

ATLAS
POETICA

Number 4 Autumn 2009

**A Journal of Poetry of Place
in Modern English Tanka**

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M. Kei, Editor

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THE UNEXAMINED LIFE IS NOT WORTH LIVING.

SOCRATES

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Atlas Poetica : A Journal of Poetry of Place in Modern English Tanka, a biannual print journal, is dedicated to publishing and promoting fine poetry of place in modern English tanka (including variant forms of tanka). *Atlas Poetica* is interested in both traditional and innovative verse of high quality and in all serious attempts to assimilate the best of the Japanese waka/tanka genres into a continuously developing English short verse tradition. In addition to verse, *Atlas Poetica* publishes articles, essays, reviews, interviews, letters to the editor, etc., related to tanka poetry of place.

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Twitterati, or Microblogging Tanka Poets

For the past year and a half, media descriptions of the opportunity to post updates such as, "Got up, made coffee, didn't get dressed," failed to illuminate why any sane person might want to make use of a microblogging service like Twitter. I dismissed it as yet another techno-toy of GenXers (or are we onto GenYers now?). I was quite surprised to stumble over a treasure trove of tanka within Twitter's archives.

People are tweeting tanka (and haiku and micropoetry) in great numbers on Twitter. While much of it is exactly what you would expect of poetry posted to a social media site, a surprisingly amount is good. Further, because each poet has 'followers' who often 'retweet' (repost) items they like, a good poem will be seen far beyond the poet's personal circle. As a result, each tanka poet has a readership larger than many tanka journals.

The thing that strikes me most about these poets is how they use tanka not as literature, but as communication. They talk to friends and strangers online and use tanka to illustrate something they have seen or experienced. They often accompany their tanka with images, links, and other items that provide context and amplify their conversation. Because their primary goal is to express themselves as effectively as possible, they have written eloquent, natural language poetry. That they have created literature is incidental; none of these poets had ever submitted tanka for publication in the print media, and they were startled when I suggested that they should.

Thus, although *Atlas Poetica* normally seeks first world English-language rights for the tanka we publish, I am deliberately waiving that requirement in order to republish a number of fine 'Twitterati'—poets who have previously published tanka on Twitter and its ancillary services.

It is with great pleasure that I introduce you to Sean Greenlaw, Dirk Johnson, Marin Paul, Kris Lindbeck, and Alex von Vaupel. Sean Greenlaw, a mere stripling at only twenty-one, has already demonstrated a grasp of tanka that exceeds many poets twice his age and experience. Kris Lindbeck has turned her tanka eye on her home in Florida and rendered it as exotic as it is ordinary, while Marin Paul successfully blends classical sites with modern tanka in a voice that is uniquely her own. Dirk Johnson, a Buddhist, brings a quiet masculinity to the depictions of the redwood forests near his home in California while Alex von Vaupel's tanka are way stations in his travels between two countries.

If you have a Twitter account, I recommend you follow these fine poets.

~K~

M. Kei
Editor, *Atlas Poetica*
kujakupoet on Twitter

Taz and Yenisey Rivers, Siberia, Russia. Ice jams caused the Taz (left) and Yenisey (right) rivers to overflow their banks. Normally the rivers would appear as thin black lines. In this false color image, land is orange and sage, water is black, and clouds are white and pink.

Cover Image courtesy of Visible Earth by NASA
<<http://visibleearth.nasa.gov>>.

Remembering My Father

Alexis Rotella

I need
a magnifying glass
to see it,
Dad says—
first engagement ring.

After all these years,
I remember how my father
showed me he cared—
rain water collected in buckets
so I could wash my hair.

Worn smooth
my father's radio dial
as he listens
to Dino croon
about the moon.

I rode all night
on the dream-train,
Dad,
trying to find you
after you died.

You know the words
to all the songs,
Dad says—
why can't you be
that good in math?

Sun about to set—
Dad still searching
for Mom's wedding ring
in the ash pile
under the green apple tree.

Muttering under my breath
about a dad
who doesn't know how
to put training wheels
on my new bike.

After they bury her,
Baba went to visit my dad—
wet spots
on the linoleum
from her big black boots.

Dad home from work—
his big hand
touches the top
of my head . . .
after-school cartoons.

I forgive you,
dear father,
for not being perfect . . .
Now can you ever
forgive me?



~Rotella, cont.

My handsome dad
building up
the insoles of his shoe,
so self-conscious
of his limp.

The day the big rock
fell on Daddy's leg—
our life
as a family
forever changed.

What the coal mines
gave us—
a grandfather
with one leg
and a crippled dad.

A moment in time—
my bronze father
in the field
leaning
on his scythe.

My mother calls
to say he had
a stroke—
for a long time
I don't say a word.

Dad takes it with him
to the other world—
note from
the little
neighbor girl.

A ray of moonlight
going deep into the earth
where my father's bones
will spend the rest
of their life.

For six months
a golden thread
connected us—
my father
after he died.

~Cairnbrook, Pennsylvania, USA



You Belong To Me

M. L. Harvey

remember,
you belong to me
her call
threading through the seaside crowds
to a girl just met tonight

sunset
at The Dunes Hotel
newlyweds
in the room next door
both toss their bouquets

~Provincetown, Massachusetts

Kyoko

Patricia Prime

noiselessly
a flaxen-haired Maori
stands sentry
outside the shopping mall
licking pink candy floss

in the sandpit
the child stands
on his head
seeing if the wind
looks the same upside down

there's a cold wind
driving between youths
skateboarding
one wolf-whistles – calls out
“Hello, Grandma” to me

I say to my son
in those days it was love
and obey
he looks at me with surprise
but has no answer

falling asleep
each night
knowing only
that the rest home patient
will phone at least ten times

dressed as brides
girls at kindergarten
hold dolls
beneath their costumes
“They're not borned yet,” they say

~New Zealand

Peregian

Mary Mageau

The beach stretches before me, its white sand warming my feet, its cushion giving way to a wet packed surface near the shore. I drink in the familiar colours—turquoise near the water's edge that suddenly turns to cobalt where the sea bed drops away. The sky is cloudless, mirroring the blue below. I walk through the shallows, hearing only the drone and splash of the open sea as it meets the shore. Closing my eyes I inhale the scent of brine.

sleeping tonight
with my hand
on your heart
in its steady beat
the roll of the sea

I dream of shells
salt rinsed, sun bleached
fans, scrolls, spirals
held and admired
gently returned

~Queensland's Sunshine Coast, Australia



diary letter

stanley pelter

*lingering days
pile up
her hair
combed by a soft wind
floats back*

Lying elsewhere. On the grass. Across its svelte green. Relaxed. Legs crossed. White capped cobblestones clouds. They dissemble into that mid blue of many summer skies. Slow moving. To somewhere above tree-speckled hilltops. Beyond, far beyond the valley.

A tomboy girl, (coming on six) wears a ra ra skirt within a pink harmony of other clothes. Kicks a full-size, toy football. Hard. Way past her mother and sleeping sister (coming on one). On a heel she swishes a full circle, whistles and inexactly claps her hands. Dyed blonde hair mother. Not long past her best tomboy years. Weighty. Runs her jostling breasts to collect the ball. Kicks it back. Hard. Such an effort. Angles of arms and legs crease the air. Pushes head back and lower. Nearly falls. For a while a wind is helpful.

*shapes crisscross
playing fields
at speed
gull shadows
spread wide*

Then i think of U¹. Eyes close. Then i see U. Keep them closed. Imagine what it would be like to be without U. Shudder. Not wanting to anymore, I open them. That's better. More than better. Quiver happy. i thought you would want to know.

*inside suns strobe
air is breathless
your Mona Lisa smile
echoes the enigma
of her voice.*

~Torrington, Devon, UK

¹ There is, in English little range of expression that equates with the French 'tu' and 'vous', the special, the more intimate with the general. 'i', 'U', is one possibility.

Minimalist Family Life

Sanford Goldstein

up early
this Sunday morning
Father's Day,
and wrappings torn,
the faces of my kids

again
into the taking-care
syndrome
I diaper the baby
I see if its sister is safe

toothless
my mother pulls at
her fish-burger,
reaches for sugar
instead of salt

another
Father's Day
I did
not visit
his grave

have I made
a spill of ten tanka on
my kitchen table?
do I thank Buddha or
the voices of my kids?

a radio tune
swells memory
to rhythm
I have not sung
for thirty-five years

I often
asked death
to take me
on the court
after a blue-ball slam

me in a tux
and my daughter
in white
I greet guests
at her second wedding

down the road
I visualize my mother
in a home
the songs she likes
and my keeping time

mother, will
your six-candle
birthday cake
make you smile
in your hospital bed?



~Goldstein, cont.

ages ago
when my mother
ran her kitchen
like a short-order cook,
senility was never a word

come
at last
July,
and it's time
for my own declaration

at times
hand brushing
your eyes,
mother, are those
imaginary tears?

wizened
a toothless masked
face of another
my mother
in decline

I see
the slipshod
of my life,
this do nothingness
of self

not once
do I remember
my mother
saying as mother,
"I'm beautiful"

almost
like a pleading
kid,
my sightless mother
brushing away the spoon

Rachel, dear child,
you remain my modern
Ruth,
tears even without
alien corn

as if from
distant regions,
two voices,
one my sister's
one my brother's

mother,
you blew and
blew,
one of the six candles
flickered out

a wisp
thin as hair
on a carpet,
this dot dimension
my mirror self

once more
I see the tight trap
of domesticity,
the chain
of humdrum



~Goldstein, cont.

at times
the fear of non-knowing
on my mother's face
where is she?
what does she do next?

once
at least
just a small piece
of the forbidden
pie

forlorn again,
oh my child,
this co-causal way
is for sticks to be stepped on
and stones broken along the curb

out
of the peanut-butter
blue,
my grandchild's
you're a nice man

~West Lafayette, Indiana; Cleveland, Ohio;
Niigata, Japan

L'Aquila, Italy, 2009

Alexis Rotella

The centenarian
waits for earthquake rescuers
and while she waits
crochets nothing
in particular.

Finally rescued,
the old woman
asks
"Can I at least
comb my hair?"

La Bella Figura—
even at
the end of time
we'll be looking
for a mirror.

~L'Aquila, Italy



The Snowbirds Are Back!

Bobbette A. Mason

the snowbirds are back!
slate colored migrants
old souls returning
tomorrow All Saints' Day . . .
yesterday's today

Through my kitchen window I catch flashes of white, a scattering of small drab finches, alighting, feeding; flitting from old cedars to overgrown yews. Daddy died at sixty three. His feathers tattered, gray suede spats long gone. Divorce brought ruin. Wall Street clients never returned pleading calls. His closet and shelves long ago emptied of custom made suits, cashmere sweaters . . . boat shoes and velvet slippers. Fine watches and jewelry, all discarded or pawned after the fall; to be replaced by an alternate currency, cheap booze.

I only saw him three times before he died, but I heard that a friar in a Bowery mission found dignity in the man, who had once sported a blue cornflower or fragrant pink in his lapel; this man who visited his garden each morning before heading off to the city on the 7:56 train. A humble man clothed in monk's garb found work for my father; the task, arranging flowers; the gift, recovery. Although I never saw it, someone told me about his flower garden beside an ancient whaler's cottage, way out on the island . . . the place of his death.

the snowbirds are back!
twittering
celebrate the season
"I know I shall see you again" . . .
now winter . . . soon snow

~Wilmington, Delaware, Long Island and Bowery, New York, USA

Nine Car Pile Up

M. Kei

all around us
cars swerving and crashing
on the bridge—
coming through unscathed
I high five my daughter

in the glow
of the headlights,
the red, red blood . . .
the other good Samaritan
laid out in the cold

accident—
going to render aid
on a cold black night
the road as icy
as the Devil's heart

those ladies
were all right before—
frightened now,
they are crying
into their cellphones

the metallic CRUNCH
of another vehicle piling into
the wrecks around me—
leaping for the slender safety
of the concrete barrier

men walk
the long length
of metal debris
calling out
"is anyone hurt?"

the truck
towing a backhoe
fishtailing
batting cars
like baseballs

driving away
at last,
I ask my daughter
to go a little
under the speed limit

~Elkton, Maryland, USA

unnerved,
but all right—
then the bloody crunch
of a young man
losing his foot

Mother's Day

Bobbette A. Mason

in my hope chest
 buried beneath a crazy quilt . . .
 a Navy middy
savagely ripped from neck to hem
 one discard . . . no, another . . . a son.

I remember 1969 and handsome Vietnam War recruiters were in town. "Sign up! You've got what it takes. Enlist!" The boy wanted to be a Seabee, to make his dad proud. I thought, "They will never accept him, all those football injuries and subsequent surgery to repair his damaged knees." But after graduation, there were goodbye parties, before an order to report to Great Lakes.

It's all a blur now . . . recorded in old letters in tight script . . . anchors away and the peeling away of self . . . testing limits of endurance with multiple push-ups and deep knee bends . . . then sudden blinding pain. Calls to report to sick-bay for physical therapy in the morning alternated with orders to march with crutches all afternoon . . . sometimes faltering and stumbling, then ultimately marched upon. This first born child of mine found himself broken, alone . . . his dreams crashing . . . in full leg braces forever. The calluses from crutches no longer mark his palms, but chronic pain begins each day.

disabled,
 but discharged with honor . . .
with each step
 the click of his braces reminds me . . .
 I could change nothing.

~Wilmington, Delaware, USA

Stone Circles, Labrador

Claudia Coutu Radmore

for Len Budgell

this is where you lived
among hebron's hills
here the garden
the graveyard
its picket fence

the torngats rear
like mythical mountain monsters
skies of lemon
and salmon
take away their bite

storm clouds lift
peace settles on the iron strand
roseroot sedum glistens
the shorewater
settles

caribou scapula
by an iron-red pool
in this valley
stone circles that anchored
thule hide tents

fine bundled hay
the scat of a bear
that has lunched on grass
an ursine artifact
song of the day

for you the sea was not a mask
it was a glass
graced with your beloved ships
the whales and cod
the slow thunk-thunk of Joe's oars

october's gold
snow willow and dwarf birch
seedheads of dune grass
riches of Labrador
bent in the wind

at saglek harbour
no one left now
to listen for
the almost noiseless feet
of caribou on muskeg

glacier worn mountains
one behind the other
you spent evenings
absorbing the order
in this solitude

languish languid limpid livid
you loved words
they came tripping out
like spring brook water
lively



~Radmore, cont.

evening blues and purples
settle into the valleys
and mountains
true mainlanders they offer
haven for the night

you must have noticed
and forgotten to say
how water drops on horsetail
form perfect globes
capture the lowering sun

whoever is in this stone grave
how i envy him
he will never have to leave
the labrador
or these sunsets

~Labrador, Canada



Morning in February

Bobbette A. Mason

white lime droppings,
broad splatters on rough quarried stone
rich remnants of life
bits of shrew, mouse and crayfish
rest in shallow crevices.

I kneel, then sit
to sift through fine matted fur,
embedded fragments . . .
scapula, tibia, mandible
carapace and claw.

I rise, and nestle
small treasures in my pocket
with this wonder-filled secret . . .
for I know where a screech owl
greet each dawn.

*~Powder Yards of Hagley Museum,
Wilmington, Delaware, USA*

Relic

Dru Philippou

Rounding a bank, I come across some deer bones scattered like divining sticks: hieroglyphic vertebrae, rodent-gnawed ribs, left side of a hip bone, bent sigh of a collar bone as if to tell the story—an arrow through the heart, then lumbering before the final kneel.

scooping out
a long bone
of sunlight . . .
sand pours
from the cracks

I sit among the bones, touching the spirit that was once there in the shade of a pine under wren's song and imagine the deer drawing all life into its eyes before bounding through the arroyo.

~Taos, New Mexico, USA



Chinese Haircut

Bob Lucky

I go for my annual haircut today, such a sunny spring day, warm and dry after months of cold drizzle, and discover that where my barber used to be there is a fruit stand having a grand opening. Bouquets of flowers spill out of the shop and onto the road.

against a wall
a stand of cut sugar cane –
wiping her nose
a girl with a machete
invites me in

I walk up and down the alley in search of a haircut. Most of the salons do not appeal to me. Hair stylists with bad haircuts – reminiscent of the days of rockers with big hair – wave blow dryers and snip bits from here and there. I want to be shorn down to a centimeter of my scalp.

near a red tub
of squirming eels
a woman
guts fish
scales glinting in the sunlight

Eventually, after walking by it a few times, I go into a two-chair barbershop where one woman cuts my hair and another shampoos what little is left, all for less than a dollar. Looking in the mirror, I hope to see myself here again next year.

~Hangzhou, China

Bill

Abigail Greene

Bill, my ex Brother-in-Law, was a strange man. My Mother was sure that was obvious because he was a psychiatric nurse. At the time we met him his wardrobe consisted of jeans, T shirts, sneakers, patent leather dress shoes and gold cuff links. The latter items were to be worn when he rented a tuxedo to attend the opera in New York City.

Bill was not always easy to be around. He had strong opinions and a short temper. He had a plethora of interests and, while not formally educated, knew a lot about many things.

Bill loved to "set the stage" and introduce you to something you hadn't already discovered. He delighted in surprising you . . . be it a narrow "dog leg shaped" entrance into a medieval town in Portugal or an excellent bottle of wine. He made his own bread for his turkey stuffing—that tells you what kind of cook he was.

One of the people he admired was my husband, Don. He trusted him implicitly. He loved to sail with Don and always obeyed orders and relished the hours spent on the water. He volunteered to help when Don sailed our boat back up from the Caribbean Islands. So, it was only fitting that Don and I, along with our son and his wife, took Bill for his last sailboat ride on a freezing cold October Saturday.

The sun shone brightly, the wind blew strong and steady and we, with great ceremony, committed our friend and mentor into the water. There was the Naval Burial at Sea Service, two hours of taped music that he loved, good Bourbon and flowers and tears. Bill would have loved it.

chill October day
on sun-dappled water
we scatter Bill's ashes —
they stream in our wake,
followed by chrysanthemums

~Chesapeake Bay, Maryland



Society Archipelago

Cynthia Rowe

a lei
of freshly woven
frangipani
her neck wreathed
as in a Gauguin painting

The yacht's sails buck above me in the wind, white triangles beneath a cobalt bowl. A speedboat spurts into view. Nose lifted like a whale breaching, the high-speed craft springs from the water in shard-sparking explosion, spattering me with cooling drops. An iceberg wash fans out, highlighted by a background of volcanic beach. The deck rocks beneath my feet. Passing oyster beds we slew around. My thoughts turn to the black gold in those beds, the glistening pearls luring fortune hunters over the centuries. I think of the blood spilled . . .

Swaying on sailor's legs, I enter Pierre's atelier on the waterfront. Gone are his dreadlocks. The chantier is brittle with strokes while he, disguised behind mask and goggles, scrapes resin. He obliterates bubbles with flair, pausing to flash me a gap-toothed grin. He says he has decided to embrace things 'moderne'. By night, he gives salsa lessons. By day, he works with plastic. "Wood is passé," he says, "too much upkeep in a world where facility rules."

in sunshine
she parts the shell revealing
nature's perfection
in shadows the boat builder
sprays his hulls with synthetic

~Papeete, Tahiti

White Wind

Andrea Grillo

another winter
with no plans to sail
as I sift through photos
I still can recall
my heartbeat to windward

the time has come
to retrieve those senses
I stored with care
for final release
onto another shore

white wind
there is a lovely cove
in coral water
to which I can return and bathe
naked on a snowy day

wolf moon
another migraine claws
through my head
gripping the days
of my life

winter thaw
today I learn to explore
those faults
I hold so close
to my heart

zesting an orange
once more I wonder
too often
am I trying too hard
or hardly trying

~Randolph, New Jersey, USA

travelogue

John Samuel Tieman

last night touching her
skin I recognize myself
it's no mystery
she is I am we are where
the moon turns to white water

then 10,000 feet
and I wonder about lives
down at ground level
a blinking light in Shreveport
a road that leads to the Gulf

all day I listen
to the whine of jet engines
Florida by 5
palms that moan with the sea breeze
wife a continent away

at Ft. Lauderdale
the early evening waves foam
in the black ocean
from out in the Atlantic
the voice of a single gull

~St. Louis, Missouri, USA



North of Superior

Guy Simser

For *The Laureate of the Great Lakes*, W. W. Campbell 1860-1919

*along the line
of smoky hills, the crimson
forest stands with me
mute, as the last curtain
falls on the caddis*

with hand scoops
from a small basalt basin
I slake life
relieve myself on gneiss
return moisture to moss

petroglyphs
on pecambrian rock
fading
my hand scribed letters
she saves to this day

this, mom taught me
while snapping its neck
we're all beholden
to what lies beyond the eyes
yours, mine and this trout's

breaking camp
I place a cup of pine tea
before it
the steep granite face that
lured me to this spirit place

the harvest moon
strikes a stark circle
lichen green blue
on the brooding boulder
a trembling druid's shadow

washing my own feet
in this precambrian lake
bushwacked
imagining
that fisherman's hail

~Ontario, Canada

Andrew's Place

Abigail Greene

For many years now, my husband and I have prepared the dinner for folks in a homeless shelter. We used to do it a half dozen times a year but the last few years we have only done it once or twice a year. It is a ministry at our church and I have been responsible for finding other folks to do it as well. I have tried to convey the wonderful feeling we have experienced doing this, for in truth, we come away knowing that we are the ones who have benefitted the most from the evening. Now that we have moved I no longer have all the large sized pots and pans that made this job easy for me to do . . . not to mention the energy level is not so high either! It has been a "hard" sell to attract younger people from our church and that has been frustrating. I keep hoping.

we arrive pot-laden
twenty men at table
appetites ready
as much for acknowledgement
as the hearty meal

we hear their stories—
"this is like my Grandmother's"
"when I was little"—
back when they were children,
homeless shelter not in their dreams

"Thank you, thank you!"
the chorus of voices rings—
oh, no, I think—
it is we who thank you tonight—
you are the gift-givers

~Wilmington, Delaware, USA

Crack of Dawn

Dru Philippou

I stare at the grey-green stamp of a marble portrait of Alexander the Great. Thick locks of hair cascade to his shoulders. The hard-shell of his God-like beauty lies hidden behind the soft smile. His face, partially visible, reveals the warrior's eye, penetrating Illyria, Persepolis, Punjab

long spears
deflecting missiles,
an army of
sixteen-deep
marching east

sword jabbing . . .
the taste of
enemy sweat
mingles with
the soldier's wine

stubbled
wheat field
sun glints off
a handful
of arrowheads

The rest of his image falls into shadow and another realm. I'm four years old on grandpa's farm, running through the pink grapefruit light, past the scraped bark of our cinnamon tree, past the swing, on my way to the chicken coop. Unlatching the gate, I climb into dark. Afraid of an attack,

I locate Alectryon, our red rooster. I rummage quickly through sawdust and straw and find a large speckled egg. I hear an *awwww-buck-buck* from a hen, then another joins in. Alectryon flaps his wings, screeches. I scramble out the coop, run through the long wind, up a hillside, and lift my prize to the heavens.

~Taos, New Mexico, USA



Winter Rains

Gerry Jacobson

afternoon storm
wild winds . . . thunder crashes
rain and hail
batter my roof . . .
bombs batter Gaza

TV news . . .
we lose at cricket
shark takes man
images of war . . .
eyeless in Gaza

pavement café . . .
sun shines bright
scrambled eggs . . .
coffee . . . newspapers . . .
scrambled planes o'er Gaza

cloven hoof
and chews the cud—
it's kosher
bombs and tanks and drones and guns—
the winter rains in Gaza

~Canberra, Australia

Allentown

Marylin Hazelton

Within the early dark of November, under the bent umbrella of global warming, leaves struggle to proclaim themselves russet or amber. In the city of Billy Joel's anthem, teenagers stream into **Hava Java** where an audience has gathered around tables. A young musician's song arcs across candlelight to a generation inheriting a world again laced together by challenge and agony of war. There is standing room only for newcomers to this small space.

coffee house concert
singers and listeners
becoming themselves
if there is reason to be
let it be love

~Allentown, Pennsylvania, USA



Hunkies

Alexis Rotella

The boy with an Anglo Saxon name
whose father was a surgeon
who grew up in the big grey house
with many turrets
and a wrap around porch.

This Easter Sunday
he sits at our table
with us Pennsylvania Hunkies
telling us how happy he is
that he married "one of our kind."

~Cairnbrook, Pennsylvania, USA



Bach at Piha

Patricia Prime

wooden cottage
complete
with TV aerial
the bush along the shoreline
shimmers green against the sky

Our first Christmas in New Zealand and all seven of my family are invited to a distant cousin's holiday home. The boys are unusually rowdy swinging from a rope across the creek, while my daughter plays in the mud. After a picnic lunch, we stroll along a gravel road leading to a small chapel dedicated to Stella Maris. Through the stained glass window, the surf beats against the shore. The Virgin appears to hover above the ocean. A plaque lists the names of those lost at sea. A blue penguin has made a nest at the foot of the font and a notice pleads: "Do not disturb. Birds nesting." Beside the crib of Baby Jesus, the children leave their drawings of penguins.

** Bach : a seaside cottage*

~Piha, New Zealand

His Old Lake

Mike Montreuil

It's always the same
returning to
this old lake—
years of memories
are only of him

horseshoes are being thrown
we laugh at my miss
and have another beer—
the BBQ waits for
marinated steaks

our family boat arrives
at the new landing—
my oldest nephew is
now in command
not me

Sunday morning
my sister now cooks
the coffee and bacon and eggs—
her new job
while everyone sleeps

the lake's rolling hills
quietly greet me
as they always have—
I wave to fishermen
trolling for Lake Trout

time to return home
so many miles away—
two little girls run
up and down the beach
with a tail-waving dog

~Ottawa, Ontario, Canada

cottage in sight
I can only laugh
as a tail-waving dog
runs down to the dock
and greets us



early morning
sunlight in my room—
in the distance
I can still hear
skidders two hills away

Moon

Marje A. Dyck

in my small studio
jazz singer
croons into the night—
hanging above the balcony
spring moon

looking into the valley
filled with moonlight
sudden meteor shower—
a coyote's
quavering cry

midsummer moon
rises
like a Chinese lantern
the air
a warm, sensuous breath

dwindling summer
me and the
window box petunias
sharing another
moonlit night

~Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, Canada

summer moon
bright as a penny—
on such a night
if you make a wish
it will surely come true

winding road
bordered with gold
can't still these thoughts
can't hold back
the moon

all day
by the river
until the moon appears—
Rilke's solitude
comes to mind



Burnt images

Jo McInerney

an orange glow
through smokey silence
false dawn

those leaving late
crawl in the sudden dark
headlights dip

breathless morning
the radio's flat tones
warn of danger. . .
we damp the grass
scanning the horizons

fire plan
what defense against
a wall of flame
huddled under blankets
we wait for what's to come

embers
fall in spirals
black origami

charred photographs
on the seat beside her . . .
burnt-out car

the wind turns
all the birds have fled . . .
heat creaks
across the iron roof
the thud of a possum

early autumn
scorched leaves rustle
as we pass
nothing falls but our tears
like all numb survivors

~Boolarra, Victoria, Australia

thickening air
the hydrangeas wilt
and sear

fire crackles
in a near gully
hoses
limp in our hands
the tanks melted



Everybody Dies

Alexis Rotella

Dead uncle's photo
falls from
a pile of papers—
Not now, please,
I'm too happy to be sad.

~Arnold, Maryland, USA

Despite the mourning
at aunt's gravesite,
how white
the snowball hydrangeas,
how blue this autumn sky.

~Central City, Pennsylvania, USA

In my address book,
a friend who took
his life—
still I don't
cross out his name.

~Arnold, Maryland, USA

Venice—
a funeral barge
in morning fog . . .
mourners
and white gladiolas.

~Venice, Italy

A water glass shatters
in my hand—
that moment when Aunt Millie
cut the cord
with all of us.

~Los Gatos, California, USA

Is this my death bed?
Not much different
from Frida's—
a Mexican crucifix
over my head.

~Arnold, Maryland, USA

The day under the oak
when I was four
when Aunt Maggie
told me
everybody dies.

~Cairnbrook, Pennsylvania, USA

My mother visits
a sick neighbor in hospital—
he just finished
eating roast beef with all
his dead brothers and sisters.

~Winder, Pennsylvania, USA



~Rotella, cont.

For funerals,
no invitation necessary—
it's always open house,
the more
the merrier.

~Anywhere, USA



To Boldly Go

susan delphine delaney

on the beach
seventeen miles
south of Columbia's launch
feeling its thunder
through my soles

again and again
watching
the breakup of Columbia
through the budding branches
of sweet gum

this winter morning
the lunar mountains
the same
dusky color
as the sky

*The break up Columbia rattled my whole
house as I watered my African violets. They
trembled, too.*

~Plano, Texas, USA

Confections

Tracy Royce

August heat
amplified
in your tiny kitchen
nowhere to hang
my sweat-soaked blouse

The cancer treatments had really diminished J's father's appetite. We wanted to entice him to eat and cheer him up, so despite the lack of air conditioning in J's cozy Eagle Rock cottage, we decided to bake his father some chocolate chip cookies. It got so warm in the confines of J's small kitchen that I stripped down to the waist to cool off. I ended up with flour-dusted, sugary breasts, which we documented with J's camera. Of course we sent the photos along with the cookies. I later heard that the photos may have lifted J's father's spirits more than the cookies did. Unfortunately, J's father didn't win the war against cancer, but all these years later J's mother still playfully refers to me as "Cookies."

~Eagle Rock, California, USA



South of One Border or Another

James Tipton

In the Garden of Gethsemane
the only scripture that made sense
was her body bending
to touch the ancient roots
of the olive trees.

~Jerusalem, Israel

Macchu Picchu—
all night long
in the old hotel
I discover gold
in her brown body.

~Macchu Picchu, Peru

I want to be the current
that tugs against the legs
of that lovely Mexican woman
who has just waded
into the bay at Guayabitos.

~Guayabitos, Mexico

This hot summer night
in Las Varras
that old car
on concrete blocks
rocks back and forth.

~Las Varras, Jalisco, Mexico

Her breasts remind me
of a favorite destination,
as she asks, professionally,
“Do you prefer coach
or first class?”



~Denver International Airport

Hard rain in Lima—
I stand behind her,
she hiding us both
under the umbrella,
me cupping her tits.

~Lima, Peru

Clarity

Marje A. Dyck

all that jangles
silenced
in the deep woods
walking and walking
with my thoughts of you

a single cloud
on the horizon—
floating
into this moment
of sudden clarity

pieces of
broken ice
glitter in the sun—
fragments of my heart
here and there

solitary Canada
soundlessly floats
amongst the reeds
have you come
to commiserate?

~Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, Canada



Hatteras Island

Abigail Greene

Hatteras Light— our
last visit stood a mile off,
waves lapped its feet—
a miracle move, two hundred
feet high— all in one piece

how can they— I thought—
now here it stands, a mile off
Cape Hatteras Light
safe for another hundred years—
if nature stays true

miles and miles of scrub,
no castle-like houses
teetering atop these fragile dunes—
the audacity of us—
to think we rule the world

blackbirds squawk, chatter
I slip in to reverie
I'm back aboard
boat winters, Southern waters
has it really been ten years?

morning paper time,
I sit by the window
my spine feels the cold
my eyes dry and itchy—
my body is turning to winter

~Hatteras Island, North Carolina, USA

Winter

winter's day
cheered first by sunlight
then over
a garden wall, the flight
of a monarch butterfly

~André Surridge
Hamilton, NZ

leafless
the skeleton
of a tree
fills with the wings
of winter egrets

~Margarita Engle
California, USA

Table for one
on this winter day
the fortune cookie
reminds me
You have many friends

~Peggy Heinrich
Santa Cruz, California, USA

Still up
the Christmas decorations
in this small town
deepening my despair,
my utter aloneness.

~Alexis Rotella
Central City, Pennsylvania, USA

A December lawn
grows three kinds of flowers
violet, yellow, blue:
Small untended reminders
to attend to life at my feet

~Kris Lindbeck
Boca Raton, Florida, USA

memorial
in an Iowa field
thick with ice
on this day, five decades ago
the music died

~André Surridge
Iowa, USA

the world
owes me nothing
pays me
with birdsong
in winter sunshine

~André Surridge
Hamilton, NZ

it hardly seems
a new year,
no frogs chorus
its anthem,
no crickets sing its glory

~M. Kei
Chesapeake Bay, Maryland, USA

Flowers and Gardens

spring flowers
in a glass vase
the spider
chooses a tulip
for its delicate web

~Margarita Engle
California, USA

wildfire season
beneath smoke and ash
one flame-red
hibiscus petal
detached and drifting

~Margarita Engle
California, USA

in the season
of bareroot fuyu
you glance
at the clock
and speak of growth

~Margarita Engle
California, USA

Magnolia—
she stands there again
pink and white
petticoats fallen
all around her.

~Alexis Rotella
*Drew University Campus, Madison, New
Jersey, USA*

So spongy this lawn –
one day we might fall
through a mole hill
and find ourselves at tea
with the Queen of Hearts.

~Alexis Rotella
Arnold, Maryland, USA

how good it is
to feel the sun on my face . . .
now I know
something of what it is
to be a flower

~André SurrIDGE
Hamilton, NZ

cinder path . . .
thinking of that article
on medicinal plants
looking at nettles
in a new light

~André SurrIDGE
Knaresborough, England

leaving
my favorite Indian Restaurant
in the sidewalk crack
a row
of tiny fennel plants

~susan delphine delaney
Dallas, Texas, USA

Labor Day

Chinese Cuban restaurant—
the drag queen dressed
in skin-tight red . . .
her every trip to the kitchen
a practice for the runway.

~Alexis Rotella
South Beach, Miami

Those lobbyists
have got to go,
I tell a guest at the party
unaware he's
one of them.

~Alexis Rotella
Washington, District of Columbia, USA

frozen in time
Scott's hut in Antarctica
had he known
there would be no return
they'd have finished the whisky

~André Surridge
Antarctica

Two wheelbarrows
one red, one blue, on a roof
in the white heat
of May midafternoon
three men nailing shingles

~Kris Lindbeck
Boca Raton, Florida, USA

could there be
anything sadder to see
than an old schooner,
her sails wung out,
hogbacked and grey?

~M. Kei
Pulp Mill Docks, Elkton, Maryland, USA

Watching the shuttle
launch on my monitor
in a quiet room
I think of the astronauts'
loneliness before countdown

~Kris Lindbeck
Boca Raton, Florida, USA

Henry Hinton
the bare chested unpaid
superintendent on the block,
tool belt strapped over
khaki bermudas.

~Alexis Rotella
Bronx, New York, USA

Our attic a millinery shop
and depository
for old letters
and my surgeon brother's jar
with the pickled human ear.

~Alexis Rotella
Bronx, New York, USA

~Labor Day, cont.

Hair dyed pale ginger
like the clouds of today's dawn
the crossing guard
in slicker and bermuda shorts
smiles at me like someone's grandma

*~Kris Lindbeck
Boca Raton, Florida, USA*

getting my teeth cleaned
by a Chinese hygienist—
my mouth wide open
I can't answer her question
why not English say teeth paste?

*~Bob Lucky
Hangzhou, China*

sun lesions
on grand-dad's arms
and the backs of his hands
he told me
we die as animals die

*~David Romanda
Takamatsu City, Japan*

glaziers
working diligently
a black swallowtail
enters
my living room

*~susan delphine delaney
Plano, Texas, USA*

tying
the first bunch
of tiny violets
with a strand
of my hair

*~susan delphine delaney
Medical School, Madison, Wisconsin, USA*

writing up
yet another CV
childhood dreams
blowing past my window
tune of the ice cream van

*~Alex von Vaupel
Canterbury, Kent, UK*

no salary
for the art life
I tell her
where little else is eaten
but time

*~M. L. Harvey
Hamilton, New York*

smear shadows
of the carney's tattoos
between his squint
the smell of gear grease
mingles with tobacco

*~M. L. Harvey
Hamilton, New York*

*Planned topics for the next issue include
vacation/recreation, women, rainy
weather, and microtanka.*

Friends & Family

the still life
of a basket of cherries
on a wooden table
that is alive with voices
of Canadian visitors

~Patricia Prime
New Zealand

A family grudge
like an armoire
from the old country
that none of us
young ones want.

~Alexis Rotella
Cairnbrook, Pennsylvania, USA

when red clouds from bush fires
sweep in from as far away
as Victoria
we are caught on the deck
cooling down, drinks in hand

~Patricia Prime
New Zealand

out of habit
I set the table for four
this family meal
 one plate is still clean
 at the end of it all

~Sean Greenlaw
Torrington, Connecticut, USA

the sea at Piha
is an elusive friend
offering me
gifts of seaweed and shells
then taking them away

~Patricia Prime
New Zealand

in the cockpit
of *The Spirit of St Louis*
a higher journey
ghostly gathering
of family and friends

~André Surridge
Somewhere over the Atlantic Ocean

Today is the kind of Valentine's day
when I wish
a half sister I never knew about
would knock
at my door.

~Alexis Rotella
Arnold, Maryland, USA

winter afternoon
sitting in a sunbeam
my grandmother's
darning egg
warm in my hand

~susan delphine delaney
Plano, Texas, USA

Shernaz Wadia

at twilight
accompanied by cicadas
under a tree
she hums a song
she never heard

the string snaps
and my kite drifts off
smaller and smaller . . .
a new hobby
after you left

I dive
deep into your eyes
to drown
in the riptide
of infidelity

between us
the river runs on
a symphony
in the whirlpool
that capsized our boat

silver fish
have burrowed through
my past
I burn the old diary
with pages full of you

as strange shadows
flit about her
with aching heart
she hugs
the tiny grave

he listens
through his stethoscope
to my heart . . .
only I can hear
the murmur of dread

alone in the ICU
hooked to the monitor
that beeps . . .
will I die here
without good byes?

he gazes
deep and long
into my eyes
my diary flips open
page by secret page

~Pune, India



Curtis Dunlap

scenic overlook —
standing on the rock
where two lovers
threw themselves
into a blaze of autumn

*~Lovers Leap in Patrick County, Virginia,
USA*

Patricia Prime

at Bethall's beach
there could be an old spirit
or a love affair
with the beach and the sea
washing in from the Pacific

the precision
of your death
floats
on the Mozart waltz
played over and over

only the plainest words
for an ocean of blue,
for rocks and flax,
composed on the cliffs
overlooking the Gulf

gannets
topple in the south wind
from the Muriwai
rock stacks
and plunge into the ocean

Coromandel Beach
is always the same—
shells, driftwood, paua,
and sand holding the sun
long after evening falls

it's an illusion
the gorse paints the hills
above Long Bay
into corners
the eye cannot reach

the Avon river
is a silver ribbon
houses huddled
in the folds of hills,
the sky opening to the touch

there's a blackness
in the sky over Tolaga Bay
that can only
be entered briefly in stars
over the little fishing boats

at the Art Gallery
colours pressed into canvas:
I could reach in
rub them between my fingers—
dust from a butterfly's wings

the inlet's skin shines
taut surfaces like blue milk
small fleets of light
as whitebait dart and shimmer
on the incoming tide

jewel blink—
a kingfisher pauses
between river banks
I too listen for the thunder
on the sky's rim

I capture
your image floating
in an aura of blues
one hand in your pocket, the other
holds the key to your new house

low tide at Waihi
crabs emerge while they can
from their holes
scuttle sideways across sand
until caught by eager children

~New Zealand

Kris Lindbeck

Overcast evening
in dry Florida winter:
The sun sinks west,
finds a fissure in the clouds
& pours out sheets of light

The strong southeast breeze
blowing from the Bermudas
makes December, May,
Blows my bicycle forward
as palm fronds fly like flags

Beach crow spreads its wings
sinking neatly to the sand
cocks his head
Swaggers confidently
but won't let his feet get wet

Strangler fig, banyan
green and ominously lovely
embracing itself
with its slow wooden snakes
I can't stop watching the show

Tank-top weather
in sultry April
a red-haired student
Wears a freckled OM
between her shoulder blades

After a still day
a sea-breeze evening comes
striped by shadows
The wind in the palm trees
sounds like longed-for rain

No iguanas
by the canal today, just
a cactus flower:
A fragile yellow blossom
from a fleshy, thorny stem

Wind rattles the palms
Flip flops scuff the pavement
A woman laughs
I look down from the landing
as the two of them walk by

After florescent midnight
morning shines yellow
through motel curtains
I wake to a child outside
shouting for the joy of noise

Cool morning air
traffic rumbles blocks away
while mourning doves call
A white-striped black lizard
rushes by my feet

From Ecuador, New York,
Rio, Minnesota, working,
shopping, sunning themselves
Like the migrant birds
so few of us were born here.

~Boca Raton, Florida, USA



susan delphine delaney

twilight in Kansas
every single sunflower
has already
turned its face
toward the dawn

~1-70 West, Kansas, USA

first light
all along
the sidewalk
the scent
of moonflowers

dawn
in the Panhandle
shoulder cracks
caulked
with pink morning glories

~approaching Amarillo, Texas, USA

hiking up the mountain
we keep silence
each pretending to pray
until we turn back
and find the breath for talking

stepping across bars
of red light
and blue light
the Abbot moves
to bless us

*~Pecos Benedictine Monastery, Pecos,
New Mexico, USA*

visiting home
recycling bin
brimful with neat rows
of liquor bottles
the labels soaked off

~Washington, District of Columbia, USA

blue skies
at the traffic light
the storm spotter's
five antennae
waggling

celebrating
living alone
six maraschino cherries
in my glass
and champagne

after the divorce
three pairs
of doves
nesting
in my yard

worshiping
beside stained glass
a round red dot
moves slowly
up my leg

~Plano, Texas, USA

Alex von Vaupel

storm stirred
leaves twirl round my feet
i wonder how it felt
in that test tube where
i first became mixed up

taking my gran
to the house where she
raised her family
this pavement once marked
by mother's fallen knees

scratch my name
in old pews scarred
with the needs
and insecurities
of so many lost souls

~Utrecht, Netherlands

starry night
holding hands in the dark
she who is
my compass points
to the polestar

~Devon, UK

early morning
in the Corner Café watching
as the world goes by
how fragile we are – dunking
biscuits in our milky tea

~Canterbury, Kent, UK

laying low here
blending with the City Walls
soaking up the sun
to satiate these latent
lizard genes

~Tonbridge / Canterbury, Kent, UK

he talks of interrupting
his poetry to go shower
thus i am left here
to write how i
imagine him naked

~Utrecht, Netherlands



Raquel D. Bailey

autumn leaves . . .
nurses remove
his browning sheets
while silence grows
even on tree branches

family
reunion
a gathering
of crickets communicate
better than we do

~Florida, USA

Marin Paul

Creta, Knossos—
my balcony overlooked
sunswept olive groves;
Ariadne shared this view
her home – like mine – now lost

~Iraklion, Crete

Gull's cry trails
over purling sunset waves;
beside you
chained chaste to the mast
I am Odysseus

~Ionian Sea off Cephalonia, Greece

Herculaneum
bread left baking, dolls dropped—
huddled, we still wait
for boats that didn't come
as our sky turned to poison

~Ercolano, Italy

Listen, my love,
to the Todai-ji bell,
its echoes fading
evanescent as heartbeats—
we cannot call them back

~Isuien Garden, Nara, Japan

While the storm raged
you sat murmuring koans;
I could not listen.
In this dripping new world,
your silence is thunder.

~Severn, Maryland

Molten copper sun
boils the sea at Earth's left edge;
waves thrum with our breath,
pulse like stone-torn fingers—
the fogbound cliff, beneath us.

~Lovers Point, Monterey, California

Compass spinning wild
as stars round an unseen pole,
with neither lodestone
nor signpost to point the way
I wander, homeless, homeward.

~Severn, Maryland



John Samuel Tieman

somewhere there's a man
whose skin is drawn tight over
where his thigh once was
somewhere locked and loaded
a veteran's gun is drawn

on my morning stroll
by the new Jewish graveyard
I put a rock on
the stone of Lt. Stein
killed training during peace

did I remember
to wave the last time I drove
past sister's convent
I wonder as I ponder
Shelly's obituary

~Saint Louis, Missouri, USA

M. L. Harvey

he told us
he was half Cherokee
before we bought
the white clapboard house
with the pig in the cellar

well learned
my mother taught me
servitude
yet, I remember
her fury, her hatred

blazing
in full sun
the house of the widow
casts shadows
back on itself

~childhood, New Jersey

he searches
my hands for signs of work
the cattleman
who sells whole sides of beef
and divines the day by clouds

telling me
about the other woman
so unlike
the self I know
and who he thinks I am

sewing box
full of buttons
missing mates
down at the town hall
a mixer just for seniors

a man's world
he tells me with a wink
still in sight
in all his courting plumage
a bluebird sings to his mate

the man
she married for money
with each breath
of this high summer breeze
the acrid smell of marigolds

after the fight
on this first hot evening
the sadness
of their five children
melts into ice cream

sprinkling
grass seed on the bald spots
dark sprouts
through the spotted white
of his T-shirt

roses
scratch my hands
while weeding
small bumps and bruises
when one begins to care



~Harvey, cont.

love,
the color of passion
at the dump
paper candy containers
to be recycled

another wish
buried by obligation
on the stove
canned plum tomatoes
simmer in their juice

pre-dawn
my grandmother pours whiskey
in her coffee
outside the kitchen window
the mountains begins to rise

an ice storm
has brought the birch
to its knees—
one by one, troubles in life
have made her let go of God

equally,
the scent of lilacs hover
on mothers
of newborn calves
and those taken to slaughter

~Hamilton, New York



Terra Martin

the smooth
texture of the frozen lake
creamy
like pale toffee
perfectly pulled

~Sauble Beach, Ontario, Canada

what if
I were a willow
would you be the wind
that tangles
and untangles me

~Heart Lake, Ontario, Canada

ozark sun drops
such deep roots
how bright
the wish that
I've buried

*~Tobermory Bruce Peninsula, Ontario,
Canada*

broken ice
exposes the dark water
this sharp seam
creeps into each
conversation we have

~Niagra Falls, Ontario, Canada

Alexis Rotella

Rushing him
to the hospital
for the last time,
he reminds his wife
to lock the gate.

~Berkeley, California, USA

From their upstairs window
they watch our
every move—
the neighbors who always
look away.

~Arnold, Maryland, USA

Am I stealing them . . .
these shells
collected
and left behind
by strangers.

~Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, USA

A hoop skirt
from my mother's younger days—
I pull it from the trunk
sneak out of the house sideways
and float into fifth grade.

~Central City, Pennsylvania, USA

Too cold for primroses
the place of my birth
but lilies-of-the-valley
deep in the woods
and apple blossom waterfalls.

~Cairnbrook, Pennsylvania, USA

I call the Hospice
as promised
but he has already departed
for his trip
across the River Styx.

*~Phone call to Bob Speiss, Editor of
Modern Haiku*

This entire town
of Harmony
for sale—
it costs less than we paid
for our house!

~Harmony, California, USA

Grey day in Athens—
a young woman runs
for the bus
flash of
red satin panties.

~Athens, Greece

As if a fairy godmother
passed her wand
over this night
of nonstop
shooting stars.

~Arnold, Maryland, USA



~Rotella, cont.

Waiting out the shower
tourists on
this covered bridge
from all four corners
of America.

~Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, USA

Foggy Mountain—
right after
the hairpin turns
the tombstone maker's
Gothic shingle.

~Allegheny County, Pennsylvania, USA

Train to Moscow—
leaving behind
the fog, the gloom
the long white
summer nights.

~Leningrad, Russia

Bolshoi intermission—
the zakushi
the fountains of champagne
and caviar glistening
on mountains of ice.

** zakushi - a medley of appetizers*

~Moscow, Russia

First day of trout season—
at the lake
two water snakes escort
my brother and his buddies
the heck outta there.

~Southwestern Pennsylvania, USA

Down home cooking—
a Bostonian accent
tells the waitress
No, I do not want a sangwich,
but I would like a sandwich.

*~Off Blue Ridge Parkway, West Virginia,
USA*

Deaf priest
the line for confession
four times longer
than that
to Father Lombardo.

~New York, USA



Marisa Fazio

midweek park
on a bench
quietly private
his sunday words
still ringing

~Melbourne, Australia.

Jacob Kobina Ayiah Mensah

isolation is not the word
of *being yourself* I wrap my bark
with wisteria
to remind me
I am still in the prison waiting

the sea opens
my son lifts his paper helicopter
full of passengers
myself and from the playground
into the Milky Way

painting the sky this morning
charcoalhead splatters
red rays about through the window
he descends
oranges of sunset

fish leaping into the air
the nurse steps down
and hurries on the staircase
her fragrance clouds
from a nearby graveyard

the thought that I too
will sink into the darkness in the chamber
is a happy hour
iris shooting
around my gravebed

~*Ghana*

ayaz daryl nielsen

quietly sitting
in the study
finding time for
conversations
with house plants

~*Boulder, Colorado, USA*

in the middle of this
raspberry thicket—itchy
scratches, thorn in
thumb, a torn shirt and
the sweetest berries!

~*Eau Clair, Wisconsin, USA*



Dawn Bruce

bush floor
a scumbled background
for golden ginkgo . . .
her wrinkled hands
adorned with amber rings

a flap
of white cockatoos
settle on the window sill
the start
of our outback adventure

~*Australia*

Naomi Beth Wakan

mist rolls in
our favorite islands disappear
as did the Spaniards
who once gave them names—
Galiano and Valdez

the park
emptied of tourists
leaves on the water
we reclaim boldly
what we had recently shared

low tide
children turn the rocks . . .
crabs run every which way
the young voices rise in shrieks
as they too scatter

stacking firewood
wondering whether it is
a full cord
doubts about mankind
loom large at such times

summer guests departed
soft strumming of a guitar
on the deck
the midges group around us
in small clouds

snow still here
in the half-opened white crocus
a sleeping bee
I shuffle seed packages
into a certain order

~Gabriola Island, Georgia Strait, Canada

Bob Lucky

reading glasses
tied to the teller's window
at my local bank
I squint at the charges
for an overseas transfer

~Hangzhou, China

killing time
over a bowl of soup
I watch the vendor
knead and stretch dough
filling his night with noodles

~Hangzhou, China

everyone else
at the foot massage parlor
oohs and aahs—
across my gritted teeth
a thin-lipped smile

~Hangzhou, China

in Bangkok
protesters have over-run
the airport—
my memory is crowded
with grilled bananas and coups

~Thailand



André Surridge

laughing children
dance to the rhythm
of a cross-legged woman
pounding strips of tapa
with a wooden club

~Lavena, Fiji

young girls
emerge from the rainforest
with big bright flowers
gathered for their high school
graduation ceremony

~Tavenui, Fiji

tapestry cushion
of the *Beagle* entering
the Bay of Islands . . .
this tiny wooden church
with nine rows of pews

~Christ Church, Russell, NZ

I know little
of Catherine of Siena
what she said makes sense—
all the way to heaven
is heaven

~Siena, Italy

cathedral bells
herald their arrival—
godwits . . .
harbingers of spring
from far Alaska

~Christchurch, New Zealand

Queen Mary 2
a winding staircase lifts the eye
to crystal chandeliers
tiny reflections
bounce off bronze walls

~Auckland, New Zealand

the dancer
a sufi dervish
spins
right hand raised to bring
light onto the earth

~Cairo, Egypt

I don't know
where you are . . . in this world
or the next—
but I recall your smile
your warmth, your kindness

~Harrogate, England

I remember
as a boy our one day a year
seaside visit
come rain, hail or shine
the train to Scarborough

~Scarborough, England



~Surridge, cont.

Japanese tourists
visiting a dairy farm . . .
the shocked look
on their faces when a cow
pisses a waterfall

~Cambridge, New Zealand

one of only
forty or so in the world
tiny fairy tern . . .
crushed in your nest when
a beachcomber crossed the barrier

~Mangawhai Spit, New Zealand

Greek train
from Patras to Olympia
slows to a halt . . .
sitting on the track
someone's cow

~Greece

as if thirsty
a dry-stone wall runs down
to the stream
here and there thinning shapes
of speckled snow

~Yorkshire Dales, England

remains of flowers
blue and white water lilies
in the tomb
of Rameses the Second
for the afterlife

~Valley of the Kings, Egypt

here and there
on either side
of the Desert Road
stands of bright tussock
like golden porcupines

~Desert Road, New Zealand

my father's death
a stroke and heart attack
simultaneously—
the doctor said he wouldn't
have known anything about it

~Shalden, England

abbey road—
the place of worship
long gone
modern pilgrims come
to hear the cuckoo

~Knaresborough, England

road gang
noise of graders and pneumatic drills
smell of fresh tarmac
the traffic marshall waves me on
through a fall of blossom

~Hamilton, New Zealand

earth tremor
the six-year-old asks
does the world
have Parkinson's
just like granddad?

~Hamilton, New Zealand

Sean Greenlaw

in this silence
as the dress slips off
even birds wait—
hear each amber thread give way
to the singing of your skin

a rain drop
into the sea
swallowed whole
I chant a mantra
under my breath

would it matter
that I am ugly
if I could write
words as beautiful
as that dark skinned boy?

tropical fog
rolls down green Oahu hills
burying our bus
as we travel in silence
to visit your mother's grave

Just how many songs
did I dedicate to you?
All those love ballads
have since wrecked off the coast
where we watched the red sun set

We paid fate no heed—
and Pyxis and Polaris
we cast off like clothes—
our weak green driftwood fire
burned against the dusking sky

~Hawaii, USA

cigarette smoke
I used to wave away
from my clothes
now clings to the walls
where your picture was

a lonely night
in this empty motel
roaches scuttle
above a bed better
than the one we shared

~New York, USA

I look away
each day a hundred times
as I pass her room
the old clothing folded
expecting her return

half a dozen ants
pull a worm carcass
across black pavement
the empty driveway
of our repossessed car

through my cracked window
the laughter of two lovers
the first day of spring
for a moment I am there
beyond the walls of myself

All of us are still
in this dead factory town
roads closing each day
even in the summer months
with just chem trails for clouds



~Greenlaw, cont.

the car now gone
and perhaps the house next
bitter on the tongue
this tea I steeped
in a banged up pot

in the stars
I can trace the contours
of your body
and all the glowing pieces
I wish to touch

rain
through the open window
reaches my face
I awake to your kisses
for the first time in a year

midnight
the same as eleven
nowadays
no bird ever springs from
that German cuckoo clock

~Torrington, Connecticut, USA



Mark Burgh

If I could tell the moon
Remote and steel cold,
About how you stand
In a dark room
Glowing like a candle.

~Fort Smith, Arkansas, USA

I have never
Won a game of chess,
But I know which way
To turn when the loon
Sings to his mate.

~Fort Smith, Arkansas, USA



Peggy Henrich

Morning sun . . .
from my hillside apartment
I watch
the hawk's shadow
darken treetops

Strands of hair
whip my cheeks
along this narrow road
Basho's face peers down
from the harvest moon

~Santa Cruz, California, USA

Kiersta Recktenwald

As the days lengthen
between rows of poplars
I ask great Heaven—
where endless oneness abides—
to make us new one more time.

~Southwestern Maine

White sugar drifting
from a silver spoon into
a pink coffee cup—
snowflakes in the lantern light
swirling past my windowpane.

~at home, Vienna, Maine



Deborah P. Kolodji

forest
of lacy bloom stalks
too big for yarrow . . .
I wonder if Socrates would think
it beautiful

~Elkhorn Slough, Watsonville, California

two salamanders
claim the waterfall
pool
a child screams
"swimming lizards"

*~Fish Canyon, San Gabriel Mountains,
California*

the old oak shades
a crumbling foundation
and non-native shrubs
I step off the trail,
wonder who lived here

*~Fish Canyon, San Gabriel Mountains,
California*



BOOK REVIEWS

Atlas Poetica welcomes book reviews and non-fiction articles relevant to poetry of place. We accept non-fiction submissions year round. Please contact us with your idea to see if it is something that might interest us.

“The Narrow Road to the Interior” by Kimiko Hahn

W.W. Norton & Co., New York, NY

c. 2006

ISBN 978-0-393-33027-4

Reviewed by Brian Zimmer

In the poetic introduction to her allusively titled volume of *zuihitsu*, “The Narrow Road to the Interior”, Kimiko Hahn writes, “. . . for me the *zuihitsu* feels *encompassing*. That a fragment might be *synecdoche*, or *excerpt*. Or *scrap*. (Sappho comes to mind.) Why not? . . . (And when is a piece that resembles a fragment – really the whole?)”

For those practiced in the reading and writing of Japanese poetic forms, no answer to Hahn’s question is necessary. They already know the answer recognizing the thrust of her argument as intrinsic to both Japanese sensibility, literature and its adaptation to foreign cultures and languages. However, Hahn’s book is not aimed at an audience familiar with Japanese literary forms. She is a mainstream poet writing for a mainstream poetry audience.

Zuihitsu is an ancient Japanese literary employing random thoughts, diary entries, reminiscence, poetry, and even fiction. It is a kind of literary tapestry, its various colored threads weaving a subtle thematic, often narrative cohesion. Historical examples and precedents can be found in Sei Shônagon’s ancient *Pillow Book* and aspects of Tsurayuki’s earlier *Tosa Diary*. Nevertheless, Hahn is at pains to distinguish between the Japanese diary and *zuihitsu* forms: “The *zuihitsu*, spatial in every way, differs from the *nikki*, a

'poetic diary' which differs from the Western—that is, differs from documenting fact unless we mean an emotional fact. Differs from what is really *true*." It is tapestry, mosaic, collage, with language for its medium.

Hahn's *zuihitsu* are relational, encompassing movement from one physical locale to another, integrated with inner trajectories with their own uniquely fixed points of psychological and emotional reference. They are intimate, experimental, reveries on the conceptualization, act and art of journeying itself.

Geographically her work moves back and forth between New York City where she makes her home and various New England getaways in the company of her two young daughters and lovers. Hahn is a practiced poet in control of her voice, her various travels and contexts giving rise to discernible shifts in personal register.

From New York she writes the following *tanka*:

All the harsh remarks about him that he himself reported to me, I
now believe and repeat to those who made them. *Torrential*.

And from Wellfleet, Massachusetts:

Do not compare the long rains of my regret with your flash flood
of grief—I imagine saying.

What immediately strikes the reader of contemporary English *tanka* is that all the *tanka* in Hahn's book depart from the five-line, 5-7-5-7-7 syllabic/units of meaning schema dominant among a majority of contemporary *tanka* writers. She seems happily oblivious to any controversy surrounding the popular western structure merely noting that all her *tanka* "are very loosely based on the form, which in Japanese is thirty-one syllables. Although I have not maintained the count, I have attempted brevity, the original convention of rendering each as a single line, and the use of seasonal/nature references."

I am reminded in this context of David Callner's translations of his grandfather, Kisaburo Konoshima's *tanka* which also forego the standard western form for one Callner developed with the intent of honoring his grandfather's own practice. Konoshima wrote: "At school I was taught that poems consisted of thirty-one syllables, arranged 5-7-5-7-7- and divided in two forms, upper and lower." [i] In a 2005 interview with Robert D. Wilson, Callner explained: "I am uncomfortable with the five-line style that maintains the 5-7-5-7-7 Japanese meter, so after attempts with various other structures, all my own, I arrived at a two-line version that roughly maintains the upper and lower *tanka* form (*kami no ku shimo no ku*) but completely ignores the 5-7-5-7-7 meter. I believe this brings me as close as I can come to the essence of the original Japanese." [ii]

Porcelain of antiquity—our ancestors lived in stillness
porcelain born in the height of stillness

Kisaburo Konoshima/*Hudson*

The Narrow Road to the Interior is one poet's travelogue through the vagaries, permutations and returns of time and experience. She reveals *zuihitsu* (including *tanka*) to be aptly suited to expressing the complexities of human experience. Here she speaks to the loss of her deeply-grieved Japanese mother,

In a room overlooking pine, I stop thinking of Mother's death and think of my lover's hands only to recall Mother brushing knots from my hair.

Here on her poetic practice:

I sit at my computer to see where the words have taken the heart. The brain enters now.

This is where I write *zuihitsu*—for the permission, the blur, the rooms created by the little blocks of text.

Regarding the failure of her marriage she interrogates herself:

When I finally told him I'm leaving he curled up in bed and heaved without noise. I grabbed the children and their jackets and pulled them into spring snow—to protect them from his grief? To protect myself? To keep them from both? To keep them to myself?

As candid where the intricacies of love are concerned as her Japanese forebears:

But it's a grasshopper—black with yellow wings—making that clicking noise. My lover shows me he can name things before catching them.

Some of the most harrowing passages in the volume are Hahn's rendering of events in New York City, September 11, 2001, as witnessed from her Gowanus, Brooklyn neighborhood:

From the Promenade—where my daughter and I saw Tower Two collapse—we look for something more than disbelief.

Intensely, unabashedly female, Hahn's *zuihitsu* are by turns ecstatic, grieving and ambivalent in their depiction of what it means to be a woman of mixed-blood living in contemporary America, a modern American poet, mother, friend, alienated wife and tentative lover. Hers is an unflinching, even confessional vision in its outpouring of joy, grief, rage, love and sexuality. Her literary allusions, as diverse and culturally distant as Auden and Shikishi, never seem forced and never threaten to overwhelm via their connections, her experience presenting fresh as yesterday's encounter with colleague, stranger or intimate friend:

In midsummer heat when I cannot sit in one chair for more than a few moments, like Shikishi, *I feel sad for no reason.*

On the train she sits one seat ahead and across the aisle. When the train brakes in Albany, the baby cries *aah!* And she replies *ahh!* And I think, *just what I would do*, then feel miserable. *Was I ever so attentive?*

Reading *The Narrow Road to the Interior*, it often struck me that here was a book practitioners within the burgeoning tanka prose movement in English might appreciate for the expansion to their growing repertoire and art *zuihitsu* has to offer. *Zuihitsu* suggests yet another approach to the ancient marriage of tanka and prose, perhaps opening a unique venue to increasing nuance and greater creative license within a genre still in its western infancy yet already demonstrating rapid maturity and promise.

In a 2006 interview[iii], Hahn admitted that she'd "resisted the tanka form for a long time because it so often seemed to use the same almost programmatic movement: mainly observation/enlightenment, and that felt too predictable. But she [Shikishi] taught me otherwise."

After spending several years writing several hundred tanka, Hahn discovered she had also written poems that were sometimes "sentimental in the worst possible way. I reformed them into paragraphs, and the paragraphs seemed to absorb the sentimentality in a way that a lineated poem could not. That was interesting to me . . . how form changes content. Different from discursive or meditative poems, I think."

An advocate of the fragmented and intentionally unpolished, Hahn confides that "if a piece feels too smooth I seek to rough it up, put in flaws, put in contradiction, because for me that makes things more compelling. And rather than subject or theme, I look for an organizing principle . . .", a perhaps critical challenge worth consideration where contemporary English tanka and tanka prose are concerned.

Does the accepted, lineated structure of much current tanka force—even restrict—poets to writing a certain kind of poem? Does it confine content? Lend itself to over-emphasizing a certain type of “pivot” that threatens to devolve into a kind of merely technical trick? These are important questions despite the many extraordinary poetic gems that have enamored the genre to so many. Is there room for greater diversity and experimentation without calling down editorial censure? Are many of our poems too clean, too finished, too clever?

Hahn’s suggestion to rough things up a bit, while provocative, may provide some encouragement to those wishing to take greater risks with the tanka form. Perhaps the extraordinary depth of her writing in *Journey to the Interior* will grant her outsider comments a more open reception among the tanka community even to the point of softening the strict criteria for submissions among so many of the various tanka journals?

Any criticism I may have of *The Journey to the Interior* is more than offset by the volume’s distinctive voice and artistry. I did not always appreciate the tendency of the poet to identify her real-life antagonists (to a certain extent unavoidable, but does one really wish to excoriate the father of one’s children publicly?) and there is a certain level of emotional repetition in the book that might have been checked in editing.

While the subject matter of *The Journey to the Interior* does not always make for a comfortable read, the poet’s skill and plain-spokenness, suffused with a daring, subtle beauty and masterful control of form, surely commends the book to the attention of all lovers of tanka and of poetry in general.

[i] Kisaburo Konoshima; Hudson – a collection of Tanka by Kisaburo Konoshima, translated by David Callner c.2004; *The Japan Times*.

[ii] *Simply Haiku*, Autumn 2005.

[iii] Sheck, Laurie, “Kimiko Hahn”, *BOMB Magazine*, Issue 96, Summer 2006.





ANNOUNCEMENTS

Atlas Poetica will publish short announcements in any language up to 300 words in length or on a space available basis. Announcements may be edited for brevity, clarity, grammar, or any other reason. Send announcements in the body of an email to: AtlasPoetica@gmail.com—do not send attachments. Announcement may be in any language and do not need to be accompanied by English translation.

* * *

Take Five : Best Contemporary Tanka, 2008 Anthology, Published by Modern English Tanka Press

Take Five: Best Contemporary Tanka is edited by M. Kei, Sanford Goldstein, Pamela A. Babusci, Patricia Prime, Bob Lucky, Kala Ramesh. This editorial team set out to read the entire field of tanka publication for a single year, regardless of source, without any dogma regarding definition, form or content. Over the course of fourteen months, they read over fourteen thousand poems. The results are gathered in one of the best new poetry anthologies.

Baltimore, Maryland – April 7, 2009 – *Take Five: Best Contemporary Tanka*, edited by M. Kei, Sanford Goldstein, Pamela A. Babusci, Patricia Prime, Bob Lucky, Kala Ramesh, has been published in trade paperback by Modern English Tanka Press. Original cover art by Pamela A. Babusci.

Tanka, the ancient Japanese poetic form, has been an important source for modernists for more than a hundred years, but never relegated itself to the position of dusty relic. It is alive and vital and producing some of the most eloquent and insightful poetry published in English today. Anthologies, contests, journals, and web sites publish thousands upon thousands of tanka poems every year—but which ones are the most rewarding for the readers?

The editorial team of *Take Five: Best Contemporary Tanka* set out to read the entire field of tanka publication for a single year, regardless of source, without any dogma regarding definition, form or content. Over the course of fourteen months, they read over fourteen thousand poems. The results are gathered in one of the best new poetry anthologies. Famous names and unknown poets from around

the world appear side by side in 321 single poems and several tanka sequences and tanka prose pieces. A List of Venues consulted and complete publishing credits are included, along with an introduction that covers the history of tanka and the project itself.

The poets included are: Hortensia Anderson, Susan Antolin, Aurora Antonovic, An'ya, Harue Aoki, Megan Arkenberg, Pamela A. Babusci, Dave Bacharach, Marty Baird, Jon Baldwin, Collin Barber, John Barlow, Frederick Bassett, Roberta Beary, Janick Belleau, Cathy Drinkwater Better, Randy Brooks, Marjorie Buettner, Owen Bullock, David Caruso, James Chessing, Bell Gale Chevigny, Margaret Chula, Tom Clausen, Urban Codrin, Norman Darlington, Janet Lynn Davis, Cherie Hunter Day, Andrew Detheridge, Melissa Dixon, Jim Doss, Curtis Dunlap, Jeanne Emrich, Margarita Engle, Michael Evans, Amelia Fielden, Trish Fong, Sylvia Forges-Ryan, Stanford M. Forrester, Bernard Gadd, Linda Galloway, Denis M. Garrison, Beverley George, Sanford Goldstein, Tom Gomes, M. L. Grace, Andrea Grillo, David Gross, William Hart, M. L. Harvey, C. W. Hawes, Peggy Heinrich, Lorne Henry, William J. Higginson, Ruth Holzer, Elizabeth Howard, Roger Jones, Jim Kacian, Kirsty Karkow, M. Kei, Susan Lee Kerr, Michael Ketchek, Larry Kimmel, Mariko Kitakubo, Kathy Kituai, Deborah P. Kolodji, Robert Kusch, Lynne Leach, Gary LeBel, Angela Leuck, Darrel Lindsey, Bob Lucky, Jeanne Lupton, Carole MacRury, Laura Maffei, Mary Mageau, A. A. Marcoff, Thelma Mariano, Francis Masat, Karen McClintock, Michael McClintock, Tyrone McDonald, Jo McInerney, Dorothy McLaughlin, Paul Mercken, Annette Mineo, Vasile Moldovan, Mike Montreuil,

Jim Moore, June Moreau, Joan Murphy, H. Gene Murtha, Peter Newton, Linda Papanicolaou, Patrick M. Pilarski, Jack Prewitt, Patricia Prime, Carol Purington, John Quinnett, Claudia Coutu Radmore, David Rice, Andrew Riutta, Barbara Robidoux, James Rohrer, Alexis Rotella, Miriam Sagan, Fujiko Sato, Grant D. Savage, Philip Schofield, Billy Simms, Guy Simser, Paul Smith, John Soules, Art Stein, John Stevenson, Richard Stevenson, Maria Steyn, John Stone, André SurrIDGE, George Swede, Noriko Tanaka, Frans Terryn, Carolyn Thomas, Marc Thompson, Tony A. Thompson, Michael Thorley, Julie Thorndyke, Kozue Uzawa, Geert Verbeke, Ella Wagemakers, Linda Jeannette Ward, Michael Dylan Welch, Liam Wilkinson, Robert D. Wilson, Jeffrey Woodward, An Xiao, Peter Yovu, and Aya Yuhki.

"Take Five is like Dave Brubeck's famous long jazz piece of the same name: both simple and complex, with varied rhythms that can make fingers snap and hips sway. Beguiling for the beginner and expert alike."—George Swede

"It seems that with every turn—whether it be picking up the latest tanka journal, navigating your way to tanka sites across the web or checking out a new entry from one of the ever-growing number of tanka bloggers—that these small but perfectly formed poems continue to offer us some of the most breathtaking moments in contemporary poetry. It's nothing short of spellbinding to behold a new tanka, its five-lines engraved in the granite of an ancient form of literature but with all the freshness of a green leaf showing. Today, writers are leaving their tanka ajar—in these brief moments of poetry, anything is possible and everything is welcome—and, as a result, tanka is able to thrive across

the globe. As writers of tanka embrace the modern world, the modern world embraces tanka.

Take Five: Best Contemporary Tanka succeeds in providing a comprehensive illustration of the state of modern tanka. Here we have a veritable feast of the finest individual tanka, tanka sequences and tanka prose published over the last year, handpicked from every nook and cranny by an editorial board that consists of some of the most highly respected figures in the field. Take Five is, at once, a satisfying digest of quality tanka and an indispensable tanka handbook for new and experienced writers of the form. With an extensive and absorbing introduction from the chief editor of the anthology, M. Kei, the book is not only a literary treat but an essential addition to the poetry shelf of reader and writer alike." —Liam Wilkinson, Editor, 3 Lights Gallery

"Powerful short stories written in five lines—that's what Take Five is all about. This anthology is not just your tanka wallpaper variety; nearly every piece is a jumpstart for the heart that tells the truth about that four-letter word called 'Life.' M. Kei and his team of editors are to be commended—when I was done reading Take Five, for a moment, I didn't know if I was a woman, a monk or a pelican." —Alexis Rotella, Ed., Prune Juice: Journal of Senryu and Kyoka

For media inquiries or to arrange an interview with the author, contact editor-in-chief M. Kei by e-mail at firepearls@verizon.net

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The 2009 editorial team is now reading. Poets may submit complete published works to

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All the Horse of Heaven / Todos los Caballos del Paraíso, Tanka by James Tipton, published by Modern English Tanka Press

All the Horses of Heaven / Todos los Caballos del Paraíso by James Tipton is a bilingual edition with Spanish translations by Martha Alcántar. It is a powerful collection of tanka poetry from the renowned James Tipton.

Baltimore, Maryland – April 6, 2009 – *All the Horses of Heaven / Todos los Caballos del Paraíso*, the collection of tanka by the renowned poet James Tipton, has been published in trade paperback by Modern English Tanka Press. This is a bilingual edition with Spanish translations by

Martha Alcántar. Tanka lovers will enjoy this wonderful new collection.

"All the Horses of Heaven is a rare combination of mostly erotic tanka that are filled with a longing for the sanctuary of the Feminine. At the same time these story-poems celebrate the sounds, colors and rhythms of a poet's life in Mexico. Those who remember Jim Tipton from the earlier days of haiku will be delighted to welcome him back as a fellow traveler with whom we explore the side streets and bazaars of Tankaland." —Alex Rotella, Editor, *Prune Juice: Journal of Senryu and Kyoka*, etc.

About Author:

James Tipton lives in the tropical mountains of central Mexico, in the town of Chapala, with his wife Martha and his daughter Gabriela. He first began to study haiku and tanka in the mid-sixties while eating sack lunches in City Lights Bookstore in San Francisco. For more than forty years he has been publishing haiku and tanka and its related forms, including senryu and kyoka. Magazine credits include *American Tanka*, *Atlas Poetica*, *frogpond*, *Haiku*, *Hummingbird*, *Lynx*, *Modern English Tanka*, *Modern Haiku*, *Prune Juice*, *still*, *The Tanka Journal*, *Tundra*, and *Woodnotes*. Anthology credits include *The Haiku Anthology*, ed. Cor van den Heuvel (Doubleday Anchor, 1974); *The Haiku Handbook*, by William J. Higginson (McGraw-Hill, 1985); *Aphrodite*, by Isabel Allende (Harper Collins, 1998); *Haiku: A Poet's Guide*, by Lee Gurga (Modern Haiku Press, 2003); *Erotic Haiku*, ed. Hiroaki Sato (IBC, 2004); and *The Red Moon Anthology of English-Language Haiku*, edited by Jim Kacian and

others (Red Moon Press, 1996, 2007, and 2008). His books of haiku include *Bittersweet* (Cold Mountain Press, 1975); *Proposing to the Woman in the Rear View Mirror* (Modern English Tanka Press, 2008); and *Washing Dishes in the Ancient Village/Lavando platos en el antiguo pueblo*, a bilingual collection of 100 "three-line poems" about Mexico and Latin America, published in Mexico (Ediciones del Lago, 2009). A collection of his poetry, *Letters from a Stranger* (Conundrum Press, 1999), with a Foreword by Isabel Allende, won the Colorado Book Award. His work has been translated into a dozen languages including Japanese and Chinese.

For media inquiries or to arrange an interview with the author, contact James Tipton by e-mail at: spiritofmexico@yahoo.com.

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BIOGRAPHIES

Ayiah Mensah (that is the surname) is a vegetarian, poet, visual poet, creative writer, journalist and artist. He was born in Ghana. He was for a short time an assistant editor of a newspaper, and a long time mathematics and science teacher.

Raquel D. Bailey is originally from St. Andrew, Jamaica, a proud mother, Executive Administrator, Event Planning consultant & child advocate. As an F.S.U English graduate, she is the Founding Editor & Publisher of *Lyrical Passion Poetry E-Zine*. Her poetry works appear in *The Heron's Nest*, *Simply Haiku*, *Modern Haiku*, *Ribbons*, *Frogpond*, *The Aureoan*, (EPN), *Shamrock*, *Wisteria*, *Chrysanthemum*, *Red Lights*, *Taj Mahal Review*, *Presence*, *Other Poetry*, *Mainichi Daily News & Cider Press Review*. She resides in Florida.

Dawn Bruce an Australian poet living in Sydney, is a creative-writing teacher, the Vice-president of the Australian Haiku Society and member of the Bower Birds tanka group. She is widely published in Australia and Overseas, a winner of many writing and haiga prizes and author of books containing free verse and haiku – *Stinging the Silence*, *Tangible Shadows* and *Sketching Light*

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Curtis Dunlap lives near the confluence of the Mayo and Dan rivers in Mayodan, North Carolina. He has been published in several anthologies and journals. He was awarded 3rd Prize in the 11th International Kusamakura Haiku Competition in 2006 and the Museum of Haiku Literature Award in 2008. His web site is located at <<http://tobaccoroadpoet.com>>. Curtis also blogs along the Tobacco Road <<http://tobaccoroadpoet.com>>.

blogsspot.com>.

Marje A. Dyck is a Canadian poet and artist. Her poetry and art work has appeared in various journals and anthologies such as *Frogpond*, *Simply Haiku*, *The Heron's Nest*, *moonset*, and *Modern English Tanka*. Her books include *rectangle of light*, proof press, 1996; and *A Piece of the Moon*, Calisto Press, 2005.

Margarita Engle is the Cuban-American author of books about the island, most recently *The Surrender Tree* from Henry Holt & Co. in April, 2008. *The Poet Slave of Cuba* (Henry Holt & Co., 2006) received many honors, including the Americas Award, presented at the Library of Congress. Margarita lives with her family in Clovis, California.

Marisa Fazio writes poetry and prose. She lives in Melbourne, Australia.

She is also an English as a Second Language Teacher.

Amelia Fielden is an Australian who divides her time among the Pacific coast of Australia, Canberra, Seattle, and Tokyo. She is a professional translator of Japanese and an enthusiastic poet. *Ferris Wheel : 101 Modern and Contemporary Japanese Tanka* (by Uzawa & Fielden, Boston: Cheng & Tsui,), was awarded the 2007 Donald Keene Prize for Translation of Japanese Literature, NY. In 2008, *In Two Minds*, a book of responsive tanka written with fellow Australian, Kathy Kituai, was released by Modern English Tanka Press.

Sanford Goldstein has been publishing tanka for more than forty years. He is co-translator of several collections of Japanese tanka poets.

Abigail Greene now lives in a retirement community, with her husband of 54 years, in Greenville, DE. Life has changed - no garden, no boat; she is now learning to write essays at the Academy of Lifelong Learning in Wilmington.

Sean Greenlaw grew up in Torrington, Connecticut. After some time spent wandering in

the wilderness he returned to his childhood home. He writes poetry and travels around the sun at about 30 kilometers per second. In both things he is merely along for the ride.

Andrea Grillo lives in an old blue farmhouse in northern New Jersey with her old Lab, Bailey. She is a landscape designer, tree grower, gardener, backhoe operator, sailor and fledgling tanka poet. All in all, a nice fit for mixing tanka, haiku and life.

M. L. Harvey is a professional landscape painter, dividing time between rural, Central New York and New York City. Continuously captivated by the dreaming room to be carved out of five short lines or set between four corners.

Marilyn Hazelton is a poet and essayist in Allentown, PA. As a teacher, she thinks about why writing poetry is an act of self-liberation, how creative acts inform the soul and how to raise those issues within a broader community. She is the editor and publisher of *red lights*, an international tanka journal. Her haiku, haibun and tanka have been published in *Modern Haiku*, *bottlerockets*, and other journals.

Peggy Heinrich's poems have appeared in *American Tanka*, *red lights*, *Ribbons*, *Moonset* and many other publications and anthologies worldwide. She is a founding member of the Tanka Society of America and the Grand Central Tanka Café, a workshop of tanka poets. A native New Yorker, she recently resettled in Santa Cruz, California after many cold winters in Connecticut.

Gerry Jacobson lives in Canberra, Australia. Since he began writing in May '07 some of his tanka have been published in *Eucalypt*.

M. Kei lives on the Eastern Shore of the Chesapeake Bay, USA. He crews aboard a skipjack, a traditional wooden sailboat used to fish for oysters. He is the editor of *Atlas Poetica* as well as the author of *Slow Motion : Log of a Chesapeake Bay Skipjack*, and the editor of *Fire Pearls : Short Masterpieces of the Human Heart*, and editor-in-chief of *Take Five : Best Contemporary Tanka of 2008*. Over 1100 of his tanka have been published in ten countries and five languages.

Kris Lindbeck teaches Jewish Studies at Florida

Atlantic University. Her first poetry publication was the Biblically-inspired "Gomer's Complaint" in the 2003 Fall issue of *CrossCurrents*. Haiku, and now tanka, are a new adventure, coming partly in response to moving to moving to Florida in 2006, and encountering an entirely new sub-tropical climate.

Bob Lucky lives in Hangzhou, China, where he teaches history. His work has appeared in various journals.

Mary Mageau discovered the refined beauty of Japanese culture when she studied the floral art form of Ikebana. Digital photography also remains a favourite pastime as she captures Australia's brilliant array of trees, flowers and foliage for her exploration of haiga. Mary's writings in the verse forms of haiku, senryu, tanka and haibun are regularly published on web sites and in literary magazines. She lives with her husband in rural south east Queensland.

Terra Martin, a practicing therapist in Toronto, has poetry in *Atlas Poetica 3*, *Amaze*, *American Tanka*, *Asahi Shimbun* (Japan), *Bottlerockets*, *Contemporary Haibun*, *Eucalypt* (Australia), *Gusts*, *Kokako*, *Lynx*, *Modern English Tanka*, *moonset*, *Ribbons*, *Simply Haiku*, *3 Lights Gallery* (England), *tinywords* and many other journals. Her tanka may be read in the *Landfall*, *Ash Moon* and *The Tanka Prose* anthologies.

Bobbette A. Mason grew up along the shores of the Great South Bay. For twenty-seven years she set children free to make quality observations and take fanciful adventures, which they recorded with pencil drawings, substantive data and creative writing. She received an EPA Award "for a poetically written environmental program viewed through the eyes of a Native American". She is retired.

Jo McInerney is an Australian writer who has had tanka published in *Stylus*, *Eucalypt*, *paper wasp*, *American Tanka* and *Modern English Tanka*. She has had haiku published in *Acorn*, *Ambrosia*, *Kokako*, *FreExpreSion*, *Shamrock*, *Stylus*, *paper wasp*, *Famous Reporter*, *haiku dreaming*, *Frogpond*, *bottle rockets*, *Wisteria*, *White Lotus*, *Simply Haiku* and *The Heron's Nest*. She has also had tanka and haiku sequences accepted for publication in the second and third issues of *Atlas Poetica*.

Mike Montreuil lives in Ottawa, Ontario, Canada. On most winter night, he can be found at a hockey arena with his son.

ayaz daryl nielsen is a poet/husband/father/veteran and a hospice nurse—he is editor/custodian of *bear creek haiku*.

Marin Paul is a former military linguist and current pharmacology student. A born wanderer, she has waded through snowbanks in Minnesota and sand dunes in Egypt, visited 42 states, and cursed empty toilet paper dispensers on four continents. She serves as resident sexton of a Buddhist temple in Severn, Maryland, where she eagerly awaits the opportunity to dig her first grave. Her first legal one, anyway.

Stanley Pelter is at an age where a hospital and doctor's Surgery become something of a second home. He has eleven grandchildren, 2 to 28 years, great G.Children, aged 0-8, 3 daughters and a son, and a pyramid of flourishing angst emerges that relates well to the different age groupings. Still cannot work without Classical music blaring. He suffer pangs of Art hunger if not drawing and/or painting at least once a week and has not visited a major Art Exhibition for a month or two. Becomes a grouchy old man if prevented from writing every day.

Dru Philippou lives in Taos, New Mexico. Her work has appeared in numerous journals and anthologies. Awards include the Scorpion Prize: A tie for the best haiku or senryu of issue VI:I 2006, *Roadrunner Haiku Journal*; twice nominee for the Pushcart Prize, 2006; Special Mention Haiku in *The Heron's Nest*, Vol.10, 2008; and an Honorable Mention in the Robert Spiess Memorial Haiku Contest, 2008. She teaches online haiku workshops.

Patricia Prime is coeditor of the New Zealand haiku magazine *Kokako* and reviews editor of *Stylus*. Patricia has published several booklets of poetry in collaboration with fellow NZ poet, Catherine Mair. Patricia recently judged the Junior Section of the NZPS International Haiku Competition. Ongoing work includes the preface for Sanford Goldstein's latest collection, an essay on African poetry and an essay on haiku by Indian

poets.

Claudia Coutu Radmore has been writing Japanese forms of poetry for nearly twenty years. She is a member of Kado, an Ottawa- based haiku writers' group, Haiku Canada, and Tanka Canda who has read and 'performed' haiku in Canada and the United States. She has won prizes and been published internationally. Claudia currently helps select tanka for Gusts magazine, is co-editor of the 2008 Haiku International Conference, and editor of the 2009 Haiku Canada Anthology.

Kiersta Recktenwald was born in northern New England and grew up mostly in Japan, where she attended Japanese public schools. She writes mostly poems and aphorisms, and has been attending college part-time for years.

David Romanda, Canadian, dwells in Takamatsu City, Japan. He has published a couple Zen-type poems in a tiny college newspaper.

Alexis Rotella has been writing haiku, senryu and tanka for 30 years. Her work has appeared internationally in hundreds of publications. Her latest books include *Lip Prints* (a collection of tanka 1979-2007), *Ouch* (a collection of senryu 1979-2007) and *Eavesdropping* (a haiku collection, Modern English Tanka Press, 2007). Alexis practices acupuncture in Arnold, Maryland, USA.

Cynthia Rowe has a degree in French and English from the University of Melbourne. Her poetry has appeared in *Yellow Moon*, *Eucalypt*, *Stylus*, *FreeXpresSion*, *paper wasp*, *Famous Reporter*, *Shamrock*, *Jack Stamm haiku anthology*, *Chrysanthemum*, *page seventeen*, *Kokako*, *moonset*, *The Heron's Nest*, *Haibun Today*, *Modern English Tanka*, *Simply Haiku*, *Contemporary Haibun Online*. She is currently president of the Eastern Suburbs Region, Fellowship of Australian Writers NSW, and writes novels for relaxation.

Tracy Royce's poetry has recently appeared in *Modern English Tanka*, *Modern Haiku*, *Ribbons*, *Affilia: Journal of Women and Social Work*, *bottle rockets*, and *paper wasp*. She is currently a graduate student in the Department of Sociology at the University of California, Santa Barbara. She resides in Southern California with her husband, animator Rob Renzetti and their devilishly

charming house rabbit Angel Derangel.

Guy Simser, called an “imagist and “humourist” by lyric poet Marianne Bluger, Guy has written in English and Japanese poetry forms since 1980, including five years service in Japan. His poems have appeared in over 50 anthologies/ journals in Japan, USA, Canada, England and Australia. Awards include the Diane Brebner Poetry Prize (Canada); Tanka Splendor Prize (USA); the Special Prize, Hekinan International Haiku (Japan). He currently serves as co-chair of the August 2009 HNA Crosscurrents Conference in Ottawa, Canada.

André Surridge was born in Hull, England, and now lives in the heart of the Waikato in the city of Hamilton, New Zealand. He is the winner of several writing awards including Katikati Haiku Contest, NZ, 2004; 8th Paper Wasp Jack Stamm Haiku Award, Australia 2006; Elizabeth Searle Lamb Award for Haiku, USA 2007; Kaji Aso Tanka Award, USA 2007 and the Kyoto Museum for World Peace Award, 2007.

John Samuel Tieman's chapbook, *A Concise Biography Of Original Sin*, is published by Bk Mk Press. His poetry has appeared in *The Americas Review*, *The Caribbean Quarterly*, *The Iowa Review*, and *River Styx*.

James Tipton lives in the tropical mountains of southern Mexico where he writes poetry, short stories, articles, and reviews. He has been publishing haiku and tanka for over forty years, and his credits include *Haiku*, *Modern Haiku*, *frogpond*, *American Tanka*, *The Tanka Journal*, and *Modern English Tanka*. Modern English Tanka Press published his most recent collection of haiku, *Proposing to the Woman in the Rear View Mirror* (October 2008) and they will soon publish a collection of tanka, *All the Horses of Heaven*.

Shernaz Wadia is a retired teacher, living in Pune, India She is peace loving and believes that life must always be lived with an attitude of gratitude. Her poems have been published in e-journals such as *boloji.com*, *Poets International* (electronic and print), *Pondering Moments*, *Poets India*, *MuseIndia*. Life's Inspirational Moments has accepted a poem of hers for their upcoming anthology— *Stolen Moments II*. She writes poetry as a means of exploration and expression of the

inner self.

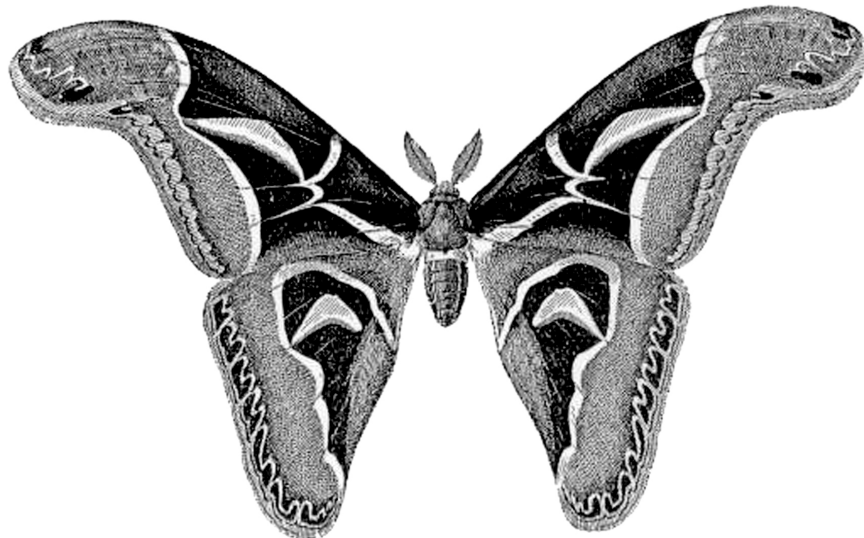
Alex von Vaupel leads a nomadic life, based in two countries. He lives in Utrecht, Netherlands, with his many dictionaries and a balcony veg garden. He is also frequently found in Canterbury, Kent, UK, with his fiancée.

Naomi Beth Wakan has written/compiled over thirty books, including *Haiku-one breath poetry*, was an American Library selection. She is a member of Haiku Canada, The League of Canadian Poets and Canadian Tanka. Her poetry and essays have been printed in numerous magazines such as *Moonset*, *Room of One's Own* and *Resurgence* and she has read them on CBC. She lives on Gabriola Island, B.C. with her husband, the sculptor, Elias Wakan. <<http://www.naomiwakan.com>>

Brian Zimmer is an ex-pat American poet now now lives on the Niagara Escarpment in Ontario, Canada. His poems have appeared in *Gusts*, *Modern English Tanka*, *Ribbons*, *Contemporary Haibun*, *Simply Haiku*, *Lynx*, *Frogpond* and other publications.

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Our 'butterfly' is actually an Atlas moth (*attacus atlas*), the largest butterfly/moth in the world. It comes from the tropical regions of Asia. Image from the 1921 *Les insectes agricoles d'époque*.

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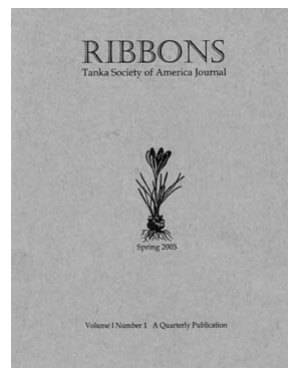
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- ~ Publication of the quarterly journal, ***Ribbons: Tanka Society of America Journal***, featuring over two hundred original tanka in each issue, articles, essays, translations, book reviews, and contest results.
- ~ Publication of a quarterly newsletter containing news and announcements pertaining to Tanka Society of America business, its members, and events in the tanka community in general.
- ~ Sponsorship of the annual Tanka Society of America International Tanka Contest every April, judged anonymously by respected tanka poets. Results appear in ***Ribbons***.
- ~ Publication of an annual anthology of tanka by members (copies are available for a nominal fee in addition to membership dues). For more information on this and other activities, please see the newsletter or contact an officer.

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