

# Haiku

*[the Interior and Exterior of Being]*

道



*revealing the Tao of nature and humankind as one*

**Don Baird**

*hokku ~ haiku ~ modern haiku ~ poetry*



*Haiku*





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Author: Don Baird  
Proof Reader: Diana Ming Jeong  
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## PREFACE

whether hokku  
haiku  
modern haiku  
or short poem  
the words unfold  
what I have  
seen  
felt  
dreamed  
breathed  
into spaces



# INTRODUCTION

from tragedy to butterfly  
wrapped bodies to priests' tears  
transcendence of the moon  
gunshots and bombs  
children playing war  
birdsongs disappearing into the night  
random in nature  
nothing by accident  
this journey  
a chaos  
through it all





out of darkness . . .  
a light autumn gust  
remembers me

fall whispers . . .  
the art district's  
late night smoke

stop sign —  
the songs of sirens  
chasing street dust

above/below —  
the soft parts of  
a cloud

evolving . . .  
the moon bigger  
tonight

found  
in the living will —  
cherry blossoms

storm drain —  
the vertical axis  
of winter

crow's foot —  
the sudden thunder  
beyond



a few stars —  
lingering in the  
ocean spray

dented hull —  
the latent ricochets  
of Japan

tsunami shore;  
a child's hands washed  
in blood

whale carcass;  
just near the horizon  
a neon haze

tsunami's tug . . .  
a rolling whale lost  
in debris

old sea turtle —  
beyond a cold breeze  
and plastic bags

along the leaf . . .  
a light-green veil  
of hope

winter twilight;  
the elegant pause  
of a birdsong



— an old bear;  
slowly through the marsh  
into the stars —

harboring  
a tomato can —  
autumn's voice

never ending . . .  
the wind blows against  
itself

warped bamboo —  
an effigy turns  
away

— snow  
gripped in my fist  
a sun burst —

grilled sardines —  
the summer sun raising  
the dead

sinking tide . . .  
the sideways call  
of a fetus

orange peel;  
the wrinkles of my thoughts  
on the moon



half-moon;  
the tide appears  
undecided

may gray;  
the heron's remarks  
lost at sea

minuet . . .  
the things I see  
in clouds

light breeze . . .  
a bugle's call crosses  
the cemetery

each rose the wind leaves behind

how early  
did the rain rise?  
still the snail

winnowing . . .  
a long shadow hides  
my thoughts

daydreaming how quickly my mind



beyond  
the pond's thin ice —  
yesterday

powder across the pines across

longing for home I become a memory

following my loneliness the moon

fading rainbow . . .  
the thought of stars  
that never were

backpack;  
the silly thought  
of permanence

raw fish:  
coiled in the scent  
of boredom

curbside garbage —  
the carefree attitude  
of money



marching  
in the field of death —  
a number

between pages memories pressed

in the bible a leaf never worn

on the sleeve  
of a priest's robe —  
his tears

christmas —  
the unopened gift  
of forgetting

winter dream . . .  
a shooting star  
closes my eyes

winter storm;  
a birdsong dangles  
from a shadow

silently,  
between raindrops . . .  
my dreams



winter's trail . . .  
an empty shell  
loses its way

coloring  
snow with snow . . .  
a winter gust

cloud break —  
a dragonfly flares  
its colors

muffled —  
in a summer fog  
hints of autumn

autumn clouds —  
the moon folds  
into a frown

fugu soup — —  
even my chopsticks  
hesitate

first few steps . . .  
a hungry mosquito  
lands its song

pink blue —  
the narrow road  
between pines



dripping  
into a leaf . . .  
winter turns

beyond the moon  
a star, leaving itself  
behind

unfinished —  
the winds of his brush  
design the sky

humid sun;  
the battlefield  
still bleeds

waning moon —  
a tinge of death  
in the halo

Syria —  
the odd chemistry  
of war

Jersey Shore;  
even a stuffed shark  
is homeless

autumn turns . . .  
where ravens become  
shadow



shy moon —  
a touch of you  
in the mist

the distance  
between grass blades —  
this one ant

umbilical —  
the astronaut returns  
on mother's day

in the space between words    worlds

her curves in the hands of the moon

high wire all the birds I'll never meet

summer's heat —  
the shrapnel of  
a human being

the sunflower  
never dreamed of;  
Hiroshima



— between bombs . . .  
an evening of love  
and body parts —

old pond —  
the sound of something  
I had forgotten

deadheads —  
the flowerless stems  
of stillness

lost in dreams . . .  
I've never grown up  
to play war

at dinner  
a little voice remembers  
. . . the graves

slung over horses —  
the white wrapped bodies  
of winter

twilight —  
her child gutted  
by a glint

tormented —  
the brown eyes  
of someone



— children planted,  
in the fields  
of war —

white wrapped —  
the damascus steel  
of hate

refugees —  
the faceless presence  
of innocence

AK-47;  
the suddenness  
of it all

refugee —  
the dusty tan  
of a baby's tear

rocket blast —  
souls ascend, in clouds  
of blood

shots pop . . .  
between the tears  
of children

wrapped —  
but not held together,  
her tiny hands



tears  
in the sand  
of her eyes . . .

water-boarding . . .  
the stark stare  
of truth

dusty breeze . . .  
the diminuendo  
of a sunset

waxing grove —  
the liberal scent  
of a blue sky

this weed  
is also reluctant . . .  
autumn chill

upside down —  
the sudden frown  
of the moon

woodpecker —  
the unusual tempo  
of this morning

over his shoulder;  
soldiers come home  
one by one



returning  
the sound of gunfire  
returning

evening poker . . .  
his legs still walking  
the trails of Nam

grenade!  
salvation trapped  
under his belly

hanging leaf —  
the sadness of being  
of being

lingering leaf  
falling, falling . . . through  
my dream, again

PTSD —  
this one daisy,  
the world

war cries . . .  
his ears ring along  
his lifeline

unearthed —  
the cloth shape of someone  
I know



hunkered down;  
the dust of someone  
blows overhead

elevation of thoughts the clouds

engaging the marmot only whistles

raining  
from a silhouette . . .  
silence

— clouds cracking . . .  
raindrops blow in all  
directions —

summer squall —  
the fusion of sweat  
and rain

clouds chasing clouds . . .  
the disorganization  
of autumn

dripping  
from an old umbrella . . .  
a slow sunset



winter wind . . .  
a star streams, from nothing  
to nothing

deep gong . . .  
the monk strikes the sound  
of my mind

— of all the moon's  
comings and goings . . .  
the moon —

chilled morning —  
the weight of winter  
in a bird song

cherry tree —  
the young blossoms of  
a soldier's dream

beneath  
a torn umbrella —  
autumn

— spyglass  
the wildness of  
a sparrow's path —

window frost;  
in its stillness  
the windmill



in the slag —  
a flower I didn't  
expect

slow rain . . . . .  
a long summer day  
of birdcalls

midnight busker;  
a never ending  
slow song

in her web . . .  
only starlight  
and dreams

silhouettes;  
a rock skips from  
star to star

pipe puffs;  
an old man adds  
to the storm

— fanning spring . . .  
the last seagulls  
become a cloud —

fading halo . . .  
the moon becomes  
a sunrise



desert storm —  
the peaks and valleys  
of an old man's face

ocean spray . . .  
more syllables land  
on my mind

looming . . .  
a birdcall stretches  
the horizon

cupping clouds;  
the storm leaks between  
my fingers

near the edge  
the loneliness  
of the moon . . .

to dream  
above the clouds . . .  
a coyote

dreaming . . .  
the autumn air  
it awakens

the rock —  
thinking about rolling,  
rolling



mixing dreams . . .  
my thoughts take off  
with a crow

sunrise . . .  
the first glimpse  
of tomorrow

spring prayer;  
silence passing  
in the breeze

early spring;  
in every droplet,  
another

butterfly;  
the sound of spring  
in your sigh

holding on . . .  
the dead silence  
of snowflakes

open field;  
the transient paths  
of a breeze

between pages;  
memories forgotten  
but this rose



late blossom —  
the waning moon stays  
for supper

darkened sky;  
the pen seeps across  
my haiku

— star to star  
the moon follows  
my thoughts —

songbird —  
even your shadow  
sings to the moon

spring fever . . .  
a stream's trickle  
through my mind

dusty road —  
prairie winds ignore  
the turns

first light;  
the many voices  
of mist

dropping petals a rose leaves town



moon rings before the storm after

clouds lost in the deep blue shrinking sails

teapot song the length of the room

fallen leaves the many faces of memories

last cicada;  
the unusual telepathy  
of nature

amongst roses —  
a wild wind shapes  
a butterfly

3 a.m.  
the taste of a  
lemon moon

after sundown;  
the city lights bathe  
a cricket's song



winter eve —  
a star leaves itself  
behind

long sunset . . .  
a shadow filling  
the pond

cupping hands —  
the ocean slips back  
to the stars

distant dream;  
a butterfly fans  
the clouds

winter's breath —  
the fleeting faces  
of rain

tundra;  
the lion's path  
to orion

river banks;  
the low flying caw  
of a shadow

jazz funeral;  
a trumpet's voice  
carries the casket



wind blown . . .  
the pathos of a  
fallen moon

buried —  
the waters of yesterday  
floating water

last leaves —  
the slow exhale  
of autumn

the sudden  
fluster of a donkey;  
scattered clouds

a memory of memories of innocence

autumn leaves;  
a birdsong follows  
the wind

bound  
in a shoestring —  
winter's chill

dandelions —  
the long explanation  
of heartbreak



each rose the wind leaves behind

early moon . . .  
the heat of summer  
still in the leaves

folding cranes . . .  
an autumn gust lifts  
one away

道

harvest moon —  
plowing my last  
thoughts



## AFTERWORD

thoughts

come and gone

with the sound of wind

and shooting stars

in the midst of rolling rocks

continue

yet

begin again





## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Don Baird, shortly after his birth, moved with his family to live on his grandfather's ranch in Wyoming. He lived in an old converted chicken coop building for some time. Eventually, he and his family moved to San Diego, California and remained there until he was 19.

At 15, Baird entered the world of martial arts of which remains his career today. He has been featured in most of the major industry magazines including Inside Kung Fu, Black Belt, Inside Karate and Fighting Stars. In 2009 he was inducted into the Masters Hall of Fame and was featured in two videos regarding police defensive tactics (Hands On - Police Defensive Tactics).

During his years of training kung fu, Baird became interested in Asian poetry and philosophy. Haiku became his first serious pursuit as a poet. While he had written various free styles of poetry over the years (threw most of it away), it was haiku that raced his heart. From haiku, he soon included haiga (with photographs), tanka and haibun.

Don is published in numerous anthologies and online journals including Ambrosia: Journal of Fine Haiku, Simply Haiku Journal, World Haiku Review, Notes from the Gean, Haijinx, Modern Haiku, the Heron's Nest, Frogpond, and others. He placed 3rd two years in a row in the Kusamakura International Haiku Contest, 2004/2005. He was also awarded 1st place (2009) in the NHK Radio International Haiku Contest: his poem was read by Soka Tadashi Kondo as part of the radio program. In 2013, he won the Haiku Now! Contest with a modern haiku about Nagasaki. His most recent books are *Haiku Wisdom* and *As the Crow Flies*.

When Baird has free time, he likes lounging on his big-fat-green-puffy chair and pondering this whole thing called life.

For more information regarding Don Baird, please visit his website:  
<http://www.kungfukarate.com>



(photo by Don Baird)

nagasaki . . .  
in her belly, the sound  
of unopened mail

Don Baird  
Haiku Now, 1st Place, 2013



## ADDENDUM

The following short poems are based on a touch of the aesthetic principles of haiku/hokku/tanka combined. They are short journeys of twists and turns.

### **rises and sets**

*looking for peace  
they bring me war  
in my head  
the moon rises and sets  
to my dismay  
how things keep going on  
in-between breaths of the dead  
a shooting star trails  
my thoughts  
to the end*

## **in the breeze**

*such a pond  
that I follow  
not with my eyes  
but my exhale  
simplified in the breeze  
of nature and her ways  
trees laugh at my dilemma  
or are they jealous minds  
a thousand years old  
with hidden rings  
outlining my life  
in the downpour*

## **between clouds**

*in the aches  
of my joints  
the pain of lightning  
between clouds  
folding birds  
into a sea of storm  
sand castles fall  
the tide turns  
to roll once again  
in the freedom  
of just being  
lost*

## **a nation lost**

*coasting  
with the moon  
across this land  
of the homeless  
in a nation lost  
to poppies and things  
swaying this way or that  
screaming at cabbies  
who are always late  
to the ultimate party  
of imperfect death*

## **so it seems**

*it seems  
so it seems  
rose petals  
melt  
my dream  
my dreams  
of what could be  
if I were free  
like a butterfly  
dreaming her way  
into nowhere  
but through the leaves*

## **bring me back**

*so many times  
I ask why  
then wait  
for God or someone  
to bring me back  
to the garden  
of lost dreams  
amongst onions and weeds  
my heart remains quiet  
in the light breeze  
of her headstone*

## **endless**

*footsteps  
through autumn  
thoughts of love  
holding hands  
with endless  
streams of sunset  
strolling aimlessly  
through the shortcuts  
of my heart  
to you*



## **song thrush**

*do you see  
the milky way  
pouring itself  
to the end  
of my mind  
a song thrush  
slows down the world  
beneath my feet  
along the cutting  
edges of my soul*

## **a storm of hearts**

*voices emerge  
suspended  
in a storm  
of hearts  
lost in the midst  
of spring rain  
seedlings perk  
along the trails  
of rainbows  
and their beckons*

## into being

*things unseen  
called  
into being  
as though  
they already are  
floating above  
in a soft wind  
of mist  
amongst the charm  
of desire*

## leapfrog

*playing leapfrog  
in the privacy  
of their own desert  
echoes of laughter  
jump  
from bomb to bomb  
without a thought  
of war hate or greed  
caught  
in an unknown blast*

## **old crow**

*swirling  
in all directions  
dandelions  
pass a street lamp  
under the old crow  
near an alley  
a few coins of hope  
lying about  
near the dead guy  
holding down a shadow*

## **colliding**

*tinted smiles  
beneath autumn's chill  
falling into everywhere  
a mind can travel  
without purpose  
clouds seem to meander  
between colliding  
amongst themselves  
and a carefree blue sky  
ignoring it all*



## CREDITS

The following publishers have published one or more of the poems included in this book. I greatly appreciate their efforts and the beauty of their publications.

A Hundred Gourds; Lorin Ford

Moongarlic; Brendan Slater and Sheila Windsor

Notes of the Gean Book Publication; Colin Stewart Jones

Red Moon Press; Jim Kacian

Simply Haiku Journal; Robert Wilson and Sasa Vazic



## **Other Books Available by Don Baird**

Suh Do Kwan: 2013, The Little Buddha Press

As the Crow Flies: 2013, The Little Buddha Press

L.A. Thru the Lens: 2013, Notes of the Gean Publishing  
(online publication)

Haiku Wisdom: 2011, MET Press

Feed the Dog, Let Out the Cat: 1997, American Martial Art  
Association

Transcending the Void: 1986, American Martial Art Association;  
2nd Printing, 2014, The Little Buddha Press









**Haiku, the Interior and Exterior of Being**, is a book of imagination; yet, it is poetry of truth. Nature, her ways, and her secrets are revealed one poem at a time, one breath at a time, unfolding the smaller picture within the larger one — and, vice-versa. Between lines, between breaths, you will journey to the center of a poet's dream-room.



**Don Baird** (2009 Martial Art Masters Hall of Fame) is an internationally known and respected martial arts teacher and poet. He specializes in Japanese poetry forms (in English) such as hokku, haiku, modern haiku, tanka, haiga, and haibun. Don describes himself as a simple man looking at nature's things through the lens of poetry. He is always searching — yet, deep within his heart, he knows there is nothing to be found but himself.

"In his Preface Don writes, *'what I have seen felt dreamed breathed into spaces . . . birdsongs disappearing into the night . . .'* Soul is indefinable. More than mere images, these quiet singing rivers of poems as a collection become stories of a remarkable life, spoken firmly from the Earth, with a delicacy of rhythm -- and grit. You can feel the truth living here. At the center of each poem is an inviting absence, leading this reader back to deeper questions: 'Who am I, here in this flowering, roiling experience of seasons in orbit?' Utilizing a plethora of haiku techniques and literary styles, these poems also deepen my life, for my life too is drawn here, as these poems hint at answers as well as explorations. Here, poet, mind and nature *'power across the pines across . . . with the sound of wind and shooting stars'* to *'continue yet begin again,'* circulating between language, nature, poem, and reader. I warmly recommend this book. It is a remarkable achievement revealing above all the heart and mind of a deeply compassionate human being."

**Dr. Richard Gilbert**

Associate Professor, Kumamoto University, Japan

**Haiku**  
**\$14.95**



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