



Roadrunner Haiku Journal

February 2008 Issue VIII:1

Welcome to the *Roadrunner Haiku Journal*. *Roadrunner* is an international quarterly online journal that publishes quality English-language haiku and senryu, as well as gendai haiku translations. We chose the name of the journal because we want it to be at the forefront of haiku thought and practice.

Jason Sanford Brown, Scott Metz and Richard Gilbert, Editors

[!\[\]\(d66ff64371a51729ac8c1cdaa685ba6f_img.jpg\) Gendai Haiku Translations](#)



[!\[\]\(003082e50e3009141f59bd5df831749f_img.jpg\) Poems](#)

[!\[\]\(17413706fd4997a1a4bdf85c6864eee1_img.jpg\) The Scorpion Prize for Issue VII:4](#)

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Gendai Haiku Translations

Uda Kiyoko (宇多 喜代子) — Haiku Selections

Richard Gilbert and Itô Yûki (trans.)

麦よ死は黄一色と思い込む
むぎよしはきいっしょくとおもいこむ
mugi yo shi wa ki issoku to omoikomu

wheat –
realizing death as one color
gold

ねむりつつ深井へ落とす蝶の羽
ねむりつつふかいへおとすちょうのはね
nemuri tsutsu fukai e otosu chô no hane

slumbering
drops, a butterfly wing
into a deep well

もてあます首の長さや苗代寒
もてあますくびのながさやなしろがん
moteamasu kubi no nagasa ya nashirogan

the unmanageable length of a neck –
rice seedlings chill

(for “rice seedlings chill” see ‘*nashirogan*’ below)

早苗饗のいちにち湯野の湯の熱き
さなぶりのいちにちゆののゆのあつき
sanaburi no ichi nichi yuno no yu no atsuki

the day of *sanaburi*
hot springs of Yuno
the heat

(for ‘*sanaburi*’ and ‘*Yuno*’ see below)

敵の数だけの野菊をもち帰る
てきのかずだけののぎくをもちかえる
teki noka kazu dake no nogiku o mochi kaeru

bringing back
wild chrysanthemum – only
the number of enemies

鉄片やかならず男がたちどまる
てっぺんやかならずおとこがたちどまる
teppen ya kanarazu otoko ga tachidomaru

piled iron :
without doubt
men stop

Notes.

1) 苗代寒 *nashirogan* (a.k.a., *nawashirozamu*, *noshirogan*)

In traditional Japanese rice agriculture, during the early spring farmers plant rice grains in shallow trays with soil. In this season, it often becomes chilly and wintery, and this return of cold weather is known as *nashirogan*. Farmers must care for the rice seedlings in this weather. After the young seedlings of rice have grown, they are transplanted into the rice field, and then it is flooded.

2) 早苗饗 *sanaburi*

A folk festival held after rice planting, in early summer. In this festival, village people summon *ta no kami* (the divine *kami* (spirit) of rice) from the heavens, and drink with the divinity. Then, after the drinking with this divinity of food, the people send the *kami back* to the divine heavens once again. This festival has two significances: the first is as a refreshment after the very hard work of rice planting. The other is, of course, as a sacred ritual for the divinity of food. The festival of *sanaburi* is a summer *kigo*.

3) 湯野 *yuno*

(*Yuno onsen*): A famous hot spring (*onsen*) in Yamaguchi Prefecture. In historical documents, this *onsen* was founded in the late 16th century. In legend however it was founded by the Empress Jungyū (169-269 CE).

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Haiku/Senryu

my body
minus my dreams
a strangled squid

David Kowalczyk

come with me, she says—
the swollen river
runs brown

white wind the eyes of the dead seal missing

Carolyn Hall

autumn chores I buy myself a machete

Cherie Hunter Day

green for a few words gray green

heaven's mall holograms ride up-only escalators

a night of dense fog no vacancy

John Stevenson

winter silence
what's finally heard

Curtis Fisher

back of the house your voice lights a candle

Gregory Hopkins

a thread worn hole in the illusionist's hand

from someone's baby a smile that knows me

far from home a ghost crab floats in the rain

Ron C. Moss

in bed
failed attempts
at private meaning

Eric Burke

goddess of regeneration
peeing
beside the evergreen

Ed Baker

nudging ghosts
of fringed gentians
the autumn wind

winter's day
the alternating regions
of a bird note

Dru Philippou

a butterfly december rises to meet it

a year left to smirk us

this year even last and before i've fallen short of myself

birds wait on my thoughts to disappear into seeds

a cold wind scraps of paper languish in my mind

marlene mountain

I sang for your wedding bath, your wedding bed

J. Zimmerman

His floating ribs mackerel sky

Reeperbahn lamppost anonymous moths

Guy Simser

Dawn glows on the edge
Signaling the departure
Of the windy dead

Eric Greinke

more waterfalls
falling
from her ears

Scott Metz

facing the abyss
lichen
graffiti

exhausted after
orgasm: the branch
where a crow was

one breath
millions of bats streaming out
millions of bats streaming in

Peter Yovu

Utsav-
the god going round
the street houses

A.Thiagarajan

whale bones
so unlike mine:
cold sea wind

Mike Dillon

what I left behind
was not left behind
New Year's Day

Victor Ortiz

A darkness so deep
I am surrounded
by gold beetles

A neon message
for every pore...
becoming night

Pure brightness
deconstructing
an ordinary dream

Paul Pfleuger, Jr.

chest caving under the spring sky's blue

lightning flashing under my eyelids up my ankles

Dana Duclo

she lifts one child--
the underwater years
of dragonflies

Peggy Willis Lyles

grasshopper
gets into my head
linen fresh

pussy willows all roughed up ...

Tyler Pruett

A Wake
Sounds
Of mockingbirds

Earth curves
At places
A bowl of leaves

Kalpana R J

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The Scorpion Prize for Best Haiku/Senryu of ISSUE VII:4

Haiku Sequence in the Sufi Spirit

In which chamber
of your heart, beloved,
is our bed?

your breast
against the moon
induces prayer

not letting go
a piece of honey
on your lip

withered grass
on a dry plain--
rain on me

William Ramsey

Like all good haiku sequences, this one by William Ramsey has connectedness or flow--it doesn't seem cobbled together. His progression of content is, of course, the chief reason, but the use of two other devices, one visual and one verbal, also contribute strongly to the effect. All four stanzas have the same atypical appearance, with indented first and third lines, and all four leave their surprising juxtaposition to the last line.

Another pleasing fact about this sequence is that it remains true to its title--a homage to Sufism. Divine love and its cultivation within individuals are the core concepts of this philosophical outlook and the reader can see such elements in each stanza.

An added feature is that all four stanzas, not just one or two, can stand alone as good haiku. Indeed, had they been submitted singly, each would have been a strong contender for this issue's Scorpion Prize. Thus, it seemed only logical to give the honor to the entire sequence.

I hasten to add, however, that Ramsey's sequence was not alone in being memorable. Issue

VII: 4 had a number of other stellar poems, an indication that Roadrunner's innovative approach is attracting gifted poets.

George Swede

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