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## ESSAYS

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### BLACK HAIKU: THE USES OF HAIKU BY AFRICAN AMERICAN POETS<sup>1</sup>

*Charles Trumbull*

#### PART I: ESTABLISHING A TRADITION

There have been a few eddies away from the mainstream of American haiku, notably among African Americans and Native Americans. In both cases, the poets approached haiku on the basis of certain oral traditions and sometimes brought with them a sociopolitical or literary agenda—rather a novelty in haiku writing, which traditionally, in Japan at least, avoids topics that arouse strong emotions.

African Americans have been writing haiku from the first days of the English-language haiku movement, and their work in the genre has been a constant presence throughout the history of North American haiku. Work of black poets often spanned the gap between mainstream haiku and the turbulent black literary and social developments in the 20th century: the Harlem Renaissance, the civil rights movement, and the Black Arts and Black Power movements. Another stream of haiku composition had its source in those early Harlem poets: haiku about or in the style of African American musical forms, jazz and blues.

Many of the major poets associated with African American poetry have explored and dabbled in haiku. In the pages below we will look at the founders of what we're calling Black Haiku and examine the work of the most prominent practitioners over the past 100 years.

## THE BEGINNINGS

## LEWIS G. ALEXANDER

The first black poet to take an interest in haiku was surely Lewis G. Alexander (1900–1945), who learned Japanese forms in the early 1920s under the influence of Imagist poet John Gould Fletcher, his professor at Columbia University. (After World War II, Fletcher was dissertation adviser for early haiku critic Kenneth Yasuda at Columbia as well.) American haiku pioneer Harold G. Henderson earned his undergraduate degree (in chemical engineering) at Columbia in 1910 but developed an interest in Far Eastern art and literature in the 1920s and returned to his alma mater in 1934 as a professor. Fletcher and Henderson certainly were acquainted and it seems very likely that Alexander would have known Henderson as well.

Living in New York City in the 1920s and '30s, Alexander found himself in the thick of the Harlem Renaissance, or New Negro, movement, which sought to establish a purely African American literature independent of, and equal to, European American culture and literary tradition. To this end, poets such as Langston Hughes (1902–1967) and Countee Cullen (1903–1946) were attracted by African American traditions, particularly jazz and the blues, as well as spirituals. Their subject matter for poetry was usually the African American experience. Hughes was known for his short poems about black people and their lives, many of them suggestive of blues, as in the poem “My People.” His poem “Suicide’s Note” certainly looks like a haiku, and its sense and feeling suggest Fletcher’s style, as for example in this haiku, titled “Moods”: “A poet’s moods: / Fluttering butterflies in the rain.”<sup>2</sup>

## MY PEOPLE

The night is beautiful,  
So the faces of my people.

The stars are beautiful,  
So the eyes of my people

Beautiful, also, is the sun.  
Beautiful, also, are the souls of my people.<sup>3</sup>

## SUICIDE’S NOTE

The calm,  
Cool face of the river  
Asked me for a kiss.<sup>4</sup>

Alexander was among the first Americans to write specialist articles about haiku—more than a decade before Henderson’s *A Bamboo Broom* (1938). Alexander’s “Japanese Hokkus” was published in W. E. B. Du Bois’s *The Crisis* in December 1923<sup>5</sup>; he appended fourteen of his own original hokku. Alexander’s verses bear the imprint of the Imagist approach to the genre, never quite able to abandon simile and overt metaphor in their pursuit of resplendent images:<sup>6</sup>

Like cherry blossoms	White dogwood blossoms
Dancing with the passing wind —	Cling to the curving branches
My shattered hopes.	Like I cling to you.

Alexander published a sequence, “A Collection of Japanese Hokku,” in a special issue of the journal *The Palms* in Guadalajara, Mexico, edited by Countee Cullen in 1926 and in the same year had his “Japanese Haiku” included in *Caroling Dusk: An Anthology of Verse by Negro Poets* (1927), also edited by Cullen, and a haiku sequence published in the journal *Opportunity: Journal of Negro Life*.

Alexander had one foot at Columbia University and the other in adjacent Harlem; it is possible that he is directly responsible for the introduction of the Imagists’ “discovery” of haiku to the Harlem Renaissance.

There ensued a 30-year break in publishing of African American haiku—until work by Julius Lester, Richard Wright, and Etheridge Knight began to appear, all in the late 1960s. Still, haiku was known to the leading black writers in the 1930s, ’40s, and ’50s as indeed it was to other mainstream poets of the era such as Ezra Pound, Carl Sandburg, Wallace Stevens, William Carlos Williams, and E. E. Cummings, all of whom wrote haiku or were influenced by Oriental forms. We will pick up this thread with a consideration of Langston Hughes and the origins of blues haiku in the second installment of this paper.

#### HAIKU OF BLACK AWARENESS AND PROTEST

**B**lack writers could hardly be laying the foundations for a freestanding African American culture without at the same time being acutely

aware of the inequalities historically suffered by their people in America. Indeed, this germ of black consciousness became the centerpiece of the Harlem Renaissance poets. To a greater or lesser extent, all succeeding generations of black poets showcased their *négritude* and social status in their work. Their awareness, however, manifested itself in a variety of ways, from simple exploration of ethnic and historical themes, to a mild pointing out of racial and social inequalities, to more radical, even strident, calls to action that developed into the Black Power movement and its literary counterpart, the Black Arts movement, in the 1960s.

#### ROBERT HAYDEN

Robert Hayden (born Asa Bundy Sheffey, 1913–1980), was an award-winning American poet and college professor of English. He was the first African American to be named consultant in poetry to the Library of Congress (i.e., poet laureate), in 1976. Long interested in African American history, Hayden explored topics such as slavery and the Civil War, as well as his own family history. His literary influences were the Harlem Renaissance poets and W. H. Auden, with whom he studied at the University of Michigan. Either of these experiences might have introduced Hayden to the haiku; Auden, it will be recalled, translated the haiku diaries of Dag Hammarskjöld in the early 1960s. Perhaps a bit like Countee Cullen, Hayden did not view himself as primarily a black poet; as critic Lewis Turco observed, “Hayden has always wished to be judged as a poet among poets, not one to whom special rules of criticism ought to be applied in order to make his work acceptable in more than a sociological sense.”<sup>7</sup>

Hayden preferred to work in the form of the haiku sequence, perhaps the most celebrated example of which is his “Smelt Fishing,” a poem that dates from the 1960s and is included in both Hayden’s major collections *The Night-Blooming Cereus* (1972) and *Angle of Ascent* (1975):

#### SMELT FISHING

In the cold spring night  
the smelt are spawning. Sportsmen  
fevered crowd the lake.

Thin snow scatters on  
the wind, melting as it falls.  
Cries for help for light.

Who is he night-  
waters entangle, reclaim?  
Blank fish-eyes.<sup>8</sup>

This poem, which is considered “perfect as a haiku” by one critic,<sup>9</sup> explored the theme of the transience of life by comparing the fevered sportsmen and the spawning smelt. Hayden was clearly under the spell of haiku for its precision and efficiency of expression, and he used haiku-like structure for many of his poems, including approximately 5–7–5-syllable stanzas, binary treatment of images, and occasionally even consciousness of the season. The language and diction of Hayden’s haiku is quite elevated and poetic, though in his longer poems he sometimes used Negro dialect, as did black poets both before and after Hayden. These traits are evident in his sequence “Approximations,” from the collection *A Ballad of Remembrance* (1962), especially the first stanza, which Turco characterizes as “an approximate haiku fused with his own experience”:<sup>10</sup>

#### APPROXIMATIONS

I  
In dead of winter  
wept beside your open grave.  
Falling snow.

II  
Darkness, darkness.  
I grope and falter. Flare  
of a match.

## III

Not sunflowers, not  
roses, but rocks in patterned  
sand grow here. And bloom.

## IV

On the platform at  
dawn, grey mailbags waiting;  
a crated coffin.<sup>11</sup>

## RICHARD WRIGHT

As a haiku poet, Richard Wright (1908–1960) is a bit of a conundrum. Easily the best-known African American haikuist, Wright is first and foremost not known for his haiku. “First” because his haiku were written over a very short time period while he was living in relative isolation outside the United States, and they were scarcely known to the public until a substantial collection was published nearly four decades after his death. “Foremost” because Wright’s literary status rests overwhelmingly on his earlier career as an influential and prizewinning novelist and short story writer who explored race relations issues and the struggle for equality. Wright is the most well-studied of American haiku poets, and the publication of collections of his haiku and scholarly articles about him has become something of a cottage industry. This despite the fact that Wright’s influence on English-language haiku has been virtually nil and on African American poetry almost as marginal.

Wright must have been aware of the short-form poems by poets such as Alexander, Hughes, and Hayden, but even if he were, they made little impression on him. Wright discovered haiku in 1959 when the South African Beat poet Sinclair Beiles lent him R. H. Blyth’s four-volume *Haiku*. The genre came as a revelation to him. Wright specialist Jianqing Zheng writes, “Immediately after Beiles’s introduction, there was an enthusiastic intensity of haiku writing in Wright’s life in Paris. Wright was ‘completely incapable of stopping’ his new obsession with haiku though he was very sick at the time.”<sup>12</sup> Wright seems to have had no other source of information about haiku and no one with whom to discuss his work. Still, Wright

produced some 4,000 haiku, 817 of which were selected by the poet himself for publication. The watershed collection, *Haiku: This Other World*, appeared in print, however, only in 1998.<sup>13</sup>

A common speculation about Wright's haiku is why, at the end of his life, he all but abandoned the trajectory of his career writing about race relations and began to compose introspective, nature-oriented haiku. An easy answer would be that he was very sick, felt isolated, and sensed his life was coming to an end. Perhaps he sought some resolution to his lifelong search for ideas that would bring humankind together; perhaps he despaired about his ability to do so. Wright's selection of this somber haiku to appear first in *The Other World* lends credence to such a notion:

I am nobody:  
A red sinking autumn sun  
Took my name away.<sup>14</sup>

Wright felt insecure about the merit of his haiku, as well he might, lacking feedback from fellow poets. Yoshinobu Hakutani, a Wright scholar, cites a passage in a letter of Wright's to a friend mentioning that he had submitted his haiku manuscript for publication. "These poems," Wright confessed, "are the results of my being in bed a great deal and it is likely that they are bad. I don't know."<sup>15</sup> Leading haiku poets have pointed out many ways in which Wright's haiku stray from English-language norms, but such arguments might also be viewed as advocating a single interpretation of what English-language haiku should be and preferring one set of received rules over another.<sup>16</sup> Wright composed his haiku typically in a 5-7-5-syllable format, which, he learned from Blyth, was the common Japanese practice, and presented each haiku in three lines, standard for haiku and translations in the West at the time. Heeding syllable count over style and syntax, Wright often padded up his lines, using, for example, the annoying phrase "just enough of [rain, snow, light, etc.]" when haiku readers now would be satisfied with the simpler "rain" or "light rain." The phrase is used ten times in Wright's *Haiku: The Other World*. Wright's haiku typically omit the break or caesura and the juxtaposition of two images (*kire* in Japanese)—as is the case in the five haiku cited

below—another aspect of haiku that English-language haikuists consider essential.

Like Robert Hayden's work, Wright's haiku stop well short of being verses of protest or militancy. Very occasionally one will find a clear reference to black people or the plight of the Negro in America, but these are muted and moot and not the least bit strident. Some examples might be:

In the falling snow  
A laughing boy holds out his palms  
Until they are white.

Is the laughing boy black? Knowing Wright's biography and earlier writings, it is easy to read more topical themes into some other haiku:

The dog's violent sneeze	Coming from the woods
Fails to rouse a single fly	A bull has a lilac sprig
On his mangy back.	Dangling from a horn. <sup>17</sup>

In the same vein, Michael Dylan Welch suggests symbolic meaning for "magnolia" (a white flower; Wright's home state of Mississippi is nicknamed the Magnolia State; and Mississippi has been considered a bastion of white domination):

The sudden thunder	The wings of a bee
Startles the magnolias	Tarnishing the smooth whiteness
To a deeper white.	Of a magnolia. <sup>18</sup>

Conceived in isolation, Wright's haiku oeuvre remained in isolation for nearly four decades. William J. Higginson wrote in 1982 that he had "located 25 unique haiku by Wright, quoted in journalistic and scholarly articles and in biographies." Most of these were published in the *Richard Wright Reader*.<sup>19</sup> It is safe to assume that Wright's haiku were virtually unknown to other American haiku poets as well as to African American writers until the publication of *Haiku: This Other World*. Consequently, we are unable to identify later haiku poets, black or white, who looked to



Wright as a model. Among scholars and the haiku-reading public, there is much admiration of much of his work and wonderment at the change of pace from politically charged novels to haiku, but Wright's celebrity as a haiku poet stems primarily from his status as a sociopolitical writer and civil rights leader.

#### ETHERIDGE KNIGHT

Wright wrote thousands of haiku in an eighteen-month period, works that only occasionally touched on social and political themes of special relevance to African Americans. The short-form oeuvre of Etheridge Knight (1931–1991) was quite different. He wrote only about forty-four haiku over a decades-long productive career, and was one of the first to harness the haiku form to make trenchant social commentary.<sup>20</sup> Knight's poetry reflected his difficult early life, an eight-year stay in prison for purse-snatching, and lifelong drug addiction. In prison Knight read and was influenced by the works of Langston Hughes. Knight began writing poetry, and by 1963 began to regard himself primarily as a poet. Chicago poet Gwendolyn Brooks introduced Knight to haiku, bringing him collections of haiku and other books. She told him that she liked haiku<sup>21</sup> and recommended haiku study as a way that Knight could reduce the wordiness in his poems. He later told an interviewer:

I write haiku for two reasons. After I began to define myself as a poet, I understood that you should master your art form. [...] To me writing haiku is a good exercise. I dig and respect them because they create an image—paint a picture—so precisely. They draw pictures in very clean lines. You say what you want to say symbolically. I work with haiku a lot in my attempt to handle the language—the word. I don't see haiku as a black form, but, then, you utilize whatever modes or vehicles are available to you.<sup>22</sup>

Like Brooks, Knight was linked to the Black Arts Movement, which sought to extend and sharpen the efforts of the Harlem Renaissance to establish a discrete African American literature by divorcing black culture from white, aligning it with the radical elements in the evolving Third World, and setting it in opposition to the dominant white American

culture. The group held that the artist must always give primacy to his/her community and resist any form of alienation from it. Knight spoke of his aesthetics in the following terms in an interview with Charles H. Rowell in 1996: “I think the Black Aesthetic differs from the European Aesthetic mainly, man, because it does not separate art or aesthetics from the other levels of life. It does not separate art from politics, art from economics, art from ethics, or art from religion. Art is a functional and a commercial endeavor. The artist is not separate from the people.”<sup>23</sup>

Brooks was also instrumental in securing parole for Knight in 1968, as were other poet friends. These included Sonia Sanchez, whom Knight married the same year (they were divorced in 1970). Scholar Thomas L. Morgan makes the point that Knight viewed haiku as essentially an oral form (which it is not) and linked it in his mind to black oral traditions and the close relationship of poetry and the people. Knight’s main metaphor is freedom, as underscored by his time when he was literally deprived of freedom in prison and certainly part of the zeitgeist of the 1960s.

Knight’s haiku are shackled by the common 5–7–5–syllable structure, and the didacticism of his message causes a deviation from the two-image structure readers now expect in the best of haiku. The first example below is from Knight’s early book, *Poems from Prison* (1968), the second from the sequence “Missouri Haiku” from *Born of a Woman* (1980):

Eastern guard tower  
glints in sunset; convicts rest  
like lizards on rocks.<sup>24</sup>

Route 66 curves  
West—an arrow piercing the  
bleeding eye of God<sup>25</sup>

Despite his meager output in the genre, Etheridge Knight was the most influential black haiku poet into the 1980s. Haiku was significant in his work over a long period of time, and he was prominent as an early practitioner of prison poetry (Knight considered his original sentence of 20–25 years as racially motivated). He was also connected to prominent African American poets—notably black haiku poets—both of the earlier generation and his contemporaries.

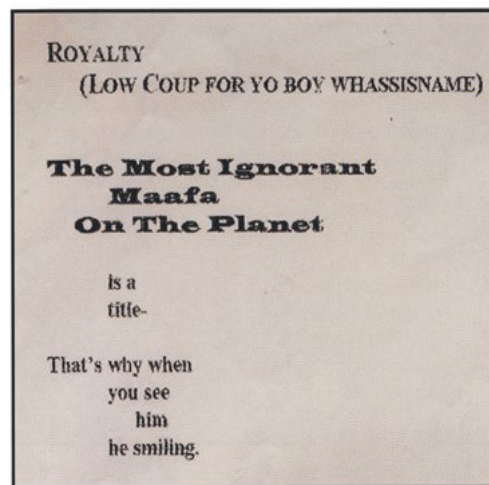
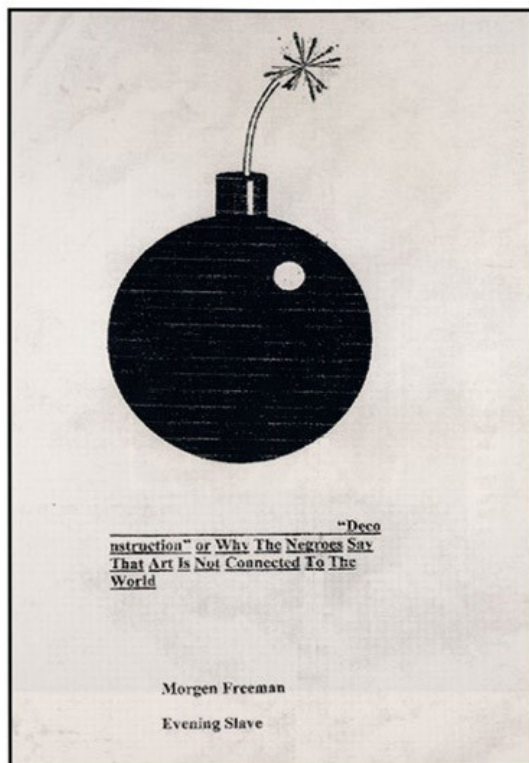
## AMIRI BARAKA

Amiri Baraka (born Everett LeRoi Jones, 1934–2014) was initially in contact in New York City with the Beats, the Black Mountain poets, and writers of the New York School, but later broke with all of them. In 1967 he adopted a Muslim name, Imamu Amear Baraka, later shortened to Amiri Baraka. He is considered the founder of the Black Arts movement in the mid-1960s, which derived from assertions that the African American cultural tradition was essentially unique and separate from the dominant white culture, that Black Americans should divorce themselves from white culture even to the point of actively opposing it, and should espouse the ideals of black solidarity. From an early age, Baraka was attracted to Marxism and communism and, like others in the Black Power movement, were much influenced by international events such as the independence of Black African countries, led by Kwame Nkrumah in Ghana in 1957, Fidel Castro's revolution in Cuba in 1959, anticolonial movements throughout the Third World, and the anti-imperialist and pan-African writings of Franz Fanon, Léopold Sedar Senghor, and others.

LeRoi Jones/Amiri Baraka made a reputation with a variety of provocative writings, many of which were originally by turns received as incendiary, racist, anti-feminist, homophobic, and anti-Semitic/anti-Israeli. At various times, Baraka seemed to be on both sides of these touchstone issues, and he later renounced most of the most outrageous writings, explaining in a 2009 interview:

Those quotes are from the essays in *Home*, a book written almost fifty years ago. The anger was part of the mindset created by, first, the assassination of John Kennedy, followed by the assassination of Patrice Lumumba, followed by the assassination of Malcolm X amidst the lynching, and national oppression. A few years later, the assassination of Martin Luther King and Robert Kennedy. What changed my mind was that I became a Marxist, after recognizing classes within the Black community and the class struggle even after we had worked and struggled to elect the first Black Mayor of Newark, Kenneth Gibson.<sup>26</sup>

Haiku certainly was not the main avenue for Baraka's politics or poetics, but later in his literary career he ventured into haiku—which he often called “low coup”—a title used perhaps to make it clear that a tiny, succinct poem can be subversive. His 2004 book *Un Poco Low Coup*, comprises twenty-three compositions that one blogger<sup>27</sup> defines as “a short, terse verse imposed on top of Black Folk Art.” Part haiga, part Marxist propaganda poster, Baraka's low coup exhibit a great vitality using naive-art techniques and sharp political messages—all pretty much ignoring any normal rules for haiku, Japanese or English. Here are two examples:<sup>28</sup>



Over the decades Baraka's verses became more like jazz poetry, fragmented, with text sprawling over the page and ideas communicated in short bursts of energy—very sympathetic, one would think, to haiku. Here are two examples with titles referring to jazz greats, from his 1995 sequence “Wise, Why's, Y's”:

## LORD HAW HAW (AS PYGMY) #37

All Blues  
Miles

We were here

before

God

We

invented

Him.

Why?

That's a good/ god damn  
question.<sup>29</sup>

## Y THE LINK WILL NOT ALWAYS BE "MISSING" #40

The Wise One  
Trane

Think of Slavery  
as  
Educational!

Jones/Baraka began his career writing about black music—jazz and popular forms—and in 1963, as LeRoi Jones, he published *Blues People: Negro Music in White America*, a seminal study that, among other topics, examines African Americans as cultural strangers in White-dominated

American society and black music as an index to the level of assimilation of African Americans in the culture. Because they placed African American culture at center stage, it is not surprising that poets associated with the Black Arts movement chose blues and jazz as favorite topics for their haiku. Probably the later popularity of “jazz haiku” and “blues haiku” developed from Baraka’s ideas in the 1960s as well as Hughes’s in the 1930s.

#### JULIUS LESTER

In his pioneering essay about African American haiku,<sup>30</sup> William Higginson included several haiku by Julius Lester (born 1939). Lester is a photographer, composer, and writer in various genres as well as emeritus professor of Judaic and Near Eastern Studies and adjunct professor of history at University of Massachusetts at Amherst.<sup>31</sup> Lester worked as a photographer for the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) in the 1960s, so he was certainly steeped in the civil rights movement and presumably the Black Arts movement. The few of his haiku that have appeared in print, however, reflect a deep sensitivity to Japanese traditions rather than a focus on the plight of blacks in America. The first of these two haiku was anthologized in Robert Hayden’s 1967 anthology, *Kaleidoscope: Poems by American Negro Poets*; the second is from Lester’s slim book of photographs and haiku, *Who I Am* (1974).

As we got  
Closer, the  
Rainbow disappeared.<sup>32</sup>

I tried  
to hear the silence:  
Spring morning.<sup>33</sup>

#### ALICE WALKER

Haiku influenced the work of the African American novelist Alice Walker (born 1944).<sup>34</sup> Walker told haiku publisher Jane Reichhold of her excitement at discovering haiku while she was traveling in Africa between her junior and senior years at Sarah Lawrence College. In her book-length essay “Those Women Writing Haiku,” Reichhold quotes Walker:

One thing I try to have in my life and my fiction is an awareness of and an openness to mystery, which, to me, is deeper than any politics, race or

geographical location. In the poems I read, a sense of mystery, a deepening of it is what I look for—because that is what I respond to. I have been influenced—especially in the poems of *Once*—by Zen epigrams and Japanese haiku. I think my respect for short forms comes from this. I was delighted to learn that in three or four lines a poet can express mystery, evoke beauty and pleasure, paint a picture—and not dissect or analyze in any way. The insect, the fish, the birds, and the apple blossoms in haiku are still whole. They have not been turned into something else. They are allowed their own majesty, instead of being used to emphasize the majesty of people: usually the majesty of the poets writing.... During the whole period of discovering haiku and the sensual poems of Ovid, my feet did not touch the ground.

Reichhold observes further,

Reading [Walker's] work *Once*, one watches a poet emerging from her educational cocoon. One sees her making experiments in the form right from the beginning. Walker never did write haiku using only three lines: she saw haiku as “painting the eye in the tiger,” so she gave her line the long, thin formats that do remind one of the glint of light in a wild cat's eye while sticking (more or less) to the traditional syllable count. Perhaps her statement, “Basho convinced me that poetry is more like music—in my case, improvisational jazz,” explains where she found the freedom to make haiku echo with her rhythms and visions.<sup>35</sup>

Here are the first four stanzas of Walker's “African Images, Glimpses from the Tiger's Back,” from her *Once*, which Reichhold cites:

#### AFRICAN IMAGES, GLIMPSES FROM THE TIGER'S BACK

Fast rapids  
Far below  
Begins  
The lazy Nile.

A silent lake  
Bone strewn banks  
Luminous  
In the sun.

Holding three fingers  
The African child  
Looked up at me  
The sky was very  
Blue.

Uganda mountains  
Black Soil  
White snow  
And in the valley  
Zebra.<sup>36</sup>

RITA DOVE

Pulitzer Prize–winner and former U.S. poet laureate Rita Dove (born 1952) is known to have written at least a few haiku, though apparently none have been published. She has used the haiku sequence format for some of her longer poems, including this tribute to civil rights pioneer Rosa Parks:

ROSA

How she sat there,  
the time right inside a place  
so wrong it was ready.

The trim name with  
its dream of a bench  
to rest on. Her sensible coat.



Doing nothing was the doing:  
the clean flame of her gaze  
carved by a camera flash.

How she stood up  
when they bent down to retrieve  
her purse. That courtesy.<sup>37</sup>

Besides writing “biographical haiku” about iconic black cultural and historical figures, Dove also used a haiku-like form for love poetry, as in this poem from her 1987 collection, *Thomas and Beulah*:

#### LIVES MUTTERED IN SLEEP

Black chest hairs, soft sudden mass.  
Washed up on her breast his pale startled face.  
Pine scent, lake scent, gorse scent, bark.<sup>38</sup>

#### FABU

The poet known as Fabu (born Fabu Phillis Carter) holds a double masters degree in African languages and African American studies from the University of Wisconsin, Madison. She is active in literary, civic, and educational affairs in Madison and served as that city’s poet laureate from 2008 to 2011. Haiku are an important part of Fabu’s work, and she published a collection in 2011, *Journey to Wisconsin: African American Life in Haiku*. Fabu’s haiku often concern the enslavement of Africans expressed in sharp, powerful language:

African plucked	Arriving in chains
Muscadine pickaninies	Winter blew death on us
Fruit in the new world	In the colonies. <sup>39</sup>

#### DURO JAIYE

Duro Jaiye (born 1957), an American who lived in Japan (now based in Singapore) and married a Japanese woman, has been writing haiku since

about 2003. He was a member of Stephen Gill's Hailstone Haiku Group in the Kansai area of central Japan and has been published in that group's anthologies. His haiku

slave quarters ...  
the shapes of their shadows  
in this dust

took second-place honors in the 2012 Robert Spiess Memorial Haiku Awards.<sup>40</sup> Jaiye pursued the issue of slavery and its aftermath in a 14-haiku chapbook, *There was a Time*, which won an honorable mention in Turtle Light Press's 2012 chapbook contest. Two of the haiku from that collection were quoted in the publisher's competition results press release:

whites only—knowing the season before she crossed it

bitter night—smelling the heat of a burning cross<sup>41</sup>

#### BLACK POETS IN THE HAIKU MAINSTREAM

The cover-flap blurb for Robert Hayden's book of selected poems, *Angle of Ascent* (1975), which contains several haiku and haiku sequences, includes this statement: "Hayden takes up, celebrates, and contends with the history of his people. He is involved with his Black Americanness, without being confined by it." This might define the work in haiku of many African American poets in recent decades. And, of course not all who write haiku would link themselves to the larger black cultural and aesthetic movements of the 20th century. The vast majority have come to haiku in the usual ways and on the usual paths. The haiku they write are indistinguishable from those of European Americans, Japanese Americans, or anyone else writing in the genre. We will briefly consider some of the outstanding black poets who contribute to English-language haiku.

## DWIGHT L. WILSON

Detroit poet Dwight L. Wilson (who also calls himself Spann-Wilson) grew up poor in the steel-mill town of Middletown, Ohio. At a young age he renounced the violent life and became a Baptist minister and later a Quaker. His career has been in teaching, school administration, and church affairs, principally at the Friends School Mullica Hill on Detroit's Near East Side. Wilson was the first African American to become general secretary of the Religious Society of Friends in America. He began to write and teach haiku in the mid-1980s. Wilson corresponded with Robert Spiess, and a number of his haiku have been published in *Modern Haiku* since 1985. Overall he has had more than 225 of his haiku accepted in American and Japanese periodicals. He has published three haiku books: *A Half-Moon Shining: Haiku from an African-American/Quaker Perspective* (1999), a collection of his own poems; *Summer Excursions: A Collection of Dwight L. Wilson's Haiku* (2010); and *The Essence of Haiku: The Relevancy of Haiku Masters* (2010), a volume of translations of Bashō, Buson, Issa, and Shiki.<sup>42</sup>

In the "Introduction to Haiku" from his first book, Wilson likens his haiku to jazz:

Jazz, America's only indigenous art form, requires listener participation. haiku is the same. Duke Ellington, the great jazz composer and director, spoke of his art as requiring the ability to "Say it without saying it." Readers or listeners participate in haiku by logically understanding the surface meaning—what happened in the moment—and spiritually understanding the deeper meaning—what is the universal connection.<sup>43</sup>

Wilson's haiku poetics, however, are decidedly mainstream. Likewise his subject matter, with only occasional, gentle discursions into black topics:

the autumn morning  
a worm's hole  
filled with dew<sup>44</sup>

dawn on the Fourth:  
Mt. Vernon's slave quarters  
freshly painted<sup>45</sup>

## RANDOLPH NELSON LEVY

Randolph Nelson taught school in the Los Angeles area for many years. We have not found any published haiku of his except for one book, *American Haiku Poetry* (1992). Levy adopts for his haiku compositions a rigid and somewhat idiosyncratic set of rules, “each haiku consists of a sentence of no less than seventeen syllables and not more than eighteen,” arranged in five, seven, and five lines, and “[if] there is an eighteenth syllable, it may appear in any of the three lines.” His subjects range from nature to social commentary, tending toward the pontifical:

Youth gangs may destroy  
Americans as barbar-  
ians did Romans.<sup>46</sup>

## LENARD D. MOORE

The most prominent contemporary African American haiku poet is surely Lenard Duane Moore (born 1958). With an undergraduate degree from Shaw University in Raleigh, N.C. and an M.A. from North Carolina A&T State University in Greensboro, Moore has taught English and world literature at his alma mater and more recently at Mount Olive College.

Moore has been very active in the North Carolina poetry community, anthologizing and critiquing the work of African American writers, especially poets from his home state. He founded and led the Carolina African American Writers Collective. His own longer poems have also won awards and appeared widely in journals, anthologies, and on the Internet.

The principal focus in Moore’s creative work has been on haiku, and he has excelled in the field, both as a creative force and as an organizer. Among other activities, Moore was among the first poets to write “jazzku,” and he has been performing them with jazz musicians and bands. Despite Moore’s career concentration on black poets, however, his haiku published in mainstream haiku journals only sometimes touch on specifically African American themes. Rather, Moore typically explores memories, both joyful and painful, of growing up in the rural South, family and community themes, and general topics of nature and humanity common

in mainstream English-language haiku. He writes in the modified classic haiku form that is prevalent in English-language haiku today: three lines in fewer than five, seven, and five syllables. Take, for example these two from his first haiku collection, *The Open Eye* (1985):

a copperhead	the tapping
on the path to the hog pen	of the coppersmith ...
this heat!	snowflakes <sup>47</sup>

and these blues- and jazz-influenced haiku:

blues singer	bobbing and bobbing
my ear shifting	on the jazz club wall —
her autumn-night voice <sup>48</sup>	the bassist's shadow <sup>49</sup>

In 2003 Moore collaborated with the poet and photographer Eugene B. Redmond on a 57-page chapbook, *Gathering at the Crossroads*, that chronicles in black-and-white photos and expressive haiku the Million Man March organized by various social activist and civil rights groups on the National Mall in Washington, D.C., on Oct. 16, 1995:

the cadenced footsteps	night after the march
of one million black men	reading the million man pledge
a warm fall day	to my pregnant wife <sup>50</sup>

The tragic loss of Moore's daughter, Maiisha, shortly after this chapbook was published inspired a number of poignant poems, including this haiku, which won multiple awards:

hot afternoon  
 the squeak of my hands  
 on my daughter's coffin<sup>51</sup>

Lenard Moore has served as executive chairman of the North Carolina Haiku Society, was a co-organizer of the biannual Haiku North America

conference in Winston-Salem, N.C., in 2007, and was elected president of the Haiku Society of America for two years, 2009–2010.

#### L. TERESA CHURCH

L. Teresa Church resides in Durham, N.C., where she writes plays, poems, and articles and is an expert on quilts and quilting. Like her friend and associate Lenard Moore, Church writes primarily about nature, family, and life in rural North Carolina:

black faces ashen	tobacco harvest
in summer night commotion	women in lamplight
handcuffs gleam <sup>52</sup>	tie the quilt <sup>53</sup>

#### TYRONE McDONALD

Brooklyn resident Tyrone McDonald is well known for his haiku in print and Web journals around the world. His point of departure is Japanese tradition, his poetics are free and unstructured, and his themes usually urban.

tunnel graffiti my brain is such a soft surface<sup>54</sup>

my entire world  
reduced to a bus shelter ...  
cold rain

“My entire world” was singled out for mention by haiku critic H. F. Noyes: “An incontestable jibing of our own inner nature with the season’s outer nature—effortless if one is able to share Tyrone’s surrender. A haiku poet may sometimes be limited as well as liberated by an authentic contact with nature.”<sup>55</sup>

McDonald occasionally includes musical references in his haiku:

Nat's Christmas croon  
 the quiet steam  
 from my hot chocolate<sup>56</sup>

the trick is to loosen the hounds: bebop cat<sup>57</sup>

#### MICHAEL MOORE

Michael Moore of DeSoto, Texas, has been writing poetry since 1975 and now specializes in haiku. He is a schoolteacher and is very active in the arts and cultural scene in the San Antonio area. He has published five books of haiku, one of them bilingual Spanish/English. His haiku, on the Japanese model, are usually traditional in theme, even as Moore departs from traditional structure:

Petals falling  
 over night  
 snapshots of the moon<sup>58</sup>

Cold night  
 the quilt  
 keeps shrinking.<sup>59</sup>

#### DESIREE COOPER

Desiree Cooper was born in Japan and lives in Detroit. She works as a journalist with the *Detroit Free Press* and is a senior correspondent for public radio's *Weekend America* and commentator on *All Things Considered*. She was a founding board member of Cave Canem, a foundation to support and encourage African American poets.

Five of Cooper's traditionally themed haiku were featured in *Simply Haiku* in 2008, including these two:

fallen leaves —  
 a gift from the morning woods  
 footsteps of a friend

in the field  
 pumpkins split open in the sun  
 forgotten harvest<sup>60</sup>

#### THE CARIBBEAN CONNECTION

Perhaps slightly outside our main focus are a handful of poets from the Caribbean whose work has enriched the corpus of English-language haiku over the years.

CLAIRE K. HARRIS (born 1937 in Trinidad) was educated at University College, Dublin, the University of the West Indies, and the University of Lagos in Nigeria. She taught school in Calgary, Alberta, for many years and became a prominent poet and editor in Canada.

Haiku is definitely a sideline for Harris, but she achieved success in that genre in the late 1970s and early '80s. She said of her work, "I write as a means of bringing my rather curious intelligence to bear on the world, and on women in the world. Even though my poetry is often about terror in one form or another, it is written out of hope."<sup>61</sup> Her haiku, however, do not reflect her concern with women's affairs or the black experience and are rather straightforward. These two won Haiku Awards from the journal *Dragonfly* in 1978 and 1983, respectively:<sup>62</sup>

in the prairie dawn  
a pheasant calls to its mate  
love go hide go hide

Falkland Island War:  
on the sea floor sailors rest  
free of thunder

GILLENA COX (born 1950 in Granada) now lives in Trinidad and Tobago. She worked as a librarian in government service. Cox has been active on the Internet haiku scene and currently runs the blog Lunch Break for haiku and related items.<sup>63</sup> She published a haiku collection, *Moments*, in 2007. Apart from an occasional bit of Caribbean color, Cox's haiku are mainstream:

hurricane warning  
in the uncanny stillness  
a hazy sunset<sup>64</sup>

alleluias  
a trapped bird flutters about  
the church<sup>65</sup>

RAQUEL D. BAILEY (born 1978) majored in English at Florida State University, and now lives in Tallahassee, Fla. Her haiku are published widely internationally in print and on the Web, and in 2007 she launched her popular website, *Lyrical Passion Poetry E-Zine*<sup>66</sup> devoted to Japanese-style short-form poetry. Bailey's well-crafted haiku are straightforward and typically nature- or relationship-oriented:



summer games:  
her shadow wins  
first place<sup>67</sup>

summer heat:  
paper snowflakes  
on my window<sup>68</sup>

KWAME DAWES is another figure prominent in the English-language haiku world who also hails from the Caribbean. Kwame Senu Neville Dawes (born 1962, Ghana, and reared in Jamaica) is a poet, actor, editor, critic, and musician who served on the faculty of the University of South Carolina and, from 2012, the University of Nebraska, Lincoln. He is best known in the haiku world not for his poetry but for his criticism and for collaboration with publisher Rick Black in the selection of winners in the Turtle Light Press Haiku Chapbook contests in recent years. *Hope: Living & Loving with HIV in Jamaica*, an e-book of his poetry and photographs, is available on the Web.<sup>69</sup>

Dawes says that he writes many haiku but does not usually publish them. Nonetheless, he has devoted much thought to the haiku aesthetic and its relationship to standard poetry. These ideas he lays out in a fine essay, “And What of the Haiku?” on the Poetry Foundation’s blog site, *Harriet: News & Commentary*, in 2007. Toward the end of that blog post, he raises the issue of the universality of haiku:

I have asked myself the question: can there be Jamaican haiku? Is there a place for the reggae haiku? Our seasons are markedly different, so how does that work for the kigo in the haiku? The truth is that the answer to this question, “yes” or “no” is the least important thing about the question. The most valuable thing about the question is that it forces me to ask what a reggae poem is, and what a Jamaican poem is, in the first place. By working out the differences that might exist between the haiku and a Jamaican poetic, I can begin to understand and define better what that aesthetic is about.<sup>70</sup>

#### BLACK AFRICANS IN MAINSTREAM HAIKU

Even further afield from our main interests here are black haiku poets from Africa who write and have recently begun to publish in the major haiku journals and on the Internet. They can be considered part of the

world haiku mainstream. In this context we should mention Ghanaians Jacob Kobina Ayiah Mensah and Nana Fredua-Agyeman, both of whom write straight-ahead haiku, indistinguishable as African:

wet morning  
family rejects  
the second marriage proposal

*Jacob Kobina Ayiah Mensah*<sup>71</sup>

twilight ...  
a stork steps  
into ripples

*Nana Fredua-Agyeman*<sup>72</sup>

Africa Haiku Network, a Facebook page based in Ghana, coedited by Adjei Agyei-Baah and Emmanuel Kalusian, has tapped into the rich haiku activity on that continent: “This page is dedicated to the promotion of African haiku (Afriku), a haiku form that draws on African setting, images and symbols.”

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Part I of this essay has discussed the early efforts in haiku made by African Americans and two main currents flowing out of New York City. Part II will look at a third major current in African American poetry, jazz and blues haiku and will appear in *Modern Haiku* 47.2.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> This essay combines two earlier presentations at haiku conferences: “Black Haiku: The Uses of Haiku by African American Poets” at “The Midwest—Cradle of American Haiku” Festival III, Mineral Point, Wis., July 21, 2012; and “Jazz Haiku & Blues Haiku” at Haiku Pacific Rim, Sept. 5–9, 2012, Asilomar, Calif.

<sup>2</sup> Fletcher, John Gould. “Moods.” *Japanese Prints*. Boston: Four Seas Co., 1918); reprinted on the Terebess Asia Online website, <http://terebess.hu/english/haiku/fletcher.html>; acc. Nov. 3, 2015.

<sup>3</sup> First published as “Poem” in *Crisis* (October 1923): 162, according to “Langston Hughes,” Wikipedia.

<sup>4</sup> “Haiku by Langston Hughes (1902–1967),” Terebess Asia Online.

<sup>5</sup> Text available on Google books at [http://books.google.com/books?id=SloEAAAMBAJ&source=gbs\\_all\\_issues\\_r&cad=1](http://books.google.com/books?id=SloEAAAMBAJ&source=gbs_all_issues_r&cad=1); acc. Nov. 3, 2015. Biographic information about Alexander is from the Wikipedia article on Lewis Grandison Alexander and “The Black Renaissance in Washington,” D.C. Library Web site, both on the <http://dclibrarylabs.org/blkren/bios/alexanderlg.html>; acc. Nov. 3, 2015.

<sup>6</sup> Alexander, Lewis G. “Japanese Hokkus.” *The Crisis* (December 1923): 68.

<sup>7</sup> Turco, Lewis. “‘Angle of Ascent’: The Poetry of Robert Hayden.” *The Michigan Quarterly Review* (Spring 1977): 199–219; quoted in “Biography: Robert Hayden, 1913–1980,” The Poetry Foundation Web site, <http://www.poetryfoundation.org/bio/robert-hayden>; acc. Nov. 3, 2015.

<sup>8</sup> Hayden, Robert. *Angle of Ascent: New and Selected Poems*. New York: Liveright, 1975: 30.

<sup>9</sup> Williams, Pontheolla T. *Robert Hayden: A Critical Analysis of His Work*. Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 1987: 140–41.

<sup>10</sup> Turco: 199–219; excerpted in eNotes; <http://www.enotes.com/robert-hayden-criticism/hayden-robert-vol-9>; acc. July 5, 2012, but no longer available Nov. 3, 2015.

<sup>11</sup> Hayden. *A Ballad of Remembrance* in *Angle of Ascent*: 83.

<sup>12</sup> Zheng, Jianqing. “Introduction.” Ed. Jianqing Zheng, *The Other World of Richard Wright: Perspectives on His Haiku*. Jackson, Miss.: University Press of Mississippi, 2011: xii.

<sup>13</sup> Wright, Richard. *Haiku: This Other World*. Ed. and with notes and afterword by Yoshinobu Hakutani and Robert L. Tener. Introduction by Julia Wright. New York: Arcade Publishers, 1998.

<sup>14</sup> Wright. *Haiku*.

<sup>15</sup> Hakutani, Yoshinobu. "Wright's Haiku, Zen, and the African 'Primal Outlook,'" in Zheng: 4.

<sup>16</sup> For example, Lee Gurga, "Richard Wright's Place in American Haiku," in Zheng, 169–80, and Michael Dylan Welch, "We Are Still Not Free: Color in Richard Wright's This Other World." Unpublished manuscript provided by the author, July 2012.

<sup>17</sup> Wright, Richard. "Fourteen Haikus." *Studies in Black Literature* 1 (Autumn 1970).

<sup>18</sup> Welch. The cited haiku are ##228 and 86 in Wright, *Haiku*.

<sup>19</sup> Higginson, William J. "African-American Haiku." *Frogpond* 5:2 (1982): 8–11; reprinted in *A Haiku Path: The Haiku Society of America 1968–1988*. New York: Haiku Society of America, 1994: 205. The reference is to Richard Wright, *Richard Wright Reader*. Edited by Ellen Wright and Michel Fabre. New York: Harper & Row, 1978.

<sup>20</sup> Morgan, Thomas L. Untitled paper about the haiku of Etheridge Knight presented at the annual meeting of the American Literature Association convention, San Francisco, May 24–27, 2012.

<sup>21</sup> I have not been able to determine if Gwendolyn Brooks composed haiku herself.

<sup>22</sup> Morgan, citing the Rowell interview; quote is on page 978.

<sup>23</sup> Rowell, Charles H. "An Interview with Etheridge Knight." *Callaloo* 19:4 (fall 1996): 967–80. An excerpt is available on the Project Muse Web site, <http://muse.jhu.edu/login?auth=0&type=summary&url=/journals/callaloo/v019/19.4rowell01.html>; acc. Nov. 3, 2015.

<sup>24</sup> Knight, Etheridge. *Poems from Prison* (1968).

<sup>25</sup> Knight, Etheridge. "Missouri Haiku." *Born of a Woman* (1980).

<sup>26</sup> Erskine, Sophie Erskine. "Art is a Weapon in the Struggle of Ideas: Interviewing Amiri Baraka." *3:AM Magazine*, June 4, 2009; <http://www.3ammagazine.com/3am/art-is-a-weapon-in-the-struggle-of-ideas-an-interview-with-amiri-baraka/>; acc. Nov. 3, 2015.

<sup>27</sup> C'BS ALife, "The Haiku and Low Coup, The Pen Is the Sword [blog], post of Nov. 9, 2007; <http://blackauthor.blogspot.com/2007/11/haiku-and-low-coup.html>; acc. Nov. 3, 2015.

<sup>28</sup> Baraka, Amiri. *Un Poco Low Coup*. Berkeley, Calif.: Ishmael Reed Publishing Co., 2004: 3, 6. These two images (and several others) are available on the Terebess

Asia Online webiste, <http://terebess.hu/english/haiku/baraka.html>; acc. Nov. 3, 2015. Full text of the poems: "Deco / nstruction" or *Why The Negroes Say / That Art Is Not Connected To The / World / Morgan Freeman / Evening Slave; Royalty / (Low Coup For Yo Boy Whassisname) / The Most Ignorant / Maafa / On The Planet / Is A / Titie / That's Why When / You See / Him / He Smiling.*

<sup>29</sup> Vangelisti, Paul, ed. *Transbluesency: The Selected Poems of Amiri Baraka/LeRoi Jones (1961–1995)*. New York: Marsilio Publishers: 267.

<sup>30</sup> Higginson: 8–11.

<sup>31</sup> Prophotos.com, <http://www.profotos.com/juliuslester/>; acc. Nov. 3, 2015.

<sup>32</sup> Hayden, Robert, ed. *Kaleidoscope: Poems by American Negro Poets*. New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1967, cited in Higginson: 207.

<sup>33</sup> "Four Haiku," a sequence of photopoems, *Julius Lester, Who I Am*. New York: Dial Press, 1974. Lester blogs at <http://acommonplacejbl.blogspot.com/>.

<sup>34</sup> An interesting aside: the inspiration for the title of Alice Walker's Pulitzer Prize-winning novel and later hit movie, *The Color Purple*, was a poem written by Evelyn Tooley Hunt (1904–1997), a white woman known primarily—at least to us—as an innovative haiku poet. The poem was published in *Negro Digest* (February 1964), 48.

<sup>35</sup> Reichhold, Jane Reichhold. "Those Women Writing Haiku." AHA Web site, <http://www.ahapoetry.com/twchp2.htm>; acc. Nov. 3, 2015.

<sup>36</sup> Walker, Alice. *Once: Poems*. New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1976.

<sup>37</sup> Dove, Rita. "On the Bus with Rosa Parks." *On the Bus with Rosa Parks*. New York: Norton, 1999.

<sup>38</sup> Dove, Rita. "Lives Mattered in Sleep." *Thomas and Beulah: Poems*. Pittsburgh: Carnegie-Mellon University Press, 1987.

<sup>39</sup> Fabu. *Journey to Wisconsin: African American Life in Haiku*. Madison, Wis.: Parallel Press, 2011.

<sup>40</sup> *Modern Haiku* 43.2 (summer 2012): 6.

<sup>41</sup> "2012 TLP Haiku Chapbook Competition Winner," Turtle Light Press Web site; <http://www.turtlelightpress.com/2012-tlp-haiku-chapbook-competition-winner/>; acc. Nov. 3, 2015.

<sup>42</sup> Wilson, Dwight L., and Spann-Wilson, Dwight, eds. *A Half-Moon Shining: Haiku from an Afro-American/Quaker Perspective*. No place [Moorestown, Pa.?): Leopard Press, 1999?; Wilson, Dwight. *The Essence of Haiku: The Relevancy of Haiku Masters*. Half Moon Press, 2010. Biographical information is from the sketch in *A Half-Moon Shining*.

<sup>43</sup> Wilson. *A Half-Moon Shining*: 4.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*: 38.

<sup>45</sup> *Modern Haiku* 32.1 (winter–spring 2001): 25.

<sup>46</sup> Levy, Randolph Nelson. *American Haiku Poetry*. New York: A Lyceum Book, Carlton Press, Inc., 1992. The quote is from the front jacket flap, the haiku is #78, page 28.

<sup>47</sup> Moore, Lenard D. *The Open Eye: Haiku*. Durham, N.C.: North Carolina Haiku Society Press, 1985: 38, 65.

<sup>48</sup> *Modern Haiku* 21.1 (winter–spring 1990).

<sup>49</sup> *Modern Haiku* 28.3 (fall 1997).

<sup>50</sup> Moore, Lenard D., and Redmond, Eugene B. *Gathering at the Crossroads*. Winchester, Va.: Red Moon Press, 2003.

<sup>51</sup> *The Heron's Nest* 6:9 (October 2004). The Heron's Nest Award, The Heron's Nest 2004 Readers' Choice Poem of the Year Award 1st; The Heron's Nest 2004 Editors' Choice Poem of the Year.

<sup>52</sup> Church, L. Teresa. *Simply Haiku* [Web] 6:4 (Winter 2008), <http://simplyhaiku.com/SHv6n4/haiku/Church.html>; acc. Nov. 3, 2015.

<sup>53</sup> Church, L. Teresa. *The Heron's Nest* 10:1 (March 2008).

<sup>54</sup> McDonald, Tyrone. *Modern Haiku* 42.2 (summer 2011): 103.

<sup>55</sup> McDonald, Tyrone. *Bottle Rockets* 22 (11:2, 2010): 13; and Noyes, H.F. "A Favorite Poem." *South by Southeast* 17:2 (2010), reproduced on Word Pond [blog] <http://donnafleischer.wordpress.com/2010/07/10/tyrone-mcdonald-and-h-f-noyes-south-by-southeast/>; acc. Nov. 3, 2015.

<sup>56</sup> *Frogpond* 32:1 (Winter 2009).

<sup>57</sup> *Bottle Rockets* 25 (2011).

<sup>58</sup> Moore, Michael. *Home Grown in the Haiku Garden*. San Antonio, Texas: Mustard Seed Press, 1996; Beary, Roberta, and Ellen Compton, eds. *Dandelion Clocks: Haiku Society of America Members' Anthology 2008*. New York: Haiku Society of America, 2008: 59.

<sup>59</sup> Moore, Michael. *Chocolate Chips: Contemporary Haiku*. San Antonio, Texas: Mustard Seed Press, 1998: 19.

<sup>60</sup> Cooper, Desiree. *Simply Haiku* [Web] 6:4 (winter 2008), <http://simplyhaiku.com/SHv6n4/haiku/Cooper.html>; acc. Nov. 3, 2015. A short biography may be found on the Detroit Free Press website, <http://archive.freep.com/article/99999999/COL03/70206024/About-Desiree-Cooper>; acc. Nov. 3, 2015.

<sup>61</sup> Reichhold, Jane. "Haiku Written by Canadian Women." AHA! website, <http://www.ahapoetry.com/twamth4.htm>; acc. Nov. 3, 2015.

<sup>62</sup> *Dragonfly* 6:4 (October 1978): 62. Dragonfly Haiku Award; *Dragonfly* 11:2 (April 1983): 23. Dragonfly Haiku Award. Biographical information available in The Canadian Encyclopedia online at <http://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/claire-harris/>; acc. Nov. 3, 2015.

<sup>63</sup> Gillena Cox blog, <http://myblog-lunchbreak.blogspot.com/>; acc. Nov. 3, 2015.

<sup>64</sup> *Tinywords* [Internet], Nov. 9, 2004. Biographical information available on the PoemHunter website, <http://www.poemhunter.com/gillena-cox/biography/>; acc. Nov. 3, 2015.

<sup>65</sup> *The Heron's Nest* 4:4 (April 2002).

<sup>66</sup> <http://lyricalpassionpoetry.yolasite.com/>; acc. Nov. 3, 2015.

<sup>67</sup> *Chrysanthemum* [Web] 7 (April 2010); <http://www.bregengemme.net/chrysanthemum/media/archiv/Chrysanthemum%207...pdf>; acc. Nov. 3, 2015.

<sup>68</sup> *Modern Haiku* 39.3 (autumn 2008), 9. Biographic information on the Lyrical Passion website, <http://www.zoominfo.com/p/Raquel-Bailey/1509093500>; acc. Nov. 3, 2015

<sup>69</sup> <http://www.livehopelove.com/>; acc. Nov. 3, 2015. See the biographical information on his website, <http://www.kwamedawes.com/wp/about-kwame/biography/>.

<sup>70</sup> Dawes, Kwame. "And What of the Haiku?" The Poetry Foundation, Harriet: News & Commentary [blog], <http://www.poetryfoundation.org/harriet/2007/03/and-what-of-the-haiku/>, 24 March 2007; acc. Nov. 3, 2015.

<sup>71</sup> *Ginyu* 44 (Oct. 20, 2009).

<sup>72</sup> *Acorn* 22 (Spring 2009).