

cottonwood rattle
the wordlessness
of his final days

In any case, Kolodji captures our attention by these unique haiku. She takes the subjective act of writing haiku and complements it with an enlivening, objective image. Each haiku wonderfully expresses Kolodji's universe in which she travels. She invites us to follow her and we are enriched because of it:

highway
of sleeping towns
the milky way

BRIEFLY NOTED

A Drop of Pond, by Brad Bennett (Winchester, Va.: Red Moon Press, 2016). 82 pages; 4¼" × 6½". Glossy four-color card covers; perfectbound. ISBN 978-1-936848-73-7. Price: \$15.00 from www.redmoonpress.com

We love the title of Bennett's first collection and how, through its nod to Basho's old pond, it situates Bennett's work in the English-language haiku tradition. We spotlighted his haiku in issue 47.1 so you know we are a fan. He creates strong haiku pairings, nothing feels forced or arbitrary, and the reader is left with a feeling of interconnectedness of all things; yet it is a world of motion, of change, so there is much wonder in his work. His love for the outdoors is obvious. Recommended. *bison wallow / where the full moon / used to be*

Seven Suns / Seven Moons, by Michael Dylan Welch and Tanya McDonald (Seattle, WA: NeoPoiesis Press, 2016). 61 pages; 4" × 7". Matte four-color card covers; perfectbound. ISBN 978-0-9903565-9-2. Price: \$14.95 from online booksellers

Poets Welch and McDonald create sequences and linked verses around the terms "Seven Suns" and "Seven Moons," similar to Welch's own Neon Buddha or Natsuishi's Flying Pope characters, creating what Welch calls personal mythologies. The new experimentations in haiku of recent years are a two-edged sword. On the one hand, they can be imaginatively striking, sometimes in the way a literary "exquisite corpse" works, not to suggest randomness on the part of the poets; but the pairings (they are in haiku form, so have the two part haiku structure) can also feel arbitrary. This reader didn't leave the collection with a strong sense of what either suns or moons were as a larger whole. That aside, the individual poems can be a joy. Two examples:

seven suns	seven moons
lowering into the pond	my juror number
Easter Sunday	not chosen

Afriku, by Adeji Agyei-Baah (Winchester, Va.: Red Moon Press, 2016). 102 pages; 4¼" × 6½". Glossy four-color card covers; perfectbound. ISBN 978-1-936848-68-3. Price: \$15.00 from www.redmoonpress.com

Haiku composition has been slowly picking up steam in Africa, culminating in 2015 in the ejournal *Mamba*, edited by Agyei-Baah and Emmanuel Jesse Kalusian. In the latest issue they make the case for an Africa-centric version of haiku, using the genre to speak about the continent's sights and sounds, instead of merely being imitative of Japanese culture. The current volume, *Afriku*, by Agyei-Baah successfully illustrates that ideal. The volume is full of many fine and well-executed haiku, many of them sketches, but Agyei-Baah has an eye for the interesting detail. In English and Twi. *deserted shore / the wind sharpens its voice / over a conch*

Invisible Tea, by Kyle D. Craig (Winchester, Va.: Red Moon Press, 2016). 72 pages; 6" × 9". Matte four-color card covers; perfectbound. ISBN 978-1-936848-74-4. Price: \$15.00 from www.redmoonpress.com

Craig's first collection of haiku and haibun, with a few tanka and other poems. His prose is a joy to read, and it exudes a welcoming familiarity with the world. The individual haiku are well-placed and fit nicely between the other forms. Many of the poems and haibun are domestically-oriented, and walk an interesting line between subtle longing for more and a warm contentment—with a zen tinge hovering over the whole. An enjoyable volume. *first snow / the care my wife gives / to books*

Scent of the Past... Imperfect, ed. by Renée Owen (Calif.: Two Autumns Press, 2016). 32 pages; 5½" × 8½". Black, white, and red card covers; saddle-stapled. No ISBN. Price: \$8.00 from jwrobello@hotmail.com

Annual chapbook from the Haiku Poets of Northern California annual Two Autumns reading. Includes twelve poems from each of the four readers: Michele Root-Bernstein, Robert Gilliland, June Hopper Hyman, and Michael Sheffield, with a brief introduction to the poets' work by editor Owen. A long-running and very successful series. The current volume is no exception.

Elemental, by Jay Friedenber (Winchester, Va.: Red Moon Press, 2016). 80 pages; 4¼" × 6½". Glossy four-color card covers; perfectbound. ISBN 978-1-936848-74-4. Price: \$15.00 from www.redmoonpress.com

The book divides Friedenber's haiku and senryu into four categories: "Terra," "Aqua," "Aeris," and "Cosmos." He is a good writer of what Shiki would call a haiku sketch or shasei, each poem illustrating a poignant moment, an important detail. Life is made up of these details and we are glad to have Friedenber's eye. *early snowfall / places the flakes miss / at first*

Spelunking Through Life, by David H. Rosen, illus. Diane Katz (Eugene, Ore.: Rosenberry Books, 2016). 46 pages; 7½" × 5½". Glossy four-color card covers; perfectbound. ISBN 978-1-4982-9392-1. Price: \$13.00 from online booksellers

One poem per page with illustrations. Rosen's work in psychiatry is felt in many of the poems' focus on what it means to be lost and found. The poems aren't always haiku; the second half often solves or explains the first, as in the two-line title poem: "Spelunking through life... / there is a way out", and several are overt metaphors. But that doesn't mean they aren't enjoyable. Rosen approaches life with a haiku mindset. They can be quite funny. *Machu Picchu / face to face / with a llama*

Helices, by George Swede (Winchester, Va.: Red Moon Press, 2016). 118 pages; 4¼" × 6½". Glossy four-color card covers; perfectbound. ISBN 978-1-936848-70-6. Price: \$15.00 from www.redmoonpress.com

Some writers find a thematic or stylistic niche and are easily identifiable throughout their career; Swede is not such a writer. There is a breadth to his work that is exciting. He is a journeyman poet, never seeming to settle. A role model to be sure. *Helices* is composed of haiku, senryu, tanka, and haibun published since 2010. As would be expected the styles vary from modern one-liners to traditional three-liners, the majority investigating his relationships to the world. He is firmly present. Always easy to recommend his work. *freed for a while / the junkyard dog / lies on its chain*

Life Death Etc., by Anna Maris (Winchester, Va.: Red Moon Press, 2016). 78 pages; 4¼" × 6½". Matte four-color card covers; perfectbound. ISBN 978-1-936848-72-0. Price: \$15.00 from www.redmoonpress.com

The book is divided into three thematic sections per the title. The "Life" section is full of just that—life—and alive with a kind of magic appropriate for the early seasons. The "Death" section is darker, more introspec-

tive, missing a “him.” But Maris comes through it all in the last section, although true to life, without any full resolutions. A rewarding structure that the poet utilizes well. Some delightful poems. *sunlight / on the bedroom wall / a new window*

Out of Nowhere, by Rob Scott (Winchester, Va.: Red Moon Press, 2016). 70 pages; 5" × 7½". Glossy four-color card covers; perfectbound. ISBN 978-1-936848-77-5. *Down to the Wire*, by Rob Scott (Winchester, Va.: Red Moon Press, 2016). 74 pages; 5" × 7½". Glossy four-color card covers; perfectbound. ISBN 978-1-936848-76-8. Price for each: \$15.00 from www.redmoonpress.com

The first of two collections from Australian expatriate Scott, *Out of Nowhere*, contains haiku and senryu that nicely arc his life, and show, as he well puts it in the intro, “The almost invisible things that always caught my eye. And lit a flame.” He has a good command of the genre and the poems are rewarding. A second volume, *Down to the Wire*, contains haiku and senryu on Australian Rules Football—specifically as a fan of the Collingwood Football Club. Similar to van den Huevel’s *Baseball Haiku*, there are many haiku moments captured in Scott’s “footy haiku.” Very few technical terms are employed so you don’t need to be a fan of the sport to enjoy it. *full moon / not noticing it / until the torp*

Slicing the Morning Mist, by Carolyne Rohrig (Rochester, N.Y.: Free Food Press, 2016). 28 pages; 4¼" × 5¾". Handmade paper covers; string tied. No ISBN. Price: \$6.50 (checks payable to “Michael Ketchek”) from 125 High Street, Rochester, NY 14609 or www.freefoodpress.com.

Rohrig is a familiar voice with a good sense of the genre. The volume contains quiet poems with well-situated details, and some surprising ones, on life’s domesticity’s and her travels. She has a good eye for the importance of small things, and she is interested in how it all—including herself—fits. A favorite: *to be as forgiving / as a god / cactus in bloom*

Naad Anunaad, eds. Kala Ramesh, Sanjuktaa, and Shloka Shankar (India: Vishwakarma Publications, 2016). 235 pages; 5½" × 8". Matte four-color card covers; perfectbound. ISBN 978-93-85665-33-2. Price: \$18.00 from online booksellers

Through the pages of this journal we have witnessed the explosion of interest in haiku in India, yet that country's ability and access to the same journals and books that we in the States take for granted is hampered by the excessive cost of shipping. Published in India, and thus inexpensively available, the global anthology *Naad Anunaad* addresses that issue by making the work of 231 poets—living and dead—from twenty-six countries available to the local population. Fortunately, we have access to it as well. Most of the poems are previously published and readers will find many favorites. The styles reflect a wide diversity. The haiku community, particularly in India, is indebted to the editors. A wonderful volume.

Something Other Than Other, by Philip Rowland (Japan: Isobar Press, 2016). 94 pages; 5½" × 8½". Glossy four-color card covers; perfectbound. ISBN 978-4-907359-14-0. Price: \$15.00 from online booksellers

In critical essays Rowland, editor of the journal *Noon*, warns against tightly defining haiku. This reluctance to definitively name a thing, to pin it down like a dead butterfly, is evident in his poetry. One image, or idea, or even poem, is often an opening to the next image, idea, or poem. Although "image" is a term to be used broadly in Rowland's work, since they can include the abstract and surreal, as well as the ordinary. A few are hard to get into, but he is not a poet who is afraid to see where his poems and language lead. He is a poet who makes us want to work harder at our own poetry. The collection is divided into four sections, three of these containing "sequences" of standalone haiku and other short poems, some of which have been collected before—in 2012's *Before Music* (reviewed in MH 44.2), for example. A rewarding read! Recommended. *pregnant she sleeps / the weight of each released / piano key*

Silver Salmon Runes, by William Scott Galasso (Laguna Woods, Calif.: Galwin Press, 2016). 107 pages; 6" × 9". Glossy four-color card covers; perfectbound. ISBN 978—970647-17-7. Price: 10.00 from online booksellers

Longtime poet Galasso's latest collects poems written between 2010-2016. It includes sections for haiku (in seasonal order), senryu, and haibun and tanka. While some of the poems are more statement than haiku, Galasso has been writing long enough to provide a bunch of keen observations that do what good haiku do: provide a unique viewpoint on the ordinary world. What is especially enjoyable is the diversity of viewpoints he puts on, covering a variety of ages and situations, which makes him a bit hard to pin down. The poems are done a disservice in small type and clustered at the top of a large page. But that aside, an enjoyable volume. *on the inside / as it is on the outside / rain*

Mlječnom Stazom / Down the Milky Way, by Dejan Pavlinović (Croatia: privately printed, 2016). 150 pages; 5½" × 8". Black and white card covers; perfectbound. ISBN 978-9-535923-30-5. Price: Inquire from author at dejan.pavlinovic@gmail.com

In English and Croatian, the first collection by haikuist Pavlinović contains a hundred haiku. Like other Eastern-European haikuists his work tends toward the "poetic," using devices such as personification which is normally unheard of in the West, yet used in classical Japanese haiku. However, since he applies the same logic to the natural world as to himself, the poems create a cohesiveness between man and the natural world. There is a particular joy in his best work. That said, not all haiku hit and he could have culled the weaker so-what ones. We were put off by the gushing *Forward* (Reichhold) and *Afterward* (Rozic) that in our opinion are unwarranted, but on the whole the collection is a nice first outing. The title poem: *from star to star / down the milky way / a little finger*

Naming a Storm, by Stephen Toft (No place: CreateSpace, 2016) 53 pages; 5½" × 8½". Glossy four-color card covers; perfectbound. ISBN 978-1-540702-26-5. Price: \$8.99 from online booksellers

The latest collection from Toft is a nice mix of haiku and tanka. He has a good grasp of haiku and the included poems satisfy in the main. Many of the poems open nicely to further readings. Especially satisfying is the diversity, which moves from well-grounded poems to more abstract ones, although he doesn't ever go too far, which gives the collection an overall even tone. A good outing. *grieving... / my neighbour's / long beard*

Evening Stillness, eds. Jeannie Martin and Peter Newton (Bristol, Conn.: Haiku Circle Press, 2016). 26 pages; 4½" × 5½". Deep blue card covers; string-tied. No ISBN. Price: \$10.00 (checks payable to "The Haiku Circle") from Joyce Clement, 168 Old Turnpike Road, Bristol, CT 06010

A wonderfully designed anthology to commemorate the tenth anniversary of the annual, daylong Haiku Circle hosted by Vince Tripi and others in Northfield, Massachusetts. Sixty poets contributed, who have attended over the years. It is a handmade book, and exudes the specialness of the gatherings, of the people, and the place. *spring sunbeam / the baby's toes / spread apart* – Peggy Willis Lyles

Old Enough, by Bruce Feingold (Winchester, Va.: Red Moon Press, 2016). 72 pages; 4¼" × 6½". Glossy four-color card covers; perfectbound. ISBN 978-1-936848-78-2. Price: \$15.00 from www.redmoonpress.com

Feingold's third collection is very satisfying. Perhaps from his career as a psychotherapist, these are wide-open poems, both spatially on the page, but thematically as well. They are active, things becoming other things, himself included, and not looking back—and with wonder the whole time. A strong volume, easily recommended. *alpine meadow swifts soaring in my knees*

O Liniște Stranie / Strange Silence, by Constantin Novăcescu and Jim Kacian (Romania: Waldpress, 2016). 94 pages; 5¾" × 8". Glossy four-color card covers; perfectbound. ISBN 978-6-066141-53-6. Price: Inquire of the poet

A volume in Romanian and English; half the poems by well-known haikuist Kacian and the other by Romanian short-poet Novăcescu. Kacian's poems are what you would expect from a leader in English-language haiku: well-crafted, poignant works, that leave room to explore. Novăcescu's poems are not haiku, but include interesting images that in our opinion don't always coalesce. Still, nice to see haiku share the stage. A one-liner from Kacian: *back from our beach walk into the same chairs*

Retreat, by John Martone (No place [Charleston, Ill.]: Ocean / Samuddo, 2016). 60 pages; 4" × 6". Glossy white card covers; perfectbound. No ISBN. Price: inquire of author. *A Small Boat*, by John Martone (No place [Charleston, Ill.]: Ocean / Samuddo, 2016). 60 pages; 4¼x7. Glossy tan, black, and white card covers; perfectbound. ISBN 978-1-365547-53-9. Price: \$7.00 from www.lulu.com

Two new collections from Martone. The first, *Retreat*, continues his poem of place, where he puts his eye to his immediate domestic surroundings. He excels at these kinds of poems: half about the place and its telling details, and half about himself. *a snail shell left behind / beside a flowerpot / also empty*. *A Small Boat* takes Martone outside into the woods. The poems are larger here, but just as satisfying. *tin roofscrap / in a streambed / I'm bare to the light*