

THE HERON'S NEST — VOLUME 8 (2006)



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VOLUME 8, ISSUE 1 – MARCH, 2006

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FEATURED POEMS

summer morning
squeak
of the bicycle seat

Steven Thunell

*

chill wind —
the heart of an oak
leaves the chimney

Robert Bauer

*

appointment calendar
a coffee ring joins
one day to the next

LeRoy Gorman

HERON'S NEST AWARD

summer morning
squeak
of the bicycle seat

Steven Thunell

So often it is a commonplace, unaesthetic sound that sparks a haiku moment of revelation and discovery. The plop of a frog, the cry of a cicada, the squeak of a bicycle seat — unassuming sounds that rivet our attention to the present yet expand our awareness in all directions.

This issue' Editors' Choice Award poem by Steven Thunell embarks as someone mounts a bicycle. Readers are invited on a journey through the sights, sounds, and scents of summer. Sensations suggested, but not specified by the poet, are conjured in the imagination of each reader by the alchemy of haiku poetics.

The first line kigo is inviting and vast. Morning is a time of freshness and unlimited potential, when the day is still what you make of it. Summer, for children, is a time of freedom from school and homework, when they entertain and educate themselves by their own resources. For adults it may be a time of vacation from later forms of school and homework, when they can be like children again.

"Squeak," that wonderfully onomatopoeic second line, suggests age and wear, but also speaks of continuing utility, enjoyment, and exuberance. It is also the sound of a rent in the fabric of time as poet and reader pedal down this morning's sidewalk and back into childhood as well. The sound's source (a bicycle) represents for many of us an early taste of freedom and discovery. In later life it remains a vehicle of escape from the drudgery of 9 to 5.

After a brief pause at the end of line two, the long third line gives the feel of the bike getting underway. Its destination is up to each reader, for Thunell's exercise of craft extends not only to his use of technique but to his knowing when to stop. He skillfully condenses an experience into a seed that can later bloom in our imagination, affirming the reader's essential role in the poetic process and the poem's central experience: imaginative freedom and discovery.

The poem is a fine example of *karumi*, often translated as lightness, and described by Haruo Shirane as "... a minimalist aesthetic stressing simplicity and leanness. For Basho, it meant a return to everyday subject matter and diction, a deliberate avoidance of abstraction and poetic posturing, and relaxed, rhythmical, seemingly artless expression."¹

The lesson taught by haiku's first great master more than three centuries ago is still true today: "The haiku that reveals seventy to eighty percent of its subject is good. Those that reveal fifty to sixty percent we never tire of."²

— Robert Gilliland
March 2006

¹ Shirane, Haruo, *Traces of Dreams- Landscape, Cultural Memory, and the Poetry of Basho*, Stanford University Press, 1998, page 269.

² Yasuda, Kenneth, *The Japanese Haiku - Its Essential Nature, History, and Possibilities in English*, Charles E. Tuttle Company, 1957, page 6.

POEMS

winter evening
a light is burning
in the back of the house

Jerry Ball

*

winter doldrums
my landlady enumerates
the perennials

Christopher Patchel

*

winter silence . . .
another armload
of junk mail

Ed Markowski

*

spring rain
the crumpled obituary
by my bed

Aurora Antonovic

*

mausoleum —
just passing
through

Yu Chang

*

from the teahouse
the smell of must
fallen cherry leaves

Margaret Chula

*

fallen leaves —
a line of snails
in the bark fold

John Barlow

*

swollen stream —
my friend talks about
the cancer

Gary Steinberg

*

Rain and wind —
in the circle of mourners
one person smiling

George Swede

*

Monday morning
ant on the coffee cup
going in circles

Lane Parker

*

country town
a railway station
without tracks

Myron Lysenko

*

red-throated finch song
a hint of it in Beethoven's
rhythm and angles

Brent Partridge

*

no old habits —
the newborn's
cry

Gary Hotham

*

evening rain —
the screen door
covered with moths

Collin Barber

*

bay shallows
a starfish moves its fingers
over mine

Lorin Ford

*

for the second time
the mourning dove feeding
without her mate

Katherine B. Steimann

*

spring dawn
one at a time
the newborn's eyes open

Marcus Larsson

*

white handkerchief —
my mother shoos
a cabbage moth

George Dorsty

*

opening the window
after lovemaking
the earth's fragrance

Dietmar Tauchner

*

beached kelp —
we examine each other's
life lines

Michael Dylan Welch

*

a rainbow
horizon to horizon
the curved wings of gulls

Grant D. Savage

*

tomorrow I leave
cones high
in the old pine

paul m.

*

spring morning
a chained dog
settles in the dust

Quendryth Young

*

country road
no way home
without a detour

Joann Klontz

*

summer rain
the back yard hole filled
with tricycles

Richard Krawiec

*

creek mouth
bathing the dog
in sunset

Tony Beyer

*

the ride
past the roadside fruit stand
— spring solitude

Sabine Miller

*

late spring
lambs play
in the slaughteryard

Graham Nunn

*

commute —
carpooling with
the same fly

Dave Bacharach

*

first rain
the smell as dust
changes to mud

Nathalie Buckland

*

rainy morning —
the old beggar not there
outside the tea shop

K. Ramesh

*

playground
searching the hubbub
for one voice

Quendryth Young

*

summer night
the strawberry stain
on a popsicle stick

Harriot West

*

wild roses —
the iron trellis
tilts to one side

Adelaide Shaw

*

origami
we fold the map into
a vacation

Darrell Byrd

*

cool morning —
the smell of garlic bread
reaches the street boy

Melchor F. Cichon

*

tongue out
the boy guides a new airplane
round and round

Randy Brooks

*

bright morning
the smell of geraniums
on my fingers

Allen McGill

*

looking up
rules of punctuation —
the green hills

Cherie Hunter Day

*

Love-in-the-Mist —
a Persian carpet
worn to warp threads

D. Claire Gallagher

*

garden path —
the same weeds
in their country

Gary Hotham

*

rain on the horizon
the inside of the nest
worn smooth

Sabine Miller

*

low tide
rain wets
the driftwood

Tim Edwards

*

peonies —
how earnestly we discuss
last night's soap opera

Carolyn Hall

*

cold tea
in the tea cup
no more to say

Greg Piko

*

wisp of a cloud
in a vast blue sky —
my thoughts exactly

Frank Critelli

*

to the beat of rain
the builder darkens
with his wood

LeRoy Gorman

*

jellyfish dance
breathing in
with a perfect stranger

Sandra Simpson

*

their love
now out in the open
night blooming jasmine

Paul Pfleuger, Jr.

*

summer breeze
taking down the wind chimes
you left

Graham Nunn

*

heat wave —
a spider pokes a leg
from a curled leaf

Cindy Zackowitz

*

summer's end
only dead grass
shows the circus was here

Sandra Simpson

*

the horse fly
attracted to my ear
. . . strike three

Dustin Neal

*

withering garden —
ladybugs neatly wrapped
in spider silk

Curtis Dunlap

*

moonlight
on a white cactus blossom
end of summer

Victor Ortiz

*

heat
the smell of ozone
before a storm

Mark M. Bastian

*

litter
in the wildflowers
prisoners

Marilyn Appl Walker

*

day winding down
the pink flick
of a lizard's tongue

Carolyn Hall

*

summer drought —
deciding where
to cross the creek

Rodney Stevens

*

summer moon —
her eyelashes touch
the telescope lens

Chad Lee Robinson

*

summer's end
loose-leaf notebook snaps
echo in the hall

Sari Grandstaff

*

crisp blue sky
the fir tip
rests a crow

Elizabeth Kusuda

*

spawning salmon —
a bubble rises between
the river stones

Cindy Zackowitz

*

nameless stream
I vaguely remember
my father's face

Katherine Cudney

*

autumn wind
the sidelong glance
from a goose

Robert Bauer

*

early autumn park
the perfect circles
of a little girl

Bruce Ross

*

autumn walk
needles at the bottom
of the stream

og aksnes

*

autumn breeze
a pine cone waddles
toward the shore

Allan Burns

*

windrows . . .
the undulating whistle
of pigeon wings

John Barlow

*

Indian summer —
a squirrel tips over
the bag of rock salt

David Giacalone

*

heat lightning
the skull of a deer
in the tall grass

William Cullen, Jr.

*

a cloud of dust
behind the tractor . . .
harvest moon rising

Kay F. Anderson

*

evening shadows
white egrets fold
into their tree

Lynne Steel

*

barn for sale —
between the rafters
a wedge of moon

Edith Bartholomeusz

*

historic cabin
we nibble windfall apples
on the rotten porch

Elizabeth Howard

*

All Souls' . . .
a wasp returns
to the lintel

Helen Buckingham

*

autumn dusk —
the hill gradually slopes
toward city din

Kala Ramesh

*

scent of windfalls —
the whisper
of solitaire cards

D. Claire Gallagher

*

old armchair . . .
its weight
this autumn night

George Dorsty

*

fall night heavens . . .
the sound of our bath
draining

Scott Metz

*

college photos
out of the shoe box
a dry apple core

Yu Chang

*

fall leaves
he tells me
I've changed

Katherine Cudney

*

autumn sun
I follow the shadow
with the limp

Jerry Ball

*

approaching winter
the fragrance of herbs
under sweet straw

Hilary Tann

*

autumn mist
the honey locust
holding light

Ann K. Schwader

*

sweet grapes
the conversation passes
between friends

Hilary Tann

*

shortening flames
from the blacksmith's coals
autumn sun

Lenard D. Moore

*

autumn's scent
in the pile of leaves . . .
I take the dare

Connie Donleycott

*

bumper crop . . .
the pecan tree's shadow
stippled in shells

Nancy Stewart Smith

*

late night —
a waitress repeats
the list of pies

John Stevenson

*

at the funeral
his secret life
white chrysanthemum

Anne Homan

*

memorial tablet
copper letters push up
through the snow

Kay Grimnes

*

his Christmas package . . .
the icy steps
of the post office

Alice Frampton

*

frost
everywhere I look —
the Milky Way

Jörgen Johansson

*

town tree —
amongst the Christmas lights
a crow's nest

Colo Buchanan

*

crescent moon
the smooth curves
of her headstone

Marie Summers

*

Shortest day
a sparrow chirps
in the dark

George Swede

*

Nutcracker Suite —
a star falls from
the ballerina's hair.

Alexis K. Rotella

*

cold night
the dashboard lights
of another car

John Stevenson

*

as I wait for you
the light of Venus
through falling leaves

Kirsty Karkow

*

falling leaves
we both speak
of living wills

Tom Tico

*

watching the waves . . .
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beside me

K. Ramesh

*

winter stars . . .
I learn to paint
empty spaces

Andrea Grillo

*

cold morning
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razor thin

Scott Mason

*

snow day . . .
finding my first grade class
in a drawer

Scott Mason

*

New Year's Eve —
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with the ebb tide

Nara Bauer

*

winter dusk
a grandchild draws
my weary smile

Laryalee Fraser

*

walking the dogs
over the snowy fields —
Orion

Tomislav Maretic

*

first snow —
against my will
the beauty

Mary Lee McClure

*

leaf-fall
for a moment
the cat all kitten

Yvonne Cabalona

*

still a few leaves —
dog hair
painted into the wall

David Boyer

*

first snowflakes
a cat whisker
in my hand

Marili Deandrea

*

snowman
one less carrot
in the pot

Beverly Tift

*

cold morning
the old horse gets up
and goes to work

Ruth Holzer

*

*

winter light
flour, sugar, and the canister
that held dog biscuits

paul m.

*

deep winter
not knowing for certain
where the garden is

Burnell Lippy

*

bare branch ridged with snow
a chickadee
powders my face

Linda Jeannette Ward

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FEATURED POEMS

spring breeze –
I catch the tune
she leaves behind

Kala Ramesh

*

the hiss of air
from a rubber raft
summer twilight

Harriot West

*

she hides,
I seek . . .
fireflies

Chad Lee Robinson

HERON'S NEST AWARD

spring breeze —
I catch the tune
she leaves behind

Kala Ramesh

The breeze carries a tune, but with it comes much more. What does the poet catch?

- a. a melody
- b. the spirit of the singer
- c. spring
- d. all of the above

There is nothing like a marked change from winter to spring to put bounce in one's step. Well yes, there's a budding romance, seeing your grandchild for the first time, or winning the lotto, but they aren't infectious the way changing seasons are. The former examples, though they do produce ripples, are experiences of individuals. Seasonal changes influence the multitudes living in a given region, all at about the same time.

Imagine a countryside about 100 miles southeast of Bombay, India, where this poem was probably written. Or just envision spring where you live. A warm floral-scented breeze kicks up. Gladdened by the proliferation of flowers and new foliage, a passerby is compelled to respond. Perhaps you'll fancy her humming or whistling. I like to imagine that she begins to sing. By the time this person has passed beyond sight, the poet identifies the tune, or at the least attunes to the melody. Even when she can no longer hear the voice, it continues to resonate.

Implication is at the heart of haiku craft. A gifted writer gives us enough information to find our way directly into an experience, but not so much that we feel manipulated. Writers who expect, or insist that we perceive things as they do, draw attention to themselves and away from what it was that inspired them. A skillful use of suggestion permits us readers to come to the poet's experience in our own, unique ways. Allowed to enter a poem without distraction, our involvement is therefore more immediate, more intense. What we are likely to find is common ground: emotions and moods that belong to no one, yet to all of us.

The amount of information required for a haiku to be effective is not determined solely by the poet. The reading of haiku is as much an art as the writing of them. Although readers unfamiliar with haiku can still find much to enjoy, some understanding of the craft is helpful. Familiarity with the imagery in a poem is also important. Some haiku, like this one by Kala Ramesh, are made up of widely recognized images and therefore have the capacity to touch a great number of readers. Who on this planet has not felt the wind? Who has not heard music (or if deaf, does not at least know of it)?

Spring causes a woman's spirits to soar and she is compelled to give voice to her feelings. Upon hearing the tune, another woman is captivated by its vivacity. Inspired, she writes a haiku and sends it to a magazine. The editors are moved by the spirit of spring in the tune in the poem. They publish it. People everywhere read the poem and in turn catch the spirit of spring. No matter where you live, no matter what time of year it is in your part of the world, Kala Ramesh offers you an emotion that transcends the season that produced it.

Just think, there is a woman somewhere in India right now who hasn't the slightest idea that she has played a pivotal role in broadcasting the emotional essence of a season. The tune she gave voice to one day is now amplified by a haiku. How far her joy has

rippled! Our thanks to Kala Ramesh for so beautifully playing her part in the ritual of sharing.

– Christopher Herold
June 2006

POEMS

my key
turns in the lock
lilac scent

Dietmar Tauchner

*

spring morning —
the cable car bellringer's
rhythmic burst

Tom Tico

*

blue violets
the girl with Down's syndrome
makes up a poem

Michele Root-Bernstein

*

new litter of kittens —
the missing rung
on the hayloft ladder

Cherie Hunter Day

*

April drizzle —
an ump checks the lineups
the sky

Paul Watsky

*

lace curtains
the spin of sunlight
from a bicycle

Laryalee Fraser

*

magnolia buds —
my one-armed neighbor
plants a tree

George Dorsty

*

first date
dogwood petals
before the leaves

Kay Grimnes

*

Amish country —
their black and white clotheslines
in spring

Barry George

*

cherry blossoms
the rookie pitcher puts on
his game face

Ed Markowski

*

spring break —
the migrant child chases
willow fluff

Nara Bauer

*

mud wasp and I
alive together —
outdoor bath

C. Avery

*

swallow bellies
grazing the water
we drink

Paul Pfleuger, Jr.

*

North Carolina —
the lush local dialect
of mockingbird song

Marianna Monaco

*

waterfall
a sad man's face
in the bark of a laurel

Brent Partridge

*

Pale green waves
jostle ashore in twilight . . .
the throb of bullfrogs

Joan Zimmerman

*

fern
uncurling
the faintest breeze

Robbie Gamble

*

dogwoods near the stream
a blossom
in our jelly jar

Kay F. Anderson

*

the dark folds
of a greening mountain —
my sister's locked diary

D. Claire Gallagher

*

mountain pass —
each valley a different shade
of spring

Nara Bauer

*

sunlit ravine
a rope bridge
over butterflies

Ernest Berry

*

mile-long jetty
tourists toss starfish
into the sky

Cathy Drinkwater Better

*

whale watching —
a distant cloud rains
into the sea

Cindy Zackowitz

*

sent outside
while the old women talk:
scent of sweetpeas

Sandra Simpson

*

thunderclouds —
an aproned butcher
takes his lunchtime stroll

Matthew Paul

*

spring mountain wind
a traveller rests
on his hat

Darrell Lindsey

*

parents' quarrel . . .
through the glass-bottomed boat
another world

Nancy Stewart Smith

*

poppy garden . . .
in and out of the flowers
the child's red cap

Keiko Izawa

*

storm brewing
our cat sphinxed out
on the porch rail

Joshua Gage

*

first summer rain —
the flower vendor
lingers on the porch

K. Ramesh

*

yellow lilies
lighten the day — the last walk
for my dog and me

Andrea Grillo

*

in the backyard shade
a small gust brings coolness
and a white petal

George Swede

*

harsh sun
the complicated eyes
of a grasshopper

Marilyn Appl Walker

*

a mosquito
caught in my hair —
scent of pine

Cindy Zackowitz

*

distant thunder —
a load of swamp drops
from the backhoe

Linda Jeannette Ward

*

afternoon heat
a passionflower falls
into the pool

Lorin Ford

*

summer afternoon
baby and I discover
the beauty of leaves

Vanessa Proctor

*

afternoon breeze —
sound of the loom
from the weaver's house

K. Ramesh

*

flash of lightning
the dry creek
choked with rubbish

Graham Nunn

*

gnats in a tizzy . . .
older brother
takes the mound

Patrick Sweeney

*

summer afternoon:
a raven and its shadow
weaving through the treetops

Chitra Rajappa

*

garden trail
my comings and goings
have worn a groove

Giselle Maya

*

first cicada
I fold away
the blankets

Dawn Bruce

*

cherry tomatoes
cradled in my hands
August heat

Irene Golas

*

sunlight
grazes my fingers —
the first ripe peach

Laryalee Fraser

*

sculpture garden
roots of the strangler fig
create their own forms

Margarita Engle

*

the lake's reflection
goes all the way out the limb
summer solitude

Burnell Lippy

*

stirring wheat . . .
the faint sound
of an ancient sea

Chad Lee Robinson

*

placid lake —
the sound of bike wheels
on the gravel path

Nathalie Buckland

*

roadside stall —
in a tomato box
the "trust" coins

Patricia Prime

*

baled hay
left in the field
a cricket's ragged chirp

Jack Barry

*

last light
an ant swims
in the hummingbird feeder

Sabine Miller

*

summer stars
we pick out
our house

Victor Ortiz

*

a moonless night
the old car's muffler
leaves sparks in its wake

Barry Goodman

*

kite shop —
a red dragonfly
flits in and out

Francis Masat

*

one more game
of shirts vs. skins
summer dusk

Collin Barber

*

in the pleat
of a morning glory
a firefly's light

Emily Romano

*

midnight
some of the sounds
are insects

Quendryth Young

*

rising sun
the shadow three times bigger
than the bird

Brenda J. Gannam

*

red leaf
I return it
to the shore wind

Ellen Compton

*

autumn broomsage
a golden eagle
curves across the sun

Elizabeth Howard

*

something startles
the rabbit field . . .
mackerel sky

John Barlow

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FEATURED POEMS

a little inn
with a swinging sign-board . . .
the evening chill

Michael McClintock

*

almost spring
she tells the whole story
in a single breath

John Stevenson

*

spring morning
last year's new neighbor
introduces himself

Kate MacQueen

HERON'S NEST AWARD

A Little Inn

Of the countless excellent haiku that appear in journals and contests, the best evoke emotion or sense of mood and offer unexpected insight. Indeed, these qualities largely define haiku. As one who reads these brief poems daily while wearing an editor's cap, I am often reminded that while the poet's hand is invisible in an outstanding work, the crafting of a successful haiku requires skill and percipience. Each word must be carefully considered, no element of the finished haiku is random. In order for a haiku to gain special notice from this journal's editors, its disparate images in juxtaposition must create a satisfying resonance. A haiku often possesses other positive qualities, bonus qualities if you will, that engage our attention. The September issue's Editors' Choice Award winner is that kind of haiku:

a little inn
with a swinging sign-board . . .
the evening chill

Michael McClintock

By alluding to a well-known person or literary work, one that is meaningful to the reader, a poem may create resonance beyond the significance of the immediate imagery. Yet another layer of appeal surfaces when a haiku evokes the memory of an event similar to that in the haiku. Michael McClintock's poem does both for this reader. Its ambience and musicality initially draw me into the moment, and I am immediately reminded of the small inns in Europe where I sometimes stopped many years ago.

The Japanese masters often paid homage to widely-known authors or their works. The author of "a little inn" is in good, even revered company. McClintock's timeless haiku could have been as true a century or more past as it is today. Shiki or Santoka might

have stayed at such an inn as this one, and like Basho, Issa, and other famous haikai, they wrote of the inns they visited during their travels. In one of his most popular haiku, Basho depicts tiredly searching for an inn and finding wisteria in bloom.

The repetition of short “i” sounds in “a little inn” creates a pleasant assonance, enhancing a mood that invites me to enter McClintock’s poem and linger awhile. I easily imagine coming upon this inn, its sign-board softly creaking as it rocks in the twilight wind. I am journeying alone, and the promise of human contact draws me closer. Already feeling the evening chill, I walk to the door. The fire that is surely crackling in the hearth will warm me. Soon, with a hot toddy comforting my insides as well, I know that here is where I will spend the night.

— Ferris Gilli
September 2006

POEMS

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a water lily's root
trailing out of sight

paul m.

*

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she talks about death
hypothetically

Collin Barber

*

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twilight chill

H. Gene Murtha

*

cicada song
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Carolyn Hall

*

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Edith Bartholomeusz

*

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Nara Bauer

*

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Lynne Steel

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Sabine Miller

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Stephen Engleman

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from the fruit flies

Gary Hotham

*

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autumn begins

paul m.

*

filigreed moon
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Yu Chang

*

morning fog
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Hilary Tann

*

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Ojibwe harvest

Jeff Winke

*

farm stand —
a pie in each basket
of apples

Adelaide B. Shaw

*

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Margaret Hehman-Smith

*

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Charishma Ramchandani

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Martin Gottlieb Cohen

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Marilyn Appl Walker

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Chad Lee Robinson

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Jonny Colley

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Laryalee Fraser

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James Deahl

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Kirsty Karkow

*

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Timothy Hawkes

*

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Kala Ramesh

*

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Angelee Deodhar

*

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K. Ramesh

*

autumn wind
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David Gershator

*

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John S. O'Connor

*

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to hear the trees

Deb Baker

*

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*

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John Kinory

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*

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Natalia L. Rudychev

*

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I've never used

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*

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a new edge
on the old axe

Timothy Hawkes

*

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*

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Nancy Stewart Smith

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Shane Robitaille

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John Barlow

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Patricia Benedict

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warm rain
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*

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*

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a ground squirrel's
puff of dust

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*

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a rabbit zigzags
the garden row

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wheat wheat wheat wheat —
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katydid chorus
nothing that can't wait
until tomorrow

Christopher Patchel

*

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FEATURED POEMS

winter wind —
a cradlesong sung
in an ancient tongue

Billie Wilson

*

deep woods
a sapling with one leaf
changes color

paul m.

*

mountain trail
a sit-here rock
padded with moss

Margarita Engle

HERON'S NEST AWARD

winter wind —
 a cradlesong sung
 in an ancient tongue

Billie Wilson

Haiku is a poetry not of the mind or invention, but of experience. When the subject of a haiku involves a major human emotion such as love, it is the writer's challenge not to overwhelm the poem. Haiku writing is a way of seeing the world and expressing an insight in a manner as unadorned by the poet's opinion as possible.

Death, grief, and love are certainly parts of life and as such are subjects for haiku. But what is love? The ancient Greeks used three words for love: *eros*, *agape*, and *philia*. *Eros* as love should be obvious. *Agape* was used by early Christians more specifically than "altruism" alone. The word came to mean love of God, or God's love. In addition to "brotherly" love, Aristotle described *philia* as showing love by a parent. It is this most basic perhaps original bond among humans that Billie Wilson has indicated to the reader.

In the here and now of Wilson's clear images, it is winter. We can hear the wind, see its effects, and sense the cold. Next to consider is "cradlesong." This is the crux of the haiku; it is the genius of the poem. All at once, so simply, we can hear a lullaby and know that an infant is being comforted. The rocking cradle or the embrace of a family member's arms is a warm place sheltered from the elements. Is the cradle an heirloom? Is there a handmade quilt? The position of the infant is not clear nor need it be. Like so much in this haiku, this is open to interpretation according to the life experiences of different readers. Just what language is sung is unanswered. By leaving this out, the author allows each of us to look even further into our own traditions. My first thought

was of some Native American language. My ancestors surely sang in Gaelic. It could be Hebrew, Greek, Chinese, or almost any language — even a European one.

I used to sing to my daughter; my wife did; so too did various older women in the family. My wife's maternal grandmother was the family champion. Sick child? One who won't relax and go to sleep? Just make the handoff to Grandma Willoughby. Edith would croon softly in an unlovely yet effective voice. Sometimes she would walk around the room to the beat of her droning melodies. I also saw this comfort given to various nieces and nephews. In my vision of the poem the singer was between 85 and 95 years old as she worked her magic.

Billie Wilson's craft employs expansive words and has them in the right order. The sound of the harsh wind is juxtaposed in fine balance with comfort and safety.

Cannot we all hear it? Familial love is such an ancient song.

— Paul MacNeil
December 2006

POEMS

brilliant moon
I hold my hand up to it
unadorned

Yvonne Cabalona

*

shooting star . . .
the warmth
of a child's breath

Timothy Hawkes

*

ray of moonlight —
our bare feet disturb
the cedar floorboards

Janet Brof

*

job listings
morning glories open
by the bay

Cherie Hunter Day

*

the search light
bouncing off clouds —
new-town lonesome

C. Avery

*

autumn night —
the spruce drops
silver needles

Chaz Southard

*

her bedtime —
more stars
on the other side of this tree

Sabine Miller

*

moving day
one last look
at the elm

Ross Vassilev

*

autumn melancholy —
the guitar in the corner
awaits my friends

Tomislav Maretic

*

starless night . . .
from the barroom a love song
about red lips

Michael McClintock

*

almost dawn
an empty whiskey bottle
near the phone

Victor P. Gendrano

*

first morning
without my old dog
my face wakes up dry

Sari Grandstaff

*

onion braids
won't go any tighter
November evening

Burnell Lippy

*

starry starry night
he wishes he had
a big thought

Greg Piko

*

autumn morning —
passengers in the train
behind their newspapers

Kala Ramesh

*

shattered mirror —
each image of myself
whole

Karen Cesar

*

foggy studio window —
the primary colours
lined up in jars

Gina

*

deep autumn
the candle flame flickers
as I pass

Lane Parker

*

starlit sky
some brighter
than others

Yu Chang

*

nearly winter —
the stilt dancer bows
to a spruce

Nara Bauer

*

cold rain
barbed wire in the middle
of an oak

Robert Bauer

*

the flock's wings —
one bird veers
into silence

Ian Daw

*

first snow
he promises to write
a new will

Susan Constable

*

first snow
deer enter the orchard
on tiptoe

Jeff Stillman

*

leaves falling . . .
some on the boulder,
some in the stream

K. Ramesh

*

the falcon
tugs at her tether —
shortest day

Ruth Holzer

*

ice patch
the surprising strength
of mother's grip

Roberta Beary

*

after the burial . . .
my father's smile
on so many faces

Curtis Dunlap

*

mountain stillness —
the loon call
held by the lake

Hilary Tann

*

a corner of dry leaves
she slowly folds
the second opinion

Elizabeth Moura

*

raw winds
the tilt
of my flamingo

Patrick Sweeney

*

moonlit night
the shadow of a wolf
just like a wolf

Rosa Clement

*

Orion rising
in the eastern sky
we compare secrets

Deborah P. Kolodji

*

worn-out stairs
up to my old mother's home —
an owl hooting

Sasa Vazic

*

she strokes
my thinning hair
winter moonlight

Jeff Stillman

*

early snow
outside the window —
pomegranates

Miriam Sagan

*

snow moon
the hunter's
empty trap

Aurora Antonovic

*

a star falls
into the winter dark
the rumble of a train

Angelee Deodhar

*

crackling fire —
her breath
smells of cinnamon

Tom Wooldridge

*

midwinter's night
the occasional chirrup
of the smoke alarm

André Surridge

*

cold moon —
a moment of hesitation
years ago

John Stevenson

*

the wrong road —
precisely placed hoof prints
of a horse

Patricia Prime

*

shop window
the beggar's reflection
in new clothes

Petar Tchouhov

*

first warm day
the toy cup fills
with sunlight

Dietmar Tauchner

*

first day of spring
she doesn't ask me
why I'm late

Gregory Hopkins

*

morning shift
one star
over the mineshaft

Tony Beyer

*

road puddles —
umbrellas dip
at each passing car

A. Thiagarajan

*

muted sunshine
the old cat stalks
with a limp

Robert Epstein

*

the scent
of thawing earth
distant dinner bell

George Swede

*

filling
a whole room —
the snapped daffodil

John Barlow

*

fat moon
through every window
bull frogs

Jack Barry

*

morning alarm —
father's face
floats away

Ruth Holzer

*

barely awake . . .
my first steps
flush pheasant

Scott Mason

*

spring dawn
my cup
full of river

Graham Nunn

*

soft breeze
the weaver bird loops
a blade of grass

Ashley Rodman

*

cake crumbs —
the balloons leak
my breath

Gary Hotham

*

morning moon —
the mouse
on a small branch

Brent Partridge

*

layers of mountains —
echoing boom of the blue
grouse

Ruth Yarrow

*

a willow shoot
between river stones
morning light

Timothy Hawkes

*

the petals still creased
on a fresh primrose . . .
Moving Day

Colo Buchanan

*

parting ways
the cherry branch
weighed down with blossom

Lorin Ford

*

distant siren —
the sound of a heifer
calving

Quendryth Young

*

ankle-deep
in cherry blossoms
and still alive

Helen Russell

*

she uses
a kitchen chair . . .
magnolia blossoms

Scott Metz

*

new buds
the snake's tongue
tasting air

Rajiv Lather

*

soft rain
the clown's smile
turns a little sad

William Cullen, Jr.

*

caroling magpies
a ghost gum outlined
with light from the east

Sue Stanford

*

spring breeze —
fragrance of sweet grass
on the mare's breath

Ellen Compton

*

Mother's Day —
admiring lilacs
just past their peak

David Giacalone

*

lavender farm
we mingle
with bumblebees

Connie Donlyecott

*

Spring Day
the cat returns with cobwebs
in his whiskers

Maria Steyn

*

summer cabin —
I do away
with the curtains

Audrey Downey

*

lunch time
the treecutter finds a tree
for shade

LeRoy Gorman

*

sunny snag
a pair of turtles slide
into thick silt

Stephen Engleman

*

heat wave —
crayfish holes
incline to the north

George Dorsty

*

boundary feud —
picking the blackberry
that breaks the web

Matt Morden

*

from deep in the forest
a haunting birdsong
sung just once

Billie Wilson

*

ancient sequoia
straw hat
in my hand

D. Claire Gallagher

*

marsh lightning
the tree's blossoms open
into egrets

Martin Gottlieb Cohen

*

stepping stones
across the stream
your hand small in mine

John Kinory

*

salmon run
does the river too
have memory?

Yvonne Cabalona

*

remembering him
the worn shell
still pink inside

Lynne Steel

*

moonlight
on the rocky side
of an oyster shell

Helen Buckingham

*

outstretched cormorant
the sun rays filter
through my fingers

Paula Fisher

*

dreaming aloud
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the sand slipping out
from under my feet

Christopher Patchel

*

alone with my thoughts . . .
the wet sand a mirror
between ebb and flow

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surprise me

Lynne Rees

*

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the lacecap hydrangeas
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Matthew Paul

*

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*

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*

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*

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according to plan

Tom Tico

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Sandra Simpson

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John Stevenson
Nassau, New York

Nancy Stewart-Smith
Athens, Georgia

Maria Steyn

Johannesburg, South Africa

Jeff Stillman
Norwich, New York

André Surridge
Hamilton, New Zealand

George Swede
Toronto, Ontario, Canada

Patrick Sweeney
Misawashi, Japan

Hilary Tann
Schuylerville, New York

Dietmar Tauchner
Puchberg, Austria

Petar Tchouhov
Sofia, Bulgaria

A. Thiagarajan
Mumbai, India

Tom Tico
San Francisco, California

Jennie Townsend
O'Fallon, Missouri

Ross Vassilev
Delaware, Ohio

Sasa Vazic
Beograd, Yugoslavia

Marilyn Appl Walker
Madison, Georgia

Harriot West
Eugene, Oregon

Billie Wilson
Juneau, Alaska

Tom Wooldridge
Mt. View, California

Ruth Yarrow
Seattle, Washington

Quendryth Young
Alstonville, New South Wales, Australia

Cindy Zackowitz
Anchorage, Alaska

Joan Zimmerman
Santa Cruz, California

VALENTINE AWARDS, 2006

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MEMORIAL PAGE FOR TOMBO (LORRAINE ELLIS HARR)

Tombo (Lorraine Ellis Harr)

October 31, 1912 — March 3, 2006

Lorraine Ellis Harr distinguished herself as a leader in the early days of the English language haiku movement. She founded the Western World Haiku Society in 1972, the same year she took over the editorship of *Haiku Highlights*, renaming it *Dragonfly*. The Japanese word for dragonfly (Tombo) became Harr's pseudonym. She taught haiku extensively, focusing primarily on a traditional approach. Fifteen books of Tombo's poetry have been published, most of which are collections of haiku. Here are four favorites:

No other sound —
just Spring rain dripping
through wisteria

*

Dragonflies —
Even if I could catch one
I wouldn't

*

Midwinter gloom —
she turns on the lights
in her doll's house

*

The time it takes
for snowflakes to whiten
the distant pines

MEMORIAL PAGE FOR KAJI ASO

Kaji Aso

April 25, 1936 – March 11, 2006

“Art,” Kaji Aso once said, “does not come from art. Art comes from life.” He often expressed the wisdom of his beliefs in haiku although haiku was just one of his many special gifts. Kaji Aso was beloved as a professor. He was a talented opera singer, marathon runner, roller-blader, ice skater, tea master, and an artist whose work is among the permanent collections of museums around the world. Mr. Aso founded the Kaji Aso Studio Institute for the Arts in 1973. It is where the Boston Haiku Society often meets. Four favorites:

spring snow
a little remains
on the stolen car

*

voice of the peeper
glides
on the spring breeze

*

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

*

harvest moon
spider too,
gazing at it quietly

MEMORIAL PAGES FOR FRANCINE PORAD

Francine Joy Porad

September 3, 1929 — September 27, 2006

Francine was my dear friend for more than twenty years. We worked together weekly from 1988-1995 producing Brussels Sprout. I miss her phone calls and frequent query, “Do you have time for one haiku?” I treasure the sharing that resulted as we discussed nuance, word choice and order, conversations that often led to jokes and stories. Her paintings and writings continue to remind me of her talent, drive, warmth, and generosity.

first dabs —
her paintbrush now
in a grandchild’s hand

— Connie Hutchison

*

Again we are reminded that we have a limited visa for life on this earth. Another of our beloved haiku poets has entered a new dimension. Having published a “first haiku” for many of us, Francine’s Brussels Sprout journal painted a path where we were warmly invited to journey. Remaining forever close to us, Francine Porad’s dynamic life and spirit continue to pulsate throughout the haiku world.

seeking balance
down a rain-rutted road . . .
cry of the night heron

— Kay Anderson

*

Losing those we love is not easy. Francine's spirit will live forever, in our hearts and in our minds. I met her for the first time at a ginko in the Bloedel Reserve. Her warm smile was the first thing I noticed. Then she took my hand and introduced herself. My heart pounded, and I'm quite sure I fumbled with trying to introduce myself.

autumn wind . . .
learning that her middle name
was Joy

— Connie Donleycott

*

Francine was the first editor I approached with my haiku. She rejected them, firmly but in such a nurturing and encouraging fashion that I was encouraged to try again and again. Now that I am working as a haiku editor myself, Francine is one of my most frequently invoked models. I'm doing my best to pass along what she gave me, with some of the warmth and humor that was so evident in her editorial work and in her poetry. This poem is one I wrote on the day I first met Francine and is one I know she liked very much:

discussion
of one word . . .
a spark flies

— John Stevenson

*

reddening apples —
her palette
still loaded with color

Kristen Deming

*

an empty chair
in the poet's circle
words of love

Carmen Sterba

*

blue September sky —
the wordless things
we want to know

Michael Dylan Welch

*

death of a friend
loss of her creative soul
inflames, inspires mine

Kathleen Decker

*

her yellow painting —
above bifocals, her dark eyes
even brighter

Ruth Yarrow

*

no matter how short we may fall . . .
my image of you
shall always stand tall

Mary Fran Meer

*

Sometimes I think . . .
you would answer the phone
if I were to call

Robert Major

*

warm earth
the gardens
it makes

Alice Frampton

*

moonless night —
in the harvested wheat field
i, too, am empty

Johnny Baranski

*

the quiet strengths
of a gentle leader —
colors that will not fade

Winifred Jaeger

*

exchanging haiku stories
we forget we live
on different continents

Sangeet Bhullar

*

One breath
the distance between
I am and I was

William Scott Galasso

*

rereading the renga
we wrote a decade ago . . .
my name: her name

Lenard D. Moore

*

windstorm —
the garden stripped of
her bright colors

Marilyn Sandall

*

there is no ending —
only the change
of seasons

Doris Thurston

*

twilight lingers
the thousand echoes
of her wordless things

Michael Evans

*

migrating monarchs . . .
the white blossoms of sweet basil
gone to seed

— Robert Gilliland

*

Francine was my first mentor in haiku, and I have loved her dearly for a long time. Ten years ago, her spot-on advice, generosity, and unfailing diplomacy put me on the right haiku path. Though we never met in person, Francine was a beloved friend over the years.

wind rising
where a willow once wept
suddenly the stars

— Ferris Gilli

*

Francine and I only met once, but I had known her for years via the Internet and perhaps always. I once reminisced: “Many mango seasons ago when I arrived on the Shiki Salon doorstep as a foundling in a basket swaddled with a week-old sports section, many haiku poets took me in and attended to my needs. Each appeared to me, in my cradle, and murmured their special words and insights.” One such was Francine Porad. She was generous with insight and straight talk . . . actions of kindness, actions of a teacher. And — she was a lot of fun! As part of some repartee, Francine once wrote: “By my poems you will know me.”

autumn storm
a great cedar blocks
the sweeping wind

— Paul MacNeil

*

I'm undoubtedly one of many haiku poets who could say with 100% sincerity that Francine gave me my start in haiku, patiently enduring my enthusiastic but sophomoric early posts and providing true encouragement. I had the opportunity to meet her in person only once, but her influence on my writing endures.

windless night —
so many leaves
at the foot of the tree

— Paul David Mena

*

As she did for many other poets, Francine published my first submitted haiku in Brussels Spout. Our friendship began right away and grew steadily. I think we learned the most about each other while writing renku together. When I moved to the Seattle area, Francine welcomed my wife and me into the Haiku Northwest group as if we were part of her family. Indeed the group was, and still is, Francine's extended family. We are so fortunate to have her legacy of poems, paintings, and so many fine memories, especially of her nurturing ways, her keen insights, and her oh-so-dry wit. Francine will always live in my heart.

wren-song . . .
her passion for linking
and shifting

— Christopher Herold

*

Francine was a wonderfully generous person and one of haiku's best friends. I am saddened by the loss and grateful for her life.

quick brushstrokes
while the light holds —
crickets

— Peggy Willis Lyles

POEMS BY FRANCINE PORAD

I raise my head
from his chest, heartbeats
to crickets

*

first yoga session:
rhythmic
creaking

*

husband spellbound —
his wife's version
of their courtship

*

bird house empty of seed
even the jays
look for Bernard

*

hospital vigil
the imperceptible shift
of clouds

*

deserted beach
missing a child's
hand to hold

*

open house
my children, their children . . .
joy is my middle name

*

thunderclap!
a squirrel near the feeder
clutches its chest

*

Mother's Day
gift-wrapped box of chocolates
one piece missing

*

steady rain . . .
I fall short of being the human
I wish to be

*

migrating birds
grains of sand tumble
from her notebook

*

twilight deepens —
the wordless things
I know

"I raise my head" (*A Mural of Leaves*, 1991)
"open house" (*Joy Is My Middle Name*, 1993)
"first yoga session:" (*Free of Clouds*, 1989)
"thunderclap!" (*The Heron's Nest*, Vol. III #2)
"Mother's Day" (*Without Haste*, 1990)
"bird house empty of seed" (*The Heron's Nest*, Vol.V #4)
"hospital vigil" (*The Patchwork Quilt*, 1994)
"migrating birds" (*The Heron's Nest*, Vol. I #1)
"deserted beach" (*The Heron's Nest*, Vol. II #12)
"twilight deepens" (*Tidepool 6*, 1989)

READERS' CHOICE AWARDS FOR 2005

My corner of *The Heron's Nest* has been exceedingly active since the beginning of December. That's when, responding to our invitation to participate in the annual Readers' Choice Awards (formerly Valentine Awards) many Nest readers began to send me votes for their ten favorite poems in Volume VII 2005. On January 15 the voting ended. By then it was clear which poems and poets were being hailed as outstanding.

This will be the first year that the awards issue will not appear, in its totality, as a separate issue of *The Heron's Nest* at our web site. There's simply too much work involved now for us volunteers to make that happen. Instead, we are revealing the winning poems and poets below. The complete awards issue, including poems, commentary, special mentions, and readers' comments will appear as part of the upcoming hardcopy edition of *The Heron's Nest*, our first annual paper edition. It is now in the midst of being prepared for publication. We anticipate mailing copies to those who have subscribed at the beginning of April. For ordering information, please navigate here.

And now for the results of your voting!

I am intrigued that readers elected the very same poems that last year we editors chose to receive *The Heron's Nest* awards. I'm also rather puzzled that the elected poems placed sequentially, and in the same order as the issues in which they appeared. Intrigued, puzzled — yes. I'm also delighted. Generally speaking, it appears that *Heron's Nest* readers and editors are navigating the stream of haiku evolution together. Sometimes the way seems obvious; at other times we find ourselves groping. Happily, we are on the journey together.

With knees hinging in reverse, a deep heron bow to the winners, to the voters, and to the spirit of haiku!

Christopher Herold
Managing Editor

FAVORITE POEMS

To give you a feel for how well the winners did, the average point total for a poem receiving at least one vote was 12.

GRAND PRIZE (120 POINTS)

so suddenly winter
baby teeth at the bottom
of the button jar

— Carolyn Hall

FIRST RUNNER-UP (94 POINTS)

glowing embers
I tell her a story
she already knows

— Rick Tarquinio

SECOND RUNNER-UP (75 POINTS)

unemployed
the uneven edge
of a quahog shell

— paul m.

THIRD RUNNER-UP (58 POINTS)

country graveyard
a hummingbird
she would've loved

— Darrell Lindsey

POPULAR POETS

This category comes as the result of totaling the number of votes awarded each poet for their entire body of work in Volume VII. The most poems allowable in The Nest each year is eight. Obviously, the more poems one has published in The Nest the better the chances of garnering votes. Hence, one's success throughout a given year has a bearing on year-end voting. To give you an idea of the range of scores, the average total points for combined works was 24.

GRAND PRIZE

Carolyn Hall (5 of 7 poems received votes - total = 163 points)

FIRST RUNNER-UP

paul m. (6 of 7 poems received votes - total = 141 points)

SECOND RUNNER-UP (A TIE)

John Stevenson (8 of 8 poems received votes - total = 135 points)

Rick Tarquinio (4 of 6 poems received votes - total = 135 points)

THIRD RUNNER-UP

Yu Chang (4 of 4 poems received votes - total = 93 points)

THE SECOND ANNUAL *HERON'S NEST* ILLUSTRATION CONTEST

A hearty thank you to the artists from four countries who sent their work to us. We are grateful for a second straight year of strong submissions!

As with Volume VII, Volume VIII features art on the cover, divisional pieces for the overview section, the seasons in which the quarterly issues appear, and sectional headings within the Readers' Choice Awards presentation.

This year's cover consists of two superb photographs taken by Carol Conti-Entin, one constitutes the front, the other the back. We think you'll find the other prints, drawings, paintings, and photographs are excellent as well.



Front Cover: Carol Conti-Entin - Shaker Heights, Ohio, USA



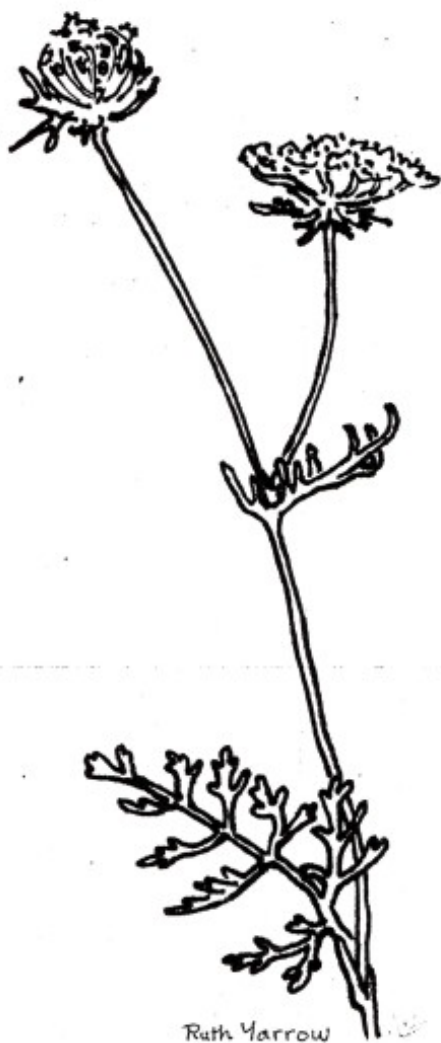
Back Cover: Carol Conti-Entin - Shaker Heights, Ohio, USA



Overview: an'ya - La Pine, Oregon, USA



Spring: Sandra Simpson, Tauranga, New Zealand



Summer: Ruth Yarrow - Seattle, Washington, USA



Autumn: Karen Klein - Cambridge, Massachusetts, USA



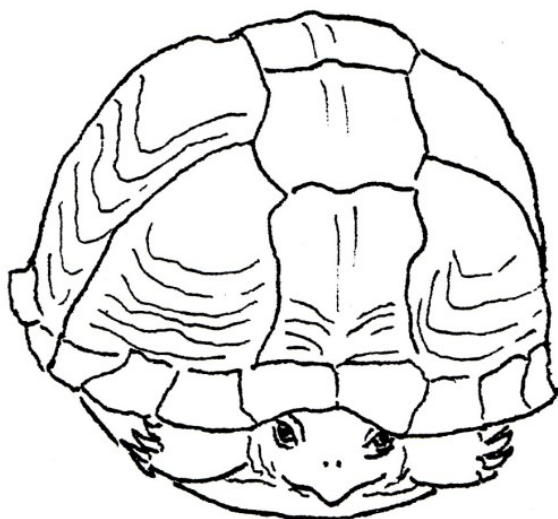
Winter: Carol Conti-Entin - Shaker Heights, Ohio, USA



Readers' Choice Awards: Doris Thurston, Port Townsend, Washington, USA

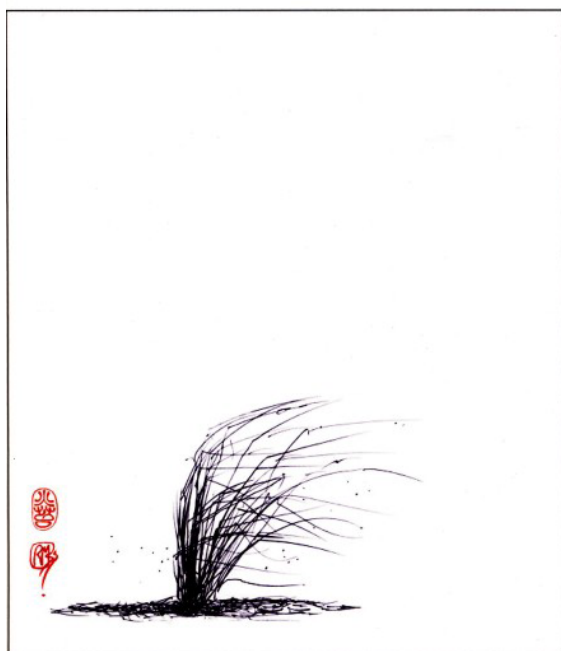


Special Mentions: Marje A. Dyck - Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, Canada



Ruth Yarrow

Voter Comments: Ruth Yarrow - Seattle, Washington, USA



Memorials: ron moss - Tasmania, Australia

ABOUT *THE HERON'S NEST*

*where tradition and innovation meet ...
and complement each other*

PHILOSOPHY

It is our intention to present haiku in which the outward form of each poem has been determined by two important elements. The primary element is the poetic experience, faithfully and uniquely evoked in words. The second element helps to shape the first; it is the poet's knowledge and respect for traditional haiku values. When well balanced these elements result in work that is distinctively and unmistakably haiku.

"Poetic experiences" are those which inspire us to express ourselves creatively. "Haiku values" are the traditional underpinnings, both Japanese and Western, by which haiku sensibility has evolved into what it is today, and which will continue to shape haiku traditions in the future. There are many ideals equated with each of the various haiku forms. No one poem can embody all, or even a majority of these ideals. Each of us must decide for ourselves what is important in the writing and appreciating of haiku.

STAFF

Christopher Herold, managing editor
Paul David Mena, webmaster & contributing editor
Ferris Gilli, associate editor
Robert Gilliland, associate editor
Peggy Willis Lyles, associate editor
Paul MacNeil, associate editor

TECHNICAL NOTE

This volume is a 2024 reproduction of an issue from 2006 and may contain errors of transcription or typography. For current information about the journal and staff, and more recent issues, please visit us at <https://theheronsnest.com>.