

AMERICAN HAIKU



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AMERICAN HAIKU

Vol. IV No. 2

EDITOR IN CHARGE OF POETRY
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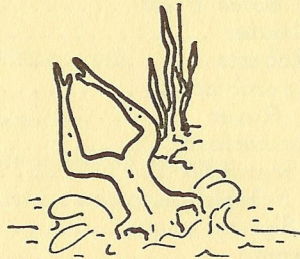
Correction: An editorial error. ZEN
AND BUDDHISM (AH, IV, 1: 24)
should read BUDDHISM AND ZEN.

GUIDE TO HAIKU AWARDS

AMERICAN HAIKU AWARDS. AMERICAN HAIKU magazine, sponsor. \$120.00 per year: divided one award per month, of \$10.00 each, for the haiku judged by the editors to be the best subscriber-haiku submitted during that month. For details, see pages 4 and 63 of this issue of AMERICAN HAIKU. Box 73, Platteville, Wisconsin 53818.

R. H. BLYTH MEMORIAL CONTEST. Leroy Kanterman, sponsor. Awards: 1st—Blyth's 4-vol. HAIKU; 2nd—Blyth's 2-vol. HISTORY OF HAIKU; 3rd—\$5.00. Conditions: original, unpublished haiku; limit of two haiku per poet; SASE for return of mss. Mail entries not later than Feb. 28, 1967, to Leroy Kanterman, 111-15 75th Ave., Forest Hills, N. Y.

NYOGEN SENZAKI MEMORIAL HAIKU AWARD. Clement Hoyt, sponsor. Award: \$25.00 for the best traditional haiku; Open to all poets. For details and conditions governing, write Faye Carr Adams, Corresponding Secretary, Poetry Society of Texas, 4244 Skillman, Dallas, Texas 75206. Enclose stamped, self-addressed envelope for PST awards brochure.



A w a r d s

The editors are pleased to present the following haiku, which have been judged to be the best subscriber-haiku submitted during the months listed. AMERICAN HAIKU cash awards were \$10.00 each. Please note: our printer requires six to eight weeks to produce the magazine; therefore, it is impossible that our awards listing match our publication date. Our next issue (scheduled for early June, 1967) will contain awards for Oct., 1966, through March, 1967.

APRIL, 1966

Looking for my face
in the quiet green water . . .
a white fish-belly.

—Gerald Mueller

MAY, 1966

Shreds of morning mist
vanishing on the hillside
where the shadbush blooms.

—Foster Jewell

JUNE, 1966

Nocturnal seascape—
waves talking along ships' hulls
and squaw-ducks quarreling.

—Phyllis A. Leshner

JULY, 1966

Step after slow step
over breath-holding silence
of fresh-crusted snow.

—Foster Jewell

AUGUST, 1966

The two poplar trees,
slender and tall on the hill—
a gate for the moon.

—John S. Haney

SEPTEMBER, 1966

In the smokery
the silver scaled herring
turns to warmest gold.

—Ga-Go (Travis S. Frosig)

GIVING A HOKKU PARTY

By Clement Hoyt (Tohko)

The hokku party is not only a delightful party to attend, but also a simple party to host, for it has its basis not in the social **obligation**—a computing and settling of social accounts—but in the social **occasion**—a gathering of friends. It is called hokku party, for when I was introduced to it by my teacher, Nyogen Senzaki, the haiku was more generally known as the hokku (The word still means “haiku” to Japanese; it is merely not used as often and is considered an older, nearly obsolete form of the word).

As with all parties, success depends upon the host's selecting the right kind of guests, for when they are invited

all guests are told to write a haiku and to bring it to the party.

If the guests are going to pick out what they consider their best haiku, the party degenerates into the usual poetry reading which can be a stilted, unnatural affair. At any rate, spontaneity is the real spirit of the hokku party and those who dig back in their stock pile come to grief at a hokku party, as will be made plain later. Naturally, each hokku party will differ with each host and hostess but the basic format is as follows.

When all the guests are seated and have finished the greetings and exchanges natural at the beginning of

any gathering, the party starts by one person being asked to read his or her haiku. It is highly recommended that, beforehand, the guests be discouraged from prefacing their readings with explanations of any sort about their haiku. Each guest in turn should stand and read his or her haiku until all those present have been heard. Exclamatory or critical remarks favorable or otherwise should not be allowed between readings.

The whole enjoyment of the hokku party is in the spontaneity and naturalness of haiku that tend to be written on short notice. A certain knowledge of the guests is therefore necessary. The person known to be unable to resist making remarks should not be invited. Such remarks, either favorable or otherwise, stifle the all-important spontaneity of the guests. No comments by the guests are called for, for if the haiku is good, comments

to that effect add nothing to its excellence. If the haiku is not so good, that too is apparent. The fact that it is received just exactly as was the good one leaves not only its author but his listeners much more at ease. Such an atmosphere is conducive to better efforts by everyone later on in the party. Besides, if the guests are chosen correctly, they all know that the writer who composed a good haiku yesterday may easily write an utter failure today.

Following the readings of the haiku brought to the party, pads and pencils are distributed. A short time is set and everyone writes a haiku **on the spot**. By the time these are read in the same way as those prepared beforehand, what I have stated previously becomes apparent. Some of those who had found the dead line of an approaching party date a mental hazard that seemed to freeze their creative ability,

when called upon suddenly, knowing that whatever they write will be accepted in the same way as the work of all the others and that those who had bested them are now at exactly the same disadvantage as they, will surprise both themselves and their fellow guests by coming up with creditable haiku. It will be found that this is often the case, for the person who does well when given a little time seldom can do as much at a moment's notice.

Of course, the success of the hokku party depends on the friendliness and honesty of the guests. If there is someone the host or hostess is certain would arrive carrying up his mental sleeve a prepared second haiku for the on-the-spot writing, do not invite him. A known cheat would never be invited to a card party. The hokku party is not different from any other. The right people, having the right spirit and enjoying each other and each other's

abilities, insure the success of any kind of party.

After the on-the-spot haiku have been read with **no comments** from the listeners, tea and cakes are served and **that is all**. The whole purpose of the party is to **enjoy** writing and listening to haiku, just as the moon-viewing party is for those who enjoy looking at the moon and the flower-viewing party is for those who enjoy looking at flowers. There can be some discussion of the haiku at this point, although it is not recommended unless the guests are **very** well-known to each other. For some reason, people who can calmly accept the vivisection of one of their sonnets become almost homicidal if one of their haiku receives even the slightest cut. And as far as writing haiku in the future is concerned, when people are enjoying a hokku party, the guests will get more good out of writing and listening to

haiku in the midst of an interested, sympathetic group than they will ever get out of any haiku lecture or analysis.

After the tea and cakes the guests might enjoy adapting the method of haikai to haiku. In Japan, haikai was composed by a group of poets seated in a circle very much like the hokku party, except the former was so formal it was, indeed, ritualistic. The first began by composing on the spot what the reader would call a haiku. The second poet composed a poem of two lines, each of seven syllables. It had to be connected to or suggested by the haiku, however tenuously. The third composed a haiku similarly connected to or suggested by the two-line poem of seven syllables each, similarly connected to or suggested by the preceding haiku, and so on. In haikai the rules were very rigid and complicated and I will go no further into

them than this.

At a hokku party which my wife and I gave, we adapted the haikai to chain-haiku. Each haiku, composed extemporaneously, had to be connected, however tenuously, with the one before it. And it had to be done rather rapidly or the effect was lost. Here is where the cheater would have failed completely, for no one had the slightest inkling what the guest before him or her would compose. Each one wrote his haiku in a note book which was passed around by the host. This really called for fast thought. But as everyone at our party entered completely into the spirit of the chain-haiku, the results were better than would have been expected. For one thing, the guests found that the hokku party, ending with extemporaneous chain-verse, developed spontaneity, certainly one of the most desirable qualities in haiku.

Shy piano sounds
sneak across the darkened stage—
the janitor-man!

—Richard L. Admussen

That fat orange goldfish
finning, just slightly moving
—racing a leaf.

—Scott Alexander

9 - 11 by Madeline Beattie

9—

Searching in woodlot
among the sapling birches
—yellow violets!

10—

Snow still keeps falling;
in the new spring catalog
gorgeous zinnias.

11—

Watching stars come out
one by one in the pale dusk
his toy forgotten.

By light of the moon
the scarecrow's shadow reaches
across the cornfield.

—Bertha Bloksberg

Inside for winter,
awkward philodendron stems
lean toward the sun . . .

—Iris O'Neal Bowen



14, 15 by Charline Hayes Brown

14—

Lazy with sunlight,
beneath the pink azaleas
the stretching dog yawns.

15—

Gold stars of sweet gum—
flotsam in the mirrored sky
of the still bayou.

Puffing up the hill
from the ninth hole bubbler tee,
cemetery view.

—Sam Bryan

Curlews and redshanks
choosingly pick their own way
through the tidal pools.

—Scott M. Bushnell

After the deluge,
through these old stone walls it
comes—
honeysuckle bloom.

—Betty Calvert

A new waterfall
scampers freely down the slope . . .
child of summer rain.

—L. Stanley Cheney

20 - 23 by Helen S. Chenoweth

20—

Wave-drenched, the rock
showed centuries of fossils
and one child bathing.

21—

No single blossom
is seen where mustard flowers
cover orchard ground.

22—

Dancing like a gull
over the smooth broad surges—
a small fishnet ball.

23—

Past the shut gates of words—
child swinging slowly,
singing her own song.

In the sudden rain
the bright undersides of leaves
blossom in the wind.

—William Howard Cohen

Boys in sleeping bags
feel the different backyard
that lives in the night.

—Kay Davis

BOOKS RECEIVED

RAISING THE MOON VINES (Calimachus Publishing Co.—Out of print) and SEVENTEEN CHIRPS (Nodin Press: Minneapolis, \$3.50)—both by Gerald Robert Vizenor.

I find VINES to be the better book and to contain proportionately more effective haiku than CHIRPS—perhaps because CHIRPS was published less than a year after VINES and its haiku were written too quickly or were not given enough attention.

Like most haiku poets, Mr. Vizenor is reluctant to get rid of his feebler children; nearly 300 selections in the two books combined are too many progeny. The resulting miscellany ranges from the precious and artificial "It took seventeen chirps/For a sparrow to hop across/My city garden" and the non-intuitive, "intellectual," gnomic "Our youth is gone/

When we worry about sand/Filling our shoes" through numerous simply imagistic poems—often rather staccato in effect (especially in CHIRPS)—"Red sumac/Like bleeding hearts in the fresh snow/Drooping!" up to the haiku "The nails leave lines/On the old morning glory fence/Dripping dew" and "Muddy river/The carp came up one by one/To feel the rain."

In the near future I would like to read another book by Mr. Vizenor, for these two have demonstrated that he has competence and is responsive to the haiku experience, but I would also like to see him develop more nuances or depth or "significance" in his haiku and experiment with (not from) the 5-7-5 form. I believe that the results would surprise and gratify him. (Reviewed by Robert Spiess).

27 - 29 by Carrow De Vries

27—

From a long way off
locust's foamy-green whiteness
is softly humming.

In the swollen stream
carp swim among golden globes
of dandelions.

—August Derleth

28—

From orchard's white bloom
of apple, a steady sound:
far, rushing water.

29—

The green frog's slow chant
a steady, balanced rhythm
one-two one-two one—

30, 31 by Magdalene M. Douglas

30—

Out of the cold fog
three ducks paddle silently;—
dry oak leaves chatter.

31—

Twigs snap underfoot.
Deep in sun-dappled thicket
ears turn and listen.

32, 33 by Cornelia P. Draves

32—

From a sullen sky
gray rain drips the whole day long
muddling the old pond.

33—

On gray-paper sky
grackles score their somber notes,
cry upon black cry.

34 - 36 by Dave Emmons

34—

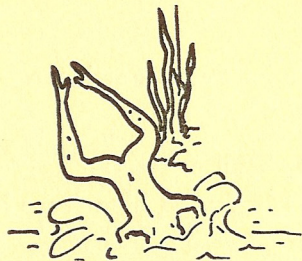
From the tin trough
beneath her nest, a sparrow
chews out passers-by.

35—

With a big grin,
the little boy opens his hand,
shows me a fossil.

36—

With infinite care
my young son ties his shoelace
in a granny knot.



37, 38 by William J. Feeney

37—

Amid this harsh grass
frogs sing a requiem
for a dead river.

38—

Lying between rows
of the drought-shriveled corn field,
a broken arrowhead.

39 - 41 by Susan Forthman

39—

Summer band concert:
a girl in frayed blue jeans hopes
for a baroque piece.

40—

Wabash train . . . a boy
takes his hands off of his ears
and waves from his yard.

41—

In the negative,
the light child and the dark child
have changed places . . .



42, 43 by Margaret M. Gage

42—

Trim, well-pruned rose trees
gossip of dandelions
so soon gone to seed.

43—

From a high cliff top
beach bathers are seen below . . .
scattered confetti.

44 - 47 by Ga - Go (Travis S. Frosig)

44—

At the market
dice, sounding in leather cups,
recall hoofs on cobblestones.

45—

Where the old roof sags
cherry petals fill the bowl
of silvered shingles.

46—

That speck of mica,
stone set, shines like a solitaire
on the rocky shore.

47—

The dragonfly's gone.
His green-bronze sarcophagus
clings to the birch bark.

Scrawled in sprawling strokes
of brown leaves on wet pavement—
Jack Frost's signature.

—David Goldstein

To confuse the wind,
the old man's beard buttoned up
in his ragged coat.

—John S. Haney

50, 51 by Lorraine Ellis Harr

50—

An ogre perhaps?
Old school building swallowing
long lines of children.

51—

The young rooster's voice—
changing in the midst of his
early morning crow.

53 - 55 by Evelyn Tooley Hunt

Dusk! and my shadow
lagging along behind me
lost in the dark.

—Beth LaPointe Heath

53—

Three ragged scarecrows
guard this small patch of
young corn . . .
and one is hoeing.

54—

Summer is waning . . .
like my creaky porch-rocker,
that rusty cricket.

55—

In my garden pool
five golden carp swim their kites
down through the treetops.

CONCERNING THE HERON'S LEGS

With the publication of **THE HERON'S LEGS** by Robert Spiess, American Haiku presents a book of haiku by its chief poetry editor.

We are delighted with the praise it has received from readers, reviewers and poets—particularly poets.

Our faithful subscribers know that the policy of **AMERICAN HAIKU** is not to publish the haiku of its editors while they are serving as editors. Robert Spiess has served as a poetry editor for over two years; consequently, his haiku have been unavailable to our readers.

Read **THE HERON'S LEGS** and you will know that Robert Spiess is one of the finest English-language haiku poets. Read **THE HERON'S**

LEGS and discover why Robert Spiess is the chief poetry editor of **AMERICAN HAIKU**.

THE HERON'S LEGS are supported by no technical crutches: no definitions, no credos, no dogmatic rules for writing haiku—just haiku—some of the best you will ever read; the kind you will want to reread, to listen to, to absorb, to live with.

THE HERON'S LEGS: distinctively designed; printed by letterpress on quality paper; bound by hand in cord; limited to 335 numbered copies in the first edition; designed as an ideal gift; destined to become a collector's item.

THE HERON'S LEGS is available at \$3.00 per copy from the publisher, American Haiku Press, Box 73, Platteville, Wisconsin, 53818.

Astonished by rain,
two apricot thieves confer
on my aerial.

—Aileen R. Jaffa

The summer rain plops;
and up jump the rain lilies
in frilly pink frocks.

—Jay Gee (Johanna Gravel)

58 - 62 by Foster Jewell

58—

Hushed, the garden pond—
surely two, of all these bubbles,
are ogling me?

59—

Sea gulls complaining
with the intermittent creak
of the gill net reels.

60—

Vines shroud the old pump;
from the marsh, bitterns bring back
the ghost of a sound.

61—

Where smoking combers
curl above the outer reef,
old seamen sail their pipes.

62—

Library silence
when a pencil point snaps
and strangers exchange smiles.

Smog lies on the town.
The water tower alone
stands crowned in silver.

—K. W. Johnsgard

64, 65 by K. W. Johnsgard

64—

The hill crest explodes:
eight bouncing spring lambs pour
down
like a waterfall.

65—

Playing at each end
of that length of yellow yarn—
kitten and little girl.

66 - 68 by Robert N. Johnson

66—

A summer shower—
soaking the brown button
in the sunflower.

67—

This year's scrub oak—
stems splitting into leaves,
leaves into lobes.

68—

New-fallen logs
fit every which-a-way
in the black millpond.

Eerie evening glow:
circling the mulberry tree,
pale green luna moths.

—Leroy Kanterman

Recorder players—
intent on making gay notes,
blow, rest, breathe—as one.

—Louise A. Kaufmann

71, 72 by Walter H. Kerr

71—

A sweet air buzzes
among the bones of my ear,
tracing white blossoms.

72—

Spinning with maggots,
mad eyes of a dead rabbit
orbit the sun.

74—

Struggling through snowdrifts
driven by howling wind—then!—
the lost calf bawling.

73, 74 by Gustave Keyser

73—

That scarecrow will fall
leaning forward for his hat
blown off by the gale!

Sitting on the pier—
quiet, impressive lifeguards . . .
two old pelicans.

—Albert Scofield Knorr

A SHORT HISTORY OF THE HAIKU IN ENGLISH

By Gary Brower

The principal Western languages into which the Japanese haiku has been adopted and adapted are five: French, Spanish, Portuguese, German and English. The English-language cultural tradition not only assimilated the form but also gradually developed the widest interest and usage of any occidental literature.

Regardless of the original impetus, each of the above languages and literatures traversed three stages in assimilating haiku: an initial superficial (often "Art for Art's sake") stage of exotic interest; a period of form experimentation by **avant-garde** movements; and a more mature phase of serious inquiry and adaptation by

academicians, critics and interested poets.

These three developmental stages of haiku in Western poetry began in France with an exhibition of Japanese art in Paris in 1841. French artists were stunned by the **ukiyo-e** prints and soon manifested their influence. From the world of painting an interest in oriental themes spread to both prose and poetry. In 1871, Leon de Rosny published his **ANTHOLOGIE JAPONAISE** which later became influential but at the time was little noticed. And in 1885, Judith Gautier published her **POEMES DE LA LIBELLULE**. It was not until the advent of a new century that the exoticist phase began to di-

minish with serious attempts to write haiku in French. Primary examples are **AU FIL DE L'EAU** (1905), **EPIGRAMMES LYRIQUES DU JAPON** (1906) and **SAGES ET POETES D'ASIE** (1917) by Paul Louis Couchoud, A. Poncin and Julien Vocance.

Meanwhile, an interest in Japanese literature had been evolving in England, based on influences of French exoticism and the translations and studies of a group of scholarly orientalists. The most famous among them were W. G. Aston and Basil Hall Chamberlain. The latter's book **JAPANESE POETRY** (1910) laid the groundwork for later studies. Probably the most fertile year of this early period of English-language haiku was 1915. In that year, Yone Noguchi published the highly influential **SPIRIT OF JAPANESE POETRY**. The exo-

ticist Lafcadio Hearn published his translations of haiku under the title of **JAPANESE LYRICS**. Adelaide Crapsey introduced the tanka-like cinquain and the Anglo-American Imagists appeared on the literary scene.

The Imagist group attempted to introduce the haiku into English as a serious verse form, though they failed to understand the significance and techniques which could be attained in the Japanese version. The major poets of the movement were Amy Lowell, Ezra Pound, John Gould Fletcher, Richard Aldington, T. E. Hulme and F. S. Flint. Imagism can perhaps be called a transition movement in the history of English-language haiku, for it included both **avant-garde** and exoticist tendencies. Fletcher, in his **JAPANESE PRINTS** (1918), and Amy Lowell, with her "Twenty-four Hokku On A Modern Theme" (**WHAT'S O'CLOCK**, 1925), represented the

exotic side of Imagism as has been pointed out by James Baird (See: J. Baird, "Critical Problems in Orientalism of Western Poetry," **ASIA AND THE HUMANITIES**, Bloomington, Indiana, 1959). Ezra Pound, however, declared Imagism to be a poetic appendage of the **avant-garde** movement which he called Vorticism. The major preoccupation of the group was also vanguardist: a renovation of English and American poetry based on the haiku, the image and free verse. Before its demise, Imagism popularized the haiku. But due to the Imagists' deficient understanding of form, the poem which they made known was a weak imitation and led many to dismiss haiku as serious poetry (See: John Gould Fletcher, "The Orient in Contemporary Poetry," **THE ASIAN LEGACY AND AMERICAN LIFE**, New York, 1945, ed. Arthur Christy, pp. 145-175, Al-

so: Glenn Hughes, **IMAGISM AND THE IMAGISTS**, Stanford, Cal., 1931. And: Earl R. Miner, "Pound, Haiku and the Image," **THE HUDSON REVIEW**, IX (Winter, 1956-57) pp. 570-584).

The well-disseminated misconceptions regarding haiku which followed in the wake of the Imagists did not die easily and in fact are still being fought in some areas. The serious debunking of these mistaken views began with the publication of Harold Henderson's **THE BAMBOO BROOM** (1933). Later republished as **AN INTRODUCTION TO HAIKU** (1958), it has probably been one of the greatest single weapons against condescending critics and scholars. The works of Donald Keene, which have always included an intelligent treatment of haiku, have also been helpful in this respect.

In the 1950's, experimentation with

haiku came from a new *avant-garde* group, the so-called "beat poets." In contrast with the Imagists, the "beats" understood haiku fairly well. The basis of their interest was Zen Buddhism and perhaps the best known critic associated with the group was Alan Watts. The writings of D. T. Suzuki and R. H. Blyth influenced the "beats" through an interpretation of haiku in the light of Zen experience—an interpretation which has triggered controversy concerning the nature and function of haiku.

In 1957, Kenneth Yasuda published **THE JAPANESE HAIKU** in which he applied the principles of the New Criticism to haiku, combining this view with a strict traditional interpretation of form. The book became widely read and eminently influential.

In the 1950's and 60's a number of new poets began to write and adapt haiku to the English language. Maurice

Schneps, James Kirkup, Paul Reys, J. W. Hackett, O M B Southard, Clement Hoyt, Robert Spiess and Marjory Pratt, not to mention the earlier Yasuda, are some of the poets who have tried their hand at haiku with gratifying results.

It was not until 1963, however, that a periodical appeared which focused the disparate groups interested in haiku and which devoted itself entirely to the form. I refer, of course, to **AMERICAN HAIKU**.

The discussion of the poetics of haiku in English have come to be concentrated in the pages of **AMERICAN HAIKU**. This running debate involves liberal and conservative interpretations of haiku form, technique and essence: is there Zen in haiku? should haiku in English be required to have seventeen syllables? should *kigo* (season words) be included? what linear arrangement should be used? how

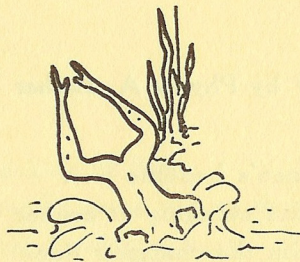
can simile and metaphor be employed if at all? how can English punctuation take the place of *kireji* (cut words)? must rhyme be employed in English-language haiku?

The most recent addition to the discussion of poetics is Harold Henderson's **HAIKU IN ENGLISH** (1965). The work is one of the best aids published for aspiring haiku poets. Particularly interesting is Henderson's identification of certain contemporary poets as continuers of the Basho and Buson "schools" of haiku (pp. 35-37).

The present state of events in the history of English-language haiku is one of intense activity and interest. A popular manifestation of this interest is the recent movement to use haiku in primary and secondary schools to reach the writing of poetry to the young. Although the possibility exists

that haiku can be degraded through misrepresentation in this context, it is a healthy phenomenon.

The haiku came from France to England first and quickly shifted to the United States during the period of the Imagists. Leadership in the area of English-language haiku has remained on this side of the Atlantic. The continuous debate on haiku form in the United States is a sign of maturity and not decadence.



76, 77 by Carol Law

76—

Through the evening mist
 voices of the wild geese
 drift down, dim and gray.

77—

This night of snow:
 a single line of fence posts
 echo the hoot owl.

78, 79 by Phyllis A. Lesher

78—

Fisherman's bedtime . . .
 trollers swinging at anchor
 with the changing tide.

79—

Snow tells a story:
 these small, close tracks grow longer
 and end suddenly!

Clean as a hound's tooth,
this polished, cusped moon—twice-
sharp
October crescent.

—Edith Lodge

Joshua, warped tree
of ancient birth and struggle—
old men doff their hats.

—Mabelle A. Lyon

The little farmer
surveys his tall weeds
with a butterfly net.

—Barbara O. Moraw

Frog looking at frog
in pond's green mirror showing
frog looking at frog.

—Violet M. Parks

84 - 87 by Catherine Neil Paton

84—

Storm signals hoisted!

Black clouds race across the sky:
sea-horses stampede.

85—

It seemed to happen

overnight—the laughing boy
squaring his shoulders.

86—

Hand in cookie jar,

the small boy keeps very still,
planning strategy.

87—

Snared in the branches

of bleached driftwood, sea-wrack
simulating leaves.

88, 89 by Jess Perlman

88—

Small waves somersault
over pebbles, mimicking
furious whitecaps.

89—

Red roses ramble
over wooden stiles and posts
proudly, aimlessly.

90 - 92 by Charlotte C. Philips

90—

Childish lips pucker
a warm spit design across
the old door screening.

91—

The swaying palm trees—
while moonlight pushes whitecaps
to an island shore.

92—

Small nose and warm eyes
press through the frosty window
and gathering dusk.

94—

Listen . . . the crickets.
Once again I am barefoot,
chasing lightning bugs.

93, 94 by Janis Montgomery Pool

93—

How the ocean roars!
. . . beneath little barefeet
the sandy beach squeaks.

A passing shadow:
cliff-hanging, far down a fish
dead upon the sand.

—Claire Pratt

96 - 99 by Marjory Bates Pratt

96—

Bell buoy, whistling buoy,
 rocked back and forth
 by the waves—
 this sound . . . that sound.

97—

The old house crumbles.
 Tendril fingers of nightshade
 push through and enter.

98—

Through the early mist
 no sound from the fisherman
 on the other bank.

99—

The song sparrow's throat
 is ruffled by the March wind
 and by its own trills.

BOOKS RECEIVED

BORROWED WATER. Los Altos Writers Roundtable. (Tuttle: Rutland, Vermont, 1966, \$2.95).

Under the leadership of Helen Chenoweth, the thirteen members of the haiku group of the Los Altos Writers Roundtable have produced a first—the first anthology of English-language haiku by a group of poets. The “Introduction” implies that the group has been writing and studying haiku since 1956, and states that it considers the haiku a “tone poem.”

Attractively illustrated by J. S. and M. B., the book contains 300 poems arranged seasonally, with a miscellaneous section, different colored paper for each season—pink for spring; yellow for summer; green for autumn;

gray for winter; orange for miscellaneous. The format illustrates what Tuttle can do; the text illustrates what a group of women can do in several years of weekly meetings, during which they discuss, criticize and annotate one another's haiku.

There are too many haiku in the collection, of course, but it contains excellent haiku by Hilda Aarons, Margot Bollock, Madeline Beattie, Peggy Card, Helen Chenoweth, Rosemary Jeffords, Barbara Moraw, Violet Parks, Catherine Paton, Ann Rutherford, Joy Shieman, Jerri Spinelli and Georgian Tashjian. All have been published in AMERICAN HAIKU. Look for them in this and previous issues. If you like their work, you will find more in BORROWED WATER.

100 - 105 by Willie Reader

100—

High on the blue rim
of the far hill a goat crops
at the early stars.

101—

Grandfather's boarhound
old and gnarled, wrinkles his nose
at the dying stars.

102—

Light snows of April
melt to a thousand flowers
and songs of whippoorwills.

103—

Buzzards curl like wood smoke
descending backward
to a dying spark.

104—

Deep in the black mud
the old sow lies wallowing—
hugging the earth.

105—

More silken than sly
the red fox rests on the snow—
the red winter snow.

106, 107 by Helen Roberts

106—

Shasta daisies eye
the lizard's shadow, leaping
from the gray stone wall.

107—

Drying to a glaze,
bodies of caribou hang
under covered racks.

108, 109 by Herta Rosenblatt

108—

The big nose, fierce eyes
and wide mouth of the clown just
make the children laugh.

109—

Intent on reading
she ignores the lone stranger
who joins her for lunch.

The early frost's lace
covered the last blossoms
with a crystal shroud.

—Dorthea Royer

Watching eagerly
how his kite takes the wind
a pilot is born.

—Anne Rutherford

112, 113 by Anne Rutherford

112—

A leaf floats by,
resting for a brief moment
on a sandaled foot.

113—

Splash by crested splash,
the battered old can is nudged
along the sea's edge.

The autumn dusk
carried away the whiteness
of the chrysanthemum . . .

—Charles Scanzello



115, 116 by Antonia Schwed

115—

From tall stone buildings,
bright lights and city breath mix
to veil the clear stars.

116—

On the cold pavement
frozen amoebas of spit
sparkle in the sun.

117 - 120 by Charles Shaw

117—

Out of darkness
a miracle of fireflies
spills neon on the night.

118—

Out of memories
a trio of old codgers
weave lie-garnished yarns.

119—

The wee sadpiper
on lightning legs, aflutter,
teases the flood tide.

120—

The old brindled cat
slinks through the new picket fence
as though it were air.

His sermon simple,
skies and trees, nothing formal—
jack-in-the-pulpit.

—Joy Shieman

The aging woman
in the chilly market stall,
proud of being cold.

—Dorothy Cameron Smith

123 - 127 by Marjorie Bertram Smith

123—

A dusty fellow
powdered with the blossom's gold
seeks other riches.

124—

Twilight whippoorwill
wings edged with velvet silence
sweeping up insects.

125—

Camouflaged with snow
now a glistening white rope
the old barbed wire fence.

126—

Rivulets of rain . . .
the path is bright with leaf-fall
under a gray sky.

Another rose blooms . . .
summer lingers till petals
drop on autumn leaves.

Cool autumn woodlands—
children search for black
walnuts . . .
no hungry squirrels.

—Jerri Spinelli

Sides flashing silver!
Dippers' lights by the river
impale wriggling smelt.

—William J. Taylor

Watching from that window . . .
a pillow behind his gray head,
he waits for darkness.

—Dori Thiry

SIMILE AND METAPHOR IN HAIKU

by James Bull

The aesthetic tension between the objects in the poem as well as the aesthetic tension between the objects and the reader of the poem are paramount to the emotional effect of a haiku. Both tensions can be triggered by various techniques, among them simile and metaphor. These figures of speech encompass subtleties which cannot be explored here, but at base metaphor is a method of making one object another object and simile is a method of making one object **like** another object.

For example, the poet uses **simile** in

Walking on the track
a bent woman bears a world
shaped **like** a coal sack.
—Paul O. Williams
(AH, III, 2: 54)

The woman's world is circumscribed by the connotations associated with the sack, but her world is not figured as an actual coal sack. So also with Cornelia P. Draves'

Faces **like** wet leaves
glued to the asylum windows
watch the brewing storm.
(AH, II, 2: 5)

The faces are pressed to the windows
like leaves; but they are **not** leaves.

With metaphor, on the other hand,
one object is not **like** another, it **is** another. For example, in

Winter explosion:
a **firecracker elm tree** pops
spraying cold sparrows.
—Larry Gates
(AH, I, 1: 22)

the elm tree explodes, but not **like** a
firecracker; it **is** a firecracker.

On the surface, it seems that in the
haiku metaphor is stronger than simile,
because the haiku is a form which
deals with **things**. For simile deals only
with how one thing is like another,
while metaphor makes one thing another.
Consider Larry Gates'

Ice-coated and stiff
the **pipe-organ maple tree**
whistles in C-sharp.
(AH, I, 1: 22)

The haiku would have been weakened
had the author made the maple tree
like a pipe organ. Through metaphor,
he intensifies the effect of the cold by
making the tree a musical instrument
—a special kind of instrument, whistling
in C-sharp.

This is not to say that every metaphor
is a good metaphor, or that every simile
should be changed to metaphor. Consider
Jack Patnode's

The pond **scum** is **blood**
and the golden **trees** are **brass**
and **stone**
when the sun goes down.
(AH, I, 1: 39)

In this variant (5-9-5), the metaphors are so strained that it is quite obvious that the scum is not blood and that the trees are not brass and stone. Consider also

Like loud fishermen
the redwings in the cattails
wind their ratchet wheels.

—Paul O. Williams
(AH, III, 2: 53)

If one removes the “like”, the redwings become fishermen. In this instance, metaphor would destroy the poem, for redwings never fish.

Yet, from a technical point of view, it often happens that a given haiku can be strengthened by the omission of simile. Lee Eldredge seems to have sensed this in her

On river's black depth
quicksilver moon-fish flicker—
withered leaves at dawn.
(AH, III, 1: 29)

In this instance the poet permits the dash to stand for the “like” comparison, in order to avoid direct statement of simile and to **imply** metaphor through “they are” understood. The device is frequently used by haiku poets, even though the effect, as in this poem, is sometimes strained. Had the poet chosen, Cecile C. Cormier could have omitted the obvious statement of simile in her

Bushes hung with snow
sway to and fro like small ghosts
with no place to go.
(AH, III, 1: 25)

She could have substituted a dash for

"like", thus changing the simile to implied metaphor and intensifying the lonely swaying.

Of course, in every poem, it is the poet's choice to make, not the critic's. And in every case, the poet must decide whether simile or metaphor is best, depending on the emotional effect he wishes to achieve. Consider Walter H. Kerr's 4-6-6 variant,

Through the tree's shade
goes—like a narrow ghost—
the shadow of a bird.
(AH, III, 2: 31)

The base of this poem is "Through the tree's shade/goes the shadow of a bird." Changing "goes" to the second line and adding "like a narrow ghost", the author manages to capture the rhythm of the bird's flight as well as to

indicate the momentary lapse of time involved in the viewer's analysis of the shadow. In deciding to use simile rather than metaphor, the author had to face the problem of **focus**: did he want to concentrate upon the **picture** of the bird's flight, or did he want to concentrate on producing an **emotional tension** between the objects in the poem and the viewer-poet-reader? Certainly the omission of simile and the change to metaphor would have made a strong metaphor, a clearer **picture**:

Through the tree's shade
goes a narrow ghost—
the shadow of a bird.

But in creating a clearer **photographic** picture, the metaphor would have destroyed the emotional tension of the

original. And that tension destroyed, metaphor would not have made the haiku a better poem.

It is not my intention to argue that to be poetic a haiku must or must not utilize figures of speech such as simile or metaphor. My argument is that the very popular method of juxtaposing objects, depending upon the juxtaposi-

tion itself to evoke the emotional response, is not the only avenue open to the haiku writer. If haiku is poetry, and poetry it is, then writers must explore the feasibility of all poetic devices available to them in English. And in the list of possible devices, one must include simile and metaphor.

131, 132 by Donald J. Tickner

131—

In the porch light
here and there raindrops flicker:
a dry stone darkens.

132—

An old man
dancing with his wine glass—
the waitress frowns.

133 - 135 by Tom Tico

133—

A white butterfly
flitters over tiled roof tops
towards spring greenery.

134—

Two homely people
arm in arm on market street
laughing together.

135—

Along this freeway—
an old house and run-down barn
tell of another age.

Father and son
tramping through the rank grass,
take the dew fishing.

—Nicholas A. Virgilio

137 - 142 by Nicholas A. Virgilio

137—

Our Lady's shrine:
a child offers a bouquet
of dandelion.

138—

The first cicada—
sure the town dentist hears it
on the way to work.

139—

My little brother
tells me my birthday is soon:
he saw a firefly.

140—

After the short night . . .
the dew—and the long day
of the dragonfly . . .

141—

The loping squirrel
making waves . . . playing porpoise
through the spray of leaves.

142—

Heat before the storm:
a fly disturbs the quiet
of the empty store.

143, 144 by Irma Wassall

143—

White popcorn blossoms
fall from great catalpa trees
along the roadway.

144—

Not like cool water:
the lake shimmered in the heat
like a bright tin roof.

Pumpkins in the fields
in the moonlight—bright beacons
for geese flying south.

—Margaret Watrous

White hydrangeas
blossom in the summer sun
and in winter's snow.

—Joyce W. Webb



The white, deaf kitten
stares in wonder as the wind
wiggles leaves and grass.

—Mary lou Wells

148, 149 by Mary lou Wells

148—

The new-fallen snow
vies with countless winter stars
—and a quarter moon.

149—

Across the valley
a small red cow seems to hang
on the mountain's side.

A lone fisherman
with a single line is plumbing
the depths of the lake.

—Beverly White

At the door I stamp.
Like scattering flakes of sound,
forty juncos fly.

—Paul O. Williams

152, 153 by Paul O. Williams

152—

Textile factory—

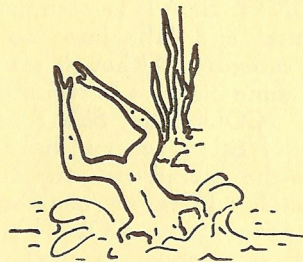
hear the katydid machines
weaving Queen Anne's lace.

153—

Summer twilight falls,
the river a hook of light
with rusty islands.

Without umbrella
the persistent lover waits:
tomcat in the rain.

—Maria Wing



CONCERNING COUNTY SEAT

American Haiku takes pride in presenting its second book, COUNTY SEAT, by Clement Hoyt, former editor-publisher of AMERICAN HAIKU magazine. COUNTY SEAT is a combination SPOON RIVER and WINESBURG, OHIO in verse. However, it is more trenchant than either Masters or Anderson, thanks to the compression of the poems which are in the 5-7-5 syllable pattern of haiku and senryu.

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