

## BRIEFLY NOTED

*Слънчогледова нива / Sunflower Field*, by Ludmila Balabanova (Bulgaria: Жанет 45, 2019). 68 pages; 5¾" × 8¼". Matte four-color card covers; perfectbound. ISBN 978-619-186-496-6. Price: inquire of the publisher at booksj45@gmail.com or author at balabanova1806@gmail.com

Celestial objects loom large in this collection of twenty-one haibun presented in Bulgarian and English, some three of which are here published for the first time. The chapbook opens with the very fine piece, "Distances," a rumination on humanity's lonely orbit of an insignificant star, capped by "sunflower field / the sun rooted / in the sky." Another ten haibun also channel the sun, moon, and stars, making space and time a dominant theme. Balabanova is especially sensitive to intimations of infinity in finite things: a broken watch whose "long hand races in vain," "two snowmen, kissing each other for the first time" for years, "children who never grew up." In one of her best pieces, "Old Photo," the narrator often looks at a picture of her parents, holding her in their arms. "Years pass by. My mother and father from the picture become younger than me, then younger than my daughter and my son."

measuring the time  
between sunset and twilight . . .  
a cuckoo

*The Birds Sing Anyway*, by George Dorsty (Windsor, CT.: Buddha Baby Press, 2019). 100 pages; 5" × 7". Glossy four-color card covers; perfectbound. ISBN 978-1-7327746-3-6. Price: \$15.00 from the author at 1314 Showalter Road, Yorktown, VA 23692.

Dorsty's second book of selected haiku, senryu, and small poems is shot through with dualities. Each haiku is "a song of myself," each a manifestation of the poet's hunger for experience and the experience of expressing

that experience. Some ninety poems arranged in six untitled parts explore Buddhist spirituality, the banalities of daily living, the idylls of childhood, the sorrows of aging, and the hopes and fears that make things matter. Altogether, a rewarding read. *the poet pecks / at his typewriter / hunger moon; a meadow takes over / the meadow I planted— / summer sabbatical; fallow field— / what will be written / between the furrows*

*Reckoning with Winter: A Haiku Hailstorm*, by Robert Epstein (West Union, W.V.: Middle Island Press, 2019). 127 pages; 5" × 8". Glossy four-color card covers; perfectbound. ISBN 978-1-7335979-1-3. Price: \$16.00 from online booksellers. *Turning the Page to Old*, by Robert Epstein (West Union, W.V.: Middle Island Press, 2019). 135 pages; 4¾" × 8". Glossy four-color card covers; perfectbound. ISBN 978-1-7335979-5-1. Price: \$15.00 from online booksellers.

Epstein, a psychotherapist living in the San Francisco Bay area, is single-handedly creating a new form—therapy haiku. He is author or editor of at least twenty chapbooks of haiku dealing with illness and pain, recovery, death awareness, grief, loss, mourning, and with notions of the sacred and the afterlife. In the two collections noted here, he comes to terms with winter and aging. Both books offer an enjoyable, light read for anyone cheered by humorous quips and aphorisms as well as senryu and haiku, the best of which probe beneath the surface of ordinary suffering. *winter writing / I concentrate / on the draft (Reckoning); not yet / a death poem the morning / glory opens (Turning)*.

*Luna di un Girasole / Sunflower Moon / Sonnenbloommond*, by Lucia Fontana (Winchester, Va.: Red Moon Press, 2019). 86 pages; 4¼" × 6¼". Glossy four-color card covers; perfectbound. ISBN 978-1-947271-41-8. Price: \$15.00 from [www.redmoonpress.com](http://www.redmoonpress.com)

Another nicely conceived chapbook from Red Moon Press, this one with cover art and two haiga as well as haiku presented in English, Italian, and

German by the Italian haijin and visual artist, Lucia Fontana. Fontana fingers the emotional vibrations of relationship in her life—as daughter, lover, mother—and strums, too, feelings of connection between cloud and dove, skyscraper and moon, self and universe: *all that longing / to be together / sunflower moon*. Some of the work veers towards the sentimental, relying overmuch on the unearned impact of images and concepts such as moon, dream, love, or heart. But the best of it gives voice to a unique sensibility, all the more apparent at times in the original Italian. Consider the one-line haiku: *snowy field and three blackbirds ... ellipses*. In English, the poem certainly conjures Wallace Stevens’s *13 Ways of Looking at a Blackbird*, yet expands in and of itself when the Italian words for ellipses—*puntini di sospensione*—are deconstructed, word for word, into dots (points) of suspension. One more favorite: *certain / that nothing is mine / clear skies*

*Selected Haiku*, by Yoshihiko Furuta, trans. Eric Selland (India: Cyberwit, 2019). 43 pages; 5½" × 8½". Matte four-color card covers; saddle-stapled. ISBN 978-93-89074-16-1. Price: \$15.00 from [www.cyberwit.net](http://www.cyberwit.net)

In the preface to *Selected Haiku*, Furuta provides the aesthetic foundations for the book’s “surreal” haiku—over seventy of them, some apparently new, others selected from three previous collections. Interested in Japanese innovations in “abstract haiku,” yet uncertain how to understand it, he takes his cue from the philosopher Michel Henry’s explication of Kandinsky’s art: “The Kandinskian equation can now be written as follows: Interior=interiority=invisible=life=pathos=abstract.” For Furuta, this translates into haiku that intuitively evoke “invisible” things at “the limit of language.” The result: haiku tartare, a raw meal of sensory bricolage, irrational imagery, and impossible mind-worlds. *A solitary habit / a battledore paddle / with green lips; Everywhere liquid, / an insect trap / made from a musical score; Heat waves: / it takes thirty thousand years / for a tree to become a bird*

23, by Gary Hotham (Green River, Vt: Longhouse, 2019). 4 pages; 4¼" × 11". Glossy green card covers; accordion fold. No ISBN. Price: \$15.00 from the publisher at PO Box 2454, West Brattleboro, VT 05303

In this pocket-sized little book the inimitable Hotham loosely links twenty-three haiku that ring the changes on some signature themes. Dwelling on interpenetrations—wave on wave, year on year, rain on rain, light in dark, dark in light, past and present, seen and unseen—this small circle of poems seems to begin where it ends and end where it begins, in contemplation of eternities. *light / that can't stay / full moon*

*500 Haiku of Sayumi Kamakura*, trans. Sayumi Kamakura and James Shea (India: Cyberwit, 2019). 159 pages; 5" × 8¼". Glossy four-color card covers; perfectbound. ISBN 978-93-88125-80-2. Price: \$20.00 from [www.cyberwit.net](http://www.cyberwit.net)

Imagine a “dream machine,” capable of recording the most private and interior of mental images and capable, too, of directly transmitting them *as is* to the apprehension of others. Such communication is impossible, of course, without first crawling over a fence of paints and papers, or the pens and inks of language. But Kamakura, one of the leading practitioners of Japanese *gendai* haiku, comes close. *500 Haiku* (in Japanese and English) teems with a private iconography of inner experience and mentation that at times confounds, at times inspires. Drawn from her *Collected Haiku* published in Japan in 2016, and harvesting work from 1984 to 2016, the poems in this book offer a glimpse of her journey as a poet. From the start Kamakura rejected haiku written in “calculated imitation of others and oneself” in favor of a deeper, highly personal form, in her case shaped by a questing empathy for the phenomenal world, her life as a woman, and smoldering desires “for a coffin, / a window, / for the sea, the wind,” for “the darkness behind Orion,” for escape and for communion. *The slightest friendship / between my fist / and the thunder; a camellia falls / as a vagina closes / at noontime; Hiding an almost / empty stomach— / my sunglasses*

*A Hole in the Light: The 2018 Red Moon Anthology of English-Language Haiku*, ed. Jim Kacian and the Red Moon Editorial Staff (Winchester, Va.: Red Moon Press, 2019). 208 pages; 5¼" × 8". Glossy four-color card covers; perfectbound. ISBN 978-1-947271-37-1. Price: \$17.00 from [www.redmoonpress.com](http://www.redmoonpress.com)

Once again the editorial staff of Red Moon Press has made an excellent selection of haiku, senryu, haibun, and other linked forms, as well as essays and book reviews, to represent the best English-language publications of 2018. It's almost impossible to pick favorites, the quality is so uniformly high, but certain pieces from unexpected places or in unexpected form nevertheless stand out. For this reader, that includes Melissa Allen's haibun, "Three Dreams in Winter," John S. O'Connor's essay, "John O'Connor is Dead," and a sure handful of haiku: *full moon ... / watchmen answering whistles / with whistles* (Barnabas Ikéolúwa Adélékè, Nigeria); *father's gravestone / moss living / in his name* (Christine Taylor, United States); *shaping / imaginations / summer clouds* (Gary Hotham, United States). Recommended.

*New Resonance 11*, ed. Jim Kacian and Julie Warther (Winchester, Va.: Red Moon Press, 2019). 175 pages; 5" × 8". Glossy four-color card covers; perfectbound. ISBN 978-1-947271-38-8. Price: \$17.00 from [www.redmoonpress.com](http://www.redmoonpress.com)

If ever you've picked up a wildflower guide to reacquaint yourself with blooms seen and loved before and to learn of new ones as yet unmet, that's what it's like to read each new volume of *A New Resonance, Emerging Voices in English-Language Haiku*. Volume 11 is no exception. And what a delight to contemplate the seventeen featured poets each in their own field of haiku—fifteen each. Recommended, for these favorites and much, much more: *a bird note / quotient of / the blue* (Joseph Salvatore Aversano); *the earth's curve / entering the room / belly first* (Tia Haynes); *a dream I make of the just now* (Hansha Teki).

*My Journal with Haiku Sprinkled in*, by David G. Lanoue (New Orleans, La.: Privately printed, 2019). 235 pages; 5" × 8". Matte four-color card covers; perfectbound. ISBN 978-0-9912840-9-2. Price: \$9.99 softcover (\$2.99 Kindle) from [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com)

Impossible not to be charmed by the disingenuous tone of Lanoue's latest work, a year's worth of journal entries or, as he suggests midway through the book, "ripped-from-life, haiku-sprinkled reflections" otherwise known as haibun. Lanoue is a professor of English and an expert on Issa and it shows. He consciously models his journal on Issa's 1819 "Oragu haru" [My Spring], even as he explores the self-referential themes of post-modern literature and contemporary memoir writing. And all to the good, the clever, the compulsively readable. We join the "burnt-out," slightly pathetic, and outrageously humorous haiku poet as he ventures abroad for a conference or two and a mid-life crisis. In short order he becomes our garrulous guide to aging clumsily, skewering his and our pretensions to honesty and self-awareness, and sussing out connections between poetry, life, and enlightenment. The prose is limpid, colloquial, admirably well-crafted, and shot through with nostalgia, not only personal, but poetic. The haiku that follow each entry, even as they extend the narrative with pith, irony, and so forth, rarely work as standalone verse, but rather as strings of haikai-inspired verse meant to be read in context. Indeed, in the didactic essay that brings the journal to a close, Lanoue declares himself in favor of preserving pre-Shiki traditions of verse-making in renku. "Haiku poets," he declares, "stand at a crossroads." Either they continue Shiki's "trajectory of de-spiritualizing haiku" or they cultivate return to Buddhist inspired understanding of the form. This may surprise those who see the übercontemporary in a poet who "put[s] on my gender" of a spring morning, but like the proverbial red jaguar, his is an understandable response to thinning hair—and well worth taking out for a spin. *pink rollerblades / why can't I / be fearless?; crying tears / of pigeon shit / the bronze king; visiting / the dead poet's house / old men only*

*Alive & In Use*, by Charlotte Mandel (American Fork, Utah: Kelsay Books, 2019). 57 pages; 6" × 9". Glossy four-color card covers; perfectbound. ISBN 978-1-949229-86-8. Price: \$14.00 from online booksellers.

Mandel is a retired writing teacher and published poet of "prose poems, poems in free verse, [as well as] formal received or nonce forms." Recently she has turned her pen to haibun, with nice results. As might be expected, the prose consistently sings with vibrant and compelling metaphors. Unfortunately, the haiku too often pale in comparison, especially those one-image ku that do not successfully establish some compelling juxtaposition or disjunction. That said, the collection includes some excellent haibun in which the rub of prose and poem ignites moments of exquisite consciousness. Mining years of "freely" scribbled diaries, Mandel recalls landscapes and relationships with a heart wide open to a full accounting of the moment. In *Begonia*, for instance, she places a tiny blossom, visibly browning, back in the ceramic pot from which it has fallen, "onto damp earth shaded by a leafed stem bearing buds about to open." The piece ends with "my husband's ashes / buried beside / a tall pine tree." Mandel's keen sensibility for what one might call the oneness of the life-force shines in perhaps the best piece in the collection, *September's First Monday*. Meditating on a sun-warmed dandelion, she feels the "downy petals" on her cheek as "the flower's crown wobbles." The capping ku makes meaning in the silent interstices of a deeply felt intuition: "fontanel pulse / in the cup of my hand / once."

*Postmark*, by John Martone (No place [Charleston, Ill.]: Tufo, 2019). 117 pages; 4" × 6". Glossy black and white card covers; perfectbound. No ISBN. Price: inquire of the author at johnmartone@gmail.com. *Homelands*, by John Martone (No place [Charleston, Ill.]: Tufo, 2019). 370 pages; 4" × 5¾". Black and white card covers; perfectbound. No ISBN. Price: inquire of the author at johnmartone@gmail.com

These two recent collections of terse thoughts and probable verse from John Martone share the same epigraph from Alcmaeōn of Croton: "We

perish because we cannot join the beginning to the end.” Thus, two diary-like perseverations on a common theme. More than this, it is difficult to say. *Postmark* reads like a word hoard punctuated with some gorgeous ku. *Homelands*, at four times the length, tosses images into the air like so many experimental birds “turning and turning in the widening gyre”—understandably, the center threatens not to hold. Both collections are studded with poems in Italian, as the narrator journeys forth to discover you can’t go home again. From *Postmark*: *trash blown into / a winter yard // the house / full of belongings, February 2 / a single bird changes the season; fibonacci / I’ll never get out of my shell*. From *Homelands*: *homeland / were / words / earth; a mote— / where I // am meant / to be; an old bird doesn’t enter the cage*

*World Haiku 15*, ed. Ban’ya Natsuishi (Japan: World Haiku Association, 2019). 255 pages; 5¾" × 8¼". Glossy four-color card covers; perfectbound. ISBN 978-4-86435-386-1. Price: \$15.00 from [www.worldhaiku.net](http://www.worldhaiku.net)

The World Haiku Association, directed by Ban’ya Natsuishi, dedicates itself to the recognition and encouragement of “excellence in haiku without losing appreciation for local and cultural norms.” Since the founding conference in 2000, international gatherings have taken place every couple of years and since 2005 have been complemented with an annual multilingual World Haiku anthology, of which this is the 15th volume. “503 haiku in 39 languages by 174 poets from 51 countries” are featured, along with several essays, a conference report, and announcements of book publications by members. In keeping with the WHA mission, the volume reads from front to back in English and from back to front in Japanese; essays appear in several languages (not all translated into English), and haiku, too, appear in the poet’s native tongue and in English (excepting haiku in French). Of note, Natsuishi discusses, in French, Paul Claudel’s “Cent Phrases pour Eventails” and Bo Lille, of Denmark, offers some compelling craft advice, in English, for minimalizing haiku. Otherwise: *The moon hanging / over a bare tree / bitter like a gong* (T. Bukhchu-



luu, Inner Mongolia); *an old port / the north wind stretching the ropes / of tied souls* (Dimitrij Škrk, Slovenia); *J'aime voir nue / La belle qui danse / Rien que la flame* [I like to see naked / The dancing beauty / Nothing but the flame] (Mohammed Bennis, Morocco).

*Last Night of the Carnival*, by Marsh Muirhead (Winchester, Va.: Red Moon Press, 2019). 78 pages; 4¼" × 6¼". Glossy four-color card covers; perfectbound. ISBN 978-1-947271-41-8. Price: \$15.00 from [www.redmoonpress.com](http://www.redmoonpress.com)

Muirhead's second collection seamlessly combines haiku and senryu, humor and pathos, past and present experience in an energetic hike through the seasons of older age. There's enough fun and games to get the kinks out. Nevertheless, the just perceptible, underlying mood is somber, as brief references to illness, sorrow, and death mingle with moments of insight and awareness poignantly gleaned from a life still well-lived. A triptych of poems based on the title image suggest that we have come to an inevitable turning point, a final reckoning with "all the men / I might have been". Nicely done. *last night of the carnival / an autumn chill / in the diesel fumes; last night of the carnival / she takes a selfie / in the house of mirrors; last night of the carnival / the tilt-a-whirl / whirling empty*

*The Deer's Bandanna*, by David Oates (Columbus, Ga.: Brick Road Poetry Press, 2019). 104 pages; 6" × 9". Matte four-color card covers; perfectbound. ISBN 978-0-9979559-6-5. Price: \$15.95 from [www.brickroadpoetrypress.com](http://www.brickroadpoetrypress.com)

This is David Oates's second chapbook from a small southern press dedicated to publishing contemporary poetry "rich with sensory image and metaphor" that also "entertains, amuses, edifies, and surprises a wide audience of appreciative readers." Oates's haiku and senryu—especially the senryu—surely check both boxes. As the eponymous haiku in this collection suggests, the poet seems particularly drawn to momentary splices

of the human and the natural and the ironies, insights, and conundrums that ensue. Comedian, radio show host (“Wordland,” streaming from wuga.org), and spoken word poet, Oates can go for the joke rather than the jux, but overall the knots he ties hold firm. *shining in the sun / plastic bags woven / in an osprey’s nest; weeks of Nutcracker rehearsals / then two performances / months of earworms; no one knows why / he has a bandanna / the wild deer*

*Cosmic Symphony (A Haiku Collection)*, by Pravat Kumar Padhy (India: Cyberwit.net, 2019). 61 pages; 4" × 22cm. Glossy four-color card covers; perfectbound. ISBN 978-81-8253-673-9. Price: Rupees 200; \$15.00 US from Amazon India or contact [info@cyberwit.net](mailto:info@cyberwit.net)

Front loaded with twenty-five pages of foreword, preface, and an essay on “Haiku: A Scientific Art,” the curtains finally part for a view of the stars, Padhy’s debut collection of over a hundred haiku relating earth-bound affairs to stellar matters. Intense bursts of light from a few meteors and other celestial bodies make hanging around for the full planetarium show worthwhile. *milky way— / lightning splits / the darkness; half moon— / the child wonders / the rest; love making— / the moon leaning / over the tides*

*Triptych*, by Kala Ramesh, Don Baird, and Hansha Teki (Winchester, Va.: Red Moon Press, 2019). 180 pages; 4¼" × 6¼". Glossy four-color card covers; perfectbound. ISBN 978-1-947271-42-5. Price: \$20.00 from [www.redmoonpress.com](http://www.redmoonpress.com)

A triptych is a picture on three panels, typically hinged together and used as an altarpiece; alternatively, a set of three associated artistic works intended to be appreciated together. Both definitions suit this chapbook by Kala Ramesh, Don Baird, and Hansha Teki. An afterword by Baird explains the poets’s shared purpose—to link “the brevity of being in the moment” with the “story of the rise, fall, and recovery of

humanity.” Each poet paints his or her own panel of the triptych in a score of “dream-room” haiku. In the first panel, titled “In the Beginning,” Ramesh takes the reader from spring through winter in an idyllic, sensuous world which only at the last reveals its underlying grimness. In the central panel, “The Collapse,” Baird explores the stasis of cold, hunger, addiction, war, the anomie of modern living. In the third panel, Teki rolls time backwards, from winter to autumn, summer to spring, as if to rewrite history before it’s too late. Slowly, Baird’s imagery of despair transforms to a new “baptismal” dawn, a return to the world as first described by Ramesh. Each panel hinges with the next in a superb linkage of haiku, heightening the thoughtfulness that characterizes the collection throughout. *morning raga ... / a honeybee attempts / to waken the bud* (Ramesh); *glacial melt / the seal’s voice also / lost at sea* (Baird); *there and there / so near still / a mayfly’s was* (Teki).

*So Many Miles: Fifty Senryu*, by Olivier Schopfer ([No place]: Alien Buddha Press, 2019). 68 pages; 6" × 9". Glossy four-color card covers; perfectbound. ISBN 978-10-90237-958. Price: \$9.99 from [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com)

In this, his second collection of haiku, Schopfer reveals himself as a highly accomplished flaneur, one who walks the city streets and their byways with a keen eye for the humorous, the pathetic, and the ironic in human affairs. Pub life, love life, end of life—all are grist for his mill of largely accessible, well-wrought senryu, a few of which succeed just at the edge of abstraction. *the pub waitress / smiles at me / beer foam spilling over; funeral / at long last / the whole family together; social me me me media*

*The Distance I’ve Come: My Haiku Journey*, by Adelaide B. Shaw (India: Cyberwit, 2019). 65 pages; 5½" × 8½". Glossy four-color card covers; perfectbound. ISBN 978-93-89074-55-0. Price: \$15.00 from [www.cyberwit.net](http://www.cyberwit.net)

Adelaide Shaw's second chapbook of one hundred haiku covers an entire life's worth of intense sensory memories and other moments of being. Largely rendered as descriptive slices of experience, these fragments of awareness often enough give way to deeper intuitions. By far the most affecting grouping of poems graces the final section of the book, "The Last Part," as Shaw works through bereavement, anger, and loneliness, towards acceptance of "the way it is." *spring sunshine / Mom's nimble fingers stretching / curtains on a rack; between morning chores / I open the door— / lilacs in the rain; one year later / along the cemetery creek / greening willows*

*The Weight of Moonlight*, by the Spring Street Haiku Group (New York: Seidboard World Ent., 2019). 17 pages; 4" × 5½". Glossy black and white card covers; perfectbound. No ISBN. Price: \$8.00 from publisher at PO Box 137, New York, NY 10012 or by PayPal to [Paypal@seidboard.com](mailto:Paypal@seidboard.com)

A collection of one to four haiku each from twelve members of the Spring Street Haiku Group begins with a smart introduction by Mykel Board about chance associations in art and haiku. Not by accident, the haiku feature some quintessential observations of New York and the world beyond city limits, too. *Central Park / in a birder's binoculars / rain on a maple leaf* (Carl Patrick); *subway saxophone / that high note held / extra long* (Miriam Borne); *from behind layers of cloud / the calls of passing geese / one stray* (Efren Estevez).

*A History of Modern Haiku*, by Charles Trumbull (Lincoln, Ill.: Modern Haiku Press, 2019). 132 pages; 5½" × 8½". Glossy four-color card covers; perfectbound. ISBN 978-0-9600855-0-7. Price: \$14.95 from [www.modernhaiku.org](http://www.modernhaiku.org)

In celebration of *Modern Haiku's* 50th year, Trumbull's fascinating history of the journal and its editors becomes a history of English-language haiku as well. More, it pays tribute to the hundreds of poets whose haiku graced the pages of *Modern Haiku* and thereby helped shape modern

haiku. For anyone interested in where we've been and where we're going, this account is not to be missed. *Kite in the wind / tying boy and sky / together* (Bonnie May Malody, 5.3); *In daisies / we turn around / older* (Raymond Roseliep, 14.3); *it didn't bother us at first the crack in the bedroom wall* (Ruth Holzer, 35.1); *on the rim / of a soap bubble / all this* (Mark Brager, 44.1); *eraser / our grandson asks / why* (Deb Koen, 46.3).

*after night rain*, by John McManus. ([No place]: *Bones, journal for contemporary haiku*, n.d. [2019]). E-chapbook. Available at <http://bones-journal.com/essays/index.html>

Hosted by the online journal, *bones*, this little e-book features thirty-five haiku, almost all of which are one-liners probing the experimental end of haiku composition. Not necessarily for the faint of heart, this collection tinged with imagery from classical civilization explores modern life on the edge of just bearable; the saving graces of poetry and love offering only uncertain deliverance from our journey through the labyrinth. Altogether excellent. *piercing the fog the minotaur's horns; waking from a dreamless sleep horses with outstretched wings; where the trees grow sick of all my problems*

*in a flash*, by Alan S. Bridges (Great Britain: Snapshot Press, 2019). E-chapbook, free access and download from [www.snapshotpress.co.uk/ebooks.htm](http://www.snapshotpress.co.uk/ebooks.htm)

All aboard for twenty haiku/senryu about trains! Bridges touches on just about every aspect of the train journey as metaphor. The result: a delightful, insightful exercise in topical constancy and expressive diversity. *from an artichoke field / row after row / of people on a train; eastbound / leafing back through the book I read / westbound; train the shape of the river*

*Ferry Crossing*, ed. Patricia Machmiller (Calif.: Two Autumns Press, 2019). 32 pages; 5½" × 8½". Matte four-color card covers; saddle-stapled. No ISBN. Price: \$10.00 inquire of [susantolin@gmail.com](mailto:susantolin@gmail.com)

*Ferry Crossing* celebrates The Haiku Poets of Northern California's thirtieth annual Two Autumns reading. The current anthology contains the work of four strong poets (Terry Ann Carter, Garry Gay, Jessica Malone Latham, and Paul M), and if you were able to attend the reading in person, you were treated to four distinct, yet genuine voices in ELH. Editor Machmiller has done a fine job of representing each individual voice, picking poems that showcase each poet's range. If you missed the reading this is your chance to join the celebration.

*Harvesting Stones*, by Matthew Caretti (Great Britain: Snapshot Press, 2019). E-chapbook, free access and download from [www.snapshotpress.co.uk/ebooks.htm](http://www.snapshotpress.co.uk/ebooks.htm)

In a connected series of eighteen haibun, Caretti tells the story of his father's slow death from cancer. The prose is clipped into sentence fragments, as if it hurts to speak, as if only the barest essence of this journey through disbelief, hope, resignation, release may be bearably related. Caretti's haiku sparingly, unerringly expand the emotional scope of the narrative with unexpected, touching imagery. In the piece "Complications," which comes near the end of the collection and of his father's life, Caretti wonders at the effects of morphine, given to quell the pain. "Warms his heart. Tenderness like she [his mother] has never seen. Vulnerability. He becomes his tears. His gratitude."

bitter cold  
of the parking lot  
dashboard glow

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*A taste of Issa*, trans. and ed. David G. Lanoue (New Orleans, La.: HaikuGuy, 2019). 455 pages; 5¼" × 8". Matte black and white card covers; perfectbound. ISBN 978-1-7333016-1-9. Price: \$13.99 from online booksellers

Lanoue is undoubtedly one of Issa's strongest scholars, and he has published a number of critical studies on the poet's work. In 2012 he published *Issa's Best: A Translator's Selection of Master Haiku*, which included twelve hundred of the master's poems. *A Taste of Issa* is essentially a reprint of that earlier work with some immaterial changes in poems, plus the added inclusion of the original Japanese, romanized transliterations, and some helpful commentary. If you are looking for a substantial collection of Issa's best work this updated version is the place to start.

