

# the ant's afternoon



the ant's afternoon

For Frances  
our own mystery  
in life

R. H. M.

12.2.92

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haiku and senryu by members of  
the boston haiku society



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## **Acknowledgements:**

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**Edited by Raffael deGruttola, Lawrence Rungren,  
and John Ziemba**

**Art by Kaji Aso**

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Haiku has always been one of the most social forms of poetry, from its beginnings in renga (easily the most group oriented form) to the tradition of the teacher-disciple relationship. We too, who happen to be living in and around Boston, Massachusetts at the end of the twentieth century are drawn to share our haiku with others; to sound them out, see if they work, and complete the experience that led us to become aware of something vital, put it into language, and then discover if that language holds true.

Inevitably, everyone who has come to love haiku has, at one time, been struck with the fact that they are sitting on a mountain of poetry that is their lives. They begin to see the shepherd's purse blooming under the hedge, and regard haiku as intense and personal. It usually comes as a surprise that there is such a thing as a Haiku Society of America, and that English language haiku contests have been held for thirty years, and hundreds of thousands of haiku have been printed in the United States and Canada. We discover that we are part of a community, and perhaps even begin to wish for someone to help us see our own work.

This is the reason that the Boston Haiku Society came into existence, but it is only a part of the reason it remains in existence. The members who have been with us for the past two years have discovered that they enjoy each others' company; talk of haiku is often displaced by discussion of how late into the year dandelions bloom, and how long one has to wait before one eats a persimmon. After getting reacquainted over tea and snacks, we discuss the goings-on in the rest of the haiku world, and eventually settle into reading our latest poems. In some ways, sitting together in a room, reading and discussing our haiku is more satisfying than publication. Our haiku occupy a space in time that is inviolable, not at the whim of a turn of the page; we know the people who are listening, and we know that they are listening. If the haiku is a success, it is seen on the faces of our friends, and if more of the moment we are trying to convey lies in ourselves than in the poem, we are told. While each of us sends or has sent work to



the journals, and enjoys that level of communication, we feel our meetings are unique, and and essential to our creativity.

This collection is an attempt to share the intimacy of our meetings, and contribute something tangible to the haiku community of North America. We would like to thank Mr. Kaji Aso, a valuable friend to the Boston Haiku Society, and the Kaji Aso Studio for providing us with a place to meet, and a rich cultural resource from which to deepen our knowledge of haiku and the culture in which it was nourished. We would also like to thank those haiku poets around the United States and Canada who have encouraged us by their visits, letters, participation in our contests, and generosity in welcoming us to the greater haiku community. Finally, we would like to extend an invitation to anyone with an interest in haiku to join us for a meeting or two. All are welcome.

John Ziemba





kaji aso

snow night...  
exquisite, but  
monologue of radiator

harvest moon  
spider too,  
gazing at it quietly

under the hot sun  
pumpkin flower  
has lost all its sweat

summer afternoon—  
lifting up my bottom a little  
then going back to sleep

ebb tide—  
new print  
of a seagull

long rain  
peony flower  
bends to the ground

**michael bernard**

**Man asking wife  
who likes positive thinking  
about smile wrinkles**

**Honest strawberry-  
packer puts the biggest berries  
on the bottom**

**Three people  
all trying to sit in the same chair:  
office politics**

raffael degruttola

in the doorway  
wrapped in yesterday's newspaper  
the beggar

floating upriver  
the garbage barge  
with seagulls

stretched out  
by a shadow  
the grasshopper's antennae

last leaf—  
a red-winged blackbird  
sways in the wind

nuthatch, you  
upside down bird  
debugging the bark

subway woman asleep  
picked daisies  
in her hand

among the mosses  
and hemlock roots—  
white Indian pipe

brilliant sun  
the new life  
of a tiny red dragonfly

winter dusk—  
the satyr's grim face  
on the garden bench



john king

five orange crocuses  
five honeybees  
hovering

winter's end  
sand blows over the beach  
at low tide

outside my skin  
the mountains  
shudder

sunrise  
snowfall  
the flag slowly moves

I paddle on still sea  
between the moon  
and its reflection

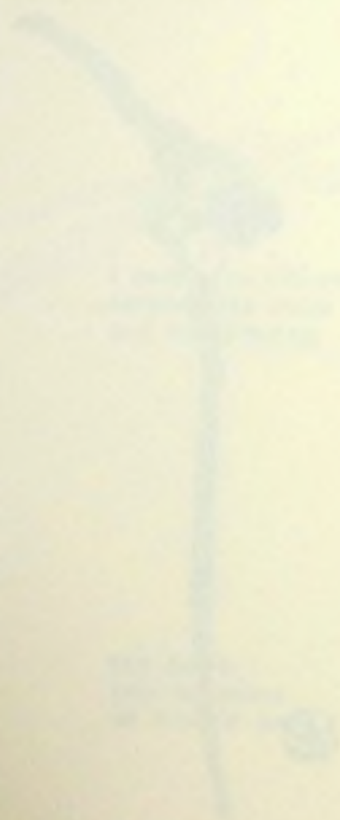
two swans  
turn in unison  
on moonlit pond



Dragonfly



Upper  
Extremity  
for the right arm



**balazs kosaras**

**fog over the lake  
in the fisherman's boat  
glimmering of a lantern**

**branches covered with ice  
sound of a temple bell  
fading away**

**winter storm  
clinging to an umbrella  
with both hands**

glenn gustafson

Cars waiting at the light  
suddenly it's snowing  
milkweed

Tap high up  
another tap  
an acorn bounces

The surging wind  
subsides to rain  
this autumn night



A cat strolls  
where birds feed  
a day late

Sunny winter morning  
downpour tapping at the window  
roof snow melting

Drops of rain  
washing themselves  
in the birdbath

june moreau

giving my horse  
a bundle of red clover  
our eyes deepen

pinecone  
clinging to its tree-  
the long winter

shaping itself on the pond

the spring wind

the mosquito's  
hair of sound  
hot smell of pine

putting  
a face on the snowman  
I feel myself smile

my child's tears  
how small they are  
the faraway stars

brett peruzzi

A car's dragging muffler  
throws a trail of sparks  
cold autumn night

Gathering the day's trash  
the streetsweeper pauses  
with the sports section

Eyes wide  
describing  
her labor pains

Ebb tide  
a harbor seal's call  
echoes across the cove

boarded-up general store  
the rusted gas pump  
stopped at \$2.65

Identifying  
his wife's corpse  
her watch still ticking

lawrence rungren

May morning--  
the cat brings the sun to me  
in its fur

in furrows  
of elm bark  
the ant's afternoon

"even now," she says  
"I still cry at times"  
city rain



hazy afternoon  
the fat woman's  
slight shadow

snow falls  
into an empty paper cup—  
winter desolation

one year after a death  
planting irises  
for the first time

Emergency Room Haiku

The snore of the drunk  
pierces  
the screams

face fallen  
her baby  
cries again

The doctor shakes her head—  
for a moment  
silence

Heart rhythm restored  
the interns  
give the high five

he tells me  
he's going to die  
and does

the fat lady cries  
and cries  
and cries

steven small

the barefoot girl  
catches a milkweed  
then lets it go

I brushed away  
the mosquito  
he came back more discreetly

of all things  
in the meadow  
wild grass, waving

花  
兒



morning glories  
closed in the moonlight  
a mockingbird's song

I did nothing  
about a branch that fell  
on the azaleas

April morning  
the rest of the storm drips  
into an old, full pail



zeke vayman

wind from the border  
my father, military man  
my mother so young

glistening  
grass nested apples  
left to rot

young poet is stretching  
exposing the appendix scar  
on his belly

glacier snow  
packed in an ice-box  
back to the future!

glacier melting  
drinking  
new water

falling asleep  
as an old man  
I try to catch taste of non-being

the spring breeze  
tilts  
the farmer's market scale

winter rain  
in the empty restaurant  
the cook is eating

throwing a stone  
into winter breakers  
nothing

august heat  
the water I make  
is the color of the sun

her voice disappears  
in the field  
of green wheat

in my loneliness  
I let the persimmon  
get overripe

## The Boston Haiku Society:

Kaji Aso was born in Japan and has lived in the United States for over twenty years. He is a professor of painting at the Boston Museum of Fine Arts School and is founder and artistic director of the Kaji Aso Studio.

Michael M. Bernard is a life member of the New England Poetry Club and has read poetry with the Boston Haiku Society at Boston's First Night. He has published poetry in MIT's literary magazine *Rune* and authored the poetry chapbook "Celestial Pottery."

Raffael deGruttola was born in Cambridge, MA. He has two books of poetry : "Where Ashes Float"-1980 and "Flamenco Song"- 1983. He has published "Recycle/Reciclo", a bilingual book of haiku-1989.

Donald Kelly was born in the Midwest in 1952. Since the early seventies, he has been living in Massachusetts. His haiku have been published in *Modern Haiku*, *Frogpond* and other journals.

John King is 29 years old, married and teaches high school English. He is currently writing a master's thesis in critical and creative thinking.

Balazs Kosaras was born in Hungary and has been living in the United States for three years now. He is currently studying Japanese.

Glenn Gustafson lives on Blueberry Hill Road in Dorchester, MA, and is a student of drama, Japanese and haiku.

June Moreau lives in Lexington, MA. Her poems have appeared in *Woodnotes*, *Modern Haiku*, *Windchimes*, *Frogpond*, *Haiku Quarterly*, etc.

Brett Peruzzi is a poet and software documentation manager from Weymouth MA.. His poems have appeared in *Frogpond*, *Modern Haiku* and *Brussels Sprout*.

Lawrence Rungren grew up in Illinois, and now lives in Andover, MA. He has published haiku in *Frogpond*, *Modern Haiku*, *Haiku Quarterly*, *Wind Chimes*, and *Brussels Sprout*.

David Shuster lives in Brookline, MA. He has published in a number of journals and magazines, including *Brussels Sprout*, *Haiku Quarterly*, *Oaks Square* and *List Magazine*.

Stephen Small is an internist retraining in anesthesiology at Massachusetts General Hospital. His interests lie in poetry, fiction and photography.

Zinovy (Zeke) Vayman was born in Moscow and has been living in the United States for eleven years. He has been writing poetry in Russian since the age of ten, and is currently working on solar energy projects.

John Ziemba was born in Rochester, New York, and has studied and taught at the Kaji Aso Studio for ten years





