



# MODERN ENGLISH TANKA PRESS

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## PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

*Meals at Midnight*, Poems by Michael McClintock, Published by Modern English Tanka Press

*Meals at Midnight*, Poems by Michael McClintock, his long-awaited new collection, is here at last and it does not disappoint our expectations. Here is a heady banquet of the finest of modern tanka poetry in English—a feast for heart and soul.

**Baltimore, Maryland – December 6, 2008** – *Meals at Midnight*, the newest collection of poems by renowned poet Michael McClintock, has been published in both hard cover and trade paperback by Modern English Tanka Press. Anyone who loves tanka and haiku will be thrilled by this outstanding collection, already widely praised by poets and critics alike:

“Those who knew Michael McClintock as the foremost poet of ‘liberated haiku’ decades ago will discover here a more deeply liberated tanka poet. In *Meals at Midnight* we find the utter simplicity of a man who has found the world new, through love, and with that, a language free of artifice or struggles for effect. These are deeply, purely, the poems of a liberated heart, innocent and playful against the tapestry of the universe—

tonight  
I’m going out to count  
the stars—  
if you wait up for me  
I might bring back a few

It has been worth the wait.”

—William J. Higginson, author, *The Haiku Handbook*, etc.

“Michael McClintock has given us an exquisite collection where every poem, in its tight and masterfully-crafted lines, is rich with unexpected imagery and layers of narrative. Every poem vibrates with the eternal resonance of myth and seasons within its immediate story; every one gives us something far beyond the moment. With McClintock as our guide, we are with these poems ‘in that lucid hour/when the sun’s a chariot/wheeling through the cedars.’”

—Laura Maffei, Editor and Founder, *American Tanka*

“Michael McClintock’s tanka bear the stamp of authenticity. Shot through with a wry sense of humor, they contain the flavor of a man who has lived broadly yet deeply, who’s taken his share of knocks, and who has no time for insignificant frills or the lies so many people tell themselves. Beyond their rich craft and formal design, the poems of *Meals at Midnight* rest upon insight, character, and a gusto for life. Another of his outstanding achievements.”

—Dave Bacharach, Editor of *Ribbons: Tanka Society of America Journal*

“All these years I have thought of Michael McClintock as a tough old bird. How delightful then to read this collection of gentle poems. The word ‘gentle’ may be misleading, for the poet in his lonely moments responds with strength and acceptance to what such a moment brings. The title itself resonates for me, for even though only one poem is about a midnight meal, I am reminded of Takuboku’s essay ‘Poems to Eat.’ These are poems in that vein. That is to say, a tanka poem is the very life blood of being, as important as food is. I feel in these poems the importance of nature, but it is not the nature so often seen in haiku and tanka, a nature used to conveniently fit a human condition. No, these poems are the poet living in nature, concerned with nature, appreciative of nature. And with this love of nature is the poet’s love of a woman. To share these feelings with Michael offers something positive in this modern world gone berserk. As Michael shaves the shadows from his face, so do we—finding in these quiet poems a good deal that is relevant amid the turbulence of our world.”

—Sanford Goldstein, Atellib House, Japan

“These tanka—and some haiku—speak of a world that is both intimate and domestic and yet vast and ineffable. It is poetry that for all of us is instrumental in ‘making a home between them’ as Michael McClintock says. He remains one of the strongest and original voices in contemporary American tanka.”

—Miriam Sagan, author of *Map of the Lost* (University of New Mexico Press) and columnist, *Writer’s Digest*

“I like Michael McClintock’s poems of animism . . . they are very attractive. In Japanese literature, particularly in tanka, animism is a very traditional way of viewing the world. However, it’s very difficult to use effectively. McClintock’s animist tanka are very natural and vivid—

one at a time  
I step on stones  
and cross the stream—  
when I’m across, the stones  
go back to what they were doing”

—Kozue Uzawa, translator of *Ferris Wheel*, winner of the 2007 Donald Keene Translation Award for Japanese Literature, and editor of *Gusts*

“A fine meal indeed! It has been a great pleasure to immerse myself in this collection of finely crafted tanka. McClintock skillfully blends together moods and keen insights to the human psyche. Many of these poems seem to have been penned during periods of solitude, more often in the spirit of being alone-together rather than of being lonely. I found many of these tanka to be permeated with a dreamlike, almost surreal quality. Some marvelous humor here too, and this poet doesn’t miss an opportunity to snicker at himself. Arranged seasonally, the poems move through a broad spectrum of emotions, from wistfulness to laughter, from incredulity to rapture. McClintock is a talented

chef.”

—Christopher Herold, Found and Editor, The Heron's Nest

### **About Author:**

Michael McClintock holds degrees from Occidental College and the University of Southern California in English and American Literature, Asian Studies, and Information Science. McClintock's poetry has been widely published and translated internationally, including by Nobel Laureate, Czeslaw Milosz. He resides in Los Angeles and Fresno, California, following a career as principal librarian, film and recordings curator, and administrator for the County of Los Angeles Public Library System.

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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, especially poetry. A family business, we treat our customers and partners in publishing like family. We use modern print-on-demand production and distribution methods. Our special mission is to promote the tanka form of poetry and to educate newcomers about this most ancient poetic form. 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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