

**LYNX**  
A Journal for Linking Poets

This issue of Lynx is dedicated to the memory of  
the life lived and in thanksgiving for the additions to literature made by  
Ruby Spriggs  
1929 - 2001

XVI:3 October, 2001

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**LETTERS** by Carol Purington, Elizabeth St Jacques, Marc Thompson, Thelma Mariano, paul.conneally, Gino Peregrini, Giselle Maya, June Moreau

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**PARTICIPATION Renga** by AB - Alice Benedict; CC - Carlos Colón; CF - Vikki Maldonado; CG - Cindy Guntherman; CSK - Carol Stroh Kemp; dht - Doris H. Thurston; DR - David Rice; DWP - Darrel W. Parry; EF - Eric Folsom; ESJ - Elizabeth St Jacques; FA - Fay Aoyagi, FP - Francine Porad; FPA - Francis (Paul) Attard; GD - Gene Doty; GM - Giselle Maya; GR - George Ralph; JAJ - Jean Jorgensen; JC - Jeanne Cassler; JMB - John M. Bennett; JR - Jane Reichhold; JS - John Sheirer; JSJ - Joyce Sandeen Johnson; KCL - Kenneth C. Leibman; LCG - Larry Gross; LE - Lesley Einer; LJ - Lael Johnson; MHH - Madeline Hoffer; ML - Minna Lerman; MM - Marianne Marks; MWM - Mary Wittry-Mason; N - Nika; NA - Nasira Alma; PC - Penny Crosby; PGC - Pamela Connor; PJS - P.J. Sharpe; PS - Pat Shelley; R - Ronan; RF - Robert Flannery; SCH - Suzette Hains, SD - Simon Doubleday; SMC - Steve McComas; TLG - Terri Lee Grell; TV - Teresa Volz; TW - Tundra (Jim Wilson) Wind; WR - Werner Reichhold; YH - Yvonne Hardenbrook; ZP - Zane Parks.

## SYMBIOTIC POETRY

### GAUNTLET OF BAITED HOOKS

Ann Piet Anderson (apa)

Francis Fike (ff)

Marchiene Vroon Rienstra (mvr)

In Memory: George Ralph (1934-1997)

In the first snowfall,  
High geese southward bound, calling.  
Woodflame in fireplace. ff

Freezing waves toss chunks of ice  
Into miniature mountains. mvr

Dripping icicles.  
Fishermen retrieve shanties;  
January thaw. apa

Through gauntlet of baited hooks,  
Steelhead upriver surging. ff

Past the sparkling sand  
Rippling wavelights glittering  
On the moonflamed lake. ff

Wind and combers sweep the beach  
Wet sand castles disappear. apa

Ducks dot the water;  
Sunlit snowflakes fill the air,  
Veiling blue sky's face. mvr

Two mated loons swimming by.  
Longing for a form that fades. ff

Across spiderwebs,  
Aging lovers, arms entwined.  
Shadows crossing path. apa

Perching on a budding branch  
A cardinal feeds his mate. mvr

Is this crimson snow?  
No: the freshfallen flowers  
From the redbud tree. ff

Summer fields of wild poppies.

Watching monarchs playing tag.           apa

A pale new moon blooms  
In a dark meadow of stars.  
Two children pick them.           mvr

The sudden rainshower bends  
A rainbow over the hills.           ff

Sparks of brilliant white  
Streak across the evening sky.  
November's fireball.           apa

A cold gray December day;  
A single yellow rosebud.           mvr

Under the ice-veneer  
Encrusting the mountain brook,  
Bubbling waterflow.           ff

A line of golden headlights  
Through a radiant whirl of white.    mvr

Night sky, shining light  
Rising far from human source-  
Pulsing Aurora.           apa

Recumbent on a soft dune  
Watching the heavenly dance.       mvr

As she walks by surf,  
Grey gulls rise and scatter,  
Settling behind her.           ff

Up above the morning mists,  
Dew-covered pine needles shine.    apa

Last leaves swirl downward  
Leaving branches bare and cold,  
Blanketing my love.           mvr

Snowflakes add a second coat  
Over the leafmeal primer.       ff

Clouds cross the Big Lake,  
Another layer coming.  
Flurries fly softly.           apa

Afloat beyond frozen beach

Wintering white swans gather.           ff

Lake waters moving!  
Freed from winter's cold prison  
Whitecaps leaping free.           mvr

Gusts of freezing wind try to  
Reach through the window for warmth. apa

She startles awake.  
Opening eyes fill with moon  
Pouring through framed glass.       mvr

No dream: haloed by doorlight,  
He . . . and she no more alone.   ff

A cry of relief,  
Familiar scent and shadow,  
Joyful reunion.                   apa

Atop a distant iceberg  
Two tiny figures embrace.       mvr

Clenched catkins unclasp-  
At streamside, pussywillows  
Airing their grey fur.           ff

A fuzzy head scans the sky,  
Sees a rabbit in full moon.       apa

White dogwood blossoms  
Fly by windows of a train  
Speeding into spring.           mvr

Snow clings to ditches, but hills  
Are green, rivulets running.       ff

**FROM A COLLABORATION:**

Douglas Barbour  
Sheila E. Murphy

Part I

sturm und  
wrangling

with that angel always  
staring  
back upon the piling ruin

playthings, molten  
mild toward  
the inter-  
locking senses  
visual in-  
tact

'its your own flicker'  
'ring'  
around the  
after what lost con  
nect i only wanted to know  
how to see it not save it

plash / salt / ticker /  
voluble encroachment  
tulip one, tulip two,  
a speck of dew at that,  
some solo wires

some solo fires thicker  
than or wider  
wings spread to  
raise the ante  
'in front of' the sun  
what signs float in the empyrean

celeste, her name-  
seamed mild  
blue eggshell  
sans foreground  
of stranded sun  
over a wing afield

afar or falling  
to sea med or black  
meld or block that light  
'translucent' & so wide  
the notes hang still above  
waves washing ultramarine

as if / as in a colour seamed  
young ring chipped small  
haze blue's entrancing  
migrant light

in tones as wide  
intoned

informed  
in foam as white  
retreats the night  
hostile blueblack now  
a single star's chipper gleam  
sews a dark possibility

treats nacht as stoic  
empt- ever to be glanced upon  
entirely potent  
in its absent  
gleam as  
buried [lance]

where / temperature / was  
sketched into / frost cloth's  
preclusionary warming  
trance [meanwhile]  
a qualitative light brushed  
health's own sacrament

channeled that bright  
20/20 breath's  
balm blame  
not the sacral sight  
white shapes the air  
behind those disappearing legs

[entonces] migratory venture  
while appearing [still]  
the sense of sight repairs  
what has been missed:  
logs on the fire now dwindling  
shapes as strewn things . . .

at once the migraine censure  
disappears [at will]  
sensual at night stares  
at what shifting possibilities  
the embers fading  
slip into the mind

as voice desired husk  
leveled into surfaces  
sans color smoke, though,  
in a night way taking

free places into custody  
to know them only silently

stepping lightly through  
or across such cancelled  
sights & sounds a single leaf  
floating stretches  
time, the reach of moon  
lighting paths across the river &

some silver posse lined  
to locate in the fallow trim  
a blessing wherewithal speech  
chanced upon per  
the directional endeavoring  
across and in and through

that way this way  
gone into the world of  
beyond & through or over  
as the wheel turns  
or the arrow offers  
truth above the treeline

vast / a word of limitless  
long wide blue environment /  
a word tainted by  
crust [alas] that blocks  
kinesis in around through  
these lines

so walking saw those environs  
the other day at  
one melt (ed) e.g.  
it meant expansion  
ice broken & lines  
bent toward the ley of the land

expanding means of weighing  
transportation, runes stand  
still to temper fleeting lithe scapes  
seamlessly, improved  
by the domain  
of their recovery

du main / 'the ayre' which weighed  
& shooed away by  
lifts above both runes  
& ruins fleeing

above (across) a sown  
(sewn) blue blazon

chemistry / in fact / flecks  
cheshire golden in the time passed  
swiftly around sanctions  
uncontrolled damage (dommage)  
until the till and many  
boundaries retract (such blue)

as fades to black or ultra  
marine marooned  
or kept behind such walls as  
raise the roofbeams of solid  
cloud to whirl the lift of  
loss of globe's glissade

lobe's impasse equals drama  
quelled, if touch is all there is  
to changing trees with scribble  
on embarking,  
so the journey is  
from far enough away

## **SO HARD TO UNFASTEN**

Maggie Chula  
Jean Jorgensen

a few leaves still cling  
old couple walks arm in arm  
down an icy path

nights shorten, the steady drip  
of sap in the bucket

she works the soil  
a long, pink worm slides  
around a seedling

those fishnet stockings  
so hard to unfasten -  
his first garter belt

polished stones  
tide rolling out. . . rolling in

reluctantly

she eases off her diamond  
all-- or nothing

August, 1990 - Jan./2001

## **MORE GLOW**

Cherie Hunter Day

David Rice

calcified coil  
as it tumbles in the surf  
my mind considers  
death as a full halt  
with more motion afterwards

each pebble's ripples  
widen across the water  
then disappear  
the wind is our ancestor  
whitecaps our past and future

after sunset  
the last remaining warmth seeps  
from granite boulders  
a lizard slows its heartbeat  
our alliance with the stars

lets us imagine  
an eternity of wishes  
the cold rocks of moonlight  
keep me grounded  
in our short half-life

at ground zero  
alpha, beta, gamma decay  
unguarded moments  
when we sense love's fallout  
continuously streaming

exposed  
to a blinding flash  
of the sublime  
we use the time we're given  
to search for more glow

## **INTO THE MAW TO START OVER**

Cindy Guentherman

Dave Bachelor

jobless again

he looks up to see  
a striped cat  
move through darker shadows  
into taller grass

slowly

into the maw of the night  
little boy  
creeps down the hallway  
to the bathroom

first light

touches both at once -  
the discarded empty bottle  
ears of the collie  
asleep on the step

affair over

outlines of weeds  
choking the neglected ditch  
far away  
crows cry

tonight's stars

lost in cloud haze  
still she makes her wish  
counts the ways  
to start over

old man dreaming

her touch, perfume  
on the stream's surface  
green scum  
barely moves

## **NEGLECTED**

Marlene Mountain

Carlos Colón

neglected some of my favorite pals as i try to sort thru long-agos

newspaper article crumbling in my hands

not in the moment rake leaves as they fall or when all have fallen

illegal procedure autumn link with a football reference

'the term for the compiler of a saijiki?' analyzer retentive?

corny to the max maize maze shaped like louisiana

no need for alarm clock today a roach lands on my face

one blanket two blanket three blanket night

haiku commandments and then there were none

grimy gingrich a face big enough for two

full moon along with the champagne we share a yawn

after little josh leaves back to my own chaos

custodychainofcustodychainofcustodychainofcustodychainofcustody

females degraded again our beautiful lips 'garbage' etc

looking for inspiration no further than my own back yard windless chimes

i tried to give away compliments but they kept returning

traditionalist his poem running smoothly on all 17 cylinders

interesting ball game ruined by motor-mouth announcers

california feelings live from her 7.1 derailed dining car phone

floyd he names himself after hurricanes

the billionaire the ego with 'a stable of stunning girlfriends'

camel's hair brush on the record needle

wrens at the window sill for what's left in the peanut butter jar

license plate eye test: A 5 5 1 5 1

not enough brain-dead donors well take stuff from the drunk drivers  
funeral casket evaporating tears  
trial as an adult a boy with first grade understandings the cold  
four generations from shackles to shackles  
ancestors on the web a line of native blood diminishes to 1/256th  
crack in the mirror dip of the carpenter's tool belt

low whine garbage disposal gagging on a dish towel  
rattled not in my 'garden of earthly delights'  
frost on the rose petals shaken baby syndrome  
all those chinese males no females to love  
leafless yard among the bare trees an empty rake stuck in the ground  
'sole legal authority' the alien elian almost home

Notes:

14m chris ofili 'the people who are attacking this painting are attacking  
their own interpretation, not mine.'

17c robert major

21m the howard kurtz in a stable of non-stunning boy yakkers on 'cnn'

24c if your vision is fuzzy enough, the license plate reads ASSISI

September 2, 1999 - January 5, 2000

## **ANOTHER DANCE**

Naia

Marjorie Buettner

you were never mine  
nor could you say I was yours  
still there was a time  
your desire eclipsed mine



a new ball of yarn  
from the knitting basket      cc

fainting in the nurse's arms  
as the needle enters      zp

foggy night  
a white-tailed deer  
just before the crash      jc

rainwater refills  
a rusty hubcap      cc

mackerel sky  
fishers argue whose bigger  
one got away      zp

one voice louder than the rest  
in the apartment upstairs      jc

## **TEN TANRENGA**

Carol Purington  
Larry Kimmel

night voices -  
rowboats rock  
on black water

trying to write down the dream  
without waking up

---

in the black night  
the shanty's yellow window -  
creak of moorings

somewhere far away  
with no address

---

with the fish in its beak  
the heron flies

to the farther bank

the water steadies into blue  
into daydream

---

empty afternoon . . .  
the teacher says I must not  
divide by 0

between hopscotch and geometry  
I draw a blank

---

eclairs and coffee  
till moonlight  
winter lightning

startled into silence  
by farewell words

---

knowing it will  
have to last for a long long while  
the farewell kiss

wishing fast  
but the star fades out

---

in the black  
of night the gurgle  
of rivulets

by flashlight  
to the lambing barn

---

March wind  
an oak leaf scuttles along  
the curbstone

chocolate cream pie  
for a case of the blues

---

all right!  
somebody's got a lot  
of explaining to do

a scarlet tulip  
in the vegetable garden

---

## **YELLOW WORDS**

Werner Reichhold  
Jane Reichhold

A year of straw  
air lifts July higher  
to yellow words  
sentence passed upon the field  
from the road two are walking

is it printed  
their wagon's wheels press  
lines into the clay  
natural nature forms  
language of a honeycomb

he who harvests  
does not require  
sweet memory  
did finished doing  
saved summer in apples

not the knot  
in the hayrope seeds  
sprouting  
come in the name of green  
grass feeding from twisted roots

this rain  
the cloudy skies have cleared  
tourists from the beach  
is there more mouth to drink  
warm visions in a tent

a fever

the wound becomes  
hot and dry  
joke walks away and returns  
to a body of patience

a cat's name  
goes out on the night air  
brings him home  
sentence of fast reactions  
a mouse in its teeth

is now ceased  
the brightness of an eye  
where did it go?  
natural carved on wooden masks  
and no more noise in ivory

he shot he said  
an elephant in Africa  
later it was a lie  
did shade a lip  
on a faded Polaroid

which was  
deeper down the river  
a beach for nymphs  
is imported from Hollywood  
and portable palm trees

variable selves  
testing inner voices  
I talk to ring doves  
and the forest answers  
green, gold and russet

they swing  
branches on the sky  
lines of a paraphrase  
will-o-the-wisps in the swamp  
leading the way to quicksand

offer and swallowed  
the lighthouse meridian  
a flame  
him she cried pointing left  
the judge blinked blankly

liver transplant  
we eat the onions

so it smells less  
with I-beams and trusses  
foreign workers repair the bridge

and on both hills  
straps of rain  
the cloud falling apart  
without trying to go around  
the spider straightway makes a circle

oil spreads on water  
the calming influence  
of one rainbow  
a long-billed dowitcher  
her flights to sprinkled eggs

sentence ending fast  
the renga nearly done  
at lunch time  
made red more red on salmon  
overlapping tongue

against a twig  
the past and future folded  
in a bud  
...shading earth and me  
the moon within nine months

Started: April 7, 1993 /Finished: April 11, 1993

## **EVENING SUN**

Alexis K. Rotella

Marlene L'Abbe Rudginsky

Evening  
sun  
melting.

Honey over  
warm toast.

Persian violets  
scenting  
the bath.

Goldfish flowing in  
and out of her hand.

Yellow butterfly  
leaving  
the day lily.

Origami kimono  
in her collage.

Caffe latte  
at the  
Whirligig Cafe.

No room  
for Rumi.

Neighbor's  
leaf blower -  
his mantra?

LAZY on  
a license plate.

A whole morning  
spent  
at DMV.

Flight attendant weeding  
her flower patch.

A big wind  
has come  
to prune the trees.

A bird repeating  
"Virginia Virginia."

Jellyfish  
inside  
the paper weight.

Sunday dim sum  
discontinued.

Surprise party -  
no one  
shows.

New boss  
in a tight mask.

Tonto  
and Kimosabi  
head for the hills.

Cezanne's blue  
under the hedge.

Woman weeping  
under  
the willow.

Llama eating  
Cheerios.

Yakkety Yak -  
the sermon  
never ends.

Adam and Eve  
sculpted in ice.

My Sin perfume  
on a breeze  
from the South.

Sand painting  
swept away.

The illness  
gone deeper -  
January snow.

The mime's  
invisible yoyo.

A cello  
in the motorcycle  
side car.

Happy hour -  
everyone frowning.

Clown  
walking  
with a limp.

Stars faded  
from the flag.

Early autumn -  
Hollywood Boulevard  
in morning light.

French poodle  
in the driver's seat.

Seals  
barking  
at dawn.

A hula hoop  
runs the red light.

July 12, 2001 Arnold, Maryland

### **THE LEAF DANCED**

Virginia Woolf, with unchanged parts of text from her book, *The Waves*  
Werner Reichhold

the leaf danced  
in the hedge without anyone  
to blow it VW

rotary and sideways  
hurricane's eye WR

secret territories  
lit by pendant currents  
red on one side VW

our fleet is steaming westward  
swallowed by sundown WR

at first so moonwhite  
radiant  
where no foot has been VW

ocean terrace  
rush of a salty tongue WR

peeling the skin  
thumb and one finger open  
flesh of half a peach WR

lovers lying shamelessly  
mouth to mouth on the burned grass      VW

a couple  
dividing itself  
into three      WR

bright arrows of sensation  
shoot either side      VW

lips on the rock  
the tideline feeds  
pink anemone      WR

I saw fields rolling in waves  
of color beneath me  
dropping      VW

Medusa into coral's  
aquatic tree      WR

we found one word  
one only for the moon      VW

deep down the well  
ripples on the mirror  
undulate her hair      WR

my true self breaks off  
from my assumed      VW

how long  
a night can last  
petals to open      WR

I cannot move without  
dislodging the weight of centuries      VW

I need someone  
who's mind falls like a chopper  
on a block      VW

pointing where they met before  
place beyond another star      WR

I shall be lifted  
higher than anyone of you  
on the backs of seasons      VW

celestial motion  
the smell of juices sweetens WR

the firelight  
brook of some round apple  
on the curtain VW

unidentified twinkle  
sunglasses for your gaze WR

we are silhouettes  
hollow phantoms moving mistily  
without background VW

a stone's blinking  
beam of a tiger eye WR

I can imagine  
nothing beyond the circle  
of my body VW

fiber sprouting  
lovers in a bow WR

flowers only  
the cowbird and the moonlight  
colored may VW

deep cut blouse  
the oval necklace widens WR

blue boarding time  
the jacket with the captain's  
golden wing WR

we are forever ourselves  
with unknown quantities VW

returning  
with the daughter's son  
grandpa's smile WR

the world that had been shriveled  
rounds itself VW

flipping a flower  
over his shoulder  
to someone else WR

I'll shade my eyes with a book  
to hide one tear

VW

allowed by sundown

WR

## **SOLOS WORKS**

### **Ghazal**

#### **THREAD**

Khizra Aslam

While you cut and sew and weave my gown,  
your fingers do nimbly crease my gown.

I thread a garland of reeds for you;  
my tears will no more leak on my gown.

You paint my cloak in autumn colours:  
red, orange and yellow, streak my gown.

You knit long strands: my black hair in plaits;  
uncoil sleek snakes; night is bleak; my gown!

When you dance around your wheel, khizar,  
does it creak within? Go, seek my gown.

#### **WILLOW NOTE**

Khizra Aslam

Soft unspoken words; you wrote in my night;  
light willow breeze brings its note in my night.

You quietly flit and whistle a tune,  
and tiptoe in my room; ghost in my night.

You fan my passions, then calm with your hands;  
what ethereal presence floats in my night!

Come see the colour of my wound is green;

I wait for your balm; fresh coat in my night.

Did you cut your flute from a willow tree?  
Look leaves weep with willow note in my night.

Why, wear your black willow rosary, khizar,  
tell your beads aloud, full-throat in my night.

### **A VALENTINE GHAZAL FOR ROSE**

Gene Doty

cosmically less than a speck--asteroid Eros;  
still we retrieve images of distant Eros

Venus swings too far inward: Mars can not woo her  
beyond the parabola of the arrow shot by Eros

how your eyes descend, near to my surface,  
a promised landing guided to Eros

the thunder lizards raised their snouts sniffing  
air engorged and darkened by a cousin of Eros

space opera arias elaborate the drama out there  
where gravity's grooves move the shadows of Eros

held on earth, gino, hear the silence born  
in the panting aftermath of tumbling Eros

### **THE GAME**

Giovanni Malito

A cough cracks the earnest silence  
and your eyes betray you.

I see them look up, a flicker  
of query in their shrinking pupils.

Your lips quiver but only slightly  
for no sound is audible to me.

This time I clear my throat

and its guttural report could be  
a sentence in some other language.

Once again you look up but only  
until you see me and your eyes abscond.

It is a stalemate, only 64 moves to go  
then we both win or we both lose

but we can guiltlessly clear the board.

### **THE SHIFT IN MAGIC**

Giovanni Malito

See how quickly flesh  
finds comfort next to flesh.

See how quickly blood  
stirs when the chests heave.

See how readily the give  
is replaced with take, but

do we see who sighs first, or  
can we hear who shifts first

once our breath has returned  
and the magic has worn off?

### **HAIBUN**

#### **IN THE EYES OF MY CHILDREN**

Marjorie Buettner

Mid-summer and the moon is full. The night, a dark, sweet liquid, pours out to coat my senses. By the moon's light, in the middle of the road, we see scores of migrating turtles tuned to an ancient memory of eggs and the heat of a full moon on a sandy beach. My children carry them off to the other side as if they were gifts laid at the feet of an unseen god. We stand by the lake which, in this moon light, looks like a bed of satin, black and shimmering, and always shining, forever shining in the eyes of my children.

sky of shooting stars  
how the night gives back to us  
its own fragile light  
and in spite of time I know

that we will live forever

## **DIARY OF FOUR LARGE SUITCASES**

Betty Kaplan

My daughter and I went on a trip. We started on The Queen Elizabeth 2 and therefore needed formal as well as casual clothing. So we ended up with four large suitcases The concern was how to deal with the suitcases as we traveled.

In London on Petticoat Lane we found porcelain dolls which we could not resist. So now it was 4 large suitcases and 3 large boxes of dolls. At the London train station, the porter took us to the VIP room for first class travel and then put the dolls, the suitcases, and us on a cart and drove us to the train to Cornwall. Great! But when we got to Plymouth, we were told ONE minute to get off. WOW! And we made it. Pat (our hostess) met us with a very small car. She was startled when she saw the luggage.

We stayed at a haunted pub and the suitcases had to be carried up stairs. The girl in charge said "no problem. I am a farmer's daughter" Traveling back, again we found a porter who put us on the train. From Paddington, we took a cab to Heathrow.

awakened from a dream  
I see on my bedroom dresser  
a smiling doll  
do you suppose she knew it too  
the ghost of The Weary Friar Pub?

## **AFTER ALL THESE CENTURIES**

Larry Kimmel

Look at them! All these signs. A palm in the red light telling you not to cross the street. An encircled bicycle with a line struck across it to say, no bicycles. Same for a truck. A stylized man, a stylized woman, to designate the gender of the restrooms. A crossed-out match; a crossed-out P; to indicate no smoking, no parking. And then there's a plate with fork and knife to tell a restaurant by. A camera to say, here is a view. Well, you get the idea. So what I'd like to know, after century upon century spent in the development of an alphabet (not to mention standardized spelling, which is a dirty trick in my book, Shakespeare didn't have to contend with it), what I'd like to know is this: After all those centuries spent in the development of an alphabet, are we going back to hieroglyphics, pic by pic?

along for the ride  
this lovely May morning  
reading every sign  
and ad in sight -

the curse of literacy

## HANSONVILLE ROAD

Gary LeBel

In the end,  
so little difference:  
a head, two eyes, a thin shell  
to house a soul-  
the snail and I

How is it that a road becomes etched into our minds as acid draws upon an artist's copper plate, building upon itself in detail after detail until its familiarity clings to us as water to the body?

There was nothing at all remarkable about this road; it led through a rural neighborhood where people I had never met lived their lives it seemed only during the day, as their only evidence at those late hours in which I cruised like a submarine would be the occasional glimmer of a dim kitchen light. At times a streetlight would find the sleek skin and chrome of a new car, or a skinny tree which had been planted in the center of someone's yard, trashcans neatly arranged and ready for the morning pickup run.

But this is the thinnest of veneers, for it is only when we are poised for transcendence that the woodland gods of the night will emerge from inside the evanescent landscape and present their world to us intact in their firm hands.

Each night and all that summer after the factory noise lay miles behind me on the graveyard shift, I would walk alone on the long road home. The stillness and each fine detail of shadow and scent was exquisite and I never tired of this walk which invited me into its realm whenever I chose to be attentive.

At first I walked briskly, shy of becoming known to another life that lived beside me in the night.

About half way home there was a barn that had been built many years before on a small hilltop surrounded by field. Its secret life lay hidden during the day when its wide doors were opened and daylight was allowed to penetrate its interior.

When the moon was full on these walks, the sloping field behind the barn would flow in a calm ocean of tremulous light. At times the moon's great celestial weight appeared to rest there in the sky on invisible scaffolds made only of sound latticed into the most gossamer of structures by crickets' voices venting out of the cool wet grass.

On nights such as these when I lingered to participate, the darkness would rise inside me like a slowly ebbing tide, filling me up with the silt of its motion, replacing me in a gentle erasure.

On one particular night, I paused to watch the moon weave its light over the field and the barn. Each line and scar on the weathered boards etched in by shadows now became veins and arteries; the texture of its clapboards, strange sinews of muscle. In the black void of its one window, an essence pulled at a

chord inside me that I could not name though I had ached for a very long time to recognize.

It was a transfiguration that I wanted, though before the self could be launched away as a heavy ship achieves its true buoyancy, it would need to be freed of the many lines that were still attached to it in layer upon layer of thought. Indeed my ship was burdensome, ungainly, and ill-fitted for sleek passage. What it envied was a thin, liquid impermanence that could move among the shadows of the night's dream unhampered by my gravity that could only claw at the door to be let in.

I stood there waiting for the awkward galleon to slide down its ways and begin the transformation, but it never did. For only on that one night did all the mysterious entities conspire to frame a window through which I had no eyes to look. This I mistook then as a blindness in the soul, and as I watched the mist and the moon invite the field and barn into its willing circle, it occurred to me in a flash of insight that the ache of remaining merely at the edges and never to be grasped in the "gods' firm hands" had grown out of a deep melancholy I'd wrestled with since adolescence, and probably even earlier in childhood.

And now it was as visible as if it were made of flesh as I was, disarming me by its immutable presence out of which the sentient skeleton of an entire life had been slowly constructed.

"Let's be clear. This was not, this is not a longing for death. No, nothing could be further from the truth," I told myself as I stood there alone on the hill. This was its ironic gift to me for having failed in the end at what was doomed from the start, a feverish hunger to know the "things in themselves" and the profound erasure that dwelled somewhere in the space behind Rilke's shifting curtain, a hunger to move through the world like water, to go deeper, even down into the gaps between quarks, if that was where being and essence began.

After the gears in my temporal clock began to grind forward again, I looked at the lone window whose Cyclops eye now dryly offered only a harsh and ordinary silence both within and without. I realized I had a home to go to and a young boy whose sleeping face needed one more gaze to complete the timeless cycle of his day, and a wife to whom I could not confess the sin I had just torn out of my head on Hansonville Road.

Wielding his sword  
he flayed the old god  
wide open  
and then hid his eyes  
from the blaze of its stars

Fall 1997, Summer 2001

**SEDOKA**

**SUMMER SOLSTICE**

Marjorie Buettner

the night is empty  
of everything but these thoughts  
flooding over like hard rain  
washing me down stream  
to pool so close to your door  
this house that hosts only wind

I have breathed the wind  
taking it into myself  
when nothing but this would fit  
I have tasted rain  
when it is my time to grow  
will you pick me--this wild rose

only the rose knows  
what to give and take away  
on a summer solstice night  
and stars remember  
how many wishes were cast  
to release an empty heart

## **SIJO**

throughout the night voices  
babble in adjacent rooms

emergency vehicles scream  
up and down the streets of Rio

out the hotel window  
the Christ statue glows softly

Elizabeth Howard

## **ARCTIC AIR**

Gino Peregrini

Forty-five to fifty years ago, one of my chores was to see the cattle had water. In bitter cold weather the ponds and stock tanks froze; I took an axe and chopped holes in the ice for them to drink from. In hot weather, I pumped water from the well into a stock tank for the cattle. Often the pump had to be primed. A one-pound coffee can (Folger's or Maxwell House) was kept by the pump; I dipped water

from the tank and poured it into the pump. When I first began to pump, the mechanism, being dry, screeched. A crowd of thirsty cattle is not especially polite, not even herefords with good breeding.

arctic air freezes the stock tank; cattle huddle out of the wind  
axe on shoulder, the boy crosses the pasture toward the pump  
the steers crowd the tank, breath freezing on their white faces

fallen leaves drift on the water, hatchling perch hover and dart  
drowned leaves litter the tank's bottom; the hand-pump drips clear water  
the boy primes the pump, grasps the handle: cattle crowd the tank's rim

~!~

On the stage of the western sky  
I see a bright new player.  
This light outshines all older stars  
in heavenly competition.  
Orbiting from this marquee  
above mere mortals - space station.

Day dawns gray, dark clouds drip rain;  
the bushes blend into the sky.  
It's hard to lift above this fog  
ignoring all the puddles.  
I know above this weather  
a yellow sun still shines.

Kirsty Karkow

Tanka

## **THE COMING OF ANTS II**

Edward Baranosky

Among the veteran archaeologists, a story is passed around about a team of diggers that disappeared from a pre-Columbian site when there were driver ants in the vicinity after heavy rains. Only a few artifacts and scattered bones were found.

On the hardened faces,  
Cracked by forgotten floods

Stone sun-wheels  
Still expose discordances  
In the passage of ages.

Evidence remains  
On the edge of ruins  
For missing time,  
For an archaeology of grief  
In a faint trace of voices.

It was the same  
During the last cataclysm  
At Pompeii,  
Huddling against the marble  
And the cool, familiar smell.

Statues with stained feet  
Stand in our naked  
Anonymous prints,  
While divining proceedings  
Interpret the planet's pulse.

When the first black wave  
of ants surge across the clearing  
Consuming shadows -  
Vipers, lizards, scorpions scurried  
Away into silence.

## **VIAJE**

John Bennett

Lock saw train room  
dip sink true lag  
o sleeve drip trail  
key spins flash once  
then dark

~!~

watching leaves fall  
i consider  
for the rest of my life  
this little plan

poem by poem

all these years  
in one house, one job  
one town and in me-  
too many changes to fathom  
as i sweep away autumn leaves

in autumn sun  
i sit on a bench  
reading poems-  
she is reading something too  
the curls in her hair

Thomas P. Clausen

**TANKA FOR JR**  
Gerard John Conforti

long is the silence  
which haunts this room of mine  
the unspoken voices  
of walls, floors, and ceilings  
which confine on this winter night

I do not know  
how to bid farewell  
in this aching heart of mine  
I long for your voice  
which has a silence of two of us

you've done so much for me  
and how can I forget  
your generous heart  
which is loving like flowers  
grown and blossoming this early morning

I have not heard your voice  
which is an emptiness to me  
if I could make up  
all the pain I've caused you

I'd root up all the dandelions

I pace the empty rooms  
of my beating heart  
which hears only  
the voices outside this room  
the hammering voices of youth

there are many roads  
leading through the forest  
I don't know which to take  
it's been that way for years  
and the silence sings in the sparrow

### **POEMS ON THE NAMING OF PLACES**

(After Wordsworth)

paul t conneally

I  
EMMA'S DELL

April morning  
a small stream running  
with a young man's speed  
the sound of winter's water  
through budding groves

city sunrise  
she weaves between  
still traffic  
police sirens echo  
building to building

walking  
through the confusion  
a leafless ash-tree

sitting  
in the coffee-shop  
dirt under her nails

alive to everything  
songbirds vying with  
a waterfall

neon signs

flick on and off  
sidewalk daisies  
swapping stories  
with a policeman

a single cottage  
on the distant mountain  
bright green hawthorn  
talking to shepherds  
on this wild nook

August 2001

~!~

Hands  
on the wheel  
waving  
no- one  
in the distance

Pouring  
another bowl  
of cereal  
has my future wife crossed  
the street out of sight?

Brendan Duffin

listen  
to the stillness of the trees  
at dusk  
when all things are done I will  
finish my tale's last chapter

leaning on my rake  
I remember those days  
of wine and roses  
how little seems to be left

of the garden of our dreams

one gust of wind  
and the morning mist starts  
to undulate -  
how strange that in the end  
our words seem to drift apart

an empty can  
rolling down the street  
struck my feet -  
how did we love to go out  
in stormy weather long ago

this chestnut leaf  
held against bright daylight  
recalls the story  
of such a warm embrace  
one autumn years ago

november storm  
the sand on the beach  
adrift and hurting  
I'll never forget the smell  
of your skin under your coat

Fred Flohr

**SPACE OCCASIONALS**  
Sanford Goldstein

I see  
in the death of others  
how memory  
falls into a niche,  
becomes alien as cloud wisp

muse of these five lines  
have you only a delicate mouth?  
can't you mine,  
mess up a soft green surface,  
dynamite a stark, dark hole?

even  
my kid's dog  
silent  
in its long stretch  
this end-of-autumn morning

those who sat  
at the MacDonald  
breakfast-time  
six years ago  
sit here today

how the kids  
at the ecumenical  
ran this way, that -  
sometimes they stopped and rested  
to color Yeshua blue

~!~

nest flooded -  
a finger on two eggs  
I tip the water out  
come back mother dove, father  
dove, is that too much to ask

bronze ax lies where  
it fell years ago  
in basil, wild thyme  
broken stone walls  
of Hagia Triada

an amber vial:  
perfume on mother's dresser  
high, high  
I want it and  
I don't want it

Ruth Holzer

full moon  
snow falling  
white night  
strange dreams  
this winter solstice

on hold  
the unwanted four lane  
through the mountain village  
archaeological digs  
Indian graves and artifacts

Elizabeth Howard

moths gather  
at a window full of night,  
I watch  
for the water to boil -  
tea to quiet the nerves

you touch my arm  
saying, "we must speak  
of this later" -  
a barn swallow darts  
and disappears

last night  
was only a thing of the moment,  
she will have me know -  
from the cottage doorway  
how wistful the out-of-tune piano

a russet sunlight  
among the goldenrods  
gone silver -  
picking at threads  
in this tapestry of regret

empty headed,  
I lean and watch the snow  
fall past the window -  
for a moment  
a world of wonder and peace

Larry Kimmel

The traffic light speaks  
with its reds, yellow, and green -  
and we obey.  
Yet in this matter of love  
how can we know what is safe?

How ordinary it is  
to lick the honey  
that dripped on my hand.  
But then, at the first tasting,  
thoughts of you flood over me.

Resting on a bench,  
I watch people passing by.  
And my favorites?  
Mothers with their new-borne babes,  
and old couples hand in hand.

I stop just in time,  
choking on unspoken words.  
Now I remember!

My daughter's revealing blouse -  
years ago was her mother's.

Ah, such joys in spring,  
unlike the days of my youth -  
for while I've not changed,  
once clothes were meant to conceal  
what now they often reveal!

Four, three, two, one - zoom!  
The motorcycles race off,  
ten seconds and done.  
Though there is a joy in speed,  
I prefer slower pleasures.

Two arms and two legs -  
all the ordinary parts -  
eyes and hair and smile.  
Why is it then, I wonder,  
that I think only of you?

David L. Kirkland

~!~

mid-summer heat wave  
everything dying except  
for the weeds  
this fragile bloom of love  
how can it survive?

outgrowing its pot  
snake plant is toppling over  
from lack of soil  
I scramble to keep  
my own balance

last night's  
talk of angels

I awaken  
to the rustle of wings -  
pigeons at my window

sampling  
this year's strawberries  
from the market  
how much better they tasted -  
the ones picked by moonlight

Angela Leuck

lovers sprawled  
in the cool of night  
on prickly grass  
moon casting shadows  
a hundred leaves on skin

cricket wings  
shrill rhythms in the night  
remind me  
hot summer days  
will soon be over

sunflowers  
droop heavy heads  
leave puddles  
of pollen around the vase  
a still life in yellow

water spills  
over large boulder  
hummingbird  
hovers near to drink  
wings in a whirl

a bumble bee  
probes blossom  
after blossom,  
like the beating of my pulse,  
it keeps a rhythm of its own

Claudia Logerquist

in his backyard  
paintbrush clenched  
in his teeth  
he paints streaks  
for swallows in flight

in the summer  
of his final madness  
Vincent's last painting . . .  
a flock of crows  
above a runway of wheat

how can I dwell  
on having lost you  
when this little girl  
so badly needs attention  
to her scraped knee

the stalks of long grass  
nod in the summer haze  
and mixed in out of synch  
are the flushed faces of children  
playing hard at hide and seek

Giovanni Malito

tattered white coat  
seven years ago  
i left home  
to make another

a bird changing nests

all the more because  
i feel at home on this earth  
my heart yearns for one  
oak in whose shade to find rest  
leaves golden in autumn

Giselle Maya

### **WORKPLACE SERIES**

Thelma Mariano

another paper  
wrested from the copy machine  
all wrinkled and torn  
I wonder who will rescue me  
from the repetition of days

beyond smiles  
and small talk in the hallways  
a restrained silence  
imagine if people dare  
to say what's on their minds

a flow of paper  
from in basket to out  
if I close my eyes  
the relentless waves  
pulling me to sea

dinner parties  
where the wine flows all night  
between chit-chat  
the stolen glances  
at my watch

my worst fear  
to be laid off at fifty  
now here I am  
planning to go  
at forty-nine

in this wind  
waves splash against the sea wall  
ever higher  
like me no longer willing  
to be contained

## **WE'LL SLEEP**

June Moreau

We'll sleep a dancing sleep  
on the foamy crest  
of an ocean wave  
kissed and kissed again  
by joyful dolphins.

We'll sleep  
the sun-drift sleep  
of pollen  
drifting, drifting  
with the drifting wind.

We'll sleep with mountain arms  
around the puma  
and feel  
the living warmth  
of its golden fur.

We'll sleep  
with swarms  
and swarms of wild bees  
in a cloud-forest  
of orchids.

We'll sleep there  
in the meadow  
where speckled eggs  
are hidden  
in a lark's dreamy nest.

We'll sleep  
in the everywhere blue  
and know  
the sun's everlasting path  
across the sky.

## SIX TANKA

Carol Purington

My crooked fingers -  
for years wearing the pearl ring  
my sister  
forgot to take with her  
when she died

I can live with  
crowded shelves, bulging drawers  
in this one room  
as long as I don't hold on  
to everything I have ever felt

Across the lawn  
the uneven steps of a child  
young enough  
to run at life, to run from life -  
I smile at all she has to learn

The child-sized table -  
we turned it boat-side up to float  
across our playroom  
even then I knew that stories  
must be lived

Eavesdropping  
on a song the robin  
gives to his mate  
this book of love letters I hold  
also written to someone else

The garden darkens  
into November's shadow  
The last tomatoes  
are lost among frosted weeds

I will not live on memories

~!~

flood of sunlight  
did I awaken with you  
that summer morning?  
spilling leftover stars  
onto the treetops where we slept.

birds of my hand  
take flight to your branches  
in a great rise of wings.  
they carry my once quiet voice,  
these thousand tiny poems.

how can I sleep?  
my thoughts are lifting  
from the pillow  
traveling north to your house  
weaving the threads of your blanket.

Claudia Retter

Wrinkles on the skin  
remind me of time's passage  
year by year travelled  
long distances renewing  
spirit and waving goodbye.

Stray fungi grow  
on the broken window frame  
beside my bed  
watery smell swells as if  
a corpse in the river.

R K Singh

a young woman  
wears her hair in a scarf  
just like her mother  
she sits contentedly  
with her husband and her tea

the ten-year-old  
counts cats in the living room  
new year's day  
a man and a woman  
compare corners of their lives

waiting patiently  
in an empty rented house  
I read histories  
of a place far away  
that was once known as home

when a heart breaks  
it breaks open to the world  
a cut flower  
catches the fading light  
of an autumn afternoon

Marc Thompson

### **LIVING IN THE G-7**

Marc Thompson

she said her mother  
will turn forty-nine  
this summer  
the sound of an oboe  
drifts in the afternoon

aching for food

on the evening news  
someone's sister

a hot wind  
crosses the parking lot  
at twilight  
sons and daughters  
gather at the mall

sculpture garden -  
a bearded man  
layered in watchcaps

fetishes  
call the moon to rise  
in Hispaniola  
the ancient gods  
watch us from the night

### **SEASON'S EDGE**

Rod Thompson

yellow leaf  
tumbles between us  
    song birds departed  
a crane high up and rasping  
punctuates our strained words

parsnips uprooted  
separated and exposed  
air nipping the skin  
    I walk away  
    our harvest done

alone  
among pines we planted  
a family ago  
I savor the touch  
of supple limbs

~!~

your jacket - collar points  
and back pleats  
high fashion  
my shirt - worn cuffs  
and split seams

a tenderness  
of northern lights  
shimmers green on blue -  
the moon colours  
wheat-fields

Joanna M. Weston

## **WITHOUT CLASSIFICATION**

### **ALIVE AND THRIVING IN OUR GLOSSOLALIA**

Sheila E. Murphy

We refuse all but  
Monosyllabic multi-  
Layered mood-loaved  
Words that sweeten  
Homewood worthy of  
A firmament  
We table insolence  
Using our own  
Known syllables  
Claimed less than adored  
We pencil each other in-  
To day squares,  
Level-best the consequence  
Of mood stairs wavering  
In situ comedias res  
Open to unformed agendas  
Plural as we are  
Drawn down to uniform  
Approach intact  
To muse upon impingement  
Clear as new divinity

## **BEFORE**

Sheila E. Murphy

Netherskens elapse in memory as points  
Along the segment of a line  
Recalled for practicality as substance:  
Pale petal after petal to be skipped across  
Then tarnished as a spoon  
Left to the atmosphere  
Of morning after morning light  
Away from common view,  
From actuarial predictions left to  
The receding wings of butterfly  
For just a chalice while  
Alive and loved  
As beatific as thin aqua in a film of sky

## **BLUE SHIRT**

Sheila E. Murphy

First time worn, a fragrant cloth  
Smooth-shaven face to kiss  
A moment of this morning's own  
Inelegance by compare, the few  
Young glints of sunlight on his hair,  
Small conversation architected  
In the way a bolt of silk might seem

His eyes have shadows of missed sleep,  
Hands full of innocence,  
This day will open on the routine  
Intersection of chemistries, there will be  
Shared, unshared analysis within  
The context weather rides, should one  
In conscience work on days  
That hover on perfection?

Each day the body is a found thing  
Planted on known mind, each day  
The cyclical arrangement learns and then unlearns,  
A recitation hastens consciousness,  
Parts of selves join, then release,  
Biography informs specific moments  
With narration to go home to  
Possibly in perpetuity, until not one new thing  
Is learned, forecast, or pointed out

In isolation, and the fabric of a thing  
Distinguishes an essence  
From protection that allows  
The same to seem a self

## **APPARENCIES**

Sheila E. Murphy

Even glossing over night, the twill comes vastly as a broom of lace across

Whittling conveyance of a spruced, interpretive massage in contrast to the wooded blue tetrameter  
defining lines against and lines in rows

The parallelogram of inference requires no moat

Stillness suppressed recedes into the negative tangential mauve kissed into being by naïve few cinders

Touching down bemuses stature of the rare breed left low on the horizon

Plenitude seems often soft

A wizened hue, a staunch, young plunge into headrest at the close of day

The tocked-off metronome that follows vigor in assembling of an evening meal

Response time varies even among triplets stung by fated views

Pronunciation damages the vineyards now imbued by clues

Retort after receivership of repertoire

In moments, closeness is marred by temple vest

The priest has shoesprings while amending tables of equations that define an attitude

One ceases wearing blue

One blends into midnight stowed with overwear and fibrous wood unevenly exuded

Birth implies retort of psychic offspring who will be fluffed into less realistic carnage as to offer  
sacrifice

Pure amendment safely washes custom

Square meters of breath collide with grief as yet unspoken, even in the gluey margins where opinion  
lies in state

Commencement always fortifies what would be naked to sure vision

Nine of ten imaginary blasphemies decry the magus on a person's mind after infancy has rescued some incessant video about to be rewound

## **APIERO**

Dawna Rae

Apiero, we lived near the crossroads  
in a hotel, mollusked and petrified  
it was a leaking aquarium of life  
when you went picking flowers  
the fates waited by the west side  
and you went hole-shouting there  
to lay your fears in dirt

The caught you  
and when I looked  
we were fish out of water.  
what you said to the worms that day, was this:

I am scared I am not wrong  
I am scared that no one believes me  
I am afraid that I am right about this world.

## BOOK REVIEWS

**Always Filling Always Full Tanka** by Margaret Chula. White Pine Press: 2001. Perfect bound, 6 x 9 inches, 112 pages, Artwork by Jef Gunn, Preface by Jane Hirshfield, Introduction by William J. Higginson, \$14.00 + postage. Order Katsura Press, P.O. Box 275, Lake Oswego, OR 97034 or White Pine Press, POB 236, Buffalo, NY 14201. ISBN:1-893996-11-5 at Amazon.com.

What is there not to like about this book?

The title grabs one with the insistence of koan. The mind endlessly ruminates on the wisdom and the aptness of what is Always Filling Always Full? Once you get started thinking on this puzzle it remains stuck with the glue of a professional jingle. This is a perfect title for a book and so very apt for a tanka collection because the poems do fulfill the promise of the title.

Margaret Chula's first book, *Grinding My Ink*, showed that she was adept at writing haiku and knew how to make a stunning collection of her work. Then she did *Shadow Lines* with Rich Youmans to show her skills at collaborative work. Yet during all this time, Margaret was also working on her tanka. A portion of the poems was published in magazines while much of her work was seen winning contests. She has won more awards in the Tanka Splendor contests than any other person. And in *The Full Moon Tide*, edited by Linda Jeannette Ward, where all the winning entries of the past ten years of the contest judged again to be ranked by 1, 2, and 3, Margaret Chula's tanka were chosen four times when the best of writers were only represented with one win. Each contest has proved her work is popular, is setting a standard for the genre and is easily appreciated by a large number of readers.

the black negligee  
that I bought for your return  
hangs in my closet  
day by day plums ripen  
and are picked clean by birds

See the daring leap she makes? How she packs meaning in the smallest lines? She starts with "the black negligee" which shares its color with over-ripened plums. The second line implies the concept of waiting with a positive aspect of "bought for your return" – good move. In the center comes the pivot where something hangs in her closet and implies that something is also hanging in a tree – the ripening plums. The idea of the ripening plums also gives off the idea of swelling sexual need and then to know over-ripe plums is to have smelled the very essence of sex which is then tied back to the negligee and its purpose of seduction. Yet what does she seduce in her loneliness? Only the birds come and pick clean the plums as her own being is devastated by the passing of time and unfulfillment. This is strong stuff and absolutely the correct emotional material for a classical tanka. Notice, again, how she is able to 'talk around' the feelings without naming them directly, but by carefully choosing images she leads the reader to actually get a sense of what she was feeling.

Again and again in *Always Filling Always Full*, Chula shows she not only completely understands the tanka techniques and methods but that she has the poet's ability to take an emotion, give it a parallel in daily reality, and to lead the reader to feel what she was feeling. Another example is:

my friends tell me  
that they are breaking up  
I stand at the sink  
- rinse the cloudy rice over

and over again

So what does the failure of a friend's marriage and rice have to do with each other? Chula does not tell the reader directly, but for anyone who has rinsed rice one knows the feeling of never getting the water to run completely clear. And how it touches us to know a marriage close to our own has failed. It sets one to wondering how to clear and keep clear one's own relationship with a mate. Is this job as fruitless as washing rice completely clean? Will the cloud of one failed marriage come to her house – to her sink? Her 'sinking' feelings? Yet, the poem ends on the positive note that she tries again and again to remove the cloud of bad news from others as well as the cloud of doubts about her own relationship by washing the rice one more time.

For anyone who wishes to see the very best contemporary, classical styled tanka, this book is highly recommended. There is so much to learn about tanka written in English from Chula's work. In addition she wisely presents her poems without caps, they have none of this lower case 'i' for silliness, and she uses the very minimum of the most necessary punctuation. Only in the sequence "Breaking Even" does she lose her courage and returns to sentence caps and punctuation.

This brings us to the several sequences of tanka. In all cases the poems are collected around a central theme on the title subjects. With her experiments in renga writing and her ability to leap from one part of a tanka to another, it is surprising that she does not apply this thinking to her series. Yet she is wide enough for her sequences to cover the subjects as varying as love and a visit to the memorial at Birkenau. She includes just enough of the longer poems to break up the jerky bounce of individual tanka by offering a smooth surface for the mind to drift and savor, linger and be enlightened.

The tanka are divided into sections, each with an abstract ink drawing by Jef Gunn. In previous books, Chula has chosen Japanese-style sumi-e illustrations, but this time, Gunn is able to match the contemporary feeling of Chula's tanka with his seemingly simple, but rich-with-meaning abstract forms without imitating the Orientals. The cover illustration, surrounded by the bright red paper and the great title is especially eye-catching and yet stands up to deeper contemplation.

For me, the Preface by Jane Hirshfield could have been longer, but yet I was grateful for her words: "In this world where we have come more and more to see that each thing touches every other, this book is welcome proof of the universality and particularity of the human heart." William J. Higginson wrote the Introduction in which he compares (favorably) Margaret Chula's tanka with those of the Man'yōshū (Ten Thousand Leaves), the first collection of Japanese tanka. Higginson's final comment was: "These tanka seem to me among the best I have read." which is high praise indeed.

White Pine Press has done an excellent job (as they usually do) with this book. No typos, everything spaced and placed correctly on lovely creamy papers. The professionalism of their work, with the quality of Margaret Chula's poems makes *Always Filling Always Full* a book you should have.

**Circling Bats: A Concrete Renga by Carlos Colón & Raffael de Gruttola.** Tragg Publications, Shreveport, Louisiana: 2001. Saddle stapled, 8.5 x 11 inches, eight pages, no price. Contact Carlos Colón.

If you are one of those persons who finds renga boring because it seems the same phrases are rolled over and over, if you delight in the leaps but think you know most of the ones possible and especially if you enjoy concrete poetry – this is the book for you. The return of the love of punning (once the basis for renga writing) which is so often stifled in English renga, especially when the work is done for



But we have to feel confident in the abilities of the messenger to bring us the truth. In an example of how he attempts to confuse the information he is supposedly bringing us, Agha tells us that he is the source of the (false) information that 'ghazal' is to be pronounced 'ghuzzle' (the sound of wine drinking) and that he did it as a 'joke' or as he says: "to be teasingly petty". This misinformation got all the way into Lynx pages as we attempted to stay on top of 'new' information on the genre. Nowhere in the introduction to Ravishing DisUnities does Agha tell us his pronunciation for ghazal. (Sunil Datta, translator with Robert Bly of *Lightning Should Have Fallen* on Ghalib, speaks the word as 'ruzzle' with a very soft, swallowed 'r' with a hint of an 'h'. But even Robert Bly, on the same stage with Sunil insisted on saying the word as gay-zel). Instead of bringing us some clarity on the subject, Agha mixes up ideas and information by stating: "Perhaps one way to welcome the shackles of the form and be in emotional tune with them is to remember one definition of the word ghazal: It is the cry of the gazelle when it is cornered in a hunt and knows it will die." This ties the pronunciation to 'gay-zel'. In discussing this with Gene Doty, he stated that his son-in-law, who is Indian, also speaks the word as Sunil does.

Okay. How are the poems in this the first anthology of English-language ghazals? Like any collection there are a few very good poems and a lot which cannot be read to the bottom of the page. What this book is not, is an overview of ghazals being currently written in English because Agha negates any poem that does not hold to the repeats as he espouses in his set of rules. What he seems unable to achieve is the idea that when a poetry form migrates from one culture to another, certain changes will occur. He also seems to forget that when this happens, the newcomers have the courage to drop the very aspects which are choking the form in its home country. In this case, it is the boredom that sets in with centuries of using the repeats. When the newcomers accomplish this sometimes necessary pruning, the genre blooms forth with new vitality and interest that attracts the best poets of the target country. By setting up the rules as known in Persia and India, and judging English ghazals only with this yardstick, Agha Shahid Ali has missed the marvel of what is really happening to the ghazal in English.

One more gripe: Agha Shahid Ali refers to 'haikus', which is bad enough by a professor of Creative Writing of University of Utah, who has also taught at Warren Wilson College, and held visiting appointments at Hamilton College, University of Massachusetts, Princeton, University of New York and State University of New York. He then perpetrates the false idea of the position of haiku in poetry as shared in universities by stating in his introduction: "This seemingly "light" form [the use of the ghazal as song lyrics in many parts of the East] can lead to a lot of facile poetry (haikuish-ly one could say)." and then Agha Shahid Ali goes to write: "It is the sort of thing that happens with haiku (Richard Howard is supposed to have said that as a poetry editor having to read five hundred haikus [sic] a week was like being nibbled to death by goldfish, and James Merrill in his "Prose of Departure" has actually used rhymes for his haikus [sic] so that Americans will know that "something is going on")." No wonder haiku has such a low status among academia when such ideas are dragged out even when informing on a completely different poetry genre. This is gratuitous bashing of haiku - a valid form of poetry by a professor of writing. Why do we have to have people with this narrow mind-set? And why are they the ones who are supported by university presses? The time for a much needed poetry revolution is at hand.

Onward and hopefully this review goes upward. Several poets who have published poems in Lynx are included in this anthology (Marcyn Del Clements, Mary Jo Salter, Robert William Watkins and Bruce Williams) since they also wanted to follow the strictures as Agha puts forth in his announcement of how to get into his book. Names of well-know persons who successfully jumped through the hoop are:

Marilyn Hacker, Maxin Kumin, W.S. Merwin, Paul Muldoon. Missing and greatly missed are the works of Adrianna Rich, Robert Bly, Allen Ginsberg, Jack Kerouac, Carolyn Kizer, Gene Doty, Wallace Stevens, and William Carlos Williams.

I was very excited to find one poem in the whole anthology in which I felt the repeats worked. The poem was written by Robert Hastings whose bio states: "was in his early teens when he sent in this ghazal. Now in his mid-teens, he is the youngest contributor to the anthology. He lives in Chicopee, Massachusetts." His stanzas were so bizarre and refreshingly odd that the repeats were a welcomed relief in the flow of madness. There is hope for the genre when the young can write like this:

Ghazal

Trying to fly in the meantime  
ready to dry in the meantime

flocks of turds have fun with words  
wanting to rely in the meantime

herds of sheep don't love you as I do  
wanting to tie in the meantime

licorice love intoxicates trees  
about to expire and die in the meantime

obsessed with masturbation and desiring sex  
teens begin to cry in the meantime

depending upon the density of fat  
pigs float by in the meantime

## **BOOK MENTIONS**

Decima Mucho by John M. Bennett and Ivan Arguelles. Luna Bisonte Prods, 137 Leland Ave., Columbus, Ohio 43214. Saddle-stapled, 5.5 x 8 inches, 20 pages, \$5.00, ISBN:1-892280-09-4.

John M. Bennett and Ivan Arguelles almost have too much fun with this book. This work is done in the spirit of 'hacking' as known in John Bennett's magazine, Lost and Found Times. Maybe I should explain: in the zine, a method of writing has evolved in which one person writes a poem or titled prose piece and another person hacks it apart by rewriting what s/he finds in the original work and makes a distorted and distended copy. An example from Decima Mucho is John's piece:

Slip

Slop anew o slap the  
choking fall against yr  
leg 'n small knee  
toothy egg stand a  
mile 'n rubble free.  
clumps chorizo, smoking

noose. while you were  
freezing! "opposition" apes  
mainly dumps 'n plans;  
turned around's the same

Then Ivan Argüelles, under the influence of his culture, mother tongue (and who knows what else)  
'hears' John's piece and records it as:

Shlooooooop!  
woops she died a failure of mortal  
re gress, shames a bit off the chin 'n  
shoves the rest into the reader clamp  
for a heavy re load into gutted space,  
while mean at the raunch a slogan  
fettters re trail wi' souds a' sci,,u  
(didja ivver?) floating eventu ality  
choking carnally that, is, if ya can  
stand like that against the wind whilst  
splicing muumy's gore little piddle

nothing personal by LeRoy Gorman. Proof Press, 67 rue Court, Aylmer (QC) Canada J9H 4M1.  
Saddle-stapled, 52 pages, 5.25 x 4.25 inches, ISBN: 1-89-5778-34-4, \$5.00 ppd.

With two to three haiku per page divided into four groups and even some eye-ku tossed in for good  
measure, the reader truly gets his or her money's worth in nothing personal. Though the title sounds as  
if the haiku are haiku cool, LeRoy Gorman is never without his sense of humor, puns and rabid jokes.  
An example:

a schoolbus passes  
cattails give it  
the finger

But he also has his serious side as he takes on environmental issues, global and personal madness, and  
the ills of society.

a yellow truck  
herbicide fogs  
the green ditches

And Gorman has his gentle moments in today's hectic world, too.

wildflowers in bloom  
the cop turns off  
the radar

Highly recommended for the good, the bad, the funny and the beautiful!

**Committed to the Road (Predan Putu) by Marinko Kovacevic.** Društvo Hrvatskih Haiku Pjesnika, Zabreb: 2000. Bilingual Croatian / English. Perfect bound, 5 x 7.5 inches, 130 pages, full-color cover, ISBN: 953-6837-02-1. No price given. Write to: Marinko Kovačević, Severin na Kupu 10, 51329 Severin na Kupu, Croatia.

The Association of Croatian Haiku Poets, seeing the need for the publication of the books of their associates, has started a press exclusively dedicated to bringing haiku beyond the borders of their country. This venture is to be greatly applauded, supported and even copied. Should that more poetry genre clubs take up their example. If I could tell others which country I felt was producing the most interesting haiku-inspired poetry today, I would unhesitatingly name Croatia. Again and again I am amazed by the poetic quality of the poems from their writers. An example from Marinko Kovačević:

Two pairs of steps.  
Each gone its own direction.  
Snow and silence.

**Haiku – One Breath Poetry by Naomi Wakan.** Heian International, Inc., 1815 West 205th Street, Suite #301, Torrance, CA 90501. 1997. Perfect bound, 6 x 9, 72 pages, full-color cover, illustrated with black and white ink drawings, ISBN:0-89346-846-0.

Winner of The Canadian Children's Book Center Choice Award, Haiku – One Breath Poetry, in the hands of Naomi Wakan, makes haiku approachable and easy to learn for both kids and adults. Grounded firmly in the Japanese haiku, the book blossoms out in the topics necessary for the appreciation and writing of haiku in English. The book straddles a great many deep subjects with aplomb, brevity and ease and includes a brief bibliography for different age groups. As blurb on the back is:

Pick up a pencil,  
or turn on the computer . . .  
now breath in, and write.

**The Haiku Bag by Naomi Beth Wakan.** Lightsmith Publishing, Box 376, Qualicum Beach, B.C., V9K 1S9 Canada. Perfect bound, 4 x 5.5, 116 pages, ISBN:1-894092-12-0, \$10.95 + \$3.50 postage and handling. Or order from the author at 3085 Mander, Gabriola Island, B.C. VOR 1X0 Canada.

Over half of the book is given to identifying haiku, telling how-to-write haiku, haiku history in brief, and quoting haiku by 'famous' writers before coming to the haiku of Naomi Beth Wakan on page 57. Her haiku are arranged by seasons. A sample from autumn:

Planning to fasten  
The vine up, I see  
The spider did it first

**Fragments collected by Ed Alison Williams.** Hub Editions, Longholm, Wingland, East Bank, Sutton Bridge, Spalding, Lincolnshire, PE12 9YS, England: 2001. Flat spine, 2.75 x 4 inches, ISBN: 1-903746-04-3, £1.50 / \$3.00. Order from Alison Williams, 9 Wood Road, Ashurst, Hampshire, S040 7BD, England.

**Forty haiku from the 13 writers** (Alan J. Summers, Alasdair Paterson, Alison Williams, David Platt, Gerard England, Hugh Waterhouse, John Crook, Matt Morden, Matthew Paul, Paul Blake, Stanley Pelter, Susumu Takiguchi, and Timothy Collinson), who have only met over the Internet, though they all come from England, Scotland and Wales. Interestingly enough, the authors are indicated only by initials below the haiku. To solve the riddle of who wrote what, one has to turn to the back for the list of contributors. From the compiler, Alison Williams:

Armistice day -  
two men come  
to mend the fence

## LETTERS TO LYNX

Dear Jane & Werner,

Our summer has been quite pleasant, with a lot of sunshine, almost enough rain, and a few too many days of HHH weather. I am very thankful for an air conditioner, and also that New England has had no rolling blackouts. In spite of the heat I have written quite a few haiku this month, which is always a very satisfying feeling. No tanka yet, but the month is not over! Taste summer! Carol Purington

Dear Friends

With deep sorrow, I regret to inform that we have lost another great haiku poet and artist, and cherished friend after a long difficult struggle with ill health, Ruby Spriggs of Ottawa, ON Canada died on July 6. Visitation and the funeral service will take place on Tuesday, July 10 at the Kelly Funeral Home, 585 Somerset, Ottawa, Ontario.

Loved by all who had the pleasure of meeting and/or working with her, Ruby's special 'voice' and gentle being will be dearly missed. I give thanks for having known and worked with this wonderful woman, and shall long cherish her moving haiku collections and renga collections with her beloved partner, Grant Savage.

Forever in the light, dear Ruby.

soft moonlight  
pressed between pages  
the delicate white flower

- Elizabeth St Jacques  
( July 2001, in memory of Ruby Spriggs)

Check out Elizabeth's tribute to Ruby on her web site and scroll down to **\*SPECIAL FEATURE\*** Each tribute page will take you to the next tribute page by clicking the URL at bottom of the page.

then today 9 / 9 / 1 I received this also from Elizabeth:

Dear Friends -

I regret to be the bearer of more sad news. Francine Porad kindly informed me that Fred Raborg, editor and publisher of the haiku journal, Cicada, as well as Amelia, died Aug 13th. As you may know, Fred had been ill for quite some time. He will be sadly missed.

Haiku in his memory or comments about Fred or his work would be most appreciated for a tribute planned to appear in my website. In-hand deadline for this is Sept. 15, please. - Elizabeth St Jacques

I've attached several poems for your consideration in Lynx. One of them, "the ten-year-old" was second runner-up in the last Tanka Society of America contest. It was published in the TSA newsletter - I don't know if that counts as previously published or not, I'll leave it to you to decide. The last piece, "Living in the G-7", is a tanka/haiku sequence. The sequence was inspired by the recent summit meeting of the G-7 nations and Russia that was held in Genoa. Russia isn't really rich enough to be included in the G-7, but it is dangerous enough. I was really irritated by Pres. Bush's actions at the meetings. If a third world country acted the way he did, we would declare it a rogue nation and start the bombing. I don't think he has any idea how the majority of the world lives. Marc Thompson

I am writing a "workplace series" of tanka as I look back over 30 years of office work, and wonder if you would like to include some in the October issue of Lynx. Whether people are still in the workforce or out of it, they seem to relate. Thelma Mariano

This is a submission for Lynx - it is part of a series that is linked to William Wordsworth's Series of five poems "Poems on the naming of places" This time I feel that I don't want to print Bill's (I feel quite close to him now!) original alongside this. Basho and the others would not print the poems that they alluded to in their own works - they left that to the reader to know or not - I will give a clue by saying "after Wordsworth". paul.conneally

here are my links for the next Lynx. The more I deal with Lynx on the web, the more I like it. Gino Peregrini aka Gene Doty

. . . the book MOONDUST is almost ready.  
- Giselle Maya

Some good Lynx news from a clipping sent by June Moreau of an article in the Boston Globe by Beth Daley reporting that researchers have now found seven dens of the wildcat Lynx in all of Maine. The jest of the article was that this was a reason to celebrate (seven pairs of producing Lynx!) and to believe that clear-cutting forests does not spell the end of wildlife! Anyhow they had a cute photo of a very angry four-week old Lynx kitten with which I identified. jr

Don't forget to send your tanka in for the TANKA SPLENDOR Contest. This is such a special effort - we try to find our winners ourselves instead of asking only one person what is good, great and best. You be the judge! But you must send one of your tanka in before October 1, 2001 in order to take part in this venture. Check out the winners last year in TANKA SPLENDOR 2000.

## ESSAY

### GHAZAL GATHERING

Jane Reichhold

By not being involved with the beginning of the active haiku movement in the USA in the late sixties, (I was busy getting out of the country), I never knew about the ways and methods by which the genre came to be so well-known. Until 1980, I thought I was the only person in the modern world writing haiku in English. And I was so ill-informed of the form that I did not recognize how haiku was influencing the writers I was studying who never would have admitted to admiring the genre let alone putting their own poems in an imitation of the form. Sometimes, it seems, ignorance is truly bliss as I am often grateful to have been spared the haiku wars of the seventies with the load of anger and jealousy they espoused and perpetuated. Already, by the eighties, the rough spots had been patched with asphalt and the new paths were smoothed with handrails and almost adequate signs as more and better translations showed us that the early educators had not been able to give us the whole story of what a haiku was to the Japanese.

With the ghazal my position has been somewhat different. When Werner and I were passed Lynx from Terri Lee Grell in 1992, the very first issue had a ghazal in it and in the next issue was an article about ghazal writing by Edna Kovac. Her view and her opinions were off-center enough to evoke a lively response from Thomas Foote, and other writers who had studied the genre more. Yet all of these writers were dependent upon translations and the spare knowledge of introductions in books of ghazal translation. In spite of these drawbacks, or perhaps in the freedom of much ignorance, a number of poets were happily experimenting with the form. Eric Folsom of Canada had written a whole sheaf of them which he gave us to publish as we had space in Lynx. It was rare that there was an issue without at least one or two ghazals; a fact that was true in the past and currently.

Over the years we had how-to articles on the ghazal, usually written by the persons who were filling the ghazal columns with their examples. Ken Leibman, Bruce Williams, Red Slider, Gene Doty, Harsangeet Kaur Bhullar (read her article on her web site), William Dennis and Agha Shahid Ali all had their say. As it had been with haiku, each person's discovery of their part of the elephant changed the understanding of the whole animal.

At first there was no agreement even on how to spell the word. Earliest reports on the form have spelled it 'ghasel' and 'ghasal' and even 'gazel'. Now it seems to be that most persons use 'ghazal' yet we still have not agreed how to pronounce 'ghazal' in English. Is it to be spoken as gay-zel; calling to mind the grace of the leaping animal of the savanna? Or are we to say 'ghuzzle' to commemorate these old poems of the divinity of wine drinking? Or shall we imitate the Indian tongue with the silent gh leaving one with a wisp of an 'h' or even an 'r' almost connected to the 'uzzle' which when spoken before the uninitiated sounds like a speech defect forcing one to spell out the term in order to agree on the subject matter. In spite of the newer lessons, it seems that the original sounds were closer to the sound of 'gay-zel'. Even the Germans, who had discovered the genre at the time of Goethe, (he wrote his versions as Westoestlicher Divan - 1819), spelled the term "Ghaselen".

Next comes the problem of how to title the poems. Authorities maintain that in the original language the ghazal has no title. And when the ghazal is written out this is so. The first word is the beginning of the first line. And yet, when native speakers wish to refer to a specific poem they usually call it by the radif or the repeated word that works as the refrain. Since many English versions of the ghazal dispense with the repeat or rhyme, there is nothing to identify one ghazal from another. Some persons (I am

thinking of Werner Reichhold) has the first few words of the first line set in a bold font to indicate that this shall be the title without repeating the beginning words. Others only number their ghazals and many of the ones printed in Lynx came out as "Ghazal One" and "Ghazal Two".

In the native language the ghazal also does not contain the author's name in the place where we expect it in an English poem – under the title (since there is no title, this makes sense). In the ghazal the author weaves his name into the lines of the last couplet (very few are known by women, which does not mean that women didn't write them; only that their poems were not saved). Sometimes the person takes on a persona or a nickname but it is the handle by which he is known as writer. For English writers, the idea of putting their name into their poem seems to be very egotistic and calls too much attention to themselves yet whether the name is here or there is truly neither "here nor there". If poets are able to take this step, it often takes a while to feel comfortable with the practice. Having a non de plume makes it easier. Strange how easily we accept one convention and how hard it is to do something new. (An aside: I have noticed in the posting of the poems sent to Open Mic that often even free verse no longer has a title and many of those with titles will only place their name below the poem. Something is afoot and happening here.)

It has been fairly easy for everyone to agree that the ghazal should be written in couplets – two lines that have some kind of a cohesion of thought and syntax. And yet, because when written in Farsi or Urdu, there is no space between the couplets, many translations were at first printed out like a sonnet. Now the ghazal couplet is set so each one can be identified and enjoyed as a single stanza or poem.

When one hears a ghazal spoken there is often the feeling that the first line has a middle break - as strong as a colon or semi-colon. The break in the second line, if it is there at all, is sometimes as soft as a comma or the use of the idea of an 'and' or 'yet'. There is not much emphasis put on this factor so it is rarely argued except in comparing translations. Yet, if one works with the need for meter and rhythm these breaks become of greater importance.

Since the length of the ghazal is not an issue, everything is possible and will certainly be tried. Somehow there is the idea that five couplets is the minimum; otherwise how can the poet show his (and hopefully her) versatility and acrobatics in less lines? Since each couplet can theoretically stand alone, it is possible to have just one verse, but these are very rare.

The really big sticking place in ghazal discussions concerns the radif or the repeat. The most relaxed position of proponents of the repeat is that one only needs to use the same word to end each of the second lines of the couplets.

-----  
-----love

-----  
-----love

The trick and gymnastics becomes the twist of the mind to make bold leaps in subject matter between the couplets and yet end up with the same word at the end of the various ideas to end the line. When live audiences listen to a poet recite a ghazal, they hang on every word waiting to see how the images can twist around to land on the very same spot of a repeated word. Sometimes the radif is a one-word

noun. The author only needs to pick one that has several meanings or uses, line these down the page and fill in the blanks (it is not that easy to do, but helps the beginner).

Sometimes the repeat occurs with a rhyme in the next to the last word (which is repeated throughout). An example would be in couplets ending with "went too", "rent too", "sent two", and "went to". Another example is "to you", "shoo you", and "boo you". I think you get the idea.

An elaboration on this technique is to require that the first use of the radif end the first break in the first line.

-----love, -----  
-----love

A variation is to end both lines of the beginning couplet with the repeat.

-----love  
-----love

For most English ears, especially ones tired of rhymes, this feels like overkill, so it is very often ignored by thinking that the repeat ending the couplet is enough. Subsequent lines then only continue the rhyme (qafia) or repeat-refrain (radif) at the end of the couplet. Some people, I am thinking of Agha Shahid Ali in his book *Ravishing DisUnities: Real Ghazals in English*, maintain that unless there is a repeat or rhyme in all the couplets, the work cannot be righteously called a ghazal. All of the poems he has picked as "real ghazals" have this feature firmly in place. If one takes this stand, the major portion of the ghazals written thus far, by such poets as Adrienne Rich (Leaflets), Wallace Stevens, Robert Bly, Gene Doty and myself are not "real".

As the translations become more faithful, as native speakers continue to educate us about the genre, more and more people are accepting this feature and working with the idea of the repeat in their poems. In the table of contents of *Ravishing DisUnities* you can find the famous names of Maxin Kumin, Diane Ackerman, and W.S. Merwin. Among the familiar names of persons who have been in Lynx are: Marcyn Del Clements, Katherine Coles, Robert William Watkins and Bruce Williams and all of their poems have the repeat firmly in place.

The fact that non-English ghazals are either 'sung' or spoken to musical accompaniment, demands that the lines have a similar beat count or meter. The author is fairly free in establishing this factor. Sticking to it is another matter – the one that shows the poet's mettle. Most people do not count syllables or even beats but simply rely on their own sense of music to determine the length of the lines or not. Yet there is always someone who wants to make a hard and fast rule about this factor.

The aspect of the ghazal that interests writers of haiku and renga is the leap that is to be made between couplets. Within a couplet there is to be a strong cohesion; enough to make it a complete and independent 'little poem' in the same way a renga link can be a haiku. The hard part for many Westerners is to then drop that subject, make a leap into completely new territory with new ideas and images. This is a basic aspect of inner ghazal construction yet is so easily ignored if one has not learned to appreciate renga. Stream of consciousness writing prepares the poet for this path but one has to be a little wild and courageous to do it well. Learning the various techniques and methods of renga linking is invaluable for ghazal writing.

As with the haiku, the ideas of punctuation and capitalization are open to the author and thus, show a wide range of possibilities. Some persons capitalize only the first word of the couplet and begin the second line with a lower case letter. Many capitalize the first word of all lines regardless of sentence syntax. Some persons make sentences within the couplets and use common English capitalization however the lines form. Some people drop all caps, which gets problematic as the ghazal, more than the haiku, seems to need punctuation to guide the reader around the courses. As is often repeated: there is to be absolutely no enjambment between the couplets. This almost demands a period at the end of the couplet unless the sentence syntax is very clear. Yet the practice the poet takes up for these factors seems more dependent on the previous habits of the author's for writing poetry than any conformity of the ghazal form.

Subject matter has greatly enlarged since the ghazal has flown from the lips in Persia and India. Where once the form was filled with songs praising wine drinking, religious ecstasy and (mostly) homosexual love (though the word 'ghazal' supposedly means "talking to women") - much in the vein of our country and Western music, it has now enlarged to accept any variation or modification of these practices and spreads out into philosophy, observation and stream of consciousness writing. There is an immense lyricism in original ghazals – a factor that makes the genre so attractive to Western poets, as it is carried in the arms of sorrow, heartbreak and wit.

More and more it is becoming fashionable in English to toss around the official terms of matla (the opening couplet), radif (the repeated word or refrain), qafia (rhyme), makha (last verse) sher (poem), mushaira (poetry gathering) but none of these will assure of you writing an acceptable ghazal in English. But do not let mispronunciations hold you back. Your experiments in poetry will simply be joining a longer line of historical figures' efforts.

Where did the ghazal come from?

The first master of the form is usually recognized as being the Persian poet Hafiz (1325 – 1389), so that this century was considered the golden age of the genre in Farsi (Persian language). Ghalib (1797 – 1869) is the recognized master in the Urdu language. Agha Shahid Ali claims that the form was already known in the seventh century in Persia. This boast makes me wonder if there is a connection between that date and the destruction of the Temple of Jerusalem (649 AD) with the resulting Diaspora of the Jewish people whose most widely published poetry form was the parallelism as is familiar to us in the Psalms of the Old Testament. If these ancient poems are translated from the Hebrew in a more faithful manner, and forgetting the verse numbering system of current Bibles, one can rediscover the parallelism of poetry in the Psalms. (Take a look at Psalms of the New Testament if you need proof.)

One can almost see where the 'new' rules of the ghazal tightened up the form and gave it new hoops to jump through as the poets got parallelism down pat. And nowadays, there is very little interest in parallelism perhaps because of its primitive beginnings and the ease with which one can compose the couplets. The form of parallelism also flourished in early Chinese poetry and was taken to Japan where they added the idea of the leap and the twist to make tanka. Still parts of tanka are parallels. The comparisons of effects in nature and human feelings are a product of parallel thinking. And in tanka, when this is all there is, the verse lacks the excitement. The challenge of the active twist or pivot is the major excitement of both tanka and the ghazal. Korea checks in with the same development of parallels with an added twist to create its sijo.

At this point in time, more and more translations of the works of the famous, and even not so famous ghazal poets are beginning to appear in English. As the situation always is, no one is completely happy

with the works of anyone else in the field. Due to a variety of meanings for one word, it is almost impossible to use one English word to end each of the couplets in translations as in the original. In the thirty poems of Ghalib, translated by Robert Bly and Sunil Dutta (his son-in-law) in *The Lightning Should have Fallen on Ghalib*, only one, built on the word "enough" but given the title "Leftovers in the Cup" by Bly, keeps the refrain in all nine verses.

This factor of being unable to use the repeat in another language causes the problem that the reader who becomes enamored of the ghazal through translations, and uses them as models for poems in English, will be happy to not use rhyme or refrain. And some very excellent poems can be written in this manner which deserve to be accepted as they are. On the other hand, the ghazal teacher, the ghazal pope, will be directing traffic saying "that is a ghazal" and "that one is not a ghazal" based on this lone point.

My problem is that I can admire ghazals in translation that do not twist themselves out of shape in order to keep the rhyme / repeat and when I read ghazals in English that do keep this structure I get a feeling I am being strangled or hit over the head. Rarely am I able to enjoy the way the poet solves the challenge. Usually the repeat bangs shut the door of images streaming in my head with a movement that is akin to pain. And like the rhymed English verse, this type of ghazal puts my mind to sleep when I know how the next couplet will end.

I would like for us to remain open to all kinds of ghazals, as Gene Doty does with his Ghazal Page web site. I think his attitude is more positive, more modern, more interesting than the hard and fast rules of persons like Agha Shahid Ali who want to establish what he calls "the real ghazal in English". My idea is that we stay open to all variations and attempts so that the poets themselves, by their words and their works, will establish how the ghazal will become in the new land of our language. Instead of making ourselves write to a formal pattern, if we are allowed to try on different robes of different colors to see what garment carries best the message of the heart, I feel the ghazal has a real chance to become a beloved genre in our foreign lands.

A list of translations you might read:

1. *The Lightning Should Have Fallen on Ghalib: Selected Poems of Ghalib* translated by Robert Bly and Sunil Dutta. The Ecco Press: 1999.

2. *A Garden Beyond Paradise – The Mystic Poetry of Rumi* translated by Jonathan Star and Sharhram Shiua. Bantam Books: 1992.

3. *The Kabir Book – Forty-Four of the Ecstatic Poems of Kabir* translated by Robert Bly. Beacon Press: 1977.

4. *The Spiritual Wisdom of Haféz – Teachings of the Philosopher of Love* translated by Haleh Pourafzal and Roger Montgomery. Inner Traditions International: 1998.

5. *A Unique Ghazal Companion* which contains a collection of Hindi, Marathi & English equivalents of over 9000 Urdu words used in Ghazals, with 4000 couplets for reference. You can know more about the book by visiting the website. The book is in paper back edition, Pages: 274, Size: Double Crown, Cost via Air Mail US\$ 22.95

Ghazals in English:

1. Zero by Gene Doty. AHA Online Books: 1999.
2. Gene Doty's Ghazal Page which also has his article on the form.
3. "Leaflets" (1968) in Collected Early Poems 1950 – 1970 by Adrienne Rich. W.W. Norton: 1993.
4. "The Man With the Blue Guitar" in The Palm at the End of the Mind by Wallace Stevens. Random House: 1971.
5. Stanzas for "The Man With the Blue Guitar" in Wallace Stevens Opus Posthumous edited by Milton J. Bates. Random House: 1990.
6. Ravishing DisUnities: Real Ghazals in English edited by Agha Shahid Ali. Wesleyan University Press: 2000.

6. Ghazals written in English by the biki

Links:

1. Listen to ghazals from radio in India
2. An Indian Pop Star who sings ghazals:
3. A mailing list dedicated to urdu poetry & hindi poetry (Ghazal / kavita):
3. Gazal (sic) - Urdu Poetic Songs by David Courtney,
4. Ghalib - Poet and Poetry The Ghazal
5. Website on Hafiz and his love poetry:
6. Use the ghazals of Hafiz for divination – just ask a question and the ghazal you need to read will appear:
7. Books on Hafiz at Amazon.com
8. Is this a joke? - Ghazal Car Co. Inc - Kalamazoo MI
9. A leading Trucks Spare Parts Company in Dubai

## PARTICIPATION RENGA

[Remember: only links written in italics are open for your new links.]

### AT THE BEACH

Rule: 3 – 2 lines alternating

Ends with 12 links

fulfilling a last request  
gray north wind  
pummels with heavy drops Robert Flannery  
tourists wading in surf eyes open for sharks GD

receding wave  
a small boy bends  
to one more shell           cg

from afar  
calling her through both hands  
white teeth               WR

~\*~

fulfilling a last request  
gray north wind  
pummels with heavy drops Robert Flannery  
in rain the rocks find their colors cg

drilling three holes -  
the rose quartz  
bowling trophy       CC

spring clear air  
blows atop Mount Saint Helena  
down the greened Napa Valley     RF

deep in the wave  
just as it breaks  
light glints           GD

missing the obvious  
he slashes his foot  
on a mussel-covered rock     JAJ

### GENTLY WIPING DUST

Alternate 3-line and 2-line links for 100 lines

Theme: impermanence, transitoriness

gently wiping dust from grandmother's photograph october windsong TW  
warm fall days chill at sunset BJ  
last rush of color outdoing itself virginia creeper PC  
nights behind closed eyes images in red float by JR  
taps at sunrise opening daylilies on their graves PC  
flowers of our youth gone – everyone MM  
mind wasting memories disappear one by one JAJ  
haiku eagle gliding in a sea of chance LCG  
meteorite streaks across the night sky sudden cool breeze MWM  
morning sun on a bayou mist KCL  
first snow already melting dancing barefoot JAJ  
thinking of Tundra buying new shoes TLG  
breath suspended overhead, the northern lights in slow dance JAJ  
father and son pause for a long moment RF  
breeze changing course weeds in the dark field bend again GR  
up ahead another hidden curve ESJ  
SOFT SHOULDERS warning he glances at his wife their 50th year GR  
finishing the school of hard knocks YH  
digital display counting the failing heart GD  
she tries to add up all the good times YH  
battery low the calculator reads "ERROR" GD  
the new player late for the first game RF  
dealing cards to an empty chair careless of how they land GD  
face-down \$10,000 poorer CC  
richer for the experience bottoms up YH  
"How do you stop a wino from charging?" CC  
at the end of that rainbow no credit card cg  
back to the diner waiting tables JSJ  
old woman slips jelly packets into her purse cg  
mistaking a condom / for a condiment GD  
runs her tongue / over red lips, / snaps her purse shut cg  
Quiet out at sea the boat sinks JMB  
hot songs melt the wax from sailors' ears GD  
her old spaniel sings along with Jimmy Buffet cg

under the window  
cats profess their love JAJ

~\*~

gently wiping dust from grandmother's photograph october windsong TW  
warm fall days chill at sunset BJ  
last rush of color outdoing itself virginia creeper PC  
nights behind closed eyes images in red float by JR  
taps at sunrise opening daylilies on their graves PC  
flowers of our youth gone – everyone MM

mind wasting memories disappear one by one JAJ  
haiku eagle gliding in a sea of chance LCG  
meteorite streaks across the night sky sudden cool breeze MWM  
morning sun on a bayou mist KCL  
first snow already melting dancing barefoot JAJ  
thinking of Tundra buying new shoes TLG  
breath suspended overhead, the northern lights in slow dance JAJ  
father and son pause for a long moment RF  
breeze changing course weeds in the dark field bend again GR  
up ahead another hidden curve ESJ  
SOFT SHOULDERS warning he glances at his wife their 50th year GR  
finishing the school of hard knocks YH  
digital display counting the failing heart GD  
she tries to add up all the good times YH  
battery low the calculator reads "ERROR" GD  
the new player late for the first game RF  
dealing cards to an empty chair careless of how they land GD  
face-down \$10,000 poorer CC  
richer for the experience bottoms up YH  
"How do you stop a wino from charging?" CC  
at the end of that rainbow no credit card cg  
back to the diner waiting tables JSJ  
old woman slips jelly packets into her purse cg  
mistaking a condom / for a condiment GD  
runs her tongue / over red lips, / snaps her purse shut cg  
Quiet out at sea the boat sinks JMB  
hot songs melt the wax from sailors' ears GD  
listening to a star leaving the lake WR

heaving light  
beneath the wave JMB

~\*~

gently wiping dust from grandmother's photograph october windsong TW  
warm fall days chill at sunset BJ  
last rush of color outdoing itself virginia creeper PC  
nights behind closed eyes images in red float by JR  
taps at sunrise opening daylilies on their graves PC  
flowers of our youth gone – everyone MM  
mind wasting memories disappear one by one JAJ  
haiku eagle gliding in a sea of chance LCG  
meteorite streaks across the night sky  
sudden cool breeze MWM  
morning sun on a bayou mist KCL  
first snow already melting dancing barefoot JAJ  
thinking of Tundra buying new shoes TLG  
breath suspended overhead, the northern lights in slow dance JAJ  
father and son pause for a long moment RF

breeze changing course weeds in the dark field bend again GR  
up ahead another hidden curve ESJ  
SOFT SHOULDERS warning he glances at his wife their 50th year GR  
finishing the school of hard knocks YH  
digital display counting down the failing heart GD  
she tries to add up all the good times YH  
was never very good at math MHH  
one more short story attempt into the waste basket GR  
sharp edges cutting through the trash bag shadows leaking out GD  
thickening juice from the black beans can JMB  
long time on shelf honey crystallizes sticky jar JSJ  
mustard seeds pop in hot oil GD  
it will be a cold day in July when I cook again YH  
even the firecrackers refuse to light – a rainy fourth! dht  
indoors all afternoon two boys play Civil War one gray; one blue RF  
turned up by the plow / a musket's firing plate GD  
breaking / in the dustpan / last wedding cup cg  
after three years divorce papers JSJ  
Solomon sharpening his sword CC  
she leaves in the nick of time ESJ  
trio of melting clocks chime to the tune of "Hello Dali" CC

digital flicker liquid  
crystals seconds display GD

after the rainstorm  
every thing so fresh  
and tall JAJ

~\*~

gently wiping dust from grandmother's photograph october windsong TW  
warm fall days chill at sunset BJ  
last rush of color outdoing itself virginia creeper PC  
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finishing the school of hard knocks YH

digital display counting the failing heart GD  
she tries to add up all the good times YH  
battery low the calculator reads "ERROR" GD  
the new player late for the first game RF  
dealing cards to an empty chair careless of how they land GD  
face-down \$10,000 poorer CC  
richer for the experience bottoms up YH  
"How do you stop a wino from charging?" CC  
at the end of that rainbow no credit card cg  
back to the diner waiting tables JSJ  
old woman slips jelly packets into her purse cg  
mistaking a condom / for a condiment GD  
runs her tongue / over red lips, / snaps her purse shut cg  
Quiet out at sea the boat sinks JMB  
hot songs melt the wax from sailors' ears GD  
The Great Lost Kinks Album needle stuck in the last groove CC

"Just a little prick"  
nurse with a syringe      GD

~\*~

gently wiping dust from grandmother's photograph october windsong TW  
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last rush of color outdoing itself virginia creeper PC  
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she tries to add up all the good times YH  
was never very good at math MHH  
one more short story attempt into the waste basket GR  
sharp edges cutting through the trash bag shadows leaking out GD  
thickening juice from the black beans can JMB  
long time on shelf honey crystallizes sticky jar JSJ  
mustard seeds pop in hot oil GD  
it will be a cold day in July when I cook again YH

even the firecrackers refuse to light – a rainy fourth! dht  
indoors all afternoon two boys play Civil War one gray; one blue RF  
refugee children / strangers to laughter PGC  
stray sniffing / stranded starfish – / gray sky's cold FPA  
returning for Easter / without painted eggs / from a far place GM  
the rabbit in the dark of the moon WR  
first rays of dawn bantam rooster wakes up the whole family JAJ  
was it all a dream: cream on top of bottled milk? ESJ

The farmhouse mulberry  
spread shade and dropped  
large juicy berries RF

~\*~

gently wiping dust from grandmother's photograph october windsong TW  
warm fall days chill at sunset BJ  
last rush of color outdoing itself virginia creeper PC  
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long time on shelf honey crystallizes sticky jar JSJ  
mustard seeds pop in hot oil GD  
it will be a cold day in July when I cook again YH  
even the firecrackers refuse to light – a rainy fourth! dht  
indoors all afternoon two boys play Civil War one gray; one blue RF  
refugee children / strangers to laughter PGC  
stray sniffing / stranded starfish – / gray sky's cold FPA  
mackerel clouds reach every horizon piling the sea JR  
broken thermometer poisonous mercury scatters everywhere JAJ  
driving through a school zone spray of sparrows RF

waiting at the end of the block police speed trap JAJ

she remembers when fast  
was dad's Model T cg

another hole  
in the cheese CC

~\*~

gently wiping dust from grandmother's photograph october windsong TW

warm fall days chill at sunset BJ

last rush of color outdoing itself virginia creeper PC

nights behind closed eyes images in red float by JR

taps at sunrise opening daylilies on their graves PC

flowers of our youth gone – everyone MM

mind wasting memories disappear one by one JAJ

haiku eagle gliding in a sea of chance LCG

meteorite streaks across the night sky sudden cool breeze MWM

morning sun on a bayou mist KCL

first snow already melting dancing barefoot JAJ

thinking of Tundra buying new shoes TLG

breath suspended overhead, the northern lights in slow dance JAJ

father and son pause for a long moment RF

breeze changing course weeds in the dark field bend again GR

up ahead another hidden curve ESJ

SOFT SHOULDERS warning he glances at his wife their 50th year GR

finishing the school of hard knocks YH

digital display counting down the failing heart GD

she tries to add up all the good times YH

was never very good at math MHH

one more short story attempt into the waste basket GR

sharp edges cutting through the trash bag shadows leaking out GD

thickening juice from the black beans can JMB

long time on shelf honey crystallizes sticky jar JSJ

mustard seeds pop in hot oil GD

it will be a cold day in July when I cook again YH

even the firecrackers refuse to light – a rainy fourth! dht

indoors all afternoon two boys play Civil War one gray; one blue RF

refugee children / strangers to laughter PGC

stray sniffing / stranded starfish – / gray sky's cold FPA

mackerel clouds reach every horizon piling the sea JR

broken thermometer poisonous mercury scatters everywhere JAJ

driving through a school zone spray of sparrows RF

brownian motion: grandchildren zooming around the room GD

radio signal

the break-up song breaking up CC

~\*~

gently wiping dust from grandmother's photograph october windsong TW  
warm fall days chill at sunset BJ  
last rush of color outdoing itself virginia creeper PC  
nights behind closed eyes images in red float by JR  
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SOFT SHOULDERS warning he glances at his wife their 50th year GR  
finishing the school of hard knocks YH  
digital display counting the failing heart GD  
she tries to add up all the good times YH  
battery low the calculator reads "ERROR" GD  
the new player late for the first game RF  
dealing cards to an empty chair careless of how they land GD  
face-down \$10,000 poorer CC  
richer for the experience bottoms up YH  
"How do you stop a wino from charging?" CC  
at the end of that rainbow no credit card cg  
back to the diner waiting tables JSJ  
old woman slips jelly packets into her purse cg  
mistaking a condom for a condiment GD  
runs her tongue over red lips, snaps her purse shut cg  
Quiet out at sea the boat sinks JMB  
belly up as we like it both WR  
under revision again my top ten list CC  
fifteenth time around the block chasing a size 8 ESJ

dripping from her neck  
a pair of skates CC

## **JUST DAUGHTERS**

7 links

theme: family relationships

In the graveyard a carved stone angel with my daughter's face GM  
grandma in her rocker turning clouds into faces cg

"get water from the well" she said, wanting me out of the kitchen GM  
mother and son discuss making pickles JAJ  
sex education must, say the educators begin at home JR  
old uncle's eyes slowly disrobe his niece ESJ

out of the closet  
so many cases of  
family incest JAJ

two hands  
a glass pane away  
visitor's day CC

~\*~

In the graveyard a carved stone angel with my  
daughter's face GM  
grandma in her rocker turning clouds into faces cg  
after thirty years I still miss her my dead sister JAJ  
in a dream again back to playing hide and seek WR  
absent father only a ghost in attic shadows GD  
grandmother's teakettle still sings on the stove cg

laughing over e-mail  
from our daughter's  
daughter GD

~\*~

In the graveyard a carved stone angel with my daughter's face GM  
grandma in her rocker turning clouds into faces cg  
"get water from the well" she said, wanting me out of the kitchen GM  
mother and son discuss making pickles JAJ  
sex education must, say the educators begin at home JR  
up on the armoire kids find the porno mag JAJ

sticky wings  
of a moth JMB

~\*~

In the graveyard a carved stone angel with my daughter's face GM  
grandma in her rocker turning clouds into faces cg  
grandpa playing solitaire JAJ  
"Don't trust. Don't talk. Don't feel." RF  
blurted out words in grade school the room laughs until I cry GD  
whispering together in another language late grandparents JAJ

prairie grasses flow

across my mother's grave GD

~\*~

In the graveyard a carved stone angel with my daughter's face GM  
grandma in her rocker turning clouds into faces cg  
after thirty years I still miss her my dead sister JAJ  
in a dream again back to playing hide and seek WR  
big sister checks the youngster's breath missing cigarettes ESJ  
twin sons loving them for who they are JAJ

aunts roll their eyes  
at a niece's tantrum cg

### LA RENGA LOCA

Rules: This is an acrostic renga. Subsequent links must spell out some haikai-related word by reading the first letter of each word down the lines. Finish with 12 links.

La Renga Loca  
Your muses lock horns with  
Night Blooming Jazzman  
X-treme Poetry – Carlos Colón

How easy it is  
Always writing verbs that end  
In ing  
Keep it to a minimum and  
Use the present tense without JAJ

She wouldn't be as  
Holy  
I  
F  
The neighbor's boy wasn't that shy WR

T  
Heoretically one would  
Reach out for an  
Endangered species  
Emigrate from  
Linear thinking, leap  
Into  
Never explored spiritual territory  
Eliminating blah-blah and  
Report back about the transparency of a raindrop WR

## SWARMING

6-word links on the

Theme: swarming

Storm a hand, shape of wind -John M. Bennett

just as the sunflower opens – bees! cg

The pounding footsteps blue-light special CC

church walls filled with the bees JAJ

carrying the birds - idea of food JR

## TIME

with 3, 2 liners up to 12 links

Theme: time's length and limits

birds winging south / no speed limit / only time JSJ

for how long / this dream? RF

clocks changed again - / spring ahead / fall back GM

Nasira waiting for us at the edge of eternity CC

oh to sit forever in the warm cradle of the moon ESJ

even now we walk through the breath of angels cg

from the top

of Mount Tamalpais

one more step GD

spinning

from the top of a wave

my next shape JR

~\*~

birds winging south / no speed limit / only time JSJ

for how long / this dream? RF

clocks changed again - / spring ahead / fall back GM

patches of snow mound of primulas in bloom JAJ  
the tension gone from his strings Howdy Doody CC  
how many neighbors don't "Make Room for Daddy" ? cg

behind the screen  
on Sullivan's stage  
Elvis writhes GD

Sid Melton  
spewing a cup  
of coffee CC

~\*~

birds winging south / no speed limit / only time JSJ  
for how long / this dream? RF  
clocks changed again - / spring ahead / fall back GM  
patches of snow mound of primulas in bloom JAJ  
the tension gone from his strings Howdy Doody CC  
falling apart as she is carted away old mannequin ESJ

sorting jackets  
in the thrift shop -  
tarnished penny GD

no head  
la mujer invisible JMB

carrot and coal  
in a pool of snow CC

~\*~

birds winging south / no speed limit / only time JSJ  
for how long / this dream? RF  
clocks changed again - / spring ahead / fall back GM  
Nasira waiting for us at the edge of eternity CC  
oh to sit forever in the warm cradle of the moon ESJ  
the thinnest sickle of light beyond clouds GD

and opposite  
the northern lights  
begin their dance JAJ

sun rise

the curve of a hill  
spreads the glow JR

~\*~

birds winging south / no speed limit / only time JSJ  
for how long / this dream? RF  
sleepless / how long the hours / of night? JSJ  
both hands point in the same direction CC  
still appealing with upturned palms the stone virgin ESJ  
Death – nothing more than a pitstop for Earnheart CC

plastic birdbath  
4th season of crows  
tips it a bit cg

~\*~

birds winging south / no speed limit / only time JSJ  
for how long / this dream? RF  
clocks changed again - / spring ahead / fall back GM  
Nasira waiting for us at the edge of eternity CC  
I'm sure it was she who visited my dream just last week JAJ  
in absence of friends your own age lighting a candle WR

lava lamp  
the sixties bubbling  
into rebirth CC

### **WITHIN/WITHOUT**

Alternate 3-line and 2-line links for 30 lines  
Theme: interconnectedness

sliding open this bathroom window startling Orion -Robert Flannery

left the hair  
combed my hand JMB

with jeans a belt of stars  
the radiance of a daughter JR

**THISGAMEISENDEDTHISGAMEISENDED**  
**MOST BEAUTIFUL GAME**

7 Links

Rule: each link is a question; no answers!

Do not add on links. Just Enjoy. Thanks!

What are the rules / for the most beautiful game, / and who can play? RF

If she sends him / one perfect rose / will he call or hide? cg

Is it better / to burn? / or to marry? JR

Can this phoenix rise again /from the charred ashes of summer? CC

dream: butterfly / or butterfly ballot? GD

is that just flapping in the wind? ESJ

no, but where

has my hair ribbon gone? JAJ

How do these golden clouds

prepare for sunset? RF

who can tell what seed

some sparrow will plant? cg

~\*~

What are the rules / for the most beautiful game, / and who can play? RF

If she sends him / one perfect rose / will he call or hide? cg

Is it better / to burn? / or to marry? JR

Is anything better than making more nuclear bombs? RF

a poor woman birthing her 10th child? JR

fathered by a cannibal who is a philanthropist? WR

where has the primal horde

stampeded to now? GD

~\*~

What are the rules / for the most beautiful game, / and who can play? RF

What are you seeking / when you smile / at strangers? JSJ

Where do we come from / Why are we going? GM

what's the joke about navel seamen? JR

how many syllables does it take to screw up a haiku? CC

does it come from your head or your gut? cg

How can rain fall

from empty sky? RF

~\*~

What are the rules / for the most beautiful game, / and who can play? RF

What are you seeking / when you smile / at strangers? JSJ  
Where do we come from / Why are we going? GM  
what's the joke about navel seamen? JR  
how many syllables does it take to screw up a haiku? CC  
how many fools to pull out the chair? JAJ

which hurts worse,  
my pride or posterior? CC

~\*~

What are the rules / for the most beautiful game, / and who can play? RF  
rather like / a Miss Universe pageant / don't you think? JAJ  
uni verse or multiverses? ??  
will that be Visa or Mastercard? JAJ  
fifteen per cent or twenty? GD  
does it really matter? JAJ

is the clock a phone? JMB

~\*~

What are the rules / for the most beautiful game, / and who can play? RF  
What are you seeking / when you smile / at strangers? JSJ  
Where do we come from / Why are we going? GM  
Do you see that very bright star? JAJ  
How about in five hundred years? RF  
Can I buy shares in stockings interneted WR

what is the price of peers' pears  
palliated on a pair of piers? JR

And you? Would you like to do a renga with this bunch of experts?

**FINIS**