

BRIEFLY NOTED

Driftwood Monster: Haiku for Troubled Times, by Kath Abela Wilson (Chicago, IL: Locofo Chaps, 2017). 32 pages; 6" × 9". Glossy four-color card covers; perfectbound. No ISBN. Price: \$5.00 from www.lulu.com

Locofo Chaps publishes politically-oriented chapbooks of poetry from a political-Left perspective. Poetry can certainly be political, and some could argue, in the current divisive political environment, that it should be political. However, as Ruth Yarrow so wisely put it, "Writing haiku is not the same as creating a bumper sticker." The haiku in *Driftwood Monster* occupy both camps: there are poems that express dissatisfaction yet leave room for the reader to inhabit—in short, poems that are poetry; but more poems that simply resort to name-calling. A frustrating distinction since Wilson is a better poet than the lesser poems indicate. One of each: *cinnamon broom / if I could sweep it clean / with this; white house / whitewash men smirking / over bad ideas*

Tokaido, by Terry Ann Carter (Winchester, VA.: Red Moon Press, 2017). 82 pages; 6" × 9". Glossy four-color card covers; perfectbound. ISBN 978-1-936-848-93-5. Price \$15.00 from www.redmoonpress.com

On the surface, a series of fifty-three haibun that follow the path of Hiroshige's woodblock series *Fifty-three Stations of the Eastern Road*, but the current volume is much more than that. Carter is in dialogue with the artist as well as characters from her own time. The prints are starting points for her poignant reflections, as well as imaginative musings on the creative process and how we might relive our own choices and circumstances. At times the journey is illustrative, heartbreaking, and often deeply personal. The haiku and prose are wonderful, and wonderfully paired. A book to savor and return to. Recommended.

Juxtathree, eds. The Haiku Foundation editors (Winchester, VA.: Red Moon Press, 2017). 190 pages; 6" × 9". Matte black, white, and red card covers; perfectbound. ISBN 978-0-982695-14-2. Price: \$35.00 from on-line booksellers

Print version of the Haiku Foundation's online journal *Juxtapositions*. A meaty volume that contains articles on haiku poetics as well as articles that cross disciplines, such as "Haiku and the Brain," "A Careful Poetics" (on haiku and care ethics), and one that discusses a haiku by President Obama. Additionally, translations of Suzuki Shizuko and assorted haiga.

Flip Flop, by Miriam Sagan and Michael G. Smith (No place [Santa Fe, N.M.]: Miriam's Well, 2017). 90 pages; 5½" × 7½." Glossy four-color card covers; perfectbound. ISBN 978-1-893003-22-4. Price: \$10.00 from msagan1035@aol.com

Four sequences of call and response—similar to John Brandi and Steve Sanfield's *No Other Business Here*—between Sagan and Smith. Sagan has experience in this vein, previously responding to the work of Elizabeth Searle Lamb in her book *Dream That is Not a Dream*. Sagan and Smith are a good pairing, and it is enjoyable to see how each responds to the other's work. The responses between the two can be subject-related or mood-related. The first sequence is on the subject of disability, which each has to some extent, yet they are not pitying verses, and one will step in to lift up the other if they stray into that territory. While the Biography page presents each author in a different font, the book itself is in a single font, with no identifying markers to name the author of a particular verse, except a few poems that can be identified by subject. Still, an enjoyable conversation between friends.

like a child	and yet on the path ahead fireflies
I hold my breath	
passing the graveyard	

Stone After Stone, eds. Amanda Bell, Gilles Fabre, David J. Kelly, and Kim Richardson (Ireland: The Fishing Cat Press, 2017). 64 pages; 5¾" × 8¼". Black and white card covers; saddle-stapled. No ISBN. Price: €11.50, Inquire of Gilles Fabre at haikuspirit@haikuspirit.org

A first anthology from Haiku Ireland, containing haiku from eighteen members (members not necessarily residents of Ireland), the results of seven *kukai*, and a list of books published by its members. Each poet gets one to two pages, containing four to thirteen poems—enough to get a good sense of each poet's poetics. An enjoyable taste of Irish haiku.

The Black Between Stars, by Elliot Nicely (Parma, Ohio: Crisis Chronicles Press, 2017). 12 pages; 4½" × 7". Black and white card covers; saddle-stapled. ISBN 978-1-940996-40-0. Price: \$4.99 from <http://ccpress.blogspot.com/2017/05/cc089Nicely.html>

A slight collection of nine haiku on the subject of loss; in particular, the loss of a partner. They are well-executed poems that together form a narrative that is made more powerful by their slim number. The title poem: *waiting / for her lab results / the black between stars*

A New Resonance 10, eds. Jim Kacian and Dee Evetts (Winchester, Va.: Red Moon Press, 2017). 175 pages; 5¼" × 8¼". Glossy four-color card covers; perfectbound. ISBN 978-1-947271-00-5. Price: \$ 17.00 from www.redmoonpress.com

The latest offering from editors Kacian and Evetts of seventeen poets whose work they suspect you'll see more of in the near future. Poets include: Abeles, Ahearn, Bergstad, Blöttenberger, Brager, Byrnes, Deegan, Gagnon, Kadric, Liljedahl, McKeon, Pierides, Scott, Serjeant, Shankar, van Leeuwen, and Whyte. Many of these names will already be familiar to readers, but the New Resonance books provide a chance to read more than a single poem—fifteen—from each. As always, a good introduction.

Low Growling from the Petunias, ed. Mykel Board (New York: Spring Street Haiku Group, 2017). 20 pages; 4¼" × 5½". Black and red card covers; saddle-stapled. No ISBN. Price: \$5.00 from Seidboard World Ent. POB 137, New York, NY 10012

Four poems each from thirteen members of New York's long time Spring Street Haiku Group. The voices are varied and enjoyable. Worth picking up. The title poem: *Hunter's moon— / low growling / from the petunias*

World Haiku No. 13, ed. Ban'ya Natsuishi (Japan: World Haiku Association, 2017). 22 pages; 6" × 8¼". Glossy four-color card covers; perfectbound. ISBN 978-4-879442-76-5. Price: \$15.00 from www.worldhaiku.net

Thirteenth iteration of the World Haiku Association's anthology. Contains haiku from 169 poets, as well as essays, haiga, and a report of the WHA's eleventh conference. The haiku represent a large variety of styles, including some that this editor struggles with; regardless, haiku is booming as a global art form. If you want to see what haiku looks like outside the English-language tradition, check it out. In the poets' original language, English, and Japanese.

Eucalyptus Wind, by Karina Young (Winchester, Va.: Red Moon Press, 2017). 74 pages; 4¼" × 6½". Glossy four-color card covers; perfectbound. ISBN 978-1-936848-99-7. Price: \$15.00 from www.redmoonpress.com

A voice who has been absent for several years so glad to see this return. Most of the poems are well-grounded in nature and the seasons—but the reader will find Young in all of them. They are active poems, things in motion, things becoming, but through it all a reverence of the moment at hand; but also a sense of fragile longing. Young strikes the perfect balance between universal and personal. *spring valley / the way she still / holds me*

Rensaku, by Luce Pelletier, Stevie Strang, Kath Abela Wilson, and Louise Vachon (Canada: privately printed, 2014). 44 pages; 4¾" × 6¼". Glossy four-color card covers; saddle-stapled. ISBN 978-2-981184-92-4. Price: \$10.00 from poetsonsite@gmail.com

According to Makoto Ueda, Shiki created the term *rensaku*, which refers to a group of haiku (in this volume's case: four to five) on a theme or subject, presented in sequence. The haiku here are in French (Pelletier, Vachon) and English (Strang, Wilson), without translations.

Cand Lumina e o Pasăre la Geam / When the Light is a bird at the Window, by Clelia Ifrim (Romania: Editura Limes, 2016). 78 pages; 5¾" × 8". Glossy four-color card covers; perfectbound. ISBN 978-6-067990-2-70. Price: inquire of author at cleliaifrim@gmail.com

Essays on haiku in Romanian, including one that was translated into English for *Modern Haiku*.

The Calculus of Daylilies, by Carolyn Hall (Winchester, Va.: Red Moon Press, 2017). 99 pages; 6¼" × 6½". Matte four-color card covers; perfectbound. ISBN 978-1-936848-97-3. Price: \$15.00 from www.red-moonpress.com

A new haiku collection from Hall is an event to celebrate. Not only is she one of the best haikuists writing today, but she is one of the most consistent. *The Calculus of Daylilies* is her fourth collection; unsurprisingly, previous collections have won a Haiku Society of America Merit Award, Haiku Foundation Touchstone Award, and a Snapshot Press Book Award. The title speaks nicely to a collection that deals with the personal and well as the global, and in all cases illustrates the complexities of the seemingly simple moments she describes. Her's is an original voice, working in the mainstream English-language tradition. The volume is broken into smaller sections that allows for sipping of its contents. Recommended. *a shovelful / of rattlesnake / the long day*

River-willow, by Steven Carter (United Kingdom: Alba Publishing, 2017). 50 pages; 6" × 8¼". Glossy four-color card covers; perfectbound. ISBN 978-1-910185-67-4. Price: \$10.00 from www.albapublishing.com

The inside cover lists forty-two books by Carter, many haibun, which the author has written since his retirement not too long ago. If this was a review of one of his haibun books, we might note that he seems to mine his past for memories, describe them, and then attach a related haiku. Often, the significance seems more personal than universal. This latest, *River-willow*, is a collection of one-line senryu, but again we have the feeling that the author finds significance—or in this case irony or humor—on a level not necessarily shared by other readers. Some of the poems are statements with little ado, while some are probably haiku that need more work, and too many fall flat. Some poems should have remained in his notebook. For example: *one size fits none*

Where Saltwater Mixes With Freshwater, by Kent Neal (Winchester, VA.: Red Moon Press, 2017). 88 pages; 4¼" × 6½". Glossy four-color card covers; perfectbound. ISBN 978-1-936848-90-4. Price: \$12.00 from www.redmoonpress.com

A native of Oregon now living in France, Neal's first collection contains haiku in English and French. Unfortunately, too many of the poems use cause and effect—often with interesting and unique images—but with little room for the reader. *she presses on a salmon's / belly and gets hit / in the eye with milt*

Haibun Hotels, by Marshall Hryciuk (Canada: Imago Press, 2017). 144 pages; 5½" × 7". Glossy four-color card covers; perfectbound. ISBN 978-0-929489-30-7. Price: Inquire of the author

A travel narrative of a book publisher's representative in haibun. He details six years on the road—bad meals, hotels, and book fairs—the ins and

outs of the book trade. Some funny moments. A nit: the use of a lower-case “i” gives the text an unfinished feel, as does a hyphen in place of an em dash. *my eyes lifting / off the wide-spread book / to the airport runway*

Haiku Detective, by Michael Ketchek (Rochester, N.Y.: Free Food Press, 2017). 151 pages; 5½" × 8½." Glossy four-color card covers; perfectbound. No ISBN. Price: \$15.00 from www.freefoodpress.com

A mystery noir through which Ketchek channels his inner Chandler and Hammett, where many of the characters write haiku. The writing has an enjoyably sharp wit, and the plotting scatters—like a good noir—buck-shot fashion in many directions, until it comes together in the end. A good quantity of haiku which Ketchek handles nicely. This is an enjoyable romp! *desperate man / the patterns in the tile floor / reveal no answers*

East-West Literary Imagination: Cultural Exchanges from Yeats to Morrison, by Yoshinobu Hakutani (Columbia, MO: University of Missouri Press, 2017). 293 pages, 6" × 9". Hardcover. ISBN 978-0-826220-80-6. Price: \$60.00 from online booksellers

A solid investigation into the influences of Eastern literature and philosophy upon American writers from the Transcendentalists (Emerson, Thoreau) to the Beats (Kerouac, Snyder) to African American writers (Wright, Sanchez, Emanuel). The last sections of the book discuss the two later groups' writings, including haiku. This is Hakutani's specialty, and he retreads some ground he has previously explored in his books *Richard Wright and Haiku* and *Cross-Cultural Visions in African-American Modernism*. While we welcome academic inquiry into haiku, we wish it wasn't always the usual suspects—Kerouac, Wright, Sanchez, etc...—especially when their understanding of the genre is often so close to their influences. Still, a volume worth picking up.

Wild Flowers, by Crystal Simone Smith (No place [Durham, N.C.]: privately printed, 2016). 32 pages; 5½" × 8½". Glossy red and white covers; perfectbound. ISBN 978-0-991551-46-0. Price: \$12.00 from www.crystalsimonesmith.com

Smith's first haiku-arts collection includes haiku, senryu, haibun, and haiga, in a very pleasing mix. It is not a large collection, but the poems within are well-written. Smith understands how haiku work and she picks the right moments and the right words to create the right poems. There is a living-breathing person below the surface, and the reader feels her joys and pains—especially in a few very moving pieces. The haiga are less successful in that they illustrate the haiku rather than give each its own space; yet the best haiku in the collection are in them. *another mass shooting / my son practices / his trumpet solo*

A Golden Leaf, by D W Skrivseth (Winchester, VA.: Red Moon Press, 2017). 66 pages; 4¼" × 6½". Glossy four-color card covers; perfectbound. ISBN 978-1-936848-88-1. Price: \$15.00 from www.redmoonpress.com

A first collection from Skrivseth. His poems value experience—he approaches them with all his senses—and he looks to find and share meaning. There are some strong poems, and we've happily published his work in *MH*, but he might have been better waiting a bit, as an equal amount tell more than show. We chalk this up to a strong desire to share his sensitive readings of his encounters, usually of the natural world; a good thing. The lovely: *how it leans / this blade of grass... / morning dew*

Chögyam Trungpa: One Hundred Haiku, by Gabriel Rosenstock, trans. Mariko Sumikura (No place [Ireland]: 2014). 106 pages. Ebook. £3.07 from www.amazon.co.uk

Inspired by a photograph of the controversial Tibetan tülku (reincarnated lama) with a gun to his head, Rosenstock wrote one hundred haiku on

gun culture. These are modernist haiku and not all work, but an interesting mix. In Gaelic, English, and Japanese. *shoot / the Mona Lisa between the eyes / a black ant out for a stroll*

Buying Time, by Elmedin Kadric (Winchester, VA.: Red Moon Press, 2017). 80 pages; 4¼" × 6½". Glossy four-color card covers; perfectbound. ISBN 978-1-936848-94-2. Price: \$15.00 from www.redmoonpress.com

We have enjoyed Kadric's work for some time, so we weren't surprised to see a first collection; what we were not expecting was the strength of it, and how many of its poems we recognized. *Buying Time* has a wonderful breadth to it. There are traditional haiku, modern haiku, and surreal or magical haiku, and more often than not they feel like true conversations where Kadric is letting you in on a piece of himself. As one would expect of a poet who tests the genre's edges, there are some misfires; but few enough. We would expect to see this on the lists of top collections this year. Check this out. *in my voice / briefly / the cave mouth*

Arrangements, by Michael Fessler (No place [Japan]: Privately printed, 2017). 143 pages; 4¼" × 5¾". Matte four-color wrapping; perfectbound. No ISBN. Price: inquire of the author at BZL02150@nifty.com

The haiku in *Arrangements* comprise a life of haiku over thirty years, years American-born Fessler has lived in Japan. He has minimally edited the poems, so it is enjoyable to see his early 5-7-5 attempts (with capitals) quickly move to a more normative style. There are a lot of poems, usually four to a page, that reflect many things Japanese—with the usual imports: baseball, golf, basketball, and of course, himself. There are some weaker poems that could have been culled, but on the whole it is an enjoyable outing. He often catches the seemingly insignificant becoming significant, and to maintain this sensibility to daily life over thirty years is remarkable. *a little temple / being rained on / the dry of cicada*

B-Flat Blues, by Bill Cooper (Winchester, VA.: Red Moon Press, 2017). 100 pages; 4¼" × 6½". Glossy four-color card covers; perfectbound. ISBN 978-1-936848-92-9. Price: \$15.00 from www.redmoonpress.com

Coopers fifth collection, the fourth in the last four years, and his strongest to date. The poems cover a lifetime—from little league to parental observations—yet don't cease to find wonder. Wonderfully resonant images and good use of all the haiku tools. The poems feel very much of place. We are glad to join Cooper on his journey. *swamp cypress / as stranger fig thickens / near the beehive*

The Unseen. 24 pages; 3¾" × 5¾". *Innocent*. 20 pages; 3½" × 5½". *Byzantine Eyes*. 8 pages; 3" × 4¼". (No place [Charleston, Il.]: Samuddo / Ocean, 2017) All tan card covers; saddle-stapled. No ISBN. Price: Inquire of the author at johnmartone@gmail.com

Three small books from Martone; one of our most prolific, but also most sensitive writers. He enters his subjects—which are both external and internal—with a deep reverence. In two of these collections he is taking stock of the present and past. These contradictions, if they truly are in his Buddhist worldview, are what makes his work so engaging. Hard to choose a single poem: *bluebells in front / the screen door's / unlatched*

Paper Ships, by Joyce Walker Currier (Winchester, Va.: Red Moon Press, 2017). 124 pages; 6" × 9". Glossy blue, black, and white card covers; perfectbound. ISBN 978-1-936848-96-6. Price: \$15.00 from www.redmoonpress.com

Three hundred and sixty poems from over forty years of practice, Currier has tried it all: haiku, senryu, and some sequences. She writes of what she knows, her life around her, and the results are intimately sensitive to a human's place in the world. Many are quiet poems that sink deeply in. Like other collections it tries to be all-inclusive which means it includes some weaker poems. This is not one of them: *at my father's grave / the weight / of unspoken words*