



sunlit jar

Carmen Sterba

4 seasons of haiku

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Introduction

The haiku in this *sunlit jar* come to us from Japan, where the author lives. They are not however typical Japanese haiku, but perfect examples of how haiku has found its own niche in many languages all over the world.

In most cases haiku made its way into other languages by means of translations of Japanese classics, that inspired people to write in the same style and form. Thus haiku was adopted in many countries. However, each language has its own characteristics, each culture has its own history, values and sentiments, each poet has his own poetics - and inevitably all this influenced the way haiku developed outside of Japan. Thus, after being adopted, haiku was adapted, resulting in new haiku traditions in different parts of the world.

All this was acknowledged in the country where haiku originated, Japan, as witnessed

by the so called Tokyo Haiku Manifesto and the Matsuyama Declaration, both published in 1999. To quote one of the seven statements that constitute this Tokyo Haiku Manifesto: *In global haiku, the greatest emphasis should be placed on the poet's originality.*

This lovely volume then - lovely both in design and in content - is a fine example of poems which show both the spirit of haiku and the poet's originality.

It is not surprising that Carmen Sterba should write haiku that appeal internationally. After all, she is American by birth, with Czech roots, and though she is living in Japan, her first collection of haiku is published in the Netherlands - in English of course!

Max Verhart,

European director,
World Haiku Association

THE

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CHICAGO

Stacks of midnight

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THE

LIBRARY

Stacks of midnight
the library
along the coast

stroke of midnight

stroke of midnight
the blast of foghorns
along the coast

winter doldrums
adding lavender sachets
to each drawer

ice rink
children skate backwards
to ragtime

cold wind
his name no longer
in the inbox

out of nowhere

out of nowhere
the construction crew stops -
birdsong

woodland path
the scent of plum blossoms
draws us forward

out of nowhere

cherry blossoms
a child asks for a cloud
of cotton candy

Passover week
a mother's gaze lingers
on her firstborn son

spring roads
after a three-day absence
the beloved returns

childhood home
the pussy willow
just as it was

after the rain
I check the growth
of each tulip

sunlit jar

sunlit jar
the beekeeper's gift
on the doorstep

dappled shade
the three-legged cat swipes
at the lizard's tail

rose trellis
a butterfly adjusts
its flight

back from death's door
the housecat rolls
in the sunshine

longer days
two seagulls shadow
a red paper kite

family picnic
the youngest child pockets
a watermelon seed

homeless

groping around
an unfamiliar room
summer holidays

hometown road

hometown road
an old burma shave sign
flaps in the wind

Halloween masks
she pretends not to know
the neighbors

rainy day
rummaging through
flaps in the grandma's
button drawer

shadowy steps
climbing towards the sound
of the shakuhachi

clear winter day
Mount Fuji whizzes by
the train window

button drawer

brisk walk -
lifting the surrounding
 bareness
flutter of wings

pale morning
leafless tree exposes
a wider view

COLOPHON

sunlit jar, 4 haiku seasons by Carmen Sterba, *Radish 30*, was printed in 8 pt Humanist type on 90 grs. seagull in 96 copies in 2002. Rob Scott was intermediate between poet and editor.

Radish is a handbound haiku series on one A4 sheet, in which poets can share their poetry with intimate friends. The name refers to Kobayashi Issa's:

*The turnip puller
points the way to me
with a turnip*

The editor has replaced the turnip featuring in this haiku by a radish, considering himself an apprentice.

Wim Lofvers

19. David Cobb: Just a Haiku
Alphabet / Zomaar een Haiku
Alfabet
20. Helena Wolthers: Omzien
21. Max Verhart: geen woord teveel /
not a word too much
22. Robert Scott: Cool Relief
23. Wim Lofvers: Wat is Haiku:
momentopname van een zienswijze
24. Han Gruschke: de wolken voorbij
25. Daniel Py: l'Année Haiku
26. Wim Lofvers: een kijkgaatje
27. Rob Scott: Only Sounds
28. Marianne Kiauta: Poldergroen
29. Hans Reddingius: The Elements
30. Carmen Sterba: sunlit jar

radish 30