

on poets centuries old (Bashō et al), reformers (Kaneko Tohta), or poets with a tragic life-story (Santoka). *Four Seasons* is a collection by an ordinary Japanese man living an ordinary Japanese life—in haiku. Check it out.

### BRIEFLY NOTED

*Blood Portraits*, by Joseph B. Raimond (Germany: Mirran Thought, 2014). *Life Café*, by Joseph B. Raimond (Germany: Mirran Thought, 2015). Both 120 pages; 4¾" × 7½". Matte four-color card covers; perfectbound. No ISBN. Price: inquire of author

Two more collections from Raimond whose understanding of haiku is limited to any thought, no matter how mundane or clichéd, displayed in three lines. *Just what am I doing? / These secret plans and hopes for / Something probably out of reach*

*Dust Devils: The Red Moon Anthology of English-Language Haiku*, ed. By Jim Kacian and the Red Moon Editorial Staff (Winchester, Va.: Red Moon Press, 2017). 182 pages; 5½" × 8¼". Glossy four-color card covers; perfectbound. ISBN 978-1-936848-85-0. Price: \$17.00 from [www.redmoonpress.com](http://www.redmoonpress.com)

The twenty-first version of the annual “best of” haiku, senryu, linked forms, and essays that appeared last year in a variety of haiku sources. If you cannot subscribe to all the haiku journals or keep track of all the websites, this is the place to read their best work. Of course, the idea of “finest haiku and related forms” as their editors put it will depend upon the editors. This reader found a strong diversity of voices in the current volume. Of the five essays three have appeared in *Modern Haiku*. Always recommended for the haiku library.

*New York City Haiku*, edited by New York Times editorial staff (New York: Universe Publishing, 2017). 128 pages; 5¼" × 7¾". Red, white, and black wrappers; hardcover. ISBN 978-0-789331-20-5. Price: \$15.95 from online booksellers

In 2014, as part of National Poetry Month, the *New York Times* asked its readers to write haiku. Sadly, the illustrious institution's idea of haiku was limited to a three-line, 5-7-5 poem. The poems were written on several urban themes, but generally the results are weak. One at random: *The deli where you / and I ate hot pastrami / is a Chase bank now* – Laura Baranik

*Blowing Up Balloons: Baby Poems for Parents*, by Vanesa Proctor and Gregory Piko (Winchester, Va.: Red Moon Press). 113 pages; 5" × 7". Glossy four-color card covers; perfectbound. ISBN 978-1-936848-78-2. Price: \$15.00 from [www.redmoonpress.com](http://www.redmoonpress.com)

A collection of poems on parenthood by two accomplished haikuists. From the first pangs of pregnancy, through infancy, to early years, the poets find meaning in the smallest of events, as well as in the obviously important ones as well. We were delighted at the breadth of the poems. This collection would make an excellent gift for anyone who has children or is about to embark on that journey. *baby and I / without our beanies / almost spring*

*Issa and Being Human*, by David G. Lanoue (No place: CreateSpace, 2017). 226 pages; 5" × 8". Glossy black and white card covers; perfectbound. ISBN 978-0-991284-0-54. Price: \$9.99 from online booksellers

Lanoue continues his exploration of poet Issa through nine essays on Issa's depiction of humans in his poetry. He examines the master's poems on children, farmers, priests, samurai, etc... a good sampling of social classes. What makes this and other writings by Lanoue interesting are the details on the people and customs. Lanoue is a wealth of information. He

is a writer who takes the time to discuss the use, sometimes ambiguous, of words and his own translations, as well as the customs of the period. One might expect this attention to detail to be dull, but it is quite the opposite. Issa and the whole period of early modern Japan come off as lively. Recommended.

*Hammerscale from the Thrush's Anvil*, by David J. Kelly (United Kingdom: Alba Publishing, 2016). 50 pages; 5¾" × 8¼". Matte gray and white card covers; perfectbound. ISBN 978-1-910185-52-0. Price: \$14.00 from [www.albapublishing.com](http://www.albapublishing.com)

The collection is broken into four seasonal sections, spring to winter, with a short haibun introducing each section that serves to set the seasonal tone. Most pages carry three poems. The poems are Kelly's day to day observations, and while many of the poems are strong, a number tell too much for this reader, and should have been culled. That said, he has a good eye for detail and how those details enlarge the landscape. *morning prayer / kneeling at the altar / of her handbag*

*Cricket Song*, by Jessica Malone Latham (Winchester, Va.: Red Moon Press, 2017). 70 pages; 4¼" × 6½". Glossy four-color card covers; perfectbound. ISBN 978-1-936848-86-6. Price: \$15.00 from [www.redmoonpress.com](http://www.redmoonpress.com)

Subtitled "Haiku and Short Poems from a Mother's Heart," this collection of haiku and tanka details the opening of the author's life to motherhood. More than discovering just the world of pregnancy and children, Latham also re-evaluates the subtleties and missed opportunities in her relationships with her own mother and father. These events are a widening of her world and she takes the reader along. Given the at times break-neck pace of parenting this is a collection that pauses to note the small, important details. *cricket song / in and out of sleep / I hear you*

*Of This World*, by Stella Pierides (Winchester, Va.: Red Moon Press, 2017). 121 pages; 6" × 9". Matte four-color card covers; perfectbound. ISBN 978-1-936848-80-5. Price: \$15.00 from [www.redmoonpress.com](http://www.redmoonpress.com)

Forty-eight haibun on various locations and times in Europe. Perhaps more so than other authors Pierides' haibun are philosophical reflections—often overtly as she breaks the fourth wall and talks right to the reader. Some of the poems link a little too closely to the prose, but she is an imaginative writer.

*L'Esprit du haïku: suivi de Retour sur les années avec le maître Sôseki*, by Terada Torahiko, trans. by Olivier Birmann & Hiroki Toura (Paris: Éditions Philippe Picquier, 2016). 80 pages; 5" × 8". Glossy four-color card covers; perfectbound. ISBN 978-2-809712-12-4. Price: €11.50 from online booksellers

Terada Torahiko (1878–1935) was a renowned physicist who came quite close to winning the Nobel Prize, and met Einstein in Japan. He was also a popular essayist, whose work is still much read. Here he discourses on the haiku, another important strand in his life, and a path he was set on by his teacher in Kumamoto, the novelist Natsume Sôseki (1867–1916). The first part of this translation into French consists of an essay describing the essence of haiku, its symbolic nature in Japanese, its evocative power, its fixed though not immutable form, the sense of unity it brings with the natural world, passionately expounded a short time before the author's death. It is followed by a reminiscence of his encounter with haiku as a schoolboy, in the house of his English teacher in Kumamoto, the already reputable poet Natsume Sôseki, later a famous novelist, in whose works Terada then appears. The intimate recollections of the Master, his manner and dress, the pictures in his study, the haiku greetings on postcards that he sent, the debilitating effect of illness on him later, and the devotion he inspired, form a rich complement to the essay on haiku.

*Old Pond: The Art of Haiku*, ed. By Clysta Seney (San Jose, Calif.: Yuki Teikei Haiku Society, 2016). 80 pages; 6" × 9". Glossy pink, black and white card covers; perfectbound. ISBN 978-1-365222-35-1. Price: \$10.00 from [www.lulu.com](http://www.lulu.com)

Between 1995 and 1998 the Yuki Teikei Society published a series of essays in their membership journal *Geppo*. These seventeen short essays, written by prominent members of the haiku community, and originally edited by Christopher Herold, are collected in *Old Pond*. The essays cover a variety of topics—"The Kigo: Simplicity and Power," "The Art of Observation," "Subjectivity in Haiku," "How Long is a Moment," and "Punctuation in Haiku," for example—that are still relevant today. These are essays that will make you think, to stop and re-evaluate your practice in light of tradition and accepted practices (by the authors). Some you'll wish went deeper into their subjects. We are delighted that they are made available again. A valuable addition to a haiku library.

*cylymau tywod / Knots of Sand*, by John Rowlands (United Kingdom: Alba Publishing, 2017). 118 pages; 5¾" × 8¼". Glossy black and white card covers; perfectbound. ISBN 978-1-910185-59-9. Price: \$15.00 from [www.albapublishing.com](http://www.albapublishing.com)

A first haiku collection from Welsh haikuist Rowlands. Many of his poems employ a narrative style—eschewing a clean, open-ended break between parts; but that doesn't make them any less enjoyable. The poems are thematically grouped, creating additional narrative space, which allows for nice reverberations between the poems. When he does employ juxtaposition, they are nicely surprising, and a number deftly misdirect the reader. Rowlands is sensitive to his surroundings—especially enjoyable are the poems on his relationships. Many are translated into Welsh, with a few into German. An enjoyable outing. *full moon / you remove / your ring*

*Cherry Blossom Light: Yuki Teikei Haiku Society Members' Anthology*, ed. by Mimi Ahern (San Jose, Calif.: Yuki Teikei Haiku Society, 2016). 76 pages; 6" × 9". Glossy pink, black and white card covers; perfectbound. ISBN 978-0-997561-41-8. Price: \$12.00 from [www.youngleaves.org](http://www.youngleaves.org)

The Yuki Teikei Society has always been more than a place to share haiku. Their mission is to teach haiku within a traditional community—a community led for many years by Kiyoshi and Kiyoko Tokutomi. So the 2016 anthology is more than just a sharing of poems, but also includes a section of season words, the Tokutomi contest winners, as well as two essays on haiku practice. One of the essays, a conversation with dojins Jerry Ball, Patricia Machmiller, and Emiko Miyashita is proof of the Society's commitment to learning. The result is a well-rounded collection.

*With a Deepening Presence*, by Don Wentworth (Pittsburgh, Pa.: Six Gallery Press, 2016). 95 pages; 5" × 6¼". Glossy blue, black, and white card covers; perfectbound. ISBN 978-1-926616-86-5. Price: \$8.00 from on-line booksellers

Wentworth is the publisher of the *Lilliput Review*, so he knows his way around the small poem. Much like his poems in his previous collection, *Yield to the Willow* (2014), the poems in *With a Deepening Presence* are not all haiku; many resolve themselves too quickly like statements. But that doesn't make them any less enjoyable; in fact, it gives the collection nice variety. The poems search for meaning—with a Buddhist bent—which is often found in strong details and unlikely places, but the poems in which meaning slightly eludes him are the real successes. We are a fan of his work. *above / our pay grade / truth*

*Waking and Dream*, by Glenn G. Coats (Winchester, Va.: Red Moon Press, 2017). 128 pages; 6" × 9". Glossy four-color card covers; perfectbound. ISBN 978-1-936848-82-9. Price: \$15.00 from [www.redmoonpress.com](http://www.redmoonpress.com)



More than seventy-five haibun from Coats. There is a comfortable cohesiveness to the collection, the reader feeling as if they have accompanied Coats through a lifetime of family and other personal moments. They are narratives of rivers, fishing, roofing, and nearly always family. They are haibun of hearth and heart, subjects of great importance to the author, and it is a joy to enter his world. This reader was left wanting more. The haibun's poems don't stray too far from the prose's subject matter—but find the right detail to deepen our understanding. A very nice collection.

*Full Circle*, by Don Holroyd (No place [York, Pa.]: privately printed, 2016). 30 pages; 6" × 9". Glossy four-colored card covers; perfectbound. ISBN 978-1-530528-05-9. Price: \$5.99 from online booksellers

The poems in *Full Circle* are organized five to a page, broken into seasonal and thematic sections. Holroyd solidly grounds his haiku in a particular season, often overtly ("Mild November day," "Autumn moon," "In late December"), then follows it up with a complementary detail. These are quiet poems, and as such the connections are often easy, sometimes too easy, the parts of the poem too close. Overall, an enjoyable outing.

*January morning— / only the track of a cat / across the new snow*

*Emptiness. Landscape Photography* by Ron Rosenstock, Haiku Responses by Gabriel Rosenstock (No place: Long Exposure Press, 2017). E-book; 88 pages. Price: \$6.99 from [www.joomag.com/magazine/emptiness/0062890001477958682](http://www.joomag.com/magazine/emptiness/0062890001477958682)

Haikuist Gabriel Rosenstock responds through haiku to Ron Rosenstock's black and white photographs. The poems in English, Irish, and Japanese. The photographs are powerful, starkly contrasted, moody pictures of landscapes void of humankind. Gabriel Rosenstock's haiku often name the place, many are Irish landmarks, and he seeks an existential connection to them; often with a zen tinge. An enjoyable volume. *Murrisk Abbey / once loud with prayer— / the voice of a crow*

*Outside the Garden*, by Mike Dillon (Winchester, Va.: Red Moon Press, 2017). 58 pages; 6" × 9". Glossy four-colored card covers; perfectbound. ISBN 978-1-936848-81-2. Price: \$15.00 from [www.redmoonpress.com](http://www.redmoonpress.com)

The third collection from Northwest poet Dillon. These are nearly pure nature poems, with only the author quietly poking around the edges. The poems are powerfully focused. We are grateful he is there to capture these moments of creation and destruction—often time indistinguishable. Yet in them: there are open gates, rivers and roads leading distant places, distant sounds, and the lights of unnamed windows; lonely poems in some ways. Dillon is a great craftsman of words, his language is rich, his subjects the deeper, more tactile for it. Easily recommended! *passion / of the sparrow's maggots / sunrise*

*Small Shadows*, by John Hawkhead (United Kingdom: Alba Publishing, 2016). 106 pages; 5¾" × 8¼". Matte black and white card covers; perfectbound. ISBN 978-1-910-185-53-7. Price: \$15.00 from [www.albapublishing.com](http://www.albapublishing.com)

The poet's realization of middle age quickly becomes a theme, and it is easy to view many of the poems as a reaction to that arrival, as if he is suddenly noticing the poignancies and ironies of the many small shadows the world casts. But while the collection is the poet's debut, he has been writing haiku for many years, which makes the hits better earned. Many of the poems are on familial relationships and feel personal, experienced. These are the strongest. While some are senryu, others unfold with hard truths. *Small Shadows* reveals a well-examined life. *kicking the beer can / along the old cobbled street / drunk father and son*