

BRIEFLY NOTED

Fired Up Haiku, ed. Corine Timmer (Portugal: Bicaideias Publishing, 2024). 52 pages; 5¼" × 8". ISBN 978-989-99760-8-5. Price: €15.00 from www.bicaideias.com

Latest anthology by Timmer. *Fired Up Haiku* contains dragon haiku, in honor of the Year of the Dragon. The poems are varied—on dragon boats, dances, kites, and even our inner dragons. A few favorites: *one string / barely enough to tame it / dragon kite* (Bryan Rickert); *under the bed / where the wild things are / my pet dragon* (Susan Beth Furst); *flowering only / in soft moonlight— / dragon fruit* (Stella Pierides). Similar to previous volumes, the art is a big draw; in this case, Timmer uses what appear to be breakfast cereals, creating colorful dragons, to illustrate the volume. Proceeds from sales go to Australia's Seadragon Search. An annual that is always a fun read.

gone / to seed, by Victor Ortiz (Durham, N.C.: Backbone Press, 2024). 40 pages; 5" × 7". Glossy four-color card covers; perfectbound. ISBN 979-8-9881650-4-0. Price: \$10.00. Order from the author at vhaiku1@gmail.com

The runner-up in Backbone Press' 2024 Haiku Chapbook Award is a slim collection that leaves the reader wanting more. Judge Chad Lee Robinson is on the mark when he describes Ortiz's work as exploring the "intersections of identity and belonging..." The poems in *gone / to seed* constantly show the poet grappling with his place in mankind and nature's society, all the while wrapped up in the creative energy of the universe. This questions the idea of any dominant structures. Highly original and inventive. Strongly recommended. *without her green card spring desert; labyrinth / the center has gone / to seed; trees feeding themselves their own bodies of Christ.*

Behind the Gate, by Leslie McDonald (No place [Batavia, Ohio]: Down the Aisle Promotions, 2024). 82 pages; 5½" × 8½". Glossy four-color card covers; perfectbound. ISBN 979-8-911333-0-2. Price: \$14.95 from online booksellers.

Haiku paired with color photographs of what we assume is the author's farm in Ohio. For example, a photo of a toad is paired with the poem: *A visitor peaks (sic) / from hideaway's safe haven / watching who's watching*. The poems are all 5-7-5 which would be fine if they were stronger. As it is, most of the poems tell too much. *Between oaken boards / childhood dreams are realized / pastures of promise*.

Wildflowers in Bloom, ed. Tanya McDonald (Calif.: Two Autumns Press, 2024). 32 pages; 5½" × 8½". Glossy four-color card covers; staple-saddled. No ISBN. Price: \$10 from the HPNC Bookseller at jchessing@hotmail.com

Annual anthology to complement the Haiku Poets of Northern California's Two Autumn's Reading. 2024's readers were Jeff Hoagland, Deborah P Kolodji, Ron Moss, and Sarah Paris. Twelve poems from each. *up all night / to get lucky / katydids* (Jeff Hoagland); *hospital bracelet / the numbered tag / on a condor's wing* (Deborah P Kolodji); *grinding ink / a duck's wingtip / skims the moon* (Ron Moss); *misty beach / the backhoe pours sand / on the whale's grave* (Sarah Paris). Check out the Zoom reading itself at www.hpnc.org.

Woods Hole Senryu, by Jon Hare (Windsor, Conn.: Baby Buddha Press, 2024). 61 pages; 5½" × 8". Glossy four-color card covers; perfectbound. ISBN 979-8-9892491-9-0. Price: \$20.00 from the author at jhare.magnolia@gmail.com

A collection of senryu on the Cape Cod village of Woods Hole. The poems tour many aspects of the town: its public spaces, restaurants, ferry

landing, as well as its famous marine science institutions. Many of the poems are paired with color photographs. After reading you get a sense of being there. *a behemoth / opens its metal maw / tourists spill out; free / to a good home / microscopes; puddles / swept with pollen / street art.*

Tangled Thicket: Seasons of Haiku, by Deborah Bowman and Melinda Canino (Boulder, Colo.: Samadhi Publications, 2024). 99 pages; 6¼" × 5". Matte four-color card covers; perfectbound. ISBN 978-1-947635-71-5. Price: \$19.95 from online booksellers.

A collaboration between poet Bowman and letterer / visual artist Canino, in which Canino presents Bowman's haiku in distinctive letterings. Bowman is a talented poet and her haiku, quietly and in just the right words, instill moments of grace to her observations. If the volume was simply a collection of her poems it would be enough. Canino letters the poems in a variety of sizes and colors, although her "font" remains fairly static. *a skirmish of robins / red berries begin / to purple; late harvest / picking burrs / off socks; vanishing point / on the horizon / fresh cut hay.*

Linije Života / Life Lines, by Dejan Pavlinović (Croatia: Tondak, 2024). 156 pages; 5½" × 8". Matte white and red card covers; perfectbound. ISBN 978-953-46031-1-6. Price: inquire of the author

Pavlinović is very active in Croatian haiku circles as editor of the Facebook group Haiku HR, as well as on the staff of the journal *Iris*. *Linije Života* is his second collection of haiku. All the poems are in Croatian, English, and Japanese. At times, as is often the case with European and Eastern European haiku, the poems tell more than we in America might be comfortable with, as in: *weight of war / conscience bows the head / closer to the ground*. Others, such as: *a street lamp / casts a shadow for this / moonless night*, are statements. Yet Pavlinović also writes haiku that fit nicely into our mode. A few favorites: *playful / amidst dry grass / a flame; death anniversary / searching for answers / in drawers and cupboards*.

A Lost Prophet, by Jacob D. Salzer (Taylorville, Ill.: Brooks Books, 2024). 60 pages; 4" × 5¾". Glossy four-color card covers; perfectbound. ISBN 978-1-929820-34-4. Price: \$15.00 from www.brooksbooks.com

An enjoyable collection from the recent managing editor of *Frogpond*. Salzer is often concerned with identity in his work, yet that truth is often elusive: shown through things muffled, buried, and dreamt. Several poems reference family, but even they are just out of reach. A mysterious quality that is a joy to sit with. A few tanka are included. *crescent moon — / a glimpse of salmon / in the river's darkness; river mist ... / the faint whispers / of a lost prophet.*

Conversations with Lenard D. Moore, ed. John Zheng (Jackson, Miss.: University Press of Mississippi, 2024). 175 pages; 6" × 9". Gloss four-color card covers; perfectbound. ISBN 978-1-496853-94-3. Price: \$25.00 (\$23.75 Kindle) from online booksellers.

A collection of sixteen interviews with Moore conducted between 1995 and 2023, in which he discusses his life and work. As would be expected, much material is repeated, yet it is interesting to hear him talk about his processes, loves, and concerns. A takeaway is the depth of his engagement with the larger artistic community and how he has brought haiku into other artscapes. The later interviews by John Zheng and Ce Rosenow, when Moore speaks at length on his jazz poetry, are the most rewarding in the collection.

Unthrown Stones, by Evan Coram (Taylorville, Ill.: Brooks Books, 2024). 56 pages; 4⅛" × 5¾". Glossy four-color card covers; perfectbound. ISBN 978-1-929820-32-0. Price: 15.00 from www.brooksbooks.com

Debut collection from Coram. Many of his poems are on family relationships, which in the back of the book he chooses to term as senryu, but most are more open than senryu, and linger thoughtfully after reading.

His choices of the right details add to this openness. A enjoyable outing. *school bus / the shadow of my son / leaves mine; due in April / the road unfolds / at headlight's edge; a leaf skims / broken cobblestones / don't say goodbye.*

Umbra liniștii / *The Shadow of the Silence*, by Ecaterina Neagoe; Liniștea umbrei / *The Silence of the Shadow*, by Clelia Ifrim (Romania: Oscar Print, 2023). 76 pages; 5¾" × 8¼". White card covers; perfectbound. ISBN 977-973-668-602-3. Inquire of the author at cleliaifrim@yahoo.com

Two collections in one by two Romanian haikuists. Neagoe's focus is silence, but in an abstract way, so she writes haiku like *With leafless branches, / only the wind directs / the shadow of the silence*. Additionally her haiku are lyrically philosophical in a way that we in America might not countenance: *Over seas and countries / accompanying the swallows, / a part of my soul*. Ifrim is the better of the two, with verses such as *The white bed sheets hang / to dry on the clothes rope — / oh, a butterfly!* and *Silence of evening — / the small dress of the swallow / is lightly closing...*; but even she cannot escape the lyricism prevalent in much of Eastern European haiku.

Before the Earth, by Laurence Stacey and Dick Whyte (New Zealand: Forgotten Press, 2024). 108 pages; 5" × 8". Matte black and tan card covers; perfectbound. ISBN 978-1-991310-47-7. Price: \$14.99 from online booksellers.

A collection of haiku and linked verse from two poetic pals. The haiku are sometimes in pairs, but it is unknown if they were written in response to each other; and some subjects repeat. Of the fifty-five stand-alone haiku, several are statements, and a few too personal; but others have interesting perspectives. A few favorites: *stopped by police the profile of my shadow* (LS); *sunrise before it was a thing to do* (DW); *evicted: / the flowers we leave / behind* (LS); *the sky / has no name: / listen*.

Two Seasons in Israel, by Rick Black (Arlington, Va.: Turtle Light Press, 2024). 139 pages; 5¼" × 8". Glossy black and white card covers; perfectbound. ISBN 978-0-9748147-7-3. Price: \$16.95 from online booksellers.

Black has expanded his 2007 chapbook, *Peace & War*, into the current volume. As a former New York Times reporter in Jerusalem, he has a unique perspective on the region's sectarian violence. This boots-on-the-ground history allows him to see the many conflicts, between the warring factions and the peace of side-by-side neighbors, between the violence and the area's beauty, between its present and its past. The poems are well-arranged so that these contradictions reveal themselves. Black handles it all with a balanced hand, yet it is hard not to be moved by the senselessness of it all. Strongly recommended. Some favorites: *listening to shells / by the edge of the Galilee — / distant explosions; despite the gunfire, / white water lilies open — / Easter morning; a little extra / for the blind customer — / sesame halvah.*

The San Francisco Haiku Anthology, Volume Two, eds. Susan Antolin, Garry Gay, and Carolyn Hall (Calif.: Spare Poems Press, 2024). 250 pages; 6" × 9". Matte four-color card covers; perfectbound. ISBN 979-8-218-51228-6. Price: \$39.95 from www.sparepoemspress.com

It's been thirty-two years since the first volume was published, and considering the Bay Area's strong haiku growth since then, an update was needed. Frankly, the first volume's publication was a bit audacious; despite some poets longer tenure with the genre, HPNC had only been around for three years at that point. The new volume picks up where it left off—and greatly expands as the number of strong poets has expanded. It contains the work of ninety-four haikuists, many of whom are household names in the haiku community, who have contributed to the haiku scene in San Francisco. Some poets, such as Vince Tripi and Garry Gay, have had overhauls to their initial showing—appropriate since in 1992 both were fairly new to the genre; while others from the first volume who are

no longer writing have been cut. Its historical value aside, the new volume is a joy to read, and readers will find many favorites—some forgotten. Recommended.

And Everything in Between, eds. Michele Root-Bernstein, Jennifer Burd, and Laszlo Slomovits (East Lansing, Mich.: Evergreen Haiku Press, 2024). 64 pages; 6" × 6". Matte four-color card covers; saddle-stapled. No ISBN. Price: \$10.00. Inquire of evergreenhaiku@gmail.com

A farewell anthology from the Evergreen Haiku Study Group. Founded in 2016 in and near East Lansing as an in-person study group, during COVID the group expanded to Zoom, at the same time expanding their members. Throughout its existence the group has sought to elevate the craft of its members with readings from Eric Amann to those of Richard Gilbert—with a goal of each member finding their own unique voice. We can't think of a group with a stronger, more diverse work ethic. The anthology highlights the work of twenty-seven poets, each poet having a biographical page accompanied by two poems. A few favorites: *subsistence farming my emotions* (Jacob Blumner); *from what / part of me / spring wildflowers* (Jennifer Burd); *traveling with me deeply rooted maple* (Michele Root-Bernstein); *winter's eve / a bay leaf plucked / from the soup bowl* (Terri L. French).

Dew of Light, by Adrian Bouter (Winchester, Va.: Red Moon Press, 2024). 94 pages; 4¼" × 6½". Glossy four-color card covers; perfectbound. ISBN 978-1-958408-54-4. Price: \$20.00 from www.redmoonpress.com

Bouter's debut collection is wonderfully diverse, poems ranging from normative three-liners such as *wandering star / a fragment of you / travels with me* to abstract one-liners such as *the quest ions suit spring sparkling*. Many of his poems have a melancholy quality to them as he measures his oft-mentioned loneliness through poetry. Many are poems of distance, mist, and missed connections. Yet despite this, he finds wonder. While a

debut collection, Bouter has been writing for a while. An enjoyable outing. Some favorites: *dew of light man risen from dust; deep in snow / the fields are / thoughts now*.

The Routledge Global Haiku Reader, eds. James Shea and Grant Caldwell (New York: Routledge, 2023). 374 pages; 6" × 9¼". Glossy four-color card covers; perfectbound. ISBN 978-1-032272-65-8. Price: \$31.53 from online booksellers.

A welcome collection of essays that looks at haiku in a global way. The book is broken into four sections, each containing three to five essays: "Haiku in Transit," which examines how haiku has been received outside of Japan, issues with translation, and the role of experience; "Haiku and Social Consciousness," which takes a look at the genre's role as social commentary; "Haiku and Experimentalism," which visits haiku's role in Imagism, Modernism, and other avant-garde isms; and "The Future of Global Haiku," which looks more closely at the roots haiku has taken outside Japan. Many of the essays will be familiar to longtime haikuists, such as Haruo Shirane's important "Beyond the Haiku Moment," Yūki Itō's "New Rising Haiku," Richard Gilbert's "The Disjunctive Dragonfly," and Philip Rowland's "From Haiku to the Short Poem: Bridging the Divide," among others. Yet, depending upon one's readings, others will most certainly be new. In its travels from Japanese to a global poetry, haiku has taken a roundabout journey, touching down in many countries in different ways. The essays here do a good job showcasing these interactions and rightly question whether there is not one "right" haiku path, but many. Strongly recommended.

Origami Butterflies: Yuki Teikei Haiku Society Members' Anthology, ed. Gregory Longenecker (Calif.: Yuki Teikei Haiku Society, 2024). 126 pages; 6" × 9". Glossy four-color card covers; perfectbound. ISBN 978-1-7357235-6-3. Price: \$15.00 from www.yths.org

For those haikuists who don't belong to YTHS, the annual members' anthology is a great way to learn what the society has been up to. Aside from the large section of members' haiku, the current volume contains members' responses to the society's haiku challenge, results of the 2023 Tokutomi Contest, reports on the 2023 Asilomar Retreat and 2024 Reading in the Park, plus two essays. The first essay is a progress report on their long-time kigo project, including the history of the project, its milestones, and welcome news of upcoming volumes! The second essay is Yukio Kachi's exploration of Bashō's many pen names. An active group, whose anthology is always worth checking out.

A Man on Horseback, by Joe McKeon (Winchester, Va.: Red Moon Press, 2024). 100 pages; 6" × 9". Matte four-color card covers; perfectbound. ISBN 978-1-958408-52-0. Price: \$20.00 from www.redmoonpress.com

An enjoyable collection of eighty haibun. Many of the pieces relate a boomer's handling of how the world has changed, but this change is recognizable by any reader, and is nicely relatable. McKeon has a good sense of humor; many of the pieces notice the ironies of modern life—and most importantly, he trusts the reader to find the ironies rather than point them out. And he does a good job balancing the distance between title, prose, and haiku. A good outing.

Cherry Blossom: Erotic Haiku, by Jon Petruschke (Portland, Maine: Annie Books, 2024). 188 pages; 4½" × 6½". Glossy four-color card covers; perfectbound. ISBN 979-8-338699-27-0. Price: \$14.95 from online booksellers.

Petruschke's latest collection is a bit of a mixed bag. Too many poems, like *she didn't know / how that part of her felt / until he touched it*, are too narrative; and others such as *counting grains of sand / on your / bikini bottoms* feel wanting of a second part. But all are playful, uninhibited, and an enjoyable read. We love the use of "scarf season" in the following

haiku. *scarf season / wrapping me / to her bedposts; one-night stand / her temporary tattoos / rub off.*

Shining Wind / Сияен вятър, eds. A A Marcoff, David Bingham, Iliyana Stoyanova, and Vladislav Hristov (United Kingdom: The British Haiku Society, 2024). 157 pages; 6" × 6". Glossy four-colored card covers; perfectbound. ISBN 978-1-906333-21-8. Price: £6.00 from www.britishhaikusociety.org.uk.

An anthology resulting from the collaboration between the British Haiku Society and Bulgarian poets on the subject of light. All haiku in both English and Bulgarian. While we aren't sure how the poets were chosen, the 139 poets are from sixteen countries (not just the U.K and Bulgaria), so a good representation of styles. Editor Hristov notes the ability of haiku to build bridges between communities and hopes they serve as examples to the rest of humanity. A few favorites: *sunrise / the gilded back / of the street dog* (Lyudmila Danova); *our deceased neighbour / her living room light / still on a timer* (Roger Watson); *night fall an angel disguised as a star* (Carita Forslund).

Sunny Uplands, by Anne Elise Burgevin (Winchester, Va.: Red Moon Press, 2024). 102 pages; 4¼" × 6½". Glossy four-color card covers; perfectbound. ISBN 978-1-958408-53-7. Price: \$20.00 from www.redmoonpress.com

The second collection from Burgevin is a wonderful spell. It is a collection best read slowly, to enjoy the language Burgevin employs. Note the repeated w's and h's in *windswept hills / a wooden pin holds / her twist of hair*. Or her use of "kiting" in *cool morning / the only cloud / a kiting osprey*. And others play with the "rules" of haiku, as in: *morning sun / the lengthening spine / of spring*. It is a joy to follow Burgevin through her paces. A fine outing. *hand sewing / a sky blue quilt / evening rain; long way home / a girl's pockets / full of weeds*.

Glimmering Hour: Haiku Northwest 35th Anniversary Anthology, eds. Connie Hutchison, C.R. Manley, Susan Roberts, R.J. Swanson, and Michael Dylan Welch (Bellevue, Wash.: Haiku Northwest Press, 2024). 153 pages; 6" × 9". Matte four-color card covers; perfectbound. ISBN 978-1-953092-07-6. Price: \$20.00 from online booksellers.

The current anthology celebrates the organization's activities from 2014 (the date of their 25th anniversary anthology) to 2024. The majority of the volume contains haiku by members past and present (seventy-nine of them), most poets presenting several poems, as well as a nice memorial piece on founder Francine Porad by Connie Hutchison. Some favorite poems: *spitting / watermelon seeds at my shadow / summer afternoon* (David Berger); *house by the ocean / for a moment / I live there* (Munira Judith Avinger); *cut chrysanthemums — / a lifetime of cigarettes / in the priest's voice* (R.J. Swanson); *bird feeder empty of seed / even the jays / look for Bernard* (Francine Porad).