose the last verse as a fitting conclusion. It may also be written by the leader or simply chosen among the participants' proposals.

— haiku ireland —

n e w s l e t t e r

Conclusion

Renku composition is a group activity and well constructed feedback and suggestions for each verse are important, and must always be made or expressed with the overall benefit of the renku in mind, given the secret of a renku's success lies in its links and shifts as well as in the quality of each individual verse.

Obviously, time is a factor in the composition of a renku. It may be arranged to dedicate a whole day for a renku and therefore set a target for the number of verses (12 tends to be a realistic target). Many renku are now being composed by email or snail mail. This way, the time factor is not an issue and the target may be 20, 22 or the more traditional 36 verses. In any case, the discussion and feedback on the verses that are submitted for consideration by the leader or facilitator are an integral part of the process. It is also at the root of the social aspect of renku composition and a factor that is maybe unique in poetry which is usually a solitary activity.

Finally, remember to follow the spirit of haiku.

Gilles Fabre
Editor of Haiku Spirit
www.haikuspirit.org

— haiku ireland —

n e w s l e t t e r

Triparshva renku: Crows in Snow

This renku was written online with the participation of:

Norman Darlington (Ireland), Sheila Windsor (UK), Johnye Strickland (USA), Cheryl Crowley (USA) and John Carley, UK as *sabaki*

crows in snow -
all the way to the postbox
we follow our breath

Sheila

beneath the early gorse
unseen eyes sleep

Norman

network cables
braid the baseboard
seething silently

John

big shoes, little shoes,
trying on them all

Ippyo

lead us
whispering wind moon
the ferry awaits

Johnye

a pale shoot touches
the rain blurred window

Cheryl

* * *

for one bob dole
kids and old folk break
a ton of stones

Norman

god in a white suit
the dead spit of elvis

Sheila

a ladybug lights
on the backyard buddha
left legs first

Johnye

waking me at night
thoughts of her laughter

John

mirror mirror
crazed and misted
hold our sated sigh

Sheila

— haiku ireland —

n e w s l e t t e r

the S in pleasure
turns out to be Z Norman

ten years on
the house of windsor
backs another filly John

the long night
reading the erl king to his son Johnye

nothing to disturb
my moonlit lake save
drifting willow leaves Norman

sacks of apples
stacked against the press John

* * *

pour the wine
push back the chairs,
so soon tomorrow ... Sheila

summer masque:
vintage fashions wanted Johnye

they say some poet
left behind this heap
of hair and rags Norman

almost pleased to see it
the first snail Sheila

lending a certain
je ne sais quoi
cherry blossom John

a double rainbow frames
the easter parade Johnye

Kawahara Ippyô (1771–1840) Verse 4:

大草鞋小草鞋足にくらべ見て

from the hankasen "Tobi hiyoro" (trans. N Darlington)

— haiku ireland —

n e w s l e t t e r

On Mother's Knees

A 'New Shisan' Renku

This renku was written during a Renku Day organised by - **haiku ireland** - in Club na Muinteoiri / Teachers Club, Dublin on Saturday 26 May, 2007 with the following participants:

Marian Neary Burke, Gilles Fabre, Dermot O'Brien, Bernadette O'Reilly, Maeve O'Sullivan, Jessica Peart, Michael Smay and Norman Darlington, Renku Editor of the online journal Simply Haiku at www.simplyhaiku.com, as *sabaki*

Side 1

tiny feet
resting on mother's knees
May shadows

Marian

toasting the new birth
summer wine, a candle

Maeve

customers
with the shopkeeper
smoking outside

Gilles

Side 2

is that the North wind
all night at the door?

Dermot

footfalls on the stairs
my heart a rope of knots
pulls me to the depths

Bernadette+Jessica

at dawn she steps
from the last carriage

Michael

— haiku ireland —

n e w s l e t t e r

Side 3

beyond the street
the moon over wheat fields
commands attention

Dermot

aroma of blackberries
heavy in the air

Marian

uilleann pipes
the way their sound
fills the session

Maeve

Side 4

raising Persia
dusty swirls from beaten rugs

Jessica

with every blossom
the boy picks up
a dream

Bernadette

tadpoles bend and stretch
in the old pond

Norman

Comment by Maeve O'Sullivan on the renku day:

"I was fairly new to renku, having only once participated in one online one quite a few years ago. I was familiar with the fact that haiku came from the opening verse of the renku, and was curious to learn more.

I found it to be a fascinating process, creatively and socially. Creatively, apart from the opening verse which is essentially a haiku, all of the other verses are generated somewhere in a zone between haiku and fiction! It was fun to imagine a season other than the one I was in, for instance, and to evoke a sense of winter in summer, for instance. I also found it challenging, in a good way, to try to link and shift in an effective manner, and to incorporate elements such as the moon and the blossom. Norman was very helpful in this respect, as in many others.

I also enjoyed the group aspect of the activity. At times it was a little competitive, but that's not always a "bad" thing. However, I think it was more often co-operative, with everyone in the group wanting a positive outcome, i.e. a good renku, or so it seemed to me anyway. I think we did achieve that too."

— haiku ireland —
n e w s l e t t e r

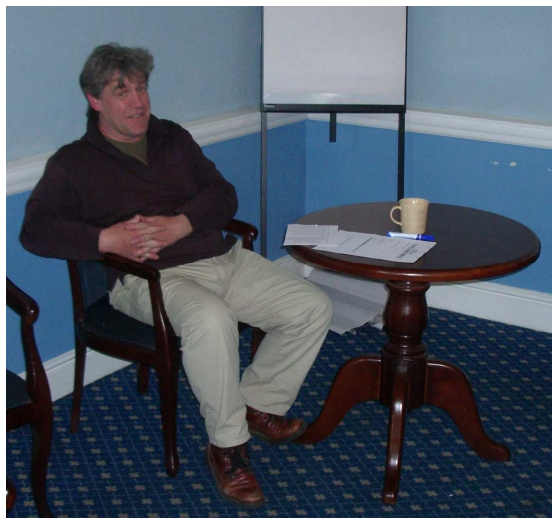


Club na Muinteoiri / Teachers Club,
the Georgian House where the renku was held



Some participants in studious mood

*Norman Darlington, the sabaki for
the day*



— haiku ireland —

n e w s l e t t e r

special guest

michael dylan welch

Michael Dylan Welch was born in Watford, England, and grew up in England, Ghana, Australia, and later Canada. He is now also a Canadian citizen, but lives and works near Seattle, Washington, where he uses his M.A. in English as an editor for Microsoft. His wife is Japanese, and with their two young children they visit Japan regularly. Michael's parents gave him his middle name after Dylan Thomas, which predisposed him for poetry—an interest he had even as a child.

He first learned of haiku in 1976 in a high school English class in Alberta, Canada, and has written haiku regularly ever since, but only began publishing them in 1988 (he lived in California from 1986 to 2002). For many years (1989 to 1997), Michael edited *Woodnotes*, published by the Haiku Poets of Northern California. In 1989 he started his press, *Press Here*, which now has about thirty titles in print, many of which have won Merit Book Awards from the Haiku Society of America.

In 1991, Michael helped to found the Haiku North America conference, which is now a nonprofit corporation of which he is a director (the 2007 conference will be in Winston-Salem, North Carolina). In 1996, he cofounded the American Haiku Archives at the California State Library in Sacramento—the largest public collection of haiku outside Japan. He served as vice president of the HSA in 1997, and again from 2003 through 2006. In 2000, he founded the Tanka Society of America, and served as its president to the end of 2004, helping to usher in the recent surge of interest in tanka (in 1994, he edited what was probably the first anthology of English-language tanka, *Footsteps in the Fog*).

He is currently editor/publisher of *Tundra: The Journal of the Short Poem*, and is coeditor of *Cascade*, the journal of the Washington Poets Association, of which he is also a board member. In 2004 and 2005 he founded and directed the Poets in the Park conference, currently helps organize the WPA's Burning Word festival, and regularly teaches haiku at numerous poetry retreats and conferences. Since 2003, Michael has curated the summer Haiku Garden reading series at the Japanese Garden in Seattle, and also curates the monthly SoulFood Poetry Night at a bookstore in Redmond, Washington.

Michael has published several thousand haiku, senryu, and tanka in hundreds of journals and anthologies in more than a dozen languages (including some in Gaelic, translated by Gabriel Rosenstock). In 2006, he served as haiku editor for "Haiku Journey," a computer game that features 540 haiku by 45 leading haiku poets from around the world.

His haiku have won first prize in each of the Henderson and Brady haiku and senryu contests run by the HSA, the Drevniok contest run by Haiku Canada, and the Tokutomi contest run by the Yuki Teikei Haiku Society, among wins and placements (as well as judging) in many other contests. His other poetry, including tanka, has also won awards and been published widely. He has noticed, with irony, as has Roland Barthes, that "haiku has this rather fantasmagorical property: that we always suppose we ourselves can write such things easily."

— haiku ireland —

n e w s / e t t e r

bibliography

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The Haijin's Tweed Coat (haiku sequence), 1990; expanded second edition, 2000
Fig Newtons: Senryu to Go (senryu anthology), 1993
Footsteps in the Fog (tanka anthology), 1994

Editor of numerous other anthologies, including all of the biennial Haiku North America conference anthologies from 1991 to the present.

links

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<http://www.brooksbookshaiku.com/welch/>

Tundra: The Journal of the Short Poem
<http://hometown.aol.com/welchm/Tundra.html>

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<http://www.millikin.edu/haiku/writerprofiles/MichaelDylanWelch.html>

Haiku Journey (computer game)
http://www.nstorm.com/games/game_detail.asp?game_id=492

— haiku ireland —

n e w s / e t t e r

3 questions

When and how did you discover and start writing haiku?

Haiku crept up on me. I specifically remember first learning of haiku in a high school English class in 1976, and though I wrote “haiku” regularly after that, it was just one of many things I wrote. In the decade that followed, I also followed my interest in Zen and Taoism, which led me to various books where haiku made their appearance. That’s how real haiku crept up on me—by seeing various translations, reading poems in varying contexts. What I wrote in that first decade was all pretty much clueless. If it was 5-7-5 syllables, no matter what I said, and no matter how badly padded or chopped it was, I thought it was a haiku. Never mind season words, the two-part juxtapositional structure, internal comparison, objective imagistic description, and other wee necessities. I believe many people continue to be stuck in the “5-7-5” mode because, as did I, they learned about haiku at an impressionable age, and it’s hard to think that your saintly teachers could possibly be wrong. What broke the ice for me was reading the second edition of Cor van den Heuvel’s venerable *The Haiku Anthology*, where the great bulk of the poems are not 5-7-5. I had to figure out why. And though Cor explains why in his introduction, I also had to feel the reasons why for myself. But fortunately, that happened. The net result was that the book shifted my focus from form to content, and that immediately made a difference in the poems I wrote. In fact, in 1988, Robert Spiess accepted one poem for *Modern Haiku* from my very first submission to him: “my window opens . . . / a hundred frogs / sing to the moon” (partially inspired by Hiroaki Sato’s book with “One Hundred Frogs” in the title. Since then, haiku has continued to open up many new and wonderful literary challenges, lively discussion, and warm friendships. Who knew that such a tiny genre of poetry could hold an infinite realm of possibility?

What is haiku for you?

In the *Haiku Journey* computer game, released in 2006 from Hot Lava Games, and widely available through computer gaming portals online, I served as haiku editor for 540 haiku by 45 poets from around the world. I also wrote information about haiku that appears as you advance through ten different levels in the game. The first screen is a definition of haiku, which I’d like to share here:

“Haiku is typically a three-line poem that uses concrete sensory images to convey or imply natural and human seasonal phenomena, using a two-part juxtapositional structure as well as simple and primarily objective language. Originally a Japanese genre of poetry, now written and adapted in many languages worldwide, traditional haiku in Japanese consists of 17 sounds (not to be confused with syllables) in a pattern of 5-7-5. Because of differences in language, this rhythm is generally not followed for literary haiku in most languages other than Japanese. As intuitive and emotional poems, haiku often capture a sense of wonder and wholeness in presenting existence such as it is. Rather than presenting one’s emotions, haiku present the cause of one’s emotions, thus empowering the reader to have the same intuitive reaction to an experience that the poet had.”

— haiku ireland —

n e w s l e t t e r

Haiku is more than just such a definition, however. It can be a way of life, as it is for me. To some people, haiku is a spiritual way of life, and haiku certainly has many spiritual aspects for me. It is an approach to infinity, perhaps even an approach to God, and an endless celebration of curiosity and wonder at the world around you. Haiku is a way of reveling in the world around you—not just the natural world, but the world of human nature also. I believe it's false to think that haiku can be a means to world peace, as some people have asserted, but it's easy to imagine that if more people had the innate sensitivity that produces effective haiku, we'd have a lot less strife happening in the world. We'd all be too busy going on haiku walks! As nice as that sentiment is, though, I believe haiku should not have a political agenda, for any such agenda will too quickly distort haiku to its own needs, and the suchness of experience would be weakened or damaged. It is such a pleasure, when I teach haiku, to have students "get" a poem. You can see it in their faces, usually through a brightening of the eyes or even a smile or laugh. That moment of joy—or a deep manifestation of other emotions—lies at the heart of every effective haiku, and it's a pleasure to record and share with others these transcendent approaches to infinity. And when students smile upon "getting" a haiku, invariably they turn their heads to share that laughter or joy or realization with someone next to them. I think haiku's deepest pleasure is exactly that sense of sharing, a profound sharing of a deeper understanding of what it is to be human in a painfully beautiful world.

How do you see haiku's place or role in the world?

I combined this question with the previous question



Michael Dylan Welch

haiku

haiku by michael dylan Welch

at his favourite deli
the bald man finds a hair
in his soup

Woodnotes #8, Autumn 1990; Honourable
mention in 1990 Haiku Poets of Northern
California Senryu Contest

a deer leaps--
the hunter's
closed eye

Modern Haiku XXV:2, Summer 1994

first star--
a seashell held
to my baby's ear

Grand Prize ("Special Award") in the Basho
360th Anniversary Haiku Contest

spring breeze--
the pull of her hand
as we near the pet store

Woodnotes #19, Winter 1993

summer moonlight
the potter's wheel
slows

2nd Prize Winner, 1990 Kaji Aso Haiku
Contest, Boston

clicking off the late movie . . .
the couch cushion
reinflates

1st Prize Winner, 1995 Brady Senryu Contest,
Haiku Society of America

reading in bed
my pulse flickering
the lightly held bookmark

Hummingbird VII:2, December 1996

accumulating snow--
oven mitts
praying on the counter

Frogpond XXVIII:1, Winter 2005

toll booth lit for Christmas--
from my hand to hers
warm change

2nd Prize Winner, 1995 Henderson Haiku
Contest, Haiku Society of America

Christmas Eve--
bits of a price sticker
stuck to my finger

The Heron's Nest 7:3, September 2005

haiku

relaxing my arm
butterfly
on the bullseye

3rd Prize Winner, 2004 Drevniok Haiku Contest,
Haiku Canada

meteor shower . . .
a gentle wave
wets our sandals

1st Prize Winner, 2000 Henderson Haiku
Contest, Haiku Society of America

base hit--
the outfielder's
four shadows

Baseball Haiku, New York: W. W. Norton, 2007

morning chill--
the bag of marbles
shifts on the shelf

Haiku Troubadours 2000: A Contemporary
World Haiku Anthology from Japan. Fujimi,
Saitama, Japan: Ginyu Press, 2000

first snow . . .
the children's hangers
clatter in the closet

Woodnotes #23, Winter 1994

tulip festival--
the colours of all the cars
in the parking lot

Honourable Mention, 2000 Tokutomi Haiku
Contest, Yuki Teikei Haiku Society

children's
book
sh
elves

Brussels Sprout VIII:2, May 1991

an old woolen sweater
taken yarn by yarn
from the snowbank

2nd Prize Winner, 1991 Henderson Haiku
Contest, Haiku Society of America

Valentine's Day--
she reminds me
to fasten my seatbelt

Honourable Mention, 2000 Brady Senryu
Contest, Haiku Society of America

morning sun--
a patch of frost
in the holstein's shadow

1st Prize Winner, 2001
Drevniok Haiku Contest, Haiku Canada

haiku

- haiku ireland – members

kukai 4

February 2007

Winner

sheltered by razorgrass
it manages to root
a new potato

wet garden
one puppy
brings it in

Jim Norton

and

Also rewarded

firemen
in a huddle
lighting up

poppy seeds
on the pale chopping-board
- period pains

Ernst J Berry

Maeve O'Sullivan

Second

winter hives
tiny hearts
in the darkness

Graveyard ~
divided in two by a path
leading up to the church

Gilles Fabre

John McDonald

Third

waxing moon
flying across the waterfall
- lone magpie

crows play
at chasing each other
...no reason

John McDonald

Maeve O'Sullivan

2nd honeymoon
how nonchalantly
he pokes the fire

Ernst Berry

haiku

gliding across the lake
towards me
a duck

Bernie O'Reilly

kukai 5
April 2007

Winner

mother and daughter
planting bulbs -
the dark earth

by John McDonald

Second

a hollow tree
the beginning
of dusk

by Michael McClintock

Third

tall sunflowers
having grown old
walking among them

by Michael McClintock

Also rewarded

wedding photos
in the 2nd drawer
first wife

memorial park
the length
of the grass

frigate bird
how easily it slips
into dusk

by Ernst J Berry

carrying the city's lights
into the darkness
night ferry

by Kim Richardson

First frost
a hidden blackberry
still plump

By Mary White

a long letter . . .
honeysuckle in the window,
and the enormous sea

by Michael McClintock

haiku

at the top
of the prison tower
star blaze

by Roberta Beary

old man coughing
newspaper open beside him –
death notices

by Maeve O'Sullivan

where three drowned
the lake water
sparkles in the morning

by Michael McClintock

other haiku

Spring blossom falling
how quickly
life passes

On a still night
the sound of a sleeping cat's
steady breathing

Tony Lewis-Jones

first test
the scrum gets up
a head of steam

Ron Moss

— haiku ireland —

n e w s l e t t e r

haiku workshop

The main objective of this new section is to share some of the comments and feedback expressed by – **haiku ireland** – members on haiku submitted for our regular Kukai activities (only open to members) and for our newsletter (open to all).

Names of the authors are not mentioned. You may contact us at **info@haikuireland.org** for any comment or contribution.

The criteria are in line with generally accepted international guidelines as set out in – **haiku ireland** – Mission Statement. You may also visit the technical introduction to haiku at **www.haikuspirit.org** for definitions, guidelines and theory.

The process of “workshopping” and discussing haiku is an integral and vital part of – **haiku ireland** – meetings and for the practice of haiku.

comment and feedback

winter hives
tiny hearts
in the darkness

Winter hives suggests a collectivity; the next line tiny hearts conveys a very visual image of individuality in contrast to the hive; and in the darkness something about the intuitive, unseen workings of nature which I like.

Although I like some of the imagery in this poem, it doesn't quite work for me. Why not? Well, I think the main reason is that the writer is **telling** me what the hives are to him or her, rather than suggesting it. They are hearts, and that's that. I feel like there's no room for me to creep into the haiku with my own imagination, a bit of a disappointment. I'm also a little confused by hives: I presume they're beehives, but a hive can also be a skin complaint, no? I can imagine how beehives on a dark winter night must be quite suggestive, but don't feel transported there.

Winter hives suggests a collectivity; the next line tiny hearts conveys a very visual image of individuality in contrast to the hive; and in the darkness something about the intuitive,unseen workings of nature which i like.

— haiku ireland —

n e w s l e t t e r

waxing moon
flying across the waterfall
- lone magpie

The imagery is beautiful. The black and white of bird is striking. I could picture clearly what the writer saw.

wet garden
one puppy
brings it in

clear succinct image raising a smile immediately without further comment required one has the whole scene encapsulated there.

firemen
in a huddle
lighting up

I love this haiku! It presents a terribly simple image, one that's quite obvious yet subtle at the same time, one that endures.

Although it's clearly not derivative, it reminds me of another haiku that I came across just a few days ago on the Frogpond website, written by Lenard D. Moore: late summer / black men spreading tar / on the side road. A happy coincidence of images that resonate: black with black, fire with fire.

A lucky poet to have seen that, and a clever poet to have captured it so well! I like the use of the word "huddle": it suggests cold or windy weather, also a sense of camaraderie or even conspiracy between the men, almost a sporting move like a scrum in a rugby match.

I liked the contrast of the firemen[putting out fires] in a huddle lighting up.

sheltered by razorglass
it manages to root
a new potato

This is my favourite because of its contemplative character. It is also unassuming but shows empathy/concern and a relation with a simple natural situation.

Negative (razorglass) impression balanced out by the outcome the poet has spotted.

It also puts the poet (human presence) totally out of the context/situation which is a proof/symbol of humility, one, as far as I'm concerned, of the most important qualities/values in haiku.

— haiku ireland —

n e w s l e t t e r

after sun shower
raindrops on leaves
turn to diamonds

This haiku highlights the usual danger (and for some taboo) in using a metaphor/comparison in a haiku.

Although for some it is forbidden, I think it sometimes works very well when the metaphor is related to the observation and based on reality/concrete element.

But in this case, I feel it fails - not by much though. Is it because there is almost a redundant element (raindrops/shower)? Would it work if the following direction was explored?

After the shower
leaves
turn to diamonds

or

After this shower
instead of leaves
I see diamonds

Maybe, maybe not...

deserted street
the evening wind
doing wheelies

I like this one, but the image of the wind wheelying up a street of an evening, to me, implies that it is deserted, that the road is clear to be wheelied up.

Maybe 'Dublin street', 'city street' or an actual street name as an alternative...?

crows play
at chasing each other
...no reason

This gave me a 'haiku moment'. My attention was brought back to the present moment by the kire and last line.

It does what, to me, haiku are meant to do: wake you up like a slap in the head from a Zen master!

— haiku ireland —

n e w s l e t t e r

poppy seeds
on the pale chopping-board
- period pains

I liked this one because of the image of the poppy seeds, the pale cutting board connecting to the pains of the woman- the connection of seemingly unconnected things works, surprises....and the way that women go on with their work, period pains just another aspect of their domestic lives.

a hollow tree
the beginning
of dusk

This is one of those haiku where I can't easily explain why it touches me, but it does, very much. When I read it first, it caught my heart off-guard, and on re-reading it, it takes me deeper still.

Perhaps it's that it is a clear, simple image, sparsely expressed, and that it has - in abundance - the qualities of 'wabi' and 'sabi' (see <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wabi-sabi>). It carries a sense of the transience of this world, of approaching mortality, of the *natural* ending of things.

A very fine haiku, firmly rooted (pardon the pun) in the tradition of Basho and Buson.

mother and daughter
planting bulbs -
the dark earth

I really like this haiku: it was the one that stayed in my mind most strongly after reading them through once or twice. On the surface it's quite simple: a mother and daughter are planting bulbs together (so we know what time of year it is).

Line three, although it's not very unusual in the context, somehow still comes as a surprise .

"The dark earth" conjures up a lot including - for me - the myth of Demeter and Persephone. Well done!

This is a potent fertility scene, which succeeds in contrasting and blending the productive (mother/earth), the product (bulbs/ daughter).

It manages to impart a sense of the process of aging and the inherent impermanence of all (the return to the 'dark earth') and thus evoke a hint of the sublime sense of passing that I associate with some of my favorite haiku. Excellent, evocative lines.

— haiku ireland —

n e w s l e t t e r

wedding photos
in the 2nd drawer
first wife

Because it's so true to life. It's very visual. Those three lines say so much.
Again it's very visual it also had sound for me, could hear the cough. Perfect as it is,
hope it does well.

frigate bird
how easily it slips
into dusk

Evocative, evoking multi-images of land sea and sky in its eight words (12 syllables)
splendid!

memorial park
the length
of the grass

For me this ran a close second to #13.
I'd have given it 5 points too, but #13 is just a little more 'open', leaving more room for
the vertical axis - the ripples of association and context set off in the reader is one way
of putting this - to manifest. 'memorial park' closes that space a little.

Still, a good, strong image that evokes, as with #13, wabi-sabi and a sense of
transience.

tall sunflowers
having grown old
walking among them

Perfect balance and connection between the 2 elements in line1 and line2
(Sunflower/human being) in their "relations" in line3. Both meditative and
contemplative. Has many qualities and nuances one would be entitled to expect from
haiku.

— haiku ireland —

n e w s l e t t e r

I also loved #13

a hollow tree
the beginning
of dusk

for its precise description (objective) that leads to emotions and feeling (subjective).
A classic!

at the top
of the prison tower
star blaze

The contrasting image of the confining prison and the freely shining starlight appealed to me here.

Also, the mystery of 'is it a star or a searchlight'? There's a hint of a reference to a modern nativity scene. Does it suit being shorter though?

atop
the prison tower
star blaze

where three drowned
the lake water
sparkles in the morning

I almost gave this haiku a point, and think it has the potential to be a really strong haiku, but it hasn't quite got there yet.

The juxtapositioning of the lake water sparkling in the place where three people drowned is very powerful, but could be even more so with a bit of line rearrangement, I think. I also think that a simple season word might be a good addition.

To anchor the haiku in the moment, I think I'd prefer to use "this morning" to "in the morning" in line 3. I'd also cut the "the" from line 2 as I feel it's unnecessary.

To give the reader more of a surprise at the end of the haiku, I suggest an almost-complete reverse of the three lines. Finally, my rewrite is as follows:

spring* morning
lake water sparkles
where three drowned

* or summer or whatever season the haiku moment took place in

— haiku ireland —

n e w s l e t t e r

tall sunflowers
having grown old
walking among them

It is unclear whether the poet grew old walking among sunflowers or is now old and is walking among sunflowers or if the sunflowers are old. Use of a double gerund can be problematic in haiku. Here are three variations:

tall sunflowers --
I walk among them
older now

tall sunflowers --
I grow old walking
among them

tall sunflowers
grown older --
I walk among them

It is possible to write a haiku that retains some ambiguity for the reader:

we walk
among sunflowers
older now

#3
winter light
passing shadow
mum visits

#23.
cigarette packet
cherry blossom on table
aftermath

I decided to review together #3 and #23 as, for me, they both have the same flaw/problem: listing effect. Haiku are short but they need precise construction and structures.

I read too many times haiku that are just a kind of "list", i.e. 3lines line1+line2+line3 without any "grammatical/construction" link or connection.

Although you can sometimes see the moment/haiku in this, the lack of structure makes it look a bit like a shopping list.

#3 and #23 seem to me to contain a moment, an event that could lead to a good haiku but there is not much "work" performed.

The author must be objective (this is the case) but also puts emotion in haiku and this is what is maybe lacking there. haiku = objective description + emotion

call for your feedback

Do not hesitate to send your feedback, comments and suggestions for publication in the next issue on any of the above haiku.

— haiku ireland —

n e w s l e t t e r

forthcoming events

- haiku ireland - meetings

- haiku ireland - hosts a gathering (meeting/workshop) open to all in Dublin.

Next Meetings:

Saturday 1st September 2007

Time: 2.30-4.30pm

Venue: Silk Road Café, Chester Beatty Library (Dublin Castle, Dublin 2)

Please check our **Notice Board** at www.haikuireland.org for confirmation of date and venue prior to each meeting or contact us at info@haikuireland.org

workshop

“Writing from Within” (see page 11 for more information) will be led by haiku poets Maeve O’Sullivan and Kim Richardson, co-authors of the collection “Double Rainbow”, and is a haiku workshop with a difference. This weeklong residential workshop, held in the Anam Chara Writers’ and Artists’ centre on Béara in West Cork, offers an opportunity for writers to immerse themselves in the short form of poetry while exploring spiritual activities in tandem and the natural beauty of the Béara peninsula, which will be explored on the midweek ginko (or haiku walk) lends itself perfectly to the sensual appreciation of nature, the cornerstone of haiku poetry, and “quiet time” will also be built into the schedule.

As well as the three-line haiku, participants will also be exploring related forms such as tanka (5-line poem), haiga (haiku combined with images), renku (haiku chain) and haibun (haiku combined with prose). In addition, there will be sessions in guided meditation and other spirit-centred activities.

No previous experience of writing haiku – or poetry - is necessary, and the workshop is also a chance for those who are already drawn to the haiku form to deepen that interest. The haiku workshop could also help writers in other forms such as fiction or screenwriting, who could benefit by the heightening of sensual awareness through the “haiku moment”, and the honing of writing style by paring down the language to its bare essentials.

thanks

- haiku ireland - wishes to thank the Chester Beatty Library, the Silk Road Café and their friendly staff for their assistance in hosting our meetings.

WRITING FROM WITHIN

HAIKU and the SPIRITUAL DIMENSION

WORKSHOP with

MAEVE O'SULLIVAN and KIM RICHARDSON

14th to 21st July 2007



Anam Cara Writers' and Artists' Retreat, Eyeries, West Cork, Ireland

'Whatever art or knowledge a man gets by an external means is not his own, nor does it intrinsically belong to him; it is only those things evolved out of his inner being that he can claim as truly his own.'
(D T Suzuki)

Whenever we sit down to write fiction, poetry, or for screen or stage, we need constantly to find ways of allowing our own inner muse to manifest in our writing. In this week-long workshop, we will work with the ancient medium of three-line haiku poetry, with its roots in the spiritual tradition of Zen. Combining this with meditation, breath and light practices, and the natural beauty and peace of Ireland's Béara Peninsula, our aim is to heighten our levels of awareness, finding a path to the "principle within."

Workshop participants will receive tuition in haiku and related forms, such as the *tanka* (five-line poem) and *haibun*, or haiku prose, in which haiku are interspersed with haiku-like prose. The discipline and conciseness of these forms is both an end in itself and an aid in the writing and editing of other creative forms, such as poetry and fiction. We will get outside as often as possible for regular *ginko*, or composition, strolls, including one major ginko mid-week, which will take in some of the sights of the Béara peninsula.

There will be opportunities during the week to appraise our "work in progress" together, and both tutors will be available for one-to-one sessions with participants. Along with the formal workshop and meditation sessions throughout the week, participants will also have time to themselves to explore the beauty of Béara and the inner landscapes of their own creative writing. We will aim to come away from this workshop with a deepened sense of where our writing comes from and a heightened level of awareness that will help us strengthen our creative skills.

"The masterly trainer is always careful to train the student along the parallel lines of technical exercises and the understanding of the principle. The latter may not come to a man, even throughout his life. The main business is to seek it not in things external but within oneself." (Kimura Kyuho, C17th Japan)

Workshop leaders **Maeve O'Sullivan** and **Kim Richardson** jointly bring their deep skills and experience to this workshop. Based in Dublin, Ireland, Maeve is a leading Irish haiku poet, founder member of Haiku Ireland and co-author, with Kim, of the haiku collection *Double Rainbow* (Alba Publishing, 2005). She is also an experienced haiku workshop leader and tutor of journalism, specialising in writing skills. Kim, who lives near London in the UK, is a partner in an editorial and design team developing information books for publishers, a published haiku poet, and a member of the Redthread Haiku Sangha.

- The workshop is appropriate for writers and artists working in all forms and in all media.
- No previous experience of haiku or of meditative practices is necessary.
- *Writing from Within* is limited to a minimum of 6 and a maximum of 15 participants on a first-deposit-in basis.

Contact: Sue Booth-Forbes at anamcararetreat@eircom.net.

Comments:

"Because of its brevity, and the laser-like focus of its structure, a haiku becomes a snapshot of an event and emotional experience. As a screenwriter, I find that the use of haiku can distill subject matter into a heartbeat of emotion. I have used such poetry in helping me to tussle with difficult subject matter by finding the emotional core of a story." Tom Richards, screenwriter

"I write short stories and plays. This means that my concentration is more often than not taken up with structure, plotting, and characterisation. And that means that very often there is very little time left for language. That's where haikus come in because the little three-liners get one to investigate the precise meaning of each word and to calculate its effect on the reader/audience. We are wordsmiths who sometimes neglect our words -- the haiku can reverse things." Seán MacMathúna, author and playwright

"Things were very well explained, and the walks were helpful in inspiring poetry. The setting at Anam Cara was beautiful, and those haiku moments kept popping up once I got a sense of that moment. There isn't anything I would change." Diane Nititham, PhD candidate and previous workshop participant

Anam Cara Writers' and Artists' Retreat <http://www.anamcararetreat.com/> is a tranquil spot set apart to nurture and to provide sanctuary for those who create; an Irish retreat for writers and artists, overlooking Coulagh Bay and the mountains and farmlands of the sub-tropical Béra Peninsula in West Cork.