



HIBIKI

**Cathy Drinkwater Better
Geert Verbeke**



HIBIKI

Cathy Drinkwater Better, USA.
Geert Verbeke, Flanders.



EMPTY SKY

spring rain
my e-mail in-box
filled to the brim

the still lake
echoes a rising moon
spring peepers

first blush
of the red bud tree
new love

homemade kites
wrestle the wind
teacher's voice



last cherry blossoms
in the wheelchair
her blanketed legs

new buds...
the shelter dog's
sad eyes

pear blossoms
shiver on the branch
April wind

Easter morning
the Christmas cactus
in bloom again



morning sunlight
through irises
the cool stone path

broom sounds
on stone steps
moss in bloom

spring raking
cloaked in the scent
of last year

rain-soaked schoolyard –
bouncing down the street
a red umbrella



weekend yard sale
the dress for a dollar
just like mine

routine MRI
I write a death poem
just in case

recalling friends
who spoke in tongues...
corn husks in the sink

low tide
Pop's empty chair
on the flagstone porch



a new birdsong
I can't quite place
your long silence

long-awaited letter
all she needs to know
between the lines

boys shout
on the kickball field
more war dead today

flag team –
how she has grown
since you died



last bell
high-school seniors
become

the day's first
deep breath...
wind through wisteria

all night
the digital clock
not ticking

hot pillow –
suddenly the scrap
of an old dream



children crowd
the teacup ride –
the carny's feral eyes

two teens enter
the tunnel of love
their matching tattoos

ice cream melts
down the side of the cone
carousel melody

all of July
lost to illness –
the untended garden



kissing you
in the garden
the fox's musk

from atop the poplar
a jay calls its mate
your saucy wink

both unfurled
beneath the sun
squash blossom and I

after the argument
stirring up
some lemonade



approaching storm
atop the weathervane
a magpie scolds

morning drizzle
flowers tied with ribbons
in the old graveyard

child's death
birthday candles
sputter out

from somewhere
a piano...worn headstones
amid weeds



sudden chill –
when did we stop
visiting his grave?

cattails ring
the dry pond bed
slanting sun

sunlit clearing
the tattered kite flutters
in a nearby tree

a leaf spins madly
on a spider's thread –
her empty eyes



the slow spirals
of a maple key
clouds roll in

carrying water
to the garden below
whirr of cicadas

dark moon
cricket sounds saturate
the still night air

searching
for the poem's last line...
cicadas' song



moss-green lake
a boy fishing the shore
casts me a wave

dog days
the preternatural stillness
of the blue-green lake

airless church
the hymn's final note
melts away

summer's end
yellow leaves let go
the old sassafras



orange and rust
chrysanthemums
shadows lengthen

first day of fall
the squirrel digs
another hole

a few green tomatoes
on the backyard vine
harvest moon

autumn rain
the quiver of branches
where the deer passed



all-day rain
shadows seep
into the walls

autumn night
a hunter's moon floats
on the ink-dark lake

November wind
the campaign sign
leans left

morning tea
holly leaves cup
the falling snow



with every gust snow
from laden branches
the cocoa's steam

snowflakes kiss
the wet windshield
our hasty goodbye

crows dissolve
into falling snow
winter dusk

ink-black crows
huddle on the branch
winter wind



bitter wind
tossing a pity dollar
into the busker's hat

twilight trickles
through snowy woods
breath on glass

Christmas baking
the cat's whiskers
dusted with flour

New Year's Day
making my annual list
for the doctor



deep winter
in the darkening house
breathing slows

bird tracks point
across new snow –
the empty feeder

winter morning
the black cat burrows
beneath a quilt

snoring
in the spare bedroom
the cat



the sweet heat
of pepper jelly
full winter moon

sleetfall
the halting drip
of the IV

water trickles
beneath a skin of ice
February dusk

late winter
deadfall rides
the swollen stream



ABOUT GEERT

Haikuholic since 1968.

Geert Verbeke, born in Kortrijk, Flanders, Belgium, on 31 May 1948. He is a poet, author, haikuist, traveler, singing-bowls musician, painter, free thinker, and eternal student. His peculiar Website, www.haikugeert.net gives useful insights into writing haiku and the lighthearted approach he himself has, as opposed to mystifying the whole process. He comes across as a worthy inheritor of Basho's legacy. ***Suja Francis, India.***

Geert Verbeke's understanding of the history and traditions of the art forms he employs is quite evident; and this understanding affords him the ability and the 'right' to experiment and further develop the literary forms he specializes in. Secondly, he masters not just the haiku, but in addition tanka, and haibun. ***Adam Donaldson Powell, Norway.***

the clear echo
of a distant bamboo flute
reverberations

reading haiku books
in the empty temple hall
the scent of flowers

silver pheasants
in the old graveyard
a soft scuffling

on the bookshelves
Japanese death poems
often hilarious



a tombstone
under virgin snow
his grandparents

her death
disappears under bouquets
the absence grows

springtime opens
the civil ceremony
so many blossoms

exchanging greetings
with only one nod
the requiem mass



summery day
on mother's tombstone
your cuddly toy

a glass of brandy
after the mourning meal
painful silences

summer has come
standing in a graveyard
wrapped in mist

winter leaves him
a legacy of children
a legacy of memories



tantalizing buzz
of insects and traffic
going camping

some huge
and slobbery kisses
dad and his tomcat

Easter peeps
the light turned out
for a handful

in spite of the people
during the parting word
inner silence



chilly weather
during the funeral
many blah-blah-blahs

rumbling thunder
with every thunderbolt
her photo brightens

during the interment
the downpour lashes
drops against his cheek

under her photo
a few rose petals
and some butts



the crowded meeting
shrouded in jabbering
afraid of silence

futile pastime
or salve against absence
the booze-up

shaking hands
hearing condolences
the lack still remains

being the bee –
I thank
the flower



memorial day ...
wintry weather
and a blue sax

among the brush wood
of pollard willows
a dead pigeon

gloomy memory
the invited guests
maintain silence

over and done
in the sadness of memory
the hangover survives



memorial service
the dead holds the words
under his breath

after her death
we gather in large numbers
a minute's silence

listen to Piaf
and gulps down the wine
a sign of sorrow

inscrutable
the faces in mourning
now and then a wink



the angel
on her tombstone
weeps icicles

the wind whispers...
the forgotten names
in the graveyard

a funeral
glittering hearses
and sombre faces

six feet under
and I still hear your voice
protected by the past



the memorial
a lot of buzz-buzz
and irritation

up to his ass
in alligators today
the street fighter

a drum stick slips
with a loud clatter –
a cymbal crashes

Abu Dhabi
airport security
and a few kisses



local bar
disoriented
with a sober mind

after midnight
a breath of fresh air
the jazz cat

a koan
can not be solved
dry shit on a stick

everything
appears and disappears
snow on a grey beard



Zen Master Guji
he raises one finger
a bee alights

grandfather
with a bee on his crown
honey from Yemen

memorial day
on his worn black trilby
a few snowflakes

dark sky
and lightning –
a dog whines



motionless
during the worship
a butterfly

my mother
with a fly on her lips
chilly mortuary

at the border
a swarm of dung flies
on a drowned cat

a bumblebee
on his leather gloves
the local bobby



goldfish
a giant spider
reflected in the bowl

the celebration
far away a hurdy-gurdy
and fireworks

hanging around
with the drum majorettes
the ladies' man

a hanging scroll
in ink and gold leaf
playful rabbits



the paper merchant
collects old haiku books
scent of whisky

on the garden seat
our cat licking its paw
patient work

pencil sketches
mounted as a panel
the grey heron

dressed as a monk –
on the narrow road
his travel journals



restless guinea fowl
in the poultry yard
autumnal gale

recording studio
a few sound experiences
with bowls and water

on the local train
a few Chinese beauties
smoking regardless

drying fishing nets
on the old esplanade
a briny odour



rosy showers of sparks
the cracking
of fireworks

the clatter
of bamboo shoes in the morning
old monastery

fingerholes
and thumbholes
a bamboo flute sings

his meditation
on ancient melodies
a shakuhachi



bluestone graves
on the verge of death
his meditation

trampled dead
during the love parade
a candlelit night

no more drones
the stampede in a tunnel
takes its toll

sultry temple
meditating monks
fans themselves







HIBIKI

haiku by Cathy Drinkwater Better and Geert Verbeke.



An honourable haiku master points out to his over-zealous pupil, who is composing haiku day and night, that this is unwholesome. The disciple answers, 'I have to work even more, without loss of time. To become a master, I have a long way to go.'

'How do you know,' asks the haiku master, 'that mastership has taken the lead? Maybe it is just running behind you, while you are increasing the distance every day.'

