



# Ink Zero

Contemporary Haiku

Don Baird

Richard Gilbert



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Ink Art by Richard Gilbert





## PREFACE

On a day in the ancient past (about a year ago), I arrived in Burbank, California, to visit Grandmaster Don Baird at his Dojo. The prevailing winds of cosmic forces were in good order, as we spontaneously designed the performance event “For a Day,” combining Tai Ch’i demonstration with haiku by several of the 135 poets found in *The Disjunctive Dragonfly* (2013) and Don’s 2014 collection, *Haiku: The Interior and Exterior of Being*. Our concept was to present haiku as collaborative in terms of both performance and authorship. Live music was provided by Rick (shakuhachi) and Kath Abela Wilson, with Mariko Kitakubo (both, on gongs and percussion). Here, a “day” of poetry was presented in four sections of dawn/morning, afternoon, twilight, and night/prophecy. The piece was once again performed, with new haiku selections, at the USC Museum in Pasadena, when I returned to the area some six months later, in September 2014.

I must return to Japan soon once again for an unknown amount of time—I am able to visit the States while on literary research grants, and my present grant ends this month—this fact raises the issue of poignancy—as our friendship and collaboration has developed, as our creative energies have entwined and blossomed, so has time moved in great leaps of months and years between opportunities for embodied creation, versus the virtuality of email and distance across oceans.

Yet, today I write having performed with Don our new collaborative piece, “Ink Zero” just last night—from which arose the book you now hold in your hands. A divine wind of synergy once again seems to blow through our lives: when I arrived a week ago Don was putting together a book of new poems, and I’d organized my own selected haiku, some 90 poems. Together we printed and cut our works into separate poems, laying them out on the dining room table. It became clear as we examined our combined works that inventive “conversations” could happen between them. You can witness the result of this play in the photos presented between the final section.

The origin of the term “ink zero” was the result of a brainstorming session we had towards the end of my September 2014 visit—at the time, we had thought it might possibly make a good journal title (still might)—so the term was kicking around, and we both came up with “ink zero” haiku, plus a further thought: to create calligraphic (*shodo*)

brush-stroke paintings in the Japanese style, using sumi-e ink on drawing paper. These works likewise appear here.

It's our hope that the joy and creative friendship we've experienced in weaving our hearts and minds together with poetry and visual art communicate both the spontaneity and the successive series of excessively late nights which have hatched this project. Without the energy and flow—the mysterious threading and wending of collaborative friendship—we would have each produced separate works. Instead, we find our combined effort approaches an alpha and omega of mutual lives: living whole, and for the day. It's this poignant and ephemeral spirit we wish to share, and offer our experiment here as one possible approach to haiku publication.

Richard Gilbert  
March 17, 2015



Ink Art by Don Baird



# Between Blossoms

between blossoms  
the salient ebb  
of creation

unaware star after star

stars  
in the natural night  
one song threads another

ink zero    murmurs

in –

fin –

i –

ty'

bell-cricket

ink zero the white blanks of a forest



breath skybreath stars tend towards home

in the abyss a moon falling

new places promised shared underleaf

falling through angles shadow play

db

eventually  
depth penetrating  
desire s

long reach shadow nears itself

deep in woods  
all the dancing in  
space

between worlds  
an ant navigates  
the others



awaiting the warm that everyone

impermanence the seedling anyway

flower of space one can touch about moss

between lights lights the way

iterative reconstruction the nation of stars

snowbound shadows themselves

shrinking emptiness pond-clouds nightfall



Ink Art by Richard Gilbert





# Butterflies and Bones

morning fog  
the morning after  
morning

on the shores of great silence father's eyes

rising tide . . .  
the waterfall gives birth  
to a hummingbird

something of a scar  
of ocean left  
rolling cigarettes

high diving;  
a hummingbird  
turns away

waning gibbous  
the increasing density  
of fall

rg

the wind between never leaves



returning bones  
a stone unwinds  
in the breeze

horizontal seashore along the mast

along the slice  
of water and sky  
never at night

settling . . .  
a butterfly in the midst  
of itself

Please feel free to stay here  
there's a system you  
always said that.

turning leaves . . .  
a light breeze  
in the sails

the sudden sliver of noon

~ dangling . . .  
a dandelion  
doesn't know ~

db



blood orange:  
the curving radius  
of sunset

high road between clouds dusk musk

solitude  
round the frequency  
of stars

moon   cricket   autumn's wide-angle-song

jack rabbit —  
the startled trail  
of moonlight



Ink Art by Don Baird



# Born of a Flower

as an and you and you and you alone in the sea



this    that    then crickets

only so long for so long only for more

inertia between thoughts another

depth penetrates desire s un

exigent road into itself self

that the thine that becomes the subject  
of one stroke no as if

undertow thoughts of thoughts today too

db

born of a flower of space that one touch can read  
about now



cumulus  
accumulating  
my eyes

a drowning man  
pulled into violet worlds  
grasping hydrangea

spring run-off  
where does the water go  
across my mind?

edge broke mill tooth saw diamond shattered breath

hanging mirror the shape of my thoughts

roses in the rose messaged and left

looking through me my reflection too

particles of change lean hard on one blue day on



see-saw  
a cloud appears  
not to know

the blood  
the horse i was, left  
to the woods

chilled bones then the moon and not

after the rent  
dinner raw ocean  
waves

winter frost  
a cloud hesitates  
. . . too

unchangeability —  
i leave the earth  
that way



Ink Art by Richard Gilbert





# Body Born

the girl brief. image  
and truth. why and  
why not. about it.

moon cradled you recall the voice of another  
i might be the distance

her tears the cost of a stamp

there in the trees to begin with just before  
and just after love

and then then the rain silent

db

lovecode the ultrasound of your photons

dried in rain her ego

then     nude  
normal silence  
between fears

sheeting rain  
voices softer  
as i well



snowflakes  
lingering sounds  
of glances

what became deeper of you i let in

boding well the last meteor I couldn't see

licking the cleft sweet aspirin after rain

shallow mallow  
the sunset hues of  
eternity

about it on the beach by the trees  
two moments between that is

rain repeating words repeating

db

as a body born of words  
as a body bones of words:  
preoccupations she writes

barely caught her breath on medium



inside a tear what remains of winter

living  
pressure of the sun  
in her belly

our yesterday behind the blinds



Ink Art by Don Baird



# Before and After

twin towers:  
at their feet, the origami  
of autumn

be mine —  
alive for one  
more war

broken whole:  
worth a world  
destoned

desert storm banana around the feeling



semitic war  
unharmful olives—the desert  
tastes your skin

themselves leaves winter orange

it must be how  
violence in the world  
crocus

lost and found the war before and after

war particles of the garbage patch

mass

solitude  
what's left  
of the party

denial

memorial day;  
the mixed messages  
of a gunshot

if only lie —  
hours  
of a parking lot

flown,  
her grainy image resolves  
from surveillance

Mt. Fuji;  
ashes of a soldier well up  
in the storm



running forever  
spring after  
tragedy

three oceans  
exported into orbit  
in a small cocoon

fallen shopping cart autumn's home

db

trading the past  
life regression for a  
past life: rape

U S A prime time junkyard banner

unable to find  
the cry of the nextdoor boy  
spring rain





Ink Art by Richard Gilbert





# Bamboo Slam

dedicated to the moon  
I rise  
without a decent alibi

r

Madonna even so nearby ants

d

near her lips the glossy side

d

leaning against  
the next semester her  
blog in mine

r

for so long only for so long for

r

transient breath the last ah-haaa

d

weirdly insistent the matter of rain

d

everything you think i think is true

r

born of a flower of space that one touch  
can read about now

r

hanging on   hanging   hang

d

without you moon the loneliness

d

moon resins —  
sex and god and teeth  
and fingernails

r

with you and i the world  
i feel there is more f  
it

r

at the end  
of a bamboo shoot  
blue whale

d



without thought a bird anyway

d

no eye no ear no nose no tongue no virgin no mind

r

unbound teeth not everything still her taste

r

under threat he pisses a poem

d

long long coma    I R S

d

hung over - ignoble  
Jerusalem - cactus  
pissing    - the cats

r

collateral damage scattered alpha d bits

r

names the smoke rings of pieces

d

blue daisy no name along

d

forgotten flowers  
lost in  
dogs

r

unabsolved ululation  
uncalculated underscore  
unwept unchurch ultrapure

r

big fish  
in a little pond  
sinking clouds

d

worm moon moving earth

d

apple-snap  
autumn brisk  
of a crush

r

after the rush  
the hollow sound  
of the holy

r

without the moon my shadow and I

d





Ink Art by Don Baird



## About the Authors

### *Richard Gilbert*

Education. While at Naropa University (Boulder, Colorado), studied and hung out with beat poets Allen Ginsberg, Gregory Corso, Peter Orlovsky, Gary Snyder, and others; became a Tibetan Buddhist meditator. Performed in and produced conceptual art multidisciplinary presentations as poet, videographer, and electric guitarist. Undergraduate thesis on Japanese classical haiku, BA in Poetics and Expressive Arts, 1982. Completed Tibetan Buddhist seminary training in 1984, and returned to Naropa for an MA in Contemplative Psychology, graduated 1986. Worked as a clinical adult outpatient psychotherapist at Boulder Community Mental Health Center. In 1990, completed a Ph.D. at The Union Institute & University, in Poetics and Depth Psychology, studying Archetypal Psychology with James Hillman. Moved to Kumamoto, Japan, in 1997, teaching at university and publishing academic articles on Japanese and English-language haiku, while designing EFL educational software. Received tenure as an Associate Professor of British and American Literature, Faculty of Letters, Kumamoto University in 2002; promoted to Professor, 2015.

Activities. Co-judge of the Kusamakura International Haiku Competition, Kumamoto, Japan (2003-present). Founder and Director of the Kon Nichi Haiku Translation Group, Kumamoto University (2002-present). Founding Associate Member of The Haiku Foundation ([thehaikufoundation.org](http://thehaikufoundation.org)). In March 2008, publication of *Poems of Consciousness: Contemporary Japanese & English-language Haiku in Cross-cultural Perspective* (Red Moon Press, 2008, 306 pp.) was awarded the HSA 2009 Mildred Kanterman Award for Haiku Criticism and Theory. In mixed media publication, the [gendaihaiku.com](http://gendaihaiku.com) website presents subtitled video interviews with notable *gendaihaiku* (modern Japanese haiku) poets, biographical information and haiku translations. In 2011, publication of *Ikimonofûei: Poetic Composition on Living Things* (a talk by Kaneko Tohta, with commentary and essays. Gilbert, et al, Red Moon Press, 92 pp.), and *The Future of Haiku*, an Interview with Kaneko Tohta (with commentary and essays. Gilbert, et al, Red Moon Press, 138 pp.). In 2012, publication of *Selected Haiku of Kaneko Tohta, Part 1, 1937-1960* (with commentary, essays and chronology. Gilbert, et al, Red Moon Press, 256 pp.), and *Selected Haiku of Kaneko Tohta. Part 2, 1961-2012* (with commentary, chronology and encyclopedic glossary. Gilbert, et al, Red Moon Press, 250 pp.). The two 2012 *Selected Haiku of Kaneko Tohta* volumes were awarded The Haiku Foundation 2012 Touchstone Distinguished Book Award. In August 2013, publication of *The Disjunctive Dragonfly: A New Theory of English-language Haiku* (R. Gilbert, Red Moon Press, 132 pp.): A revised and

expanded update of the decade-old essay, which first appeared (in North America) in *Modern Haiku Journal* 35:2 (2004). The book contains 275 haiku by 185 authors, and several new sections, including a comparative discussion of strong and weak styles of disjunction in excellent haiku, and a presentation of seven newly coined "strong reader-resistance" disjunctive categories. (Full bio. here <<http://bit.ly/1bPcrGV>>).

SHAO NPO – Mission Japan. In 2014 the NPO, Sailing for Haiku Across Oceans, was founded, and the literary-research vessel, Stella Aurore (a 35' Jeanneau Sun-Rise) was acquired for "Mission Japan," a sailing pilgrimage around Japan to meet with haiku groups countrywide, and create international poetic interchange through translation and publication. The Mission will begin September 2015 and continue throughout 2016. For more information, please visit <<http://sailing-across-oceans.org>>.

## ***Don Baird***

### Background.

Shortly after his birth, Don moved with his family to live on his grandfather's ranch in Wyoming. He lived in an old converted chicken coop building for some time. Eventually, he and his family moved to San Diego, California and remained there until he was 19. At 15, Don entered the world of martial arts of which remains his primary career today. He has been featured in most of the prominent industry magazines including *Inside Kung Fu*, *Black Belt*, *Inside Karate*, and *Fighting Stars*. In 2009 he, as a Grandmaster, was inducted into the Masters Hall of Fame. He was also featured in two police defensive tactics videos.

### Education.

Graduate of UCLA in Music Performance and Education. Studied clarinet under the guidance of Dan Magnusson and Mitchell Lurie. English minor. 10th Degree Black Belt in martial arts.

### Activities.

Published in numerous anthologies and online journals including *Ambrosia: Journal of Fine Haiku*, *Simply Haiku Journal*, *World Haiku Review*, *Notes from the Gene*, *Haijinx*, *Modern Haiku*, *the Heron's Nest*, *Frogpond*, *A Hundred Gourds*, and others. Placed 3rd two years in a row in the Kusamakura International Haiku Contest, (2004, 2005). Awarded 1st place in the 2009 NHK Radio International Haiku Contest: winning haiku was read by Sokan Tadashi Kondo as part of the radio program. In 2013, won the Haiku Now! International Haiku Contest. Received The Haiku Foundation Touchstone Award, 2013. Published six books of which *Haiku - the Interior and Exterior of Being* is most recent.

### Current Projects.

Under the Basho Haiku Journal; [underthebasho.com](http://underthebasho.com)  
Living Haiku Anthology; [livinghaikuanthology.com](http://livinghaikuanthology.com)



## Publication Credits

### Richard Gilbert

Most of my haiku presented here have been published in books and journals, including: *Haiku in English* (Kacian et al, Norton 2013); *Haiku 21* (Gurga & Metz, Modern Haiku Press, 2011); *Haiku 2014* (Gurga & Metz, Modern Haiku Press, 2013); *Bones Haiku Journal* <bonesjournal.com>; *Frogpond Journal* <hsa-haiku.org/frogpond>; *Is/Let Haiku Journal* <isletpoetry.wordpress.com>; *Moongarlic Haiku Journal* <moongarlic.org>; *Noon: Journal of the Short Poem* <noonpoetry.com>; *Rattle: Poetry for the 21st Century* <rattle.com>; and *Roadrunner Haiku Journal* <bit.ly/1AvJ8kw>.

### Don Baird

My haiku are written for *Ink Zero*. They are not published elsewhere.





## **Enjoy the Following Adendum**

(our creative process at work)

These photos were taken of Richard and Don while they were painting Ink Art for this book. In a few instances, there was more ink on the artists than the paintings!

Other photos are of the visual creative process between Richard and Don during their meeting to arrange haiku for their presentation of the *Champagne Pour Deux* and *In A Day* live performance readings. Haiku were everywhere. Soon, it was done, the shows ready, and voices were being cleared.



Deep Concentration



One Whip of the Brush



The Official Drying Station



Richard's Ink Foot



Palmed by Richard



Brushes Taking a Break





Awaiting the Perfect Moment



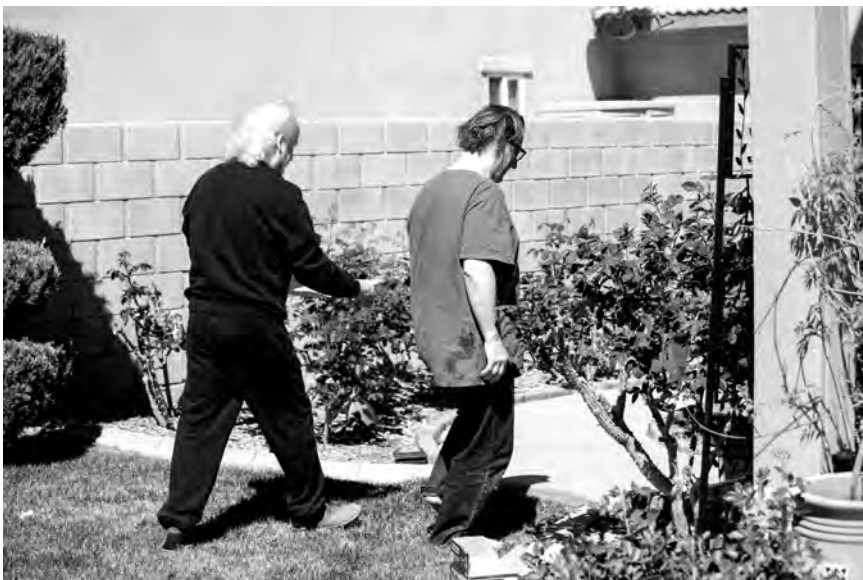
Crouching Tiger







Don Throwing Ink



A Walk to the Drying Room





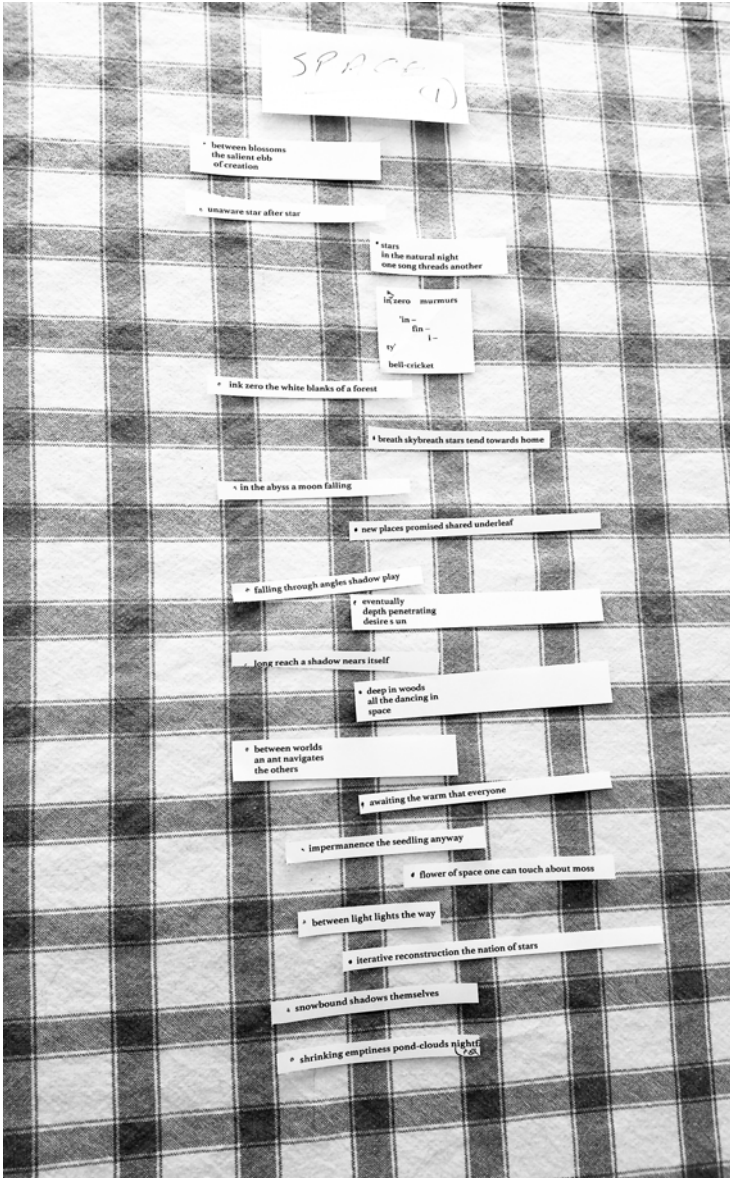
Preparing the Presentation -- *Champagne Haiku Pour Deux*



Last Minute Thoughts

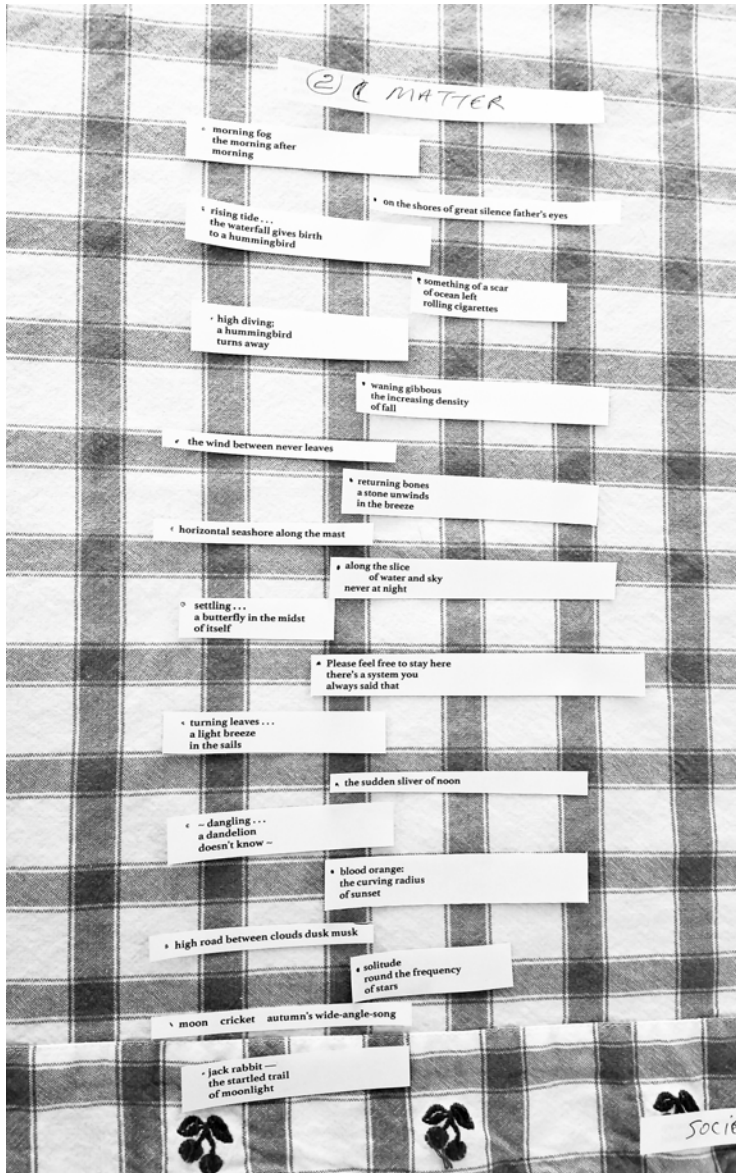
# Between Blossoms

## (Spaces)



# Butterflies and Bones

(Matter)



• dedicated to the moon  
 I rise  
 without a due not alid

Madhouse even to meet by me

• when her lips the glossy side

• knowing against  
 the most creature her  
 thing to mine

• For as long only for as long for

I remember her with the face oh, how

• while I remember the matter of care

• everything you think I think to fear

• Since her I think give her more have more that her more call

keeping on keeping home

without you mean the face flower

• more even  
 to a good and reach  
 and long reach

• with your I the world  
 I find there to more I

at the end  
 of a hundred about  
 blue white

without thought a bird any way

• see you more as see more see longer see right see right

• unknown reach and everything still her face

under there as for given a given

long long come I P O

• long even I am able  
 from when I am  
 getting the cat

• called at damage to attend alpha of his

names the smoke rings of pieces

• like duty are some along

• forgotten flowers  
 for his  
 dogs

• without of solution  
 are all what under to see  
 we get our face I what square

big fish  
 in a little pond  
 sticking a hand

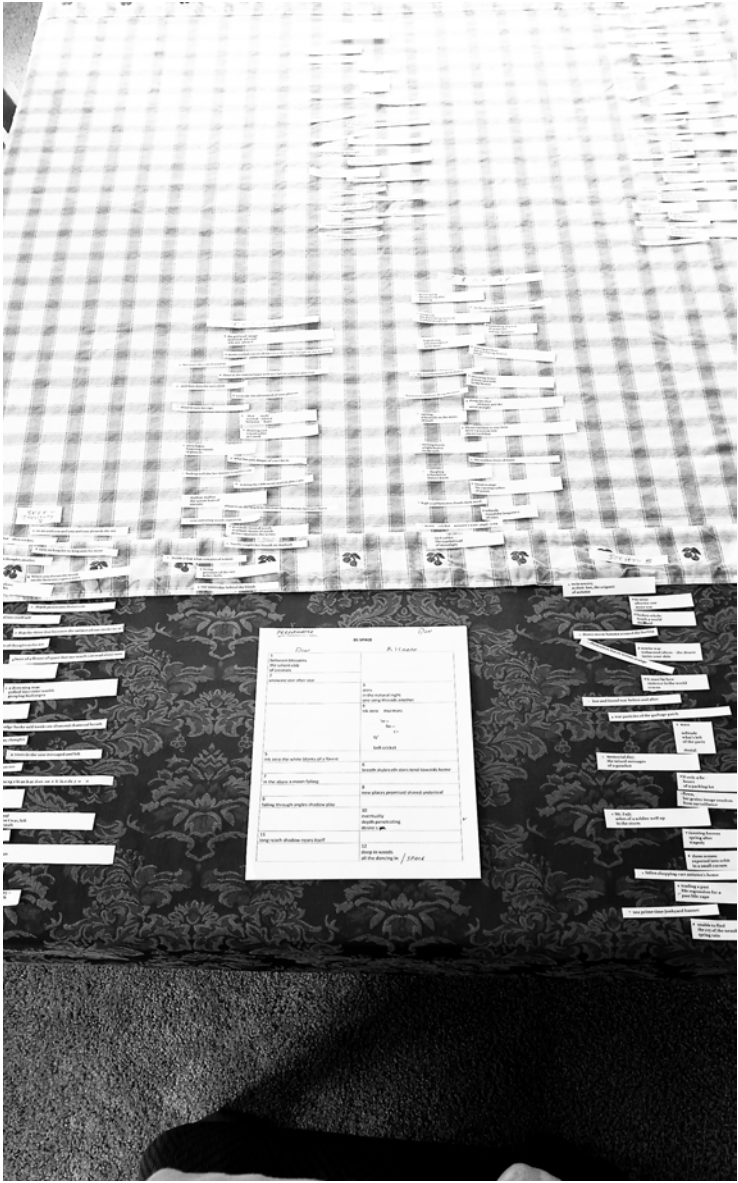
• when more moving each

• apple map  
 on some look  
 of a crash

• after the rock  
 the hollow sound  
 of the body

• without the moon my shadow and I

The Table  
(Creation)





## Decanter Haiku

(Another Time -- Another Place -- Another Project)









Don B. and Richard G.

# Ink Zero

## Contemporary Haiku

**Professor Richard Gilbert**, Ph. D., Kumamoto University, Faculty of Letters, is an international figure in the promotion of modern Japanese and English-language haiku. Dr. Gilbert has published numerous books and article on haiku over the last two decades. He grew up on the Connecticut shore sailing in cruising yachts and participating in small-craft racing on Long Island Sound, and currently sails in the Kyushu area. Last year he founded the SHAO NPO: "Sailing for Haiku Across Oceans <sailing-across-oceans.org>." The first NPO mission, "a haiku sailing pilgrimage around Japan," is inspired by haiku journeys - those of Bashō and Issa - contemporary figures such as Santoka, Mikajo and Hosai - and by adventurous explorations by those who have sought to discover historical and contemporary cultural treasures through meetings with noted contemporary artists in local settings.

**Don Baird** (2009 Martial Arts Masters Hall of Fame) is a widely known martial arts Grandmaster and poet. He has been featured in magazines such as *Fighting Stars*, *Black Belt Magazine*, *Inside Kung Fu*, and *Inside Karate*. Don is a recent winner of the *HaikuNow! International Haiku Contest* and the recipient of the esteemed *Touchstone Award*, 2013. He has written and published six books. *Haiku - the Interior and Exterior of Being* (2014) is his most recent. In his words he is a "simple man looking at nature's things and ways through the lens of haiku."

**Ink** - The history of Chinese inks can be traced back to the 23rd century BC, with the utilization of natural plant (plant dyes), animal, and mineral inks based on such materials as graphite that were ground with water and applied with ink brushes. The best inks for drawing or painting on paper or silk are produced from the resin of the pine tree. They must be between 50 and 100 years old. The Chinese ink stick is produced with a fish glue, whereas Japanese glue (nikawa) is from cow or stag.

**Zero** -

# Ink Zero

## \$14.95

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