

AMERICAN HAIKU

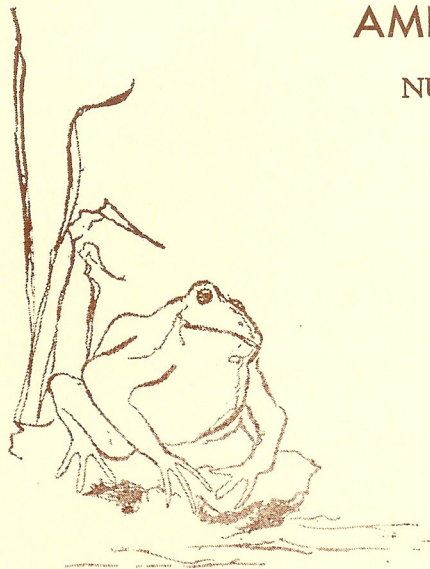


number one
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AMERICAN HAIKU

NUMBER 1

EDITORS
James Bull
Donald Eulert



AMERICAN HAIKU is published semi-annually by American Haiku, P. O. Box 73, Platteville, Wisconsin. Regular subscription \$2.00 yearly U. S. and Canada, \$3.50 foreign. Library subscription \$3.00. Manuscripts cannot be returned unless accompanied by stamped, self-addressed envelope. Copyright© 1963 by James Bull and Donald Eulert. Printed by Union Printing Co., Dubuque, Iowa.

Dedication--

The first issue of AMERICAN HAIKU is dedicated to Harold G. Henderson, whose aid we solicited and whose encouragement we value. Mr. Henderson's works, including BAMBOO BROOM and INTRODUCTION TO HAIKU, provided impetus for the editors in founding AMERICAN HAIKU magazine. Moreover, we are in general accord with Mr. Henderson's views about haiku in English, as he expresses them in the following note . . .

DEAR MESSRS. BULL AND EULERT:

Your letter announcing AMERICAN HAIKU has just reached me. First of all, let me thank you for sending it. Second, I want to let you know that it has got me thoroughly excited. I want to get up on my hind legs—or front legs, for that matter—and cheer!

I have come up against some of your problems—and so far have been frustrated in trying to find the answers. In the past few years, literally thousands of (so-called) “haiku” have been sent to me. As you can well imagine, most of them have been hopeless junk. But every so often a gleam of pure light has come through. (The question has been how to see that this *real* stuff should not be lost).

A lot of the poems sent to me are didactic. By this I mean that they are purely logical statements (or questions), which *may* have arisen out of a genuinely felt emotion, but which do not make the reader (or hearer) *share* in that emotion any more than prose would. They are not poems, whatever the form.

Even worse, it seems to me, is the fetish that a haiku *must* be 5-7-5. It makes some sense in Japanese, where every syllable ends with a vowel (or a nasal “n” sound, which counts as a syllable in haiku), and all vowels are short, “long” vowels being counted as *two* syllables. But Basho, Buson, et. al. did not feel they had to stick to it. And in English! No! To me 5-7-5 is a good norm, but not a

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Procrustean bed on which a poem must be made to fit--and tortured to death if necessary! I do think 5-7-5, "seasonal" reference, "internal comparison," etc., etc.--all Japanese conventions—can well help in putting across a genuine emotion (even--or perhaps especially—if it is a minor emotion). But I don't think they are absolutely necessary. The one standard that seems to me important is that haiku, be starting-points for trains of thoughts and emotions (That is too didactic, and cannot be taken literally).

To sum up. My point is that there was—and is—real validity in most of the Japanese criteria, BUT, that they do not necessarily apply to English haiku.

If there is to be a real "American Haiku" we must—by trial and error—work out our own standards. Perhaps in some future edition of AMERICAN HAIKU you would let me pontificate further. I would not expect—or want—everybody to agree with me. But I do believe that one of the great functions AMERICAN HAIKU could perform is that of being a forum for the expression of divergent opinions.

In any case, I look forward to the day when "First Published in AMERICAN HAIKU" will be an accolade of honor to our haiku poets.

Yours, most cordially,
Harold G. Henderson

Index

Author	Pages
Bruce J. Anderson	8
Frank Ankenbrand, Jr.	7, 8, 9, 10
Ahmad Azarmi	10
Juliet M. Baran	10, 11
Susan Barris	12
Nash Basom	12
Madeleine F. Bennett	12, 13, 14
Norma E. Bentley	14
Dwain Berggren	14
Friar Melaine Berkemeier, O.F.M.	15
Lawrence Block	15
Tom Bolling	15
Peter Brennan	16
Sister Mary Alan Burke, R.S.M.	16
Alyce Cathey	16
Sister Maryanna Childs, O.P.	17
Patricia Currie	17
Mary Dragonetti	17
Cornelia P. Draves	18, 19
Alf Dunfore	19

Author	Pages
Willis Eberman	19
Amy Bissett England	20
Harvey Firari	20
Becky A. Frazier	21
Larry Gates	22, 23, 24
Morgan Gibson	24
Madelyn Gloge	24
H. Bernard Goldberg	25, 26
Joan Goldstein	26
R. H. Grenville	26
Zelda Crocker Griffin	27
Loren Gruber	27
Louise Gunn	28
J. W. Hackett	6, 28, 29, 30
Robert Davis Harris, Jr.	31
Myrtle Marguerite Hatfield	31
James Hawley	31, 32
H. H.	32
Paul Hopper	32
Coralie Howard	32, 33

Index

Author	Pages
Catherine Hubbell	33
Robert W. Hull	34
Charles Jaquette	34
S. E. Johnson	34
Douglas Jory	35
A. E. Judd	35
Edan Keane	35
Dennis Kennedy	36
Chris Kirchner	36
James Kritzeck	36
Elaine Kruchten	36
Keo Felker Lazarus	37
Ben Harris McClary	37
Barbara Malan McLean	38
Allison Parry	38
Jack Patnode	38, 39
Roimor	40
Archie Rosenhouse	40
Keith Rotewell	40
Donald Rothman	41
Thomas Rountree	41
Katherine Saunders	42

Author	Pages
Elizabeth W. Schmitt	42, 43
R. J. Schoeck	43
Betty Schrom	43, 44
Mike Seliger	44
Charles Shaw	44, 45
Margaret E. Singleton	45
Eve Smith	46
Daniel Smythe	46
O M B Southard	7, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52
Keith Spellum	52
Robert C. Steensma	53
Jack Swenson	53, 54, 55
Lucia Trent	55
Ulrich Troubetzkoy	56
Nicholas A. Virgilio	56
T. Mike Walker	56
James E. Warren	57
Mary Lou Wells	57, 58
Veris Wessel	58
E. G. White	59
Stella Whittlemore	59

Awards

The editors are pleased to present the following three haiku, which we have judged to be the best entries in competition of original haiku in English—as entered in the contest held by AMERICAN HAIKU magazine and ending December 20, 1962. The cash awards were \$35.00, \$15.00, and \$5.00 for first, second and third.

First

Searching on the wind,
the hawk's cry
is the shape of its beak.

—J. W. Hackett

Second

In the garden pool,
dark and still, a stepping-stone
releases the moon.

—O M B Southard

Third

Crunch, crunch, crunch, hungry
winter is snapping at my
footsteps in the snow.

—Frank Ankenbrand, Jr.

New cut grass . . .

a hose is turned on —
smell of wet boys.

—Bruce J. Anderson.

Good friends

climbing down a mountain . . .
then the old path.

—Bruce J. Anderson.



Tonight, the sunset is
gathered in a ball,
hanging in that tree.

—Bruce J. Anderson.

See empty shell of
lowly snail. It seems carved
from a piece of hail.

—Frank Ankenbrand, Jr.

Stretching its shadow
is all the exercise this
tall elm receives.

—Frank Ankenbrand, Jr.

The hail beats on the
brown thatch, and a cricket sings . . .
my heart skips a beat.

—Frank Ankenbrand, Jr.

This brave plum tree shakes
its fisty buds at retreating
bullying winter.

—Frank Ankenbrand, Jr.



Tadpoles are all a swirl . . .
thread them on a spring wind—
a pond's black pearls.

—Frank Ankenbrand, Jr.

There is a car parked down
in the bushes with two heads in it.
Spring is there . . .

—Ahmad Azarmi.



Through the wide-thrown gate
he comes home. Orange blossoms
die on the table.

—Juliet M. Baran.

The boy by the gate
is waiting for me. The tulips
are early this year.

—Juliet M. Baran.

Look! The woods turn green,
and time goes on
though you are dead a week.

—Juliet M. Baran.

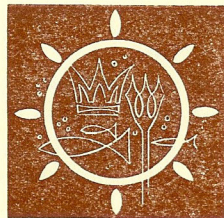
A million lovely
things outside call to me, but
I shall wash your clothes.

—Juliet M. Baran.



Hands clasped at night
under a handmade quilt,
are glad it's winter.

—Juliet M. Baran.



Together on a damp
bench. Protected. We listened
to the boats talk.

—Susan Barris.

Heavy morning mist
shrouds dim rows of gray tombstones,
each its own grave's ghost.

—Nash Basom.



Sweet acorns,
groves scent the air;
look for a puddle
to see if it still rains.

—Madeleine F. Bennett.

Sounds of the still night—
cricket and fog-horn and
touch of my husband's breath.

—Madeleine F. Bennett.

Fierce mum lions
your manes have been matted
and tamed by the rain.

—Madeleine F. Bennett.

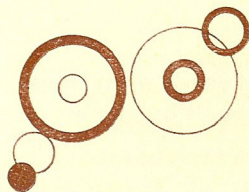
The attic—
a dusty tricycle.
My child
has children of his own.

—Madeleine F. Bennett.



Father is an old man now.
Never before
did he seem that way to me.

—Madeleine F. Bennett.



Ah moon!

You are the first golden orange
on the youngest of our trees.

—Madeleine F. Bennett.

The mist disperses—

beyond the spruce: mountains, lake—
a bass leaps, gleaming.

—Norma E. Bentley.

Lovers

Blest

With last year's worn straw—
The sparrows build their nest.

—Dwain Berggren.



Cicadas

Children's voices

Fountain waters

Rise and fall

Rise and

fall.

—Dwain Berggren.

When brooks begin to freeze
I'll send my love to you
with tiger lilies.

—Friar Melaine Berkemeler, O.F.M.

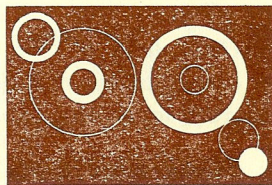
Fast on the way home
we pause before the mountain
to look one last time.

—Lawrence Block.



Violets started
blue along the wall, and now
they cover the yard.

—Tom Bolling.



Chimney smoke melting
into a snow flake sky,
in bed two day light-lovers lie.

—Peter Brennan.

From heaven's hive the
white bees swarm to sting and leave
frozen honey—snow.

—Sister Mary Alan Burke, R.S.M.



As fishermen sleep
their nets lie still on old rocks—
seagulls sound and sweep.

—Alyce Cathey.

Little boys with rocks
are hitting gulls and small girls
with sand in their socks.

—Alyce Cathey.

Strangely in the sky
red and gold chrysanthemums
bud, blossom, and die.

—Sister Maryanna Childs, O.P.

Night and temple bells . . .
stone god high above the square . . .
now . . . glittering snow.

—Patricia Currie.

Across the drying grasses
the footsteps
of a scarecrow passing.

—Mary Dragonetti.



Night licks bare mountain
top, swallowing man and hut
in one greedy gulp.

—Cornelia P. Draves.

This a dogwood year
blossoms open to the sun . . .
sparrows feeding there.

—Cornelia P. Draves.



Summer sun and moon
oh summer sun and moon, come . . .
ashes to the wind . . .

—Cornelia P. Draves.

The purple hour creeps
over tree-scrubbed mountain where
purple flowers cling.

—Cornelia P. Draves.

In this path . . . see,
nine, ten, eleven snow flakes
flash small moons at me!

—Alf Dunfore.

Big gold-button moon.
Why of course that's what you are . . .
button in the sky.

—Cornelia P. Draves.



Against the white screen
a shadow falls.—
Your ghost returns?

—Willis Eberman.



White butterfly sails
dipping, rising near the rim
of the bay's blue bowl.

—Amy Bissett England.

In the heather land
one town clock plays a Burns air
every day at noon.

—Amy Bissett England.



Into the bright pan
of my new day—
rancid bacon.

—Harvey Firari.

In the cold and snow
my dog awaits the coming
of spring and maggots.

—Harvey Firari.

A lone cup on the shelf
tries to recall how . . .
the saucer was broken.

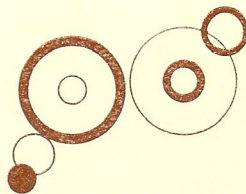
—Becky A. Frazier.

Bits of broken glass . . .
imitation stars, sparkle
sharply in the grass.

—Becky A. Frazier.

Memories of childhood . . .
a doll with one arm,
an unkept diary.

—Becky A. Frazier.



Fickle damsel-fly
come back to my fishing-pole
I won't shake you off.

—Larry Gates.

Winter explosion:
a firecracker elm tree pops
spraying cold sparrows.

—Larry Gates.



Ice-coated and stiff
the pipe-organ maple tree
whistles in C-sharp.

—Larry Gates.

Fretful butterfly
jerks . . . jerks its jagged-edged fans
but stays on the fence.

—Larry Gates.

Milkweed pods laugh so
hard from the feathers inside
their sides split open.

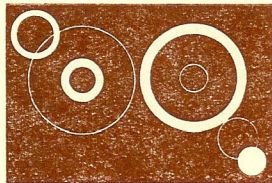
—Larry Gates.

Regal cicadas
wrapped in veined transparent cloaks
rave . . . little King Lear!

—Larry Gates.

No one ever told
the robins it was still cold,
so they started spring.

—Larry Gates.



Cottonwood leaves shake
long after other trees think
that the wind has stopped.

—Larry Gates.

Kids and birds know it's
just in mud-puddles and the sky
that rainbows occur.

—Larry Gates.



Swinging in the night wind
against these coppery leaves:
pendulums of rain.

—Morgan Gibson.

Now the breath of night
blows on sleeping buds; listen . . .
crickets are calling.

—Madelyn Gloge.

Ach! Ach! Ach-hoo!
Into the moon the owls plunge
in the midst of night.

—H. Bernard Goldberg.

The coffin lowered,
the fine polish of its wood
looks dimmer now.

—H. Bernard Goldberg.



Looking up, I
see the hazy cup of sky
turn with the sea.

—H. Bernard Goldberg.



Suddenly I see
shadows flapping on a wall
and know it is fall.

—H. Bernard Goldberg.

Summer stamped her feet
in the doorway and kicked night
out of her loud path.

—Joan Goldstein.



Whisper of spring rain—
waking, I thought I heard
your voice again.

—R. H. Grenville

Snow on the temple roof,
and in the busy market-place
snow also.

—R. H. Grenville

How sadly this hand
builds the could-have-been castles
in memory sand.

—Zelda Crocker Griffin.

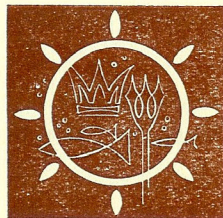
Sorrow in her face
looking at the water lilies
floating in one place.

—Zelda Crocker Griffin.



Bathers sniff the sun
and baste themselves
lobster-brown.

—Loren Gruber.



Autumn strips away
camouflage of leaves . . . bare boughs
write truth on sky-boards.

—Louise Gunn.

Autumn evening . . .
the weight and shape of this moment,
is a distant bell.

—J. W. Hackett.



A tiny spider
has begun to confiscate
this cup's emptiness.

—J. W. Hackett.

While squatting,
the puppy diverts herself
by smelling flowers.

—J. W. Hackett.

A distant dog
is adding another shade of gray
to the morning.

—J. W. Hackett.

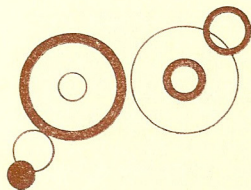
Bitter morning:
sparrows sitting
without necks.

—J. W. Hackett.



Come! See how fresh snow
has silenced every edge
of this moonlit night.

—J. W. Hackett.



The fleeing sandpipers
turn about suddenly
and chase back the sea!

—J. W. Hackett.

Snail may creep his way,
but see how he binds with silver
each moment he leaves.

—J. W. Hackett.



A single cricket
warms the quiet
of this lonely night.

—J. W. Hackett.

City loneliness . . .
dancing with a gusty wind:
yesterday's news.

—J. W. Hackett.

Oh, excuse me please . . .
you looked like a steppingstone,
Mr. Terrapin!

—Robert Davis Harris, Jr.

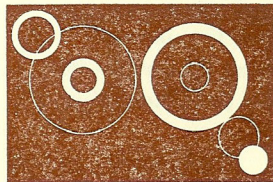
By the empty farm
old weeping willows whisper
to the wind, the ground.

—Myrtle Marguerite Hatfield.



On a dusty road
three old women haggling—
and in the dust, a toad.

—James Hawley.



Along the edges
of our winding roads snowplows
build winter's hedges.

—James Hawley.

Lone whippoorwill call;
my spring love waited—till dark,
but that was all.

—H. H.



Stand near the narrows,
watching the stream flow past you:
sand in an hourglass.

—Paul Hopper.

Small winds are sifting
snow powder patterns over
stolid gray asphalt.

—Coralie Howard.

Giant metal beetles
lined up in raucous protest
at their stalled brother.

—Coralie Howard.

Cruising at sixty
scanning parallel white lines—
some dead matted thing.

—Coralie Howard.



City stone, city sky:
one rain-fragrant tree calling
"Here am I!"

—Catherine Hubbell.



Wedding confetti . . .
heaven and earth are married
by this snowy rice.

—Robert W. Hull.

Gray snow settles on
silent cars, crushed and broken,
in the wrecking yard.

—Charles Jaquette.



The pale, white snow comes.
Sh—listen. Can you hear it?
Can you—it goes plop!

—S. E. Johnson.

Leaves slowly falling,
small leaves sing songs of sorrow.
Little girl smiling.

—S. E. Johnson.

Up in the wind they
fly far into the dark night—
swift wild geese in flight.

—Douglas Jory.

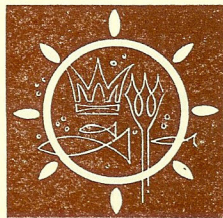
Moving now and then,
beside the road, these yuccas,
like armed highwaymen.

—A. E. Judd.



Yesterday I rode
through today's hazy tunnel
dreaming tomorrow.

—Edan Keane.



The frozen night is silent,
there is no answer
to my lonely call.

—Dennis Kennedy.

Along mudded lanes,
shivering in purple hoods—
violets in rain.

—Chris Kirchner.



A small waterfall
yet this great band of fireflies
chooses to light here.

—James Kritzeck.

A stone
sired and weathered by eons
passes time in my garden.

—Elaine Kruchten.

Lusterless on the dry sand
the shells from last tide.
We pick those glowing in the ebb.

—Keo Felker Lazarus.

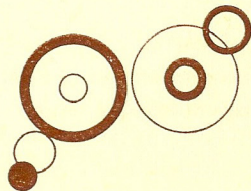
Leaves skirling the air,
blurring brown the gutters—
pull the wind to bed protesting.

—Keo Felker Lazarus.



On the cold gray slate
a green caterpillar met
multicolored fate.

—Ben Harris McClary.



Who knows what the goose cries
as he soars straight
through many-sattelited skies?

—Barbara Malan McLean.

Fireflies signal me;
if I had a small lantern
I would answer them!

—Allison Parry.



White plumeria
floating on a troubled pool
are your quiet hands.

—Allison Parry.

The old poet sits
counting his words while the boy
runs in the warm wind.

—Jack Patnode.

Morning stands at ten
and the high rooster now sits
at the hen's door.

—Jack Patnode.

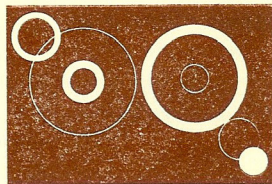
The pond scum is blood
and the golden trees are brass and stone
when the sun goes down.

—Jack Patnode.



Cold water rimming
her white ankles, the girl catches
her hair in a scarf.

—Jack Patnode.



Hip high in white snow,
wee dog wends way to tall tree.
Margaret attached.

—Roimor.

At noon school-lawn bursts
into flower-garden bloom—
gay girls, daffodils.

—Archie Rosenhouse.



The round frigid moon
discovered in a street puddle—
so near and so far.

—Archie Rosenhouse.

In the garden,
thistledown on snow—
blossoms where they go.

—Keith Rotewell.

A single flower
and inevitably
there is the bee.

—Donald Rothman.

I loved a soft girl,
she gave to me a rock,
I love its hardness.

—Donald Rothman.



On the weathered shelf
a self-cleaned cat in autumn
curls around itself.

—Thomas Rountree.



Brave chrysanthemum
is dusted with the light snow—
white frost on sunshine.

—Katherine Saunders.

Sleek bluejay cries, "Mine!"
All the cherries in the tree
have reddened for him.

—Katherine Saunders.



Down long rows of beans,
the garden fire-flies guide me
and my water pail.

—Elizabeth W. Schmitt.

Though she still sits and
looks at me, my wife has fled
into her shadow.

—Elizabeth W. Schmitt.

In spring dusk, I saw
five snow-white bloodroot petals
burst from stem, and fall.

—Elizabeth W. Schmitt.

Stay quietly there,
against the moon where you are:
I shall bring you stars.

—R. J. Schoeck.

Wind exercises trees
as they do their bends
and stretches.

—Betty Schrom.



Thunderstorms —
coda
of a summer day.

—Betty Schrom.

On its long journey
dark wings blot out a moonbeam.
Brief, black on silver.

—Mike Seliger.



The night's a circus
and just above the house tops
a clown's round face grins.

—Charles Shaw.

Tonight the moon is
an ivory tambourine.
The stars make skysong.

—Charles Shaw.

Tenement washing,
lacing backwater backyards,
sings in polychrome.

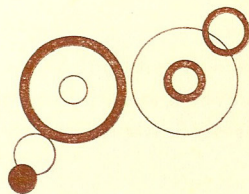
—Charles Shaw.

Splintering the night,
you moo away the hours.
Old cow of the sea.

—Charles Shaw.

Feathered bit of sky
lightly lands and hops on grass.
Cloud hides hole in blue.

—Margaret E. Singleton.



Black cloud overhead
grows beyond the farthest blue,
then spills its burden.

—Eve Smith.

The yearning flutter
of wings upon my window—
they, too, want the light.

—Daniel Smythe.



Look at this green bough
that waves a friendly season—
no stop-lights here!

—Daniel Smythe.

Venus moves its feet
into the wave; shoes of flame
walk to the islands.

—Daniel Smythe.

A bar of iron—
upon the old wall, it throws
so soft a shadow!

—O M B Southard.

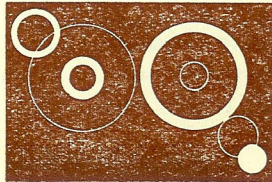
At the windowpane,
sleet; and here in the dark house—
a ticking of clocks.

—O M B Southard.



Dropping its burden
of snow, the pine-branch springs up—
and out flies a crow!

—O M B Southard.



Now the leaves are still—
and only the mockingbird
lets the moonlight through!

—O M B Southard.

Spring rain: on the old
maple, the sugar-bucket
full of clear water.

—O M B Southard.



A rubbing of boughs . . .
but only the near . . . can hear
the cedars creaking.

—O M B Southard.

Bearing its last gifts
the ancient tree: a small leaf
and a large apple.

—O M B Southard.

Moonlight: up they loom
from the dark water—the posts
of the rotting pier.

—O M B Southard.

On a leaf, a leaf
is casting a green shadow—
and the tree-frog sings!

—O M B Southard.



Into a wave, out—
and into the next, and out—
a school of porpoise.

—O M B Southard.



One breaker crashes;
as the next draws up, a lull—
and sandpiper-cries.

—O M B Southard.

Gone the house—and gone
the gate: and still the catbird
recalls its creaking.

—O M B Southard.



Company tonight!
Chirping from the window-sill
a pair of crickets.

—O M B Southard.

An Eskimo grave;
beneath the leaning timbers
a kayak paddle.

—O M B Southard.

Under the souging
pines, you can hear the brook—if
you do not listen!

—O M B Southard.

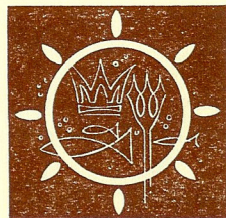
Fluttering the vine
the night wind: under the moon
a watermelon.

—O M B Southard.



Morning: through mist-shreds
that rise from the lake, the cry
of a distant loon.

—O M B Southard.



On the lake the breeze
dies away; once more the hills
rest upon the clouds.

—O M B Southard.

On the beach the trail
of a cow; here a hoofprint
full of sea-water.

—O M B Southard.



Moonlight leaves no trace
entering dark water: fish
splash ripples my face.

—Keith Spillum.

Between charred rafters,
willow shadows sweep the hearth:
gray ash lies still.

—Keith Spillum.

Come, my beloved,
let us watch the silver moon
bathe the black mountain.

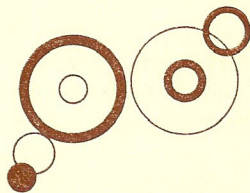
—Robert C. Steensma.

A bluejay's complaint
shrills against a deaf world
And a cheerful wren.

—Robert C. Steensma.

After summer heat,
busy people—quietly!
—on the city street.

—Jack Swenson.



How the welder's spark gleams!
—side-by-side the sun,
high among the beams.

—Jack Swenson.

As autumn leaves fall,
playing in them, a pup,
with a child's rag ball . . .

—Jack Swenson.



Raking leaves, thinking.
Suddenly, a sleepy frog
—blinking!

—Jack Swenson.

A red neon light.
It, too, is shivering, this
wet October night.

—Jack Swenson.

Sunset, moonrise—
silently across my path
a single mallard flies.

—Jack Swenson.

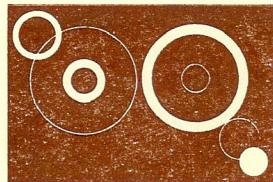
In the window's frame,
children struck by thunder grow
silent in the rain.

—Jack Swenson.



The old love the spring.
They watch her young wistfulness
with sad, wintry eyes.

—Lucia Trent.



The moon is too high
to reach on tiptoe—a balloon
some boy set free?

—Ulrich Troubetzkoy.

Spring wind frees
the full moon tangled
in leafless trees.

—Nicholas A. Virgilio.



Two broken sparrows,
fallen like garbage on grass.
My daughter skips, sings!

—T. Mike Walker.

A balalaika!
Three cornered tune spinning snow—
drunk in the grass again, love.

—T. Mike Walker.

Sad with heat, they bend,
brooding, trying to recall
ice and wintry wind.

—James E. Warren.

Eagerly they go,
fluttering from bloom to bloom,
asking, "What is snow?"

—James E. Warren.

Trees for an awning,
country mailbox; someone's hand
has left you yawning—.

—Mary Lou Wells.



On long ago farms
cakes of salt licked to nothing
by the livestock there.

—Mary Lou Wells.

Spring flowers, ho!
Capped and shivering, quite surprised
by April Fool snow!

—Mary Lou Wells.



My child has brown eyes
darker than the rich, brown fields
that keep his father.

—Veris Wessel.

When my husband snores
like an old bull frog, I pray
the dark to croak him.

—Veris Wessel.

Above the roof-peak
a silently gliding crow—
ah, dark bird, dark sky!

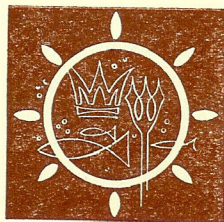
—E. G. White.

Hearing autumn thunder,
the dragonfly taps his head
at my lighted window.

—Stella Whittlemore.

While we talked, see,
the moon escaped
through that small tree!

—Stella Whittlemore.



Books Received

TWENTY-FIVE HAIKU. James Kritzeck. (Carolingian Press: Princeton, N. J., 1962).

The first and last of Kritzeck's TWENTY-FIVE frame a wakaesque love poem of twenty-three separate haiku. Several could stand out of context, but all should be read as the story of a love affair—from "I notice Jun-ko across the room" to "Our last season Jun-ko apart." Space doesn't permit printing one of Kritzeck's TWENTY-FIVE, and that's a pity, because the book is limited to fifty copies. A trade edition is needed so that haiku poets might study and appreciate the possibilities open to them with Kritzeck's form—traditional seventeen syllables, but startling and effective arrangement.

PLUM BLOSSOM SCROLLS. Frank Ankenbrand, Jr. (Winward Press: Audubon, N. J., 1962, \$2.75).

With several of the sixty-one leaves of PLUM BLOSSOM SCROLLS, Frank Ankenbrand has experimented, linking haiku together as stanzas in longer poems. In doing so he has produced beautiful poetry, but not haiku. Whether such haiku linkage can be achieved (and still remain haiku) is something else: perhaps Ankenbrand can do it; perhaps another. Ankenbrand's experiments illustrate the effect haiku can have upon American poetry, and in that sense his work is vital. Such poems as "Water Portrait," "Jewel Lanterns," "White as Moonlight," "Water Music," "Shadow Poems," and "Liquid Moon Flowers" bear study.

AMERICAN HAIKU
magazine

...Invites Manuscripts

Manuscripts to be considered for Fall publication and prize awards should be received before August 30. Poems for publication in AMERICAN HAIKU may be accepted from individual subscribers only; they must be original and previously unpublished. Haiku should be typed one to a page and accompanied by return postage if return is desired. Cash awards of \$35.00, \$15.00, and \$5.00 will be made to the best three haiku among those selected for publication in the Fall issue.

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