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PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

The Maternal Line: The 13th Tanka Collection by Kawano Yūko, translated by Amelia Fielden and Saeko Ogi, Published by MET Press

Baltimore, Maryland – April 25, 2011 – *The Maternal Line: The 13th Tanka Collection* by Kawano Yūko translated by Amelia Fielden and Saeko Ogi, has been published as a trade paperback by MET Press of Baltimore, Maryland.

Critical Comment:

The team of Amelia Fielden and Saeko Ogi has done it again, made available a wonderful tanka poet's contemporary collection for the enjoyment and appreciation of English readers everywhere. Without such important translations, much distinctive tanka poetry would be lost to non-Japanese. Kawano Yūko's award-winning tanka book: *The Maternal Line* is filled with tanka which will pull on your heart strings and captivate your soul. Her poetry weaves a rich tapestry of intense feelings all can relate to, from generation to generation. *The Maternal Line* is a tanka collection that should grace every tanka poet's library, a collection poets will read again and again, each time gaining new vision into the poet's life."

—Pamela A. Babusci, Editor of *Moonbathing: a journal of women's tanka*

In *The Maternal Line* (2008), Kawano Yūko's poignant thirteenth collection of tanka and precursor to her final collection, *Reed Boat* (2009), the poet summons the reader to a heartfelt meditation on the legacies of family, personal identity, health, and mortality. Confronting the realities of her mother's death and the resurgence of her own cancer, Kawano finds in nature vivid images of responses to physical and spiritual trials — *if it were me / I would scream— / covered in green buds / the camellia tree / is burning* — as well as images of ultimate transcendence — *blue sky / infiltrating my body / bit by bit— / just look at that sky! / all through the house, blue sky*. This special volume, made possible by the poet's official translator, Australian Amelia Fielden, arrives as a gift to Western readers who appreciate Kawano's many contributions to the tanka world. In touching, evocative verses, we follow the poet as she progresses toward a luminous closure and, ultimately, an understanding and acceptance of her place in her family's maternal line.

*all I'll leave behind
are children and poems—
the voice*

*of a clear-toned cicada singing
earnestly, in the evening sun*

—Jeanne Emrich, author of *The Pleiades at Dawn, a Tanka Collection*

About the Author:

Kawano Yūko High-profile professional poet Kawano Yūko (24 July 1946–12 August 2010) stood in the forefront of Japanese post-war women tanka writers. An intensely personal writer, who always enlivened her work with events from her own life, she had a distinguished career spanning forty years. In addition to several thousand original tanka, she published books of essays and criticism. Kawano also taught tanka composition at colleges and on television while working as an editor, lecturer, and contest judge. She was married to scientist and poet Dr. Nagata Kazuhiro with whom she led the prestigious Kyoto-based association of contemporary tanka writers called ‘Tower.’ Published in late 2008, *The Maternal Line, Bōkei*, was Kawano Yūko’s 13th tanka collection. The poems in it, written from 2005 to 2008, reflect her life over those years as a daughter, wife, mother, grandmother, and poet. Embracing the light and shade of her world with her whole being, Kawano has revealed that world to her readers through her tanka.

About the Translators:

Amelia Fielden is an Australian professional translator, now specializing in modern Japanese tanka, who is also noted for her original English tanka poetry. She was designated by high-profile poet, Kawano Yūko, as her official translator.

Together with Saeko Ogi, Amelia first published translations of Kawano Yūko’s work in the joint collection *Fountains Play and Time Passes* in 2002. This was followed in 2004 by *Vital Forces* (co-translator Yuhki Aya), the anthology *As Things Are* (co-translator Uzawa Kozue) in 2005, and a complete, annotated, translation of Kawano’s *My Tanka Diary*, which gained Amelia a Master of Arts’ degree from the University of Newcastle. In 2010 Saeko Ogi and Amelia published *The Time of This World: 100 Tanka From 13 Collections by Kawano Yūko* (Modern English Tanka Press, Baltimore, USA).

Amelia’s fourteen previous translation publications include collections by women poets Kawamura Hatsue (2002), Kuriki Kyōko (2005), Kitakubo Mariko (2006 & 2008), Tanaka Noriko (2008 & 2010), and Kono Mari (2010).

In 2007 Amelia and co-translator Uzawa Kozue were awarded the Donald Keene Prize for Translation of Japanese Literature, by Columbia University, New York, for the anthology *Ferris Wheel: 101 Modern and Contemporary Tanka*. A selection of tanka by famous male poet and playwright Terayama Shūji, translated also by Amelia and Kozue was published in Tokyo under the title of *Kaleidoscope* in 2008, to critical acclaim.

Six collections of Amelia’s own tanka poetry have been published, the most recent being *Light on Water*. Books of responsive tanka composed with Australian poet, Kathy Kituai, have appeared in 2008, *In Two Minds*, and 2011, *Yesterday, Today & Tomorrow*. Another such, *Weaver Birds*, written bilingually with Saeko Ogi, was published in 2010.

Saeko Ogi, born in Tokyo, has lived in Canberra since 1972. She is a former member of the Neiraku Tanka Society of Nara and a current member of the Araragi-ha Tanka Society of Tsu in Japan. She has been co-translator with Amelia for Kawano Yūko's and Tanaka Noriko's work, and co-author for *Weaver Birds*.

For media inquiries or to arrange an interview with the translators, contact Amelia Fielden by e-mail at anafielden@hotmail.com. Publisher information at: www.themetpress.com.

This book is available from www.Lulu.com/modernenglishtanka. Information is available online at www.themetpress.com Price: \$15.00 USD. ISBN 978-1-935398-23-3. Trade paperback. 144 pages, 6" x 9", perfect binding, 60# cream interior paper, black and white interior ink, 100# exterior paper, full-color exterior ink.

About MET Press:

MET Press (Modern English Tanka Press) is a small independent publishing house in Baltimore, Maryland, dedicated to producing work of lasting literary value, especially fine verse. 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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