

after a day of blasting / for the highway / the songs of frogs. Although all of his poems find the constant creative in the world, later poems flag a bit, and he includes two with overt similes that don't quite work, including the title poem. *if awakened, the mountains / like barons would / surely dance.* Overall, an enjoyable collection.

Off the Main Road: Six Contemporary Haiku Writers, eds. David Jacobs & Andrew Shimield (United Kingdom: Alba Publishing, 2024). 92 pages; 5¾" × 8¼". Matte yellow and black card covers; perfectbound. ISBN 978-1-912773-60-2. Price: £12.00 from www.albapublishing.com

An anthology from a competition in search of haiku talent that has not yet published an individual collection. The organizers set a strict limit of six finalists from the one-hundred fifty submissions. The winners each given a brief bio and space for twenty-four haiku. Not surprising in this day of extensive haiku publishing opportunities—print, online, and competition—most of the names will be familiar. Nice variety in both experience, voice, and style. A favorite from each: *in the bittern hide / the resident bore / unscrews his thermos* (David Weston); *spring stream / she lifts the saree / just enough* (Meera Rehm); *honeymoon over / a padlock rusting on a bridge / in france* (Steve Black); *returning geese / a few more pebbles / on her headstone* (John Pappas); *ice cream truck— / the swing swings / by itself* (Mary Ann Conley); *loan application / the chain / on the bank's pen* (Nick Hoffman).

Milkweed: Selected Haiku & Senryu Alexis Rotella, eds. Randy & Shirley Brooks (Taylorville, Ill.: Brooks Books, 2024). 156 pages; 6¼" × 9¼". Matte four-color card covers; Hardcover. ISBN 978-1-929820-30-5. Price: \$30.00 from www.brooksbookshaiku.com

Rotella has been a steady presence in English-Language haiku and senryu for nearly fifty years, serving as HSA President, *Frogpond* editor, and honorary curator of the American Haiku Archive ... to name but a few

important roles she has played. However, her greatest role has been that of poet, and we are grateful to Brooks Books for bringing out this career (until now) retrospective. Rotella has often been labeled a writer of psychological haiku and senryu, indeed she was one of the first to write haiku that focused on interpersonal relationships (see her wonderful 1984 collection, *After the Affair*) and much of her work is in this vein, but such labels mask the wider range of her work. The poems are arranged, with a few exceptions, in order of publication. This reader would have liked further context concerning this arrangement, such as year of publication or collection name, or both, to better illustrate the timeline of Rotella's long haiku career. Like most writers, Rotella has over the years revised some of her previously published work; these and new edits were made on the poems in *Milkweed*. While Rotella has worked in other forms, such as tanka, haibun, and haiga, the current volume only contains her haiku and senryu. A good chance to revisit her large corpus, including both the classics and lesser knowns. *Late August / I bring him the garden / in my skirt; Posing seductively / under the lilac / my mother at my age*. Recommended.