

failed haiku

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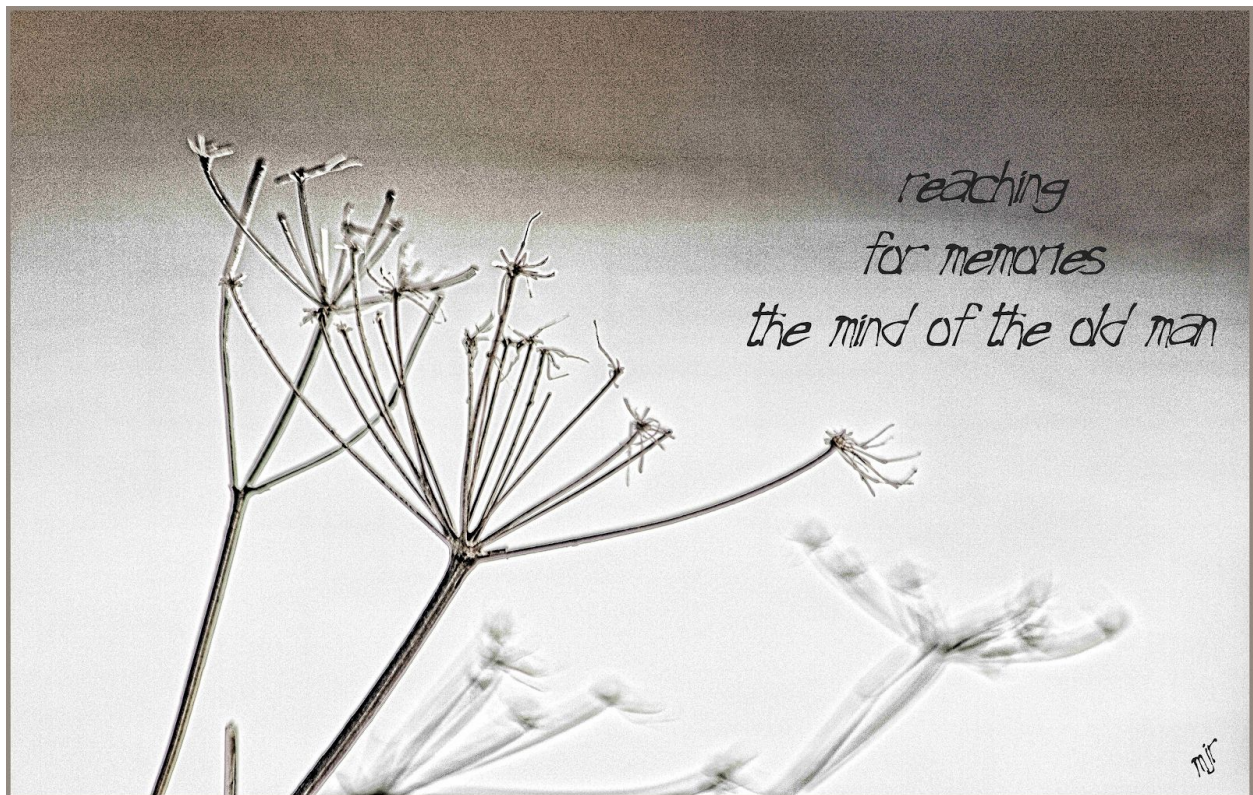
michael rehling

'Failed' Editor

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Cover haiga by: Mike Rehling

Ok, this issue has some senryu submitted by students from India, and some from other places too. But the Retrospective portion focuses solely on haiga. I have chosen a few of my favorites, but by no means more than a small fraction of the haiga submitted here, for some commentary.

Haiga is a 'jazz like' expression of the haiku/senryu form. Miles Davis often said that he 'never played any composition the same twice'. Just as in jazz the different pieces 'play into' each other to create a unique piece. It is that way with haiga too. It is an articulation of an experience in both image and poem. There are NO rules for the combination of poem and image either. At the beginning of the form the image reflected almost exactly the moment described by the words in the poem. But in the modern version of the form the image can be a humorous or poetic 'contrast' of either high or low connection to the poem itself. One approach, in my mind, is not better or more representative of the haiga form than the other.

Where paper and ink were the mode of expression three hundred years ago, today we can add photography, mixed media, and computer art to the original methodology, as well as video and sound. One thing remains paramount to the haiga form and that is that 'poem' is the 'thing'. No haiku or senryu and your image is just a 'pretty' picture is all.

Peace and good viewing!

Mike

Cast List

In order of appearance

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Angela Giordano

Pravat Kumar Padhy & Smita Padhy

Bruce England

Yashvi Shah

Michael Minassian

John J. Dunphy

Bruce Jewett

Tanvi Nishchal

Elin Bell

David He Zhuanglang

Kala Ramesh

*the haiku students of **Kala Ramesh** at the Symbiosis
School for Liberal Arts:*

Rajath Nair

Yaeshona Sarkar

Yashvi Shah

Kaavya Ranjith

Unnati Agrawal

Azara Merchant

Kaavya Ranjith

Megha Nair

Shruti Manurkar

Jesita Sarosh Limathwala

Anna Maria Domburg-Sancristoforo

Ron Scully

Roberta Beach Jacobson

Antonio Sacco

Ingrid Bruck

Adrian Bouter

Lucia Fontana

Ivan Gaćina

John J. Han

Jill Lange

Retrospective (haiga)

Veronika Zora Novak

Alexis Rotella

Barb Kaufmann

Elizabeth Crocket

Shloka Shankar & Kyle Hemmings

Roberta Beary

Sandi Pray

alzheimer-
memories vanish
inside the words

Angela Giordano



extended sky--
the closeness dwells
deep within

Haiku: Pravat Kumar Padhy

Art: Smita Padhy

Pravat Kumar Padhy & Smita Padhy

In bed
my reading face near
her sleeping face

Looks gray
car salesman insists
it's brilliant silver

A side glance
and all I remember
a hint of breast

Bruce England

profession-
my independent mother
governs the housemaids

Yashvi Shah

Cold January morning
even when there is no wind
there is wind.

Yes, she said,
the answer
is still no.

Michael Minassian

corpse pose
my friend lies on a yoga mat
in his coffin

alley
vagrant and his dog
frozen together

John J. Dunphy

only when I woke
did I remember
you died long ago

a birthday balloon
hovers in the kitchen
wrinkled and nodding

Bruce Jewett

writer's block...
crumbled thoughts
mess up the floor

Tanvi Nishchal

my heart
touched and broken -
memorial wall

midnight -
nobody
to hold on to

winter walk -
the breath of two
becomes one

Elin Bell

monks recite the sutra...
a spider web vibrates
on the temple wall

David He Zhuanglang

I wonder why
when driving in peak traffic
ideas strike

fretting about her daughter
who grows up
anyway

meditating, I'm aware
more than ever before
of the breeze

Kala Ramesh

*The following are poems from the 'prompt' of 'election promises' from the haiku students of **Kala Ramesh** at the Symbiosis School for Liberal Arts:*

election promises -
my father stares at the screen
and yawns

Rajath Nair

election promises-
a man from the audience
throws a shoe

Rajath Nair

election promises -
speakers blaring gibberish
as people applaud

Yaeshona Sarkar

the politician's son
follows his father's footsteps -
election promises

Jesita Sarosh Limathwala

election promises —
a round of applause from
the paid spectators

Yashvi Shah

election promises ...
the politician takes a peek into
his unfamiliar speech

Yashvi Shah

election promises -
behind his back
he crosses his fingers

Kaavya Ranjith

election promises -
the politician tries hard
to look promising

Unnati Agrawal

election promises -
the farmer still awaits
running electricity

Azara Merchant

election promises
the people hear
last year's speech

Megha Nair

election promises —
the politician stops yet again
to drink water

Yashvi Shah

From the same class more 'unprompted' senryu:

my mouth waters ...
chicken biryani being cooked
on television

Rajath Nair

Ganpati festival
my cheeks are puffed up
with sweet momos

Shruti Manurkar

she sits motionless
with her eyes closed...
a snore escapes

Megha Nair

an economy collapses—
a butterfly far away must have
flapped its wings

Megha Nair

first snow ...
grandpa nags us
to take him out

Jesita Sarosh Limathwala

after school
our class continues
at the paanipuri stall

Azara Merchant

milk flies off
the supermarket shelves
...rumours of war

Kaavya Ranjith

full of the moon -
reflected in the mirror
an empty bed

snow in the air -
the shadows of words
between us

burnt dinner -
the wisps of smoke
from a candle

my private spring -
the scent of hyacinths
in the living room



lake twilight-
chasing the silence
of the clouds

A.M.

Anna Maria Domburg-Sancristoforo

<https://ventodelgiorno.wordpress.com/>

waterlogged
Moby Dick Illustrated
unreadable

bottom shelf
The Plague mildewed
smells of the dead

"night" fallen
behind the bookcase
safekeeping

Ron Scully

metal gate ajar
no guard dog
- it's decision time

murderous Monday
not me, I didn't do it
- fired on Friday

Monday morning
one cup
at a time

Roberta Beach Jacobson

<http://www.RobertaJacobson.com>

First plagiarism
glad and sad
at the same time

*Il primo plagio
contento e dispiaciuto
al tempo stesso*

Fashion pants,
my granny has patched them
in my absence!

*Brache alla moda,
a nonna le rattoppa
in mia assenza!*

Antonio Sacco

family in six keys
harmonies tangle~
wind chimes

rigid at attention
wind punched bare trees~
a suicide's death watch

Ingrid Bruck

critical question
she crosses her legs
carefully

lover*s lane
cans and bottles cover
the dry riverbed

dentist visit
a flash in the sky
remembers me

Adrian Bouter

zany night
what I still have to learn
about myself

old misunderstanding
on our silence
the silence

Carnival

I'm not clown, but I collect moments anyway

inspired by *Heinrich Böll*

Today has been a very chilly day, not easy to stay outside for more than a little while.

So, as the tradition here requires, me and my girls have decided to have some fun for carnival, but instead of in streets and squares where the party usually takes place, we have relaxed at home, simply making up and creating characters and song stories . . . Spring yet to come we had butterflies, ladybugs and bees in the green garden of our imagination. . . I don't know if what we did together worked or not, but I believe that for our brain it's more important to try and empathize with an urge , than to give up.

missing an angel . . .
I dress white wings
for a day

Lucia Fontana

autumn twilight . . .
stepmother and stepchild
in the blind alley

Ivan Gaćina

silent night...
an old couple wraps gifts
for each other

alone at yuletide—
the comfort of
gaining no weight

near retirement
using business cards
as bookmarks

Senior Poetry Critique Session

It is open to poets of all ages, but only seniors attend. Eight people today. We begin with wellness reports—poetry can wait. LeAnn cannot attend because of broken ankles. Diana cannot because of fractured wrists. Bob says his wife will undergo knee replacement; his own shoulders need replacement soon. “My doctor told me,” Matt interjects, “I’m too old for knee replacement.” Debbie says, after a cataract surgery, she needs adjusting glasses. By the time we share our poems, thirty minutes have passed, which bothers no one. We have all the time and space in the world.

autumn rain
a maple leaf clinging
to the window

Debbie brought a poem dedicated to her granddaughter, who recently scored 100% on a Calculus test at her university. On a Calculus test! After she reads the poem, her eyes well up with tears. Jim brought poems that don’t make sense but sound funny. Amused by his own poems, he laughs before and after reading them. Dolly recollects growing up on a cotton farm as sharecroppers’ daughter in Arkansas. Keith, a Gulf War veteran, has brought poems that are incoherent but seem to convey some truths.

poetry club
an old member parks his car
then drives away

Suddenly, Debbie brings up the topic of passing gas. She does not blush. Bob says withholding gas can be life-threatening. A Colombian teenager died of toxicity after holding farts too long in the

presence of his date, he says. The rest of us agree that passing gas is good for health.

silent prayer time
someone's stomach
rumbles

By the time we leave for lunch at Cracker Barrel, we vastly increase our knowledge of medicine while our knowledge of poetry remains the same.

John J. Han

he—
down to his skivvies
she—
poker face on

deep forest—
a black squirrel
crosses my path

Jill Lange

Retrospective (haiga)



Veronika Zora Novak

Some folks do not enjoy extreme brevity, but I am not one of those sticks in the mud folks! The image and the 'single' word are perfectly matched in this haiga. That yin yang rope is priceless, and it matches the mood we all know well. That real words of love come in quietly, even though when there are just two in the

room there is little need for it. Veronika's work always makes my imagination smile.



Alexis Rotella

This is an image that could be reduced to pedantry but for the wonderful poem it is a part of. Everything in this image speaks of simple joy, and yet, the poem tells another story altogether. The pain of a stillborn child is something no one wants to even think about. It hurts that much. But here the poet has told us more than the pain, there is a resurrection of sorts in the form of a doll, and a dance performed by the living children. Is this a 'memory' of a child that never was? It would seem so. It would truly seem so!



Barb Kaufmann

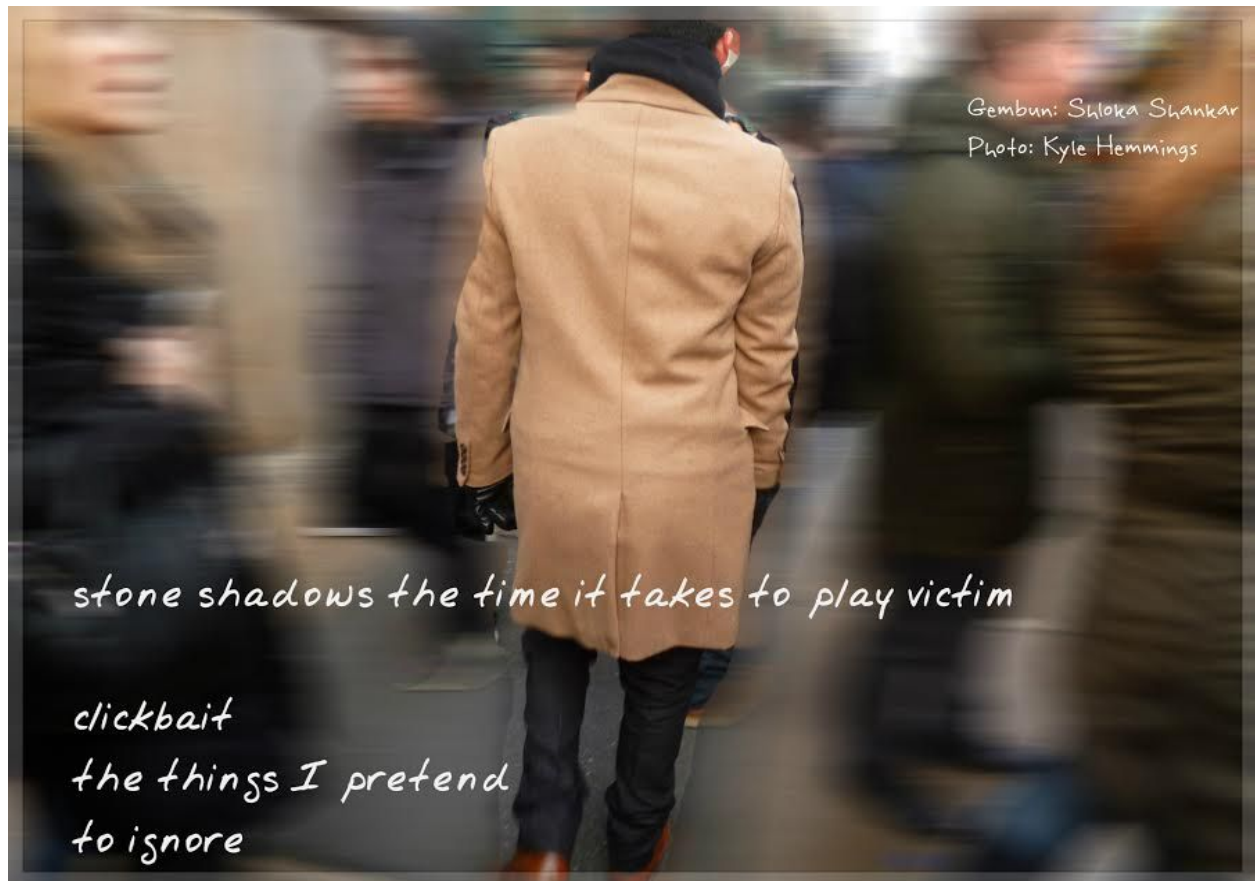
A moment is just that, and then it is over. What is left is a broken memory of that moment. In Zen you let each moment 'rise and fall', fully replaced by the 'next'. The image here captures the past and the present in subtle waves. I was captivated by the sameness and yet the differences of those waves. This is a haiga worth meditating upon. It is both the creator and the remainder of enlightenment.



Elizabeth Crocket

Humans find it difficult to think about some things. Illness, even if followed by a 'cure' is the toughest of those 'things'. When someone else's life force is transfused with your own that is a gift that truly keeps on giving. We take for granted so many things, but when confronted with a need that requires another you just can't take that for granted. Organ donors, blood donors, and skin donors often never see the

person they 'shared' a moment with, but their 'kindness' is never forgotten by the receiver of that gift. The many 'blooms' depicted in the image are so fully blooming themselves. Are they also a gift we take for granted? This is a 'hallelujah' haiga!



Shloka Shankar & Kyle Hemmings

Sometimes it takes two talented artists to finish the 'lift' of a haiga. This one works on so many levels. First the image is of a single person in crowd of people. It captures the way most of us feel as we move through our lives. 'Alone in a crowd' is a cliché, but that is because it is so true. The 'gembun' is a classic!!! When you 'play victim' you do, in point of fact, turn yourself to stone. And 'clickbait' is right out of the 'social media' lives that are all about the 'media' and have

very little to do with the 'social'. Ever been 'stung' by a comment on social media? Yeah, we all have!



Roberta Beary

This one is a knife in the heart for sure. My wife and I dated, and two hippies wandering around Detroit we were about as likely to get noticed in the sixties as a

mouse in an alley. When my wife and I got married we paid the twenty five bucks, filled out a form (with carbon copies back then), and showed some ID. That was it, no questions, no looks, nothing but a bureaucratic set of instructions. Which when I think about it is exactly what it should be. If we were to divorce, the paperwork of the law kicks in, just as it should. Everything is just 'normal'. What motivated us was our love for one another, nothing else. And that is the way it should be for anyone, anywhere.

One of the toughest teachings of Buddha is acceptance. Not tolerance, that has a stink to it, but to just accept your own life and the lives of others. But what makes this haiga turn on a dime for me is that those two lovers are holding hands and staring at the flag. A flag is nothing really, but it embodies the 'aspirations' of the people. What a simple reminder to look up with love and acceptance.



Sandi Pray

My own granddaughter is twenty now. But I still have pictures she drew for us. The simple thoughts and pure hearts of our children and grandchildren call us home to our center. When that wonderful child holds your hand you somehow know that it is 'you' who is being led, that it is you that is being looked over and protected. And when they grow up you really should thank them for raising you so well. The simple image

of a shared vision of a grandma and granddaughter
just made me feel twenty five years younger.

drafts for my epitaph

'i have stepped out. call me on my cell.'

'i dont know where i am either.'

'not sure but i think being alive was better.'

'there is another life. i am the guy jumping and waving.'

'hey news flash! when you die you really do get to take it all with you!'

boxing
with my shadow
i fail to land a punch

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