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PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

Take Five: Best Contemporary Tanka, Volume Two (2009) Anthology, edited by M. Kei, et. al.,
Published by MET Press

Take Five: Best Contemporary Tanka, Volume Two. The *Take Five* editorial team consisting of M. Kei, editor-in-chief (USA), Sanford Goldstein (JP), Patricia Prime (NZ), Kala Ramesh (IN), Alexis Rotella (USA), and Angela Leuck (CAN), read all contemporary tanka published in English during 2009, more than 16,000 poems. Sources ranged from tanka journals to social media to musical performances to chapbooks and many other formats.

Baltimore, Maryland – May 31, 2010 – The *Take Five* editorial team consisting of M. Kei, editor-in-chief (USA), Sanford Goldstein (JP), Patricia Prime (NZ), Kala Ramesh (IN), Alexis Rotella (USA), and Angela Leuck (CAN), read all contemporary tanka published in English during 2009, more than 16,000 poems. Sources ranged from tanka journals to social media to musical performances to chapbooks and many other formats. The result is *Take Five: Best Contemporary Tanka, Volume Two*, showcasing tanka, tanka prose, and tanka sequences by 140 poets from more than a dozen countries, with cover art by Alexis Rotella. The inaugural volume has been honored by *The Montserrat Review* on their “Best Reading” list for Autumn, 2009.

The second volume contains an introduction that summarizes recent tanka developments in traditional and new media, as well as discussion of notable tanka from the anthology. New this year is tanka formatted on one and two lines, in contrast to the usual five line presentation for English. The age range of the poets spans more than six decades, from poets in their early twenties to their late eighties. Several poets had never or only rarely been published in the usual tanka media and were discovered via social media; they appear side by side with famous names known to the tanka world for decades. The resulting anthology is a treasury of tanka that shows the wide range of approaches, subjects, and traditions for contemporary tanka in English.

Originating in Japan over 1400 years ago, tanka has survived and evolved due to its strength and flexibility. Each tanka is as complete as a pebble, yet like a pebble thrown into the still pond of a receptive mind, becomes the center of ever widening ripples. Readers become co-creators by joining their own experiences and emotions with the images and ideas evoked by the poets. This is the most powerful kind of poetry: poetry that can span the gap between nations and meld itself with local traditions to provide a new—yet ancient—way to engage the world.

“*Take Five: Best Contemporary Tanka, Volume Two*—What a nice present for us! We, tanka enthusiasts around the world, welcome this anthology. And, I really appreciate the time and energy M. Kei has spent compiling this book. *Take Five: Best Contemporary Tanka, Volume Two* is certainly one of the best anthologies in the growing community of English Tanka.”—Kozue Uzawa, Ph.D., Editor, *Gusts: Contemporary Tanka*, award-winning translator of tanka.

“The editorial team of *Take Five* is an international one. Its reading encompasses an impressive range of sources of tanka in English, both electronically ephemeral, or captured in print. Thus *Take Five: Best Contemporary Tanka, Volume Two* leads this diminutive genre to the next phase of accessibility and accurate representation of the times in which it is composed. In so doing, it is true to Japanese origins where poetry was, and remains, a widespread, integral part of everyday life.”—Beverley George, Editor, *Eucalypt*.

Poets appearing in the anthology: A. A. Marcoff, A. Thiagarajan, Adelaide B. Shaw, ai li, Alex von Vaupel, Alexis Rotella, Amelia Fielden, An Xiao, an'ya, Ana-Maria DiVera, André Surridge, Andrew Cook-Jolicoeur, Andrew Riutta, Angela Leuck, Annette Mineo, Audrey Olberg, Aurora Antonovic, Aya Yuhki, Barbara Strang, Becky DeVito, Belinda Broughton, Bell Gale Chevigny, Beverley George, Bob Lucky, C. W. Hawes, C. William Hinderliter, Carol Raisfeld, Carole MacRury, Carolyn Eldridge-Alfonzetti, Carolyn Thomas, Cathy Drinkwater Better, Chad Lee Robinson, Chen-ou Liu, Cherie Hunter Day, Claudia Coutu-Radmore, Colin Stewart Jones, Collin Barber, Cor van den Heuvel, Curtis Dunlap, Cynthia Rowe, Dave Bacharach, Dave Bachelor, David Lee Kirkland, David Rice, David Terelinck, Dawn Bruce, Deborah P. Kolodji, Denis M. Garrison, Don Miller, Dorothy McLaughlin, Elaine Riddell, Ferris Gilli, Francis Masat, Gautam Nadkarni, Geert Verbeke, George Swede, H. Gene Murtha, J. Andrew Lockhart, Jade Pandora, James Tipton, Jane Reichhold, Janet Lynn Davis, Jared Carter, Jean LeBlanc, Jeanne Emrich, Jeffrey Woodward, Jo McInerney, Joanne Morcom, John Martell, John Quinnett, Joyce Sandeen Johnson, June Moreau, Kala Ramesh, Karen Cesar, Kathy Kituai, Kathy Lippard Cobb, Kirsty Karkow, Kisaburo Konoshima, Kozue Uzawa, Kris Lindbeck, Larry Kimmel, Laurence Stacey, Lenard D. Moore, LeRoy Gorman, Liam Wilkinson, Linda Galloway, Linda Jeannette Ward, Lois Harvey, Lorelei Jolie Polden, M. Kei, M. L. Grace, M. L. Harvey, Magdalena Dale, Margaret Chula, Margarita Engle, Maria Steyn, Marian Morgan, Marilyn Hazelton, Marilyn Potter, Mark Rutter, Mary Mageau, Max Ryan, Megan Arkenberg, Melissa Dixon, Michael Ketchek, Michael McClintock, Miriam Sagan, Natalia L. Rudychev, Owen Bullock, Pamela A. Babusci, Pamela Cooper, Pamela Miller Ness, Patricia Prime, Patrick M. Pilarski, Paul O. Williams, Paul Smith, Peggy Heinrich, Philip Miller, Philomene Kocher, R. K. Singh, Randy Brooks, Raquel D. Bailey, Reiko Nakagawa, robert d. wilson, Robert Kusch, Roberta Beary, Roger Jones, Ruth Holzer, Sanford Goldstein, Sean Greenlaw, stanley pelter, Susan Marie La Vallee, Terry Ann Carter, Tess Driver, Thelma Mariano, Tom Clausen, Vasile Moldovan, William Hart, and William I. Elliott.

About the Editors:

M. Kei is an award-winning poet who lives on the Eastern Shore of the Chesapeake Bay, USA. He is a tall ship sailor who served his apprenticeship aboard a skipjack, a traditional wooden sailboat used to fish for oysters. He is the editor of *Atlas Poetica: A Journal of Poetry of Place in Contemporary Tanka* and the editor-in-chief of the anthology series *Take Five: Best Contemporary Tanka*. His second collection is *Slow Motion: Log of a Chesapeake Bay Skipjack* (2008), a log he kept in verse form while making extended cruises aboard a historic wooden sailing vessel. Over

1200 of his tanka have been published in ten countries and six languages. He also writes non-fiction articles about tanka and compiles the *Bibliography of English-Language Tanka*. He previously edited *Fire Pearls: Short Masterpieces of the Human Heart* (2006) and published a collection of short poetry, *Heron Sea, Short Poems of the Chesapeake Bay*. Most recently he has published a nautical novel, *Pirates of the Narrow Seas*, set during the Age of Sail and featuring a gay protagonist.

Sanford Goldstein, who lives in a village in Japan, continues to write his tanka for more than fifty years.

Patricia Prime is the co-editor of the New Zealand haiku journal *Kokako*, assistant editor of *Haibun Today*, reviews editor of *Takahe* and *Stylus*, and is on the panel of editors for the *Take Five Anthologies*, Vols. 1 & 2. She is also one of the judges for the Presence Seashell Game and Metverse Muse traditional poetry competitions. Her poetry, reviews, interviews and articles have been published worldwide.

Kala Ramesh is an Indian classical musician, having worked extensively on Pandit Kumar Gandharva style under Mrs. Shubhadha Chirmulay for more than 15 years, and has performed professionally in major cities in India. A recently turned haiku poet (since 2005), Kala writes haiku, tanka, senryu, haibun, renku and one-line haiku, and her work has appeared in leading e-zines and anthologies all over the world. Kala heads the World Haiku Club in India. As director, she organised the World Haiku Club Meet at Pune, December 2006. The four-day 9th World Haiku Festival she organized at Bangalore in February 2008 was sponsored jointly by Sri Sri Ravi Shankar Ji and Sri Ratan Tata Trust. She is the Deputy Editor-in-Chief of *The World Haiku Review*, and since April 2009, is also the Poetry Editor of *Katha*, New Delhi, a renowned Indian publishing house. In this capacity, she got together and edited an ebook of haiku, senryu, haibun, tanka and haiga to be published soon, encompassing the work of 35 Indian haiku poets, for the first time in India! Currently, she is also the lead poet (sabiki) of a Kasen renku with six other international renkujin: experimenting and incorporating the traditional renku with the Rasa Theory of India.

Alexis Rotella is a well known poet who writes in many genres and who has published in hundreds of journals. A number of her haiga exhibits may be viewed at *haiga online*, *ink sweat and tears*, *Simply Haiku*, *3Lights Gallery* and *Modern Haiga*. Rotella founded and edited *Prune Juice*, a journal of senryu and kyoka. Her latest books from Modern English Tanka Press include *Black Jack Judy and the Crisco Kids: Bronx Memories*, *Elvis in Black Leather*, *Lip Prints*, *Ouch* and *Eavesdropping*. Check out Alexis Rotella's blog at www.alexisrotella.com and see her readings on YouTube. Rotella is a practitioner of Oriental Medicine in Arnold, Maryland.

Angela Leuck was born in Vancouver in 1960. She obtained a B.A. from the University of Saskatchewan and an M.A. from McGill University. Specializing in Japanese-inspired short poetry forms—haiku, tanka, renga and haibun—she also combines her poetry with collage and photography in an updated version of the Japanese art of haiga. She served two terms as Quebec Regional Coordinator of Haiku Canada and is now Vice President. In 2005, she co-founded Tanka Canada and edited its biannual publication *Gusts: Contemporary Tanka*. She is a full member of the League of Canadian Poets and serves on the board of the Quebec Writers Federation. An award winning poet, her work has been published in journals and anthologies around the world. She is the author of *haiku white/haiku noir* (carve, 2007), *Flower Heart* (Blue Ginkgo Press, 2006) and has edited a number of anthologies, including *Rose Haiku for Flower Lovers and Gardeners* (Price-Patterson,

2005), *Tulip Haiku* (Shoreline, 2004), and, with Maxianne Berger, *Sun Through the Blinds: Montreal Haiku Today* (Shoreline, 2003). She lives in Montreal.

For media inquiries or to arrange an interview with the editor-in-chief, contact M. Kei by e-mail at: take5tanka@gmail.com Publisher information at: www.themetpress.com

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About MET Press:

MET Press (Modern English Tanka Press) is an independent publishing house in Baltimore, Maryland, dedicated to producing work of lasting literary value, especially fine verse. A family business, we treat our customers, authors, 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.

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