



# MODERN ENGLISH TANKA PRESS

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## PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

*Ash Moon Anthology: Poems on Aging in Modern English Tanka* Published by Modern English Tanka Press

*Ash Moon Anthology* explores and celebrates the later years of life: the “golden years,” to some, and far from it, to others. Senior men and women have a perspective on life that cannot be achieved except by enduring the passage of several decades. Just as youth and the fullness of maturity are celebrated for their special characteristics, so should be our later years. *Ash Moon Anthology* includes poems about all aspects of aging, both the ups and downs, the joys and the sorrows; poems that embody the humor, insight, and wisdom of our elders and the ways in which we age with grace and even elegance. This is a tremendous collection of nearly nine hundred poems on aging from 97 poets on five continents.

Baltimore, Maryland – March 7, 2008 – *Ash Moon Anthology: Poems on Aging in Modern English Tanka*, the fourth in a series of new wave tanka anthologies, has been published by Modern English Tanka Press of Baltimore, Maryland. It is perhaps the largest anthology of tanka written in English yet published with nearly nine hundred poems by ninety-seven poets on five continents. It follows the prior volumes in this series: *The Five-Hole Flute*, *The Dreaming Room*, and *Landfall*. *Ash Moon Anthology* is edited by Alexis Rotella and Denis M. Garrison.

“‘May you be awake one moment before you die’ The Buddha said. If readers can absorb the joy and the intensity of this book, they will be more alive than ever before in their lives. I am stunned by the precision of emotions and the variety of feelings. I want to read one page each day, to be in touch with everything that is truly, vividly alive.” —Grace Cavalieri, Producer/host, *The Poet and the Poem from the Library of Congress*

“The Zen aesthetic of wabi-sabi demonstrates the recognition that things are often more beautiful, more treasured, more emotionally significant when they are somewhat broken, slightly worn out, aged by human use, subject to the natural laws of decay or uniquely unfinished. In the *Ash Moon Anthology*, contemporary tanka poets explore the aesthetics of aging, the wabi-sabi of the human experience. These tanka examine the feelings and psychological insights that can only come with a lifetime of surviving into old age, when we recognize the impermanence and transitory nature of our bodies, our minds, our selves. These English tanka of aging celebrate and explore a wide range of moments conveying the feelings of being fully alive in our imperfect, broken, unfinished bodies, minds and souls.” —Dr. Randy Brooks, Millikin University

“Age. It happens to us all. Advertisements inform us that we can be sexual athletes at ninety, if only we buy the magic cure and follow the exercise guru’s advice. Yet the evidence of our own lives is decidedly more human, more problematic, and full of petty perfidies. Age is not simply the prolongation of our youth with the help of a little dye to hide the grey hair but a fundamental process of transformation. We change, and as we change, we are haunted or enlivened by the past we carry with us. Understanding all that we are and have experienced is difficult enough, but communicating it to others is even harder, especially when the gap is dramatic as the one separating today’s youth from today’s elders. This is the chasm which the poets of *Ash Moon* cross. Nearly a hundred in number, they are themselves aging or the care-givers and companions of elders. With unblinking honesty they record their age as it is lived—despair and dereliction alongside grace and humor—and what emerges is a true portrait of age with all its awkward complexities.

“Readers of *Ash Moon* will find all these poems written in a fitting form, namely, ‘tanka,’ the eldest of poetic forms. The oldest continuously anthologized poetry in the world (compared to which the venerable sonnet is a mere stripling), tanka has been the vehicle by which poets ancient and modern have given voice to the myriad beauties and burdens of their lives. The result is a series of snapshots without commentary, allowing the readers to directly experience the poets’ vision. They will find much that resonates with them, and much to reflect on. The ash moon hangs over all our heads.” — M. Kei, Editor of *Atlas Poetica: A Journal of Poetry of Place in Modern English Tanka*, Editor-in-chief of *Take Five: Best Contemporary Tanka of 2008*, and author of *Heron Sea, Short Poems of the Chesapeake Bay*.

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About Modern English Tanka Press:

Modern English Tanka Press is an independent equity publishing house in Baltimore, Maryland, dedicated to producing books and periodicals of lasting literary value. A family business, we treat our customers and partners in publishing like family. Our publications are produced using modern print-on-demand production and distribution methods. We publish tanka, haiku, and other fine poetry. Our special mission is to promote the tanka form of poetry, to educate newcomers to tanka about this most ancient poetic form, and to work for wider publication of tanka in both specialty and mainstream poetry venues. To those ends, we publish the journals “Modern English Tanka,” “Atlas Poetica,” “Modern Haiga,” and special edition books of tanka, haiku, and other fine verse. We operate [www.TankaCentral.com](http://www.TankaCentral.com), the internet megasite for tanka, with its popular “Tanka News” blog, and the poetry web hub, [www.ShortVerse.com](http://www.ShortVerse.com).

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