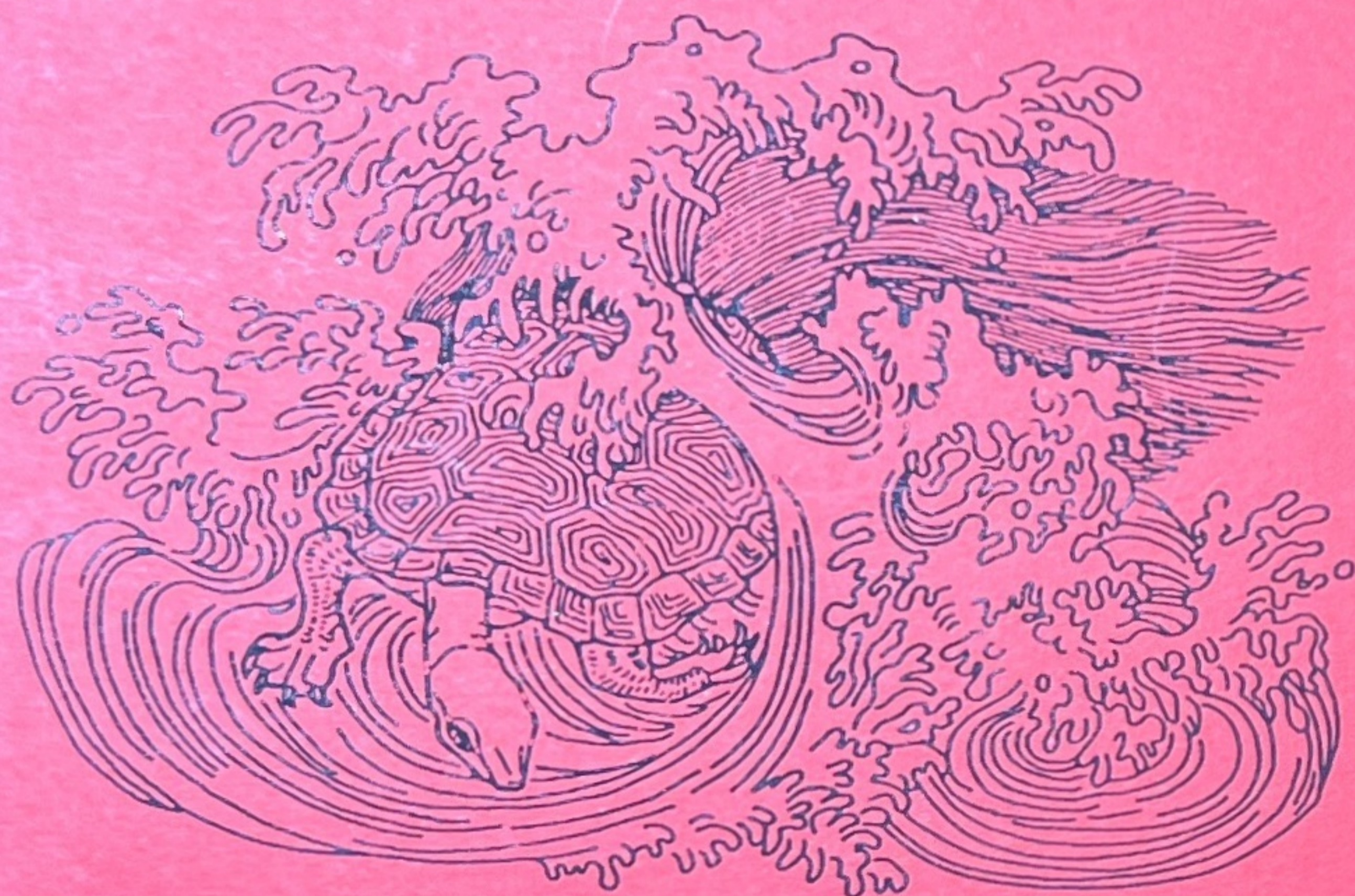


Blithe Spirit



Journal of
The British Haiku Society

Volume 2 Number 4 October 1992

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Blithe Spirit

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Richard Goring



The Brief

David Cobb

The Pathway

David Cobb

Editorial

This issue brings us to the close of our year of editorship. Our first output, back in January, represented quite a dramatic change - the new A5 size, computer typesetting, coloured card covers, perfect binding, etc. We like to believe that we have continued to make further improvements in subsequent issues, with such changes as a smaller but hopefully pleasing typeface, more space around individual poems, more pages each issue, and so forth. In short, we have begun to establish a 'house style'. Letters we have received suggest that, by and large, you like the way it is shaping.

As for content, that has been rather more in your hands than ours (though we have been somewhat instrumental in introducing tanka and renga as regular features), and you have responded with an ever-increasing volume of varied articles and poems, so much so that we already have three articles and two haiku sequences held over for the next issue.

We are nonetheless always anxious to receive comment upon *Blithe Spirit* from more of our readers. Do you like the articles? The poems? And if not, why not? What other topics would you like to see covered? Can you write something yourself?

We are hopeful that this issue will be out in time to distribute to members present at our first Conference and AGM at Durham. We are certainly looking forward to meeting many of you there, some for the first time, others as old or not-so-old acquaintances, and to receiving feedback on the journal and on our editorship. Some measure of our success may be apparent when the voting-in of Officers for the coming year takes place, but perhaps the clearest indication will come from the level of membership renewals for 1993. Obviously, we do hope you will all renew, and if you haven't bent our ears at Durham or written to us with your views on *Blithe Spirit* (or done both), maybe you will pen some comments to go with your renewal slip.

In case you didn't already know, Colin selects all the haiku and senryu, Richard selects all the tanka. We both read and consider all the articles submitted, though it is Richard who makes the final choice of articles to be published. We take it in turn to write the editorial (no prizes for figuring out which of us is writing

this). However, both David and Stephen (and Dee and James when they are "in town") also see and approve (or not) a typeset draft before the finally agreed version is printed and distributed.

The draft copy is usually ready for our quarterly Committee Meetings. These are held at various locations, but a regular venue, chosen for its convenience for David, Stephen and your editors to travel to and from on a Friday evening, is near Kings Cross, London. The setting is congenial and has even been known to yield the odd haiku:

the bistro's fat cat,
squatting on the doormat
by his empty dish

* * * * *

In this issue we include our first haibun, two members' renga and, for the first time, *The Pathway*. One of the renga, 'Sunny Intervals', is the second BHS postal renga, involving no less than 21 members. It was launched on 4 March and eventually completed in early September, having journeyed all over the U K and even to the Azores and Singapore. We felt it worthy of printing, being a marked improvement on the first BHS postal renga of last year. We hope that everyone enjoyed participating. The other renga in this issue is a more conventional model, but also conducted by post, by three members.

* * * * *

The Season Corner theme for the next issue will, of course, be that "season of mists and mellow fruitfulness" and your submissions should be in your editors' hands (whoever they may be) by Friday, 4 December, please - preferably well before that date. Please note that contributions for *The Pathway* should continue to be submitted to David.

Colin Blundell and Richard Goring

Haikew: May Flowers at Kew Gardens

B H S Groups 1 and 2 joint meet, 23 May 1992

Kakitsubata / kataru mo tabi no / hitotsu kana (Bashō)
To talk casually about an iris flower is one of the pleasures
of the wandering journey (trans. Yuasa)

A hot, sunny day: and thirteen BHS members, together with spouses and children - a group of nineteen altogether - took a 'wandering journey' around the Royal Botanical Gardens at Kew 'talking casually' about flowers, trees and haiku all the way! The meet began near the Japanese Gateway at the *kuhi* (poem-inscribed rock) commemorating Kyoshi's haiku, composed on 1 May 1936 on a visit to the Gardens:

Suzumera mo / hito o osorenu / kuni no haru
Even sparrows are freed from all fear of man - England
in the spring (trans. Bownas)

In the maroon-tinged shade of a nearby copper beech, an introduction to Japanese seasonal feeling (*kikan*) and season words (*kigo*), with particular reference to flower poems, was given to the party by Stephen Gill. Kyoshi himself was a defender of the season word in haiku and, while others were breaking away from it, he and his followers continued, by and large, to work in the traditional way. The concept of *hon'i* (essential character and connotation) was also touched on... and, later, illustrated with a selection of haiku chosen to bring out the classical haiku qualities of certain flowers. These were read as the party halted in front of each successive 'living *kigo*' - wisteria, poppy, new green leaves, iris, peony, azalea, lilac and so forth. Some composition (mainly Jim Norton's!) was achieved: and the outing ended with a general airing and sharing of flower haiku by most of the participants. The following are a selection of the haiku aired or written on the happy day. (SHG)

A bright thunderous haze -
And our noses are thankful
At the tangle
Of dangling wisteria.

Tito

Light voices
almost lost in leaf rustle -
haijin gathering

Shaded by a London plane
three drakes and a duck
face the four directions

At the crossroads
a sudden smell of cypress
decides

Beneath massed blossom
three seated ladies heatedly discuss
the lazy poor

Whirr of a camera motor -
an old woman
capturing blossom on film

Drowning in fragrance -
the bees swim in and out
wisteria caverns

Jim Norton

Golden buttercup
dust on my fingers:
childhood rushes back

Evening - the silent
perpendicularity
of laburnums

Bruce Leeming

the buzz of the bees
leaves us with very little
to say

follow-my-leader
with his sheaf from the masters:
azaleas at Kew

David Cobb

a flower without poems;
the *kurinsō*
shelters from the sun

Brian Tasker

(*kurinsō* = *primula japonica*, which is a dusky red hue and on the subject of which there are very few haiku in Japanese)

the hot day
cooled by falling garlands
of wisteria

Annie Bachini

Breath taking beauty
Of azure Wisteria
Encountered at Kew

June Mitchell

Beneath arched bamboo
a hide-away of shadows
for contemplation

Two wisterias
cascade in purple and white
wind-rippled torrents,
releasing a strange odour
of surprising mustiness

Joan Daniels



A Beginner's Journey

D J Peel

Thursday 25 June 92: From Birmingham, to visit old university friends living in New Forest area of Wiltshire. For some weeks, weather had been hot and rainless - reports of droughts and dried-up rivers, though no local hosepipe ban; I drenched favourite plants before leaving. Driving down was tiring, but passing via Swindon - to northern newcomers a town of sudden ups and downs and confusing carousels of traffic roundabouts; its name recalling green and gold liveried steam locomotives of my youth - I called unannounced on Kevin Bailey (*Haiku Quarterly*), receiving kind hospitality and much needed refreshment. We talked poetry for some time.

Home-made lemonade,
but tired, hot toddler
does not care for haiku talk.

Stayed at my usual guest-house in Plaitford - near to my friends' home, set well back from the A36, and very quiet at nights. My room overlooked a seemingly boundless lawned garden - dotted with orchard trees and flowerbeds. A city-dweller, the blackness of the nights there always impresses me - only the merest Southampton glow, unless there is a bright moon. Normally there would be several summer guests of various nationalities, but at this time of economic recession I saw only two families over my three day stay.

Saturday 27 June: Waking early each morning, unable to return to sleep, I would watch the days begin from the open window. Today at 4.30 am, a thin crescentic lunar fingernail prepared to scrape back the rose-mauve traces of the night sky. Over the moist dewscape of lawn, mist hung around dark featureless shapes, while numerous blackbirds searched sectors like vigorous chessboard pawns. Soon the air filled with tics, chirrs, pipings - all the trills and grace notes of the bird world; finally - pheasants korred, cocks crew, dark shapes metamorphosed into trees and flowerbeds, and the sun rose. At first a sullen dusky crimson globe, low in a multi-coloured sky; then an orb of molten gold, crusted with cloud, illuminating vapour trails into bright saffron scratch marks upon the palest blue; and by 7.00 am a white hot silver sphere climbing through dazzling cloud. Another hot day to come; yet still at the window, a moist-cool scented sensual air lightly touched and examined the skin, soothing tiredness and pain, and stirring forgotten memories - but then the smell of sizzling bacon stirred more immediate senses.

First in the bathroom, but.....
corner off the butter, crumbs,
a chair pushed back.

To Lepe, via Lyndhurst and Beaulieu; the sun became a pitiless blinding star, and all over the hot gorseland heath it seemed that chestnut foals had dropped like conkers.

As day develops,
heat lifts from the ground -
drowning skyline trees.

Gorse heath and tarmac
shimmer as one;
ponies everywhere.

Everywhere the heat -
young ponies lie motionless;
crows pick in droppings.

Open heathland roads; roads with brown seared hedgerows - flowerless but for rank-sweet Hogweed; to narrow green lanes; and at Lepe, parking beneath a large oak, I walked shorewards down a leafy path full of the thick sweet spices of privet and honeysuckle, and dotted with yellow Cat's Ear bright as buttons.

Hedgerows baking hot
white plates of Hogweed - distant
hush of sea on flint.

Lepe looks across the Solent to Cowes; it was the day of the Round the Island Race. The milk-washed thin dark landmass of the island separated a pewter sky from the sparkling pewter sea - as in some badly taken photograph. Race yachts were long since gone, but sails still lay in the lee of the island like so much paper litter. Windless - no day for yacht racing; sun and sailors glowered in the tiring tiresome conditions which enforced a shortening of the slowest race on record.

An ebbing tide and suffocating stillness - yachts drifted forlornly up and down between channel markers, their numbered sails like pages torn from trigonometry books; a man waded out some hundred yards. Then at 1.30 pm: a supernatural event - slack tide; suddenly the flinty slop ceased, the water motionless - time itself stopped. Gull clamour only accentuated the strange silence of the moment; the energy of the spirit and of the whole Universe seemed drained into the water to power the recommencement of its timeless pendular swing. How pointless it seemed to be concerned with this other ritual in which only the players change; two yachts might have collided, the man drowned - uncovered, unnatural, black weed-encrusted shapes stared out impassively.

Midday chorus
on exposed rocks -
squabbling seagulls.

With no perspective
at such a distance - two yachts
idly converge.

Returning, I stopped at a Beaulieu cafe for a scrambled egg tea, discussing the finer points of Escoffier's method; then wandered the heathland - still furiously hot in the closing afternoon - till sundown, with its brief sudden breath of cool air - now accentuated by the day's heat.

Low sun over gorse heath:
in the road -
hesitant chestnut foal.

At sundown: a cool wind
over the chestnut foal's ribs
runs a shudder.

Sunday 28 June: Now, a circuitous homeward journey; still the furnace heat.

Parching heat - gorse heath;
atop a telegraph pole,
crow sits open-mouthed.

At Damerham - by a shady leafy lane, a sign: CHURCH FLOWER FESTIVAL.

After a hot drive,
cool white interior walls;
peace and scent of flowers.

In old Norman church,
two elderly ladies
discuss a prostate.

Across Cranborne Chase - a spectacular view: flax fields in flower.

Cranborne - round a blind
corner, cars stop - breathtaking.
Fields of Monet blue.

Heaven's Gate, near Longleat - a welcome oasis stop.

Deep woodland light pool;
two brown speckled butterflies
spiralling upwards.

Frome - another unannounced descent - on Brian Tasker (*Bare Bones*). Again kind hospitality and haiku talk.

Jasmine tea;
in the cup - fragrance
of a single flower.

Homewards, I consider the difference between smell and fragrance, recalling the perfumery hall at Rackhams, and in particular, the organic chemistry experience of C Dior's "Poison".

Gorse Blossoms

*"when gorse is out of bloom, kissing's out of fashion."
all seasons, no season - haiku, senryu, experiments...*

Art patrons
drawn to the fair
cooking smells

Child's gleeful grin
puddled under his sneaker
shattered with a laugh

Popeyed boys
ogle short skirt girls
teaching... no chance

Aromatic foreplay
pervading the kitchen
wine moistened lips

William Scott Galasso

A singing crystal
pulses with music and light,
all faces shining

Clear sharp melodies
vibrate in sonic delight:
electronic sound

Chords of bright colours
silences softer than night,
shape musical lands

John Light

Lights on the headland
jump the gentle water-line.
Freeze-frame this moment

Stanley Pelter

Walking with
Yellow butterflies ...
Flying up the tumbling
Turquoise river.

(near Legship, Sikkim 5/90)

Fleeting footprints
Of seabirds on the sands,
Pointing to eternity
When the tide is out ...

(Tonfanau, Gwynned 9/73)

Tito

tight socks
red marks
tight round his ankles

Sunday Tracts
and up the church walk
fresh tracks

old drunk
and old clouds
reforming

diamonds in her ears
and on the quiet lake
moonlit water
flashes

dull wall
shiny
wet wallpaper glue

after the fiftieth death note
writing the message
by rote

Diane Albertina

seating oneself on the shock
of this warmth
somebody else's bum

bend in the river -
hearing mallards
round it leaving

between the question
and the reply -
sunlight on a few leaves moving

Geoffrey Daniel

Dusk

Owls calling at dusk
Bring memories of rooftops
Against purple sky

Clematis (Montana Alba)

Shimmering white stars
Scattered at random among
Clouds of hazy green

Julia Dent

The grass
is never allowed
to grow up

Solitude,
rain washes away
footprints

Hamish Turnbull

the wind sends us back
time and again to the girl
who gives free balloons

at the zoo
my shadow in the cage
beside the bear

the angler casts
and counselling his spouse
to peace he sighs

the tennis begins -
tops of the poplars swaying
to left and to right

David Cobb

Taxidermist's window
Cat's whiskers
Twitching

A mating cat's screech
The crack in the lavender vase
On my windowsill

From the locomotive's
Whistle-steam
Black butterfly

H Batt

Dust has collected
on her photograph but he
no longer sees it

The elm tree's death etched
on the winter sky, the field
flood reflecting it

Eric Speight

Across the wet grass
a blackbird runs a few feet,
stops - then runs again

Bright sunshine
makes me want to do -
something

I watch a butterfly
on its gay haphazard flight
across the sunlit lawn

Will Morris

dead cat claws the curb
so angry so dead so what
May flies dance with joy

the arrow is shot
it flies through the Autumn leaf
both fall silently

John W Hadler

Five a.m. - first light;
two magpies saunter the road
checking the curfew

Desperate pages; dense
fistfuls of passionate flies,
Oh, Rachmaninov

Wheeling down the road
behind large pram - unseen
small girl

D J Peel

on the abbey roof,
hail; the clattering of
wooden angels' wings

Elisabeth Bletsoe

Fingers of white cloud
Slide down the gullies and the
Great mountains have gone

Beautiful insects
Wreck my beautiful garden
Shall I poison them?

The shadows lengthen
In the garden. I think of
Night and your coldness

Des Delany

Under the fish leaping
and gasping in the net lies
a skeleton picked clean

The Christ is worm-eaten:
hungry grubs could not spare
their divinity

Edward Glover

In the Mountains

The tarn ripples back
to its pebbled home, the wind
soothing its return

Ice

Cold grips his pale face
on a stark morning, flurries
that mottle his skin

G Cullum

Old balloon seller
at the corner of the street -
apple tree in bloom

Making love - building
card castles till the last card
brings them crashing down

(Alvaro Mutis)

James Kirkup

in the depths of the forest
the sound of a man shouting
day after day

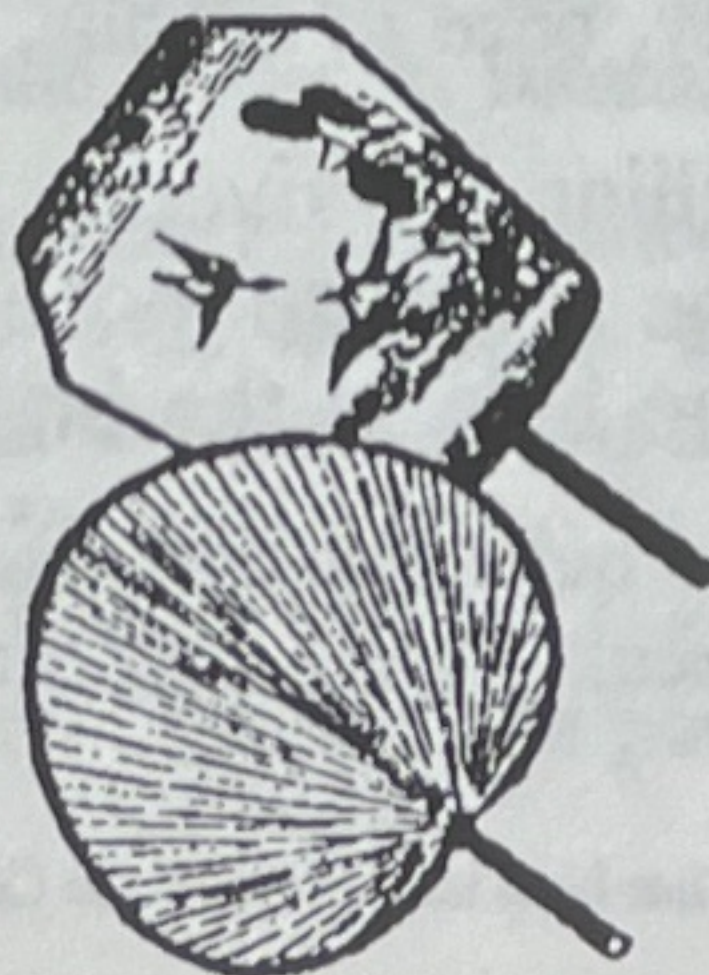
empty street...
the big door closed
to the private garden

Michael Gunton

Spider on my book
The page turns, caught by the wind
Long-legged shadows run

Children sleep at last
My husband snores beside me
Peace is relative

Susan Rowley



Reviews

Jane Reichhold: *A Dictionary of Haiku* (AHA Books, P O Box 767, Gualala, California 95445. ISBN 0-944676-8-1. 353 pp, Paperback. US \$ 12.95)

The advertisements for this book are somewhat economical with the facts; they say it contains "over 5,000 haiku arranged according to season words by traditional and modern methods". There's no doubt there are over 5,000 verses given as examples, but contrary to simple expectations (in the absence of any statement to the contrary) they are all the work of the author. I'd expected to find examples from all the best poets writing haiku in English, at least in North America. But no. Whatever the truth of the second claim in the advertisement, that the dictionary is "the first of its kind in English", it must certainly rank as the first occasion of such a phenomenal output by one poet in a single publication.

About a thousand different season words are listed (under headings -- moods, occasions, celestial, terrestrial, livelihoods*, animals, plants), so there's an average of about five haiku as examples of the use of each season word. This immediately begs the question, are so many examples for each season word really necessary? Why, for example, 24 for the full moon in autumn, but only two for the scarecrow in the same season, and three for the snowman (in spring)? One's uneasy feeling is, this is a pretext for presenting us with the author's collected (if not complete) works under a different name.

In her foreword, the author's stated aim is "to increase an awareness of the season for readers and writers". This is a worthy cause, and well, any listing of over 5,000 haiku and 1,000 season words must make some kind of impression, even if no more subtly than a battering ram. But the unfortunate consequences of citing only her own poems as examples, and in addition following a collective rather than selective principle, are inevitable.

First of all, for quality: no one since Bashō has ever come anywhere near producing a total of over 5,000 really good haiku. Reichhold produces a good haiku about as often as most front-rank poets writing in English at the present time; which is to say, once in a while. An example:

filling the river
the complete moon covers
the hole in the bridge

Like most of us, she also quite regularly produces bad ones, and she does herself no justice by not weeding these out, eg:

* The "livelihoods" section for autumn has been missed out of the Contents Page.

as little as a wren
alive as a friend
the wren is

or the following, spoilt by its anthropomorphism and general twee-ness and inept, possibly unintentional, word-play:

doorknob:
the moon looks down
on its tiny self

The second trap is to think that what one pair of eyes has seen can pass for the universal compendium of experience which use of the term "dictionary" invites us to expect. Inevitably, the view seems egocentric, arbitrary, and the claim overweening or totalitarian. The author appears to have taken over some of the traditions of *saijiki*, eg. "dragonfly" and "red dragonfly" are listed, as in the Kō publication *Four Seasons*, as autumn phenomena. But one cannot escape the feeling that other references, especially to activities and moods, have been slotted into a particular season simply because that's when they happened to Jane Reichhold.

So, "pregnancy" is a "summer livelihood", as is "reliving history". She is "youthful" in the spring -- okay -- but "feels childlike" in winter (though one of the examples seems to be about someone feeling "grandparentlike"):

baby's ancient face
wrinkled and sexless
grandparents

Yet "accepting aging" is an autumn mood.

Personally, I have to say I find this all much too haphazard and frankly opportunistic to make much sense as a reference work. I shall want to refer to it from time to time, particularly if I'm looking for a haiku about a particular plant or beast. But when I do that I shall rue the absence of a single composite alphabetical index in which all the 1,000 season words are combined (where would you look for blue tits, for example? No, not on the bird tables in winter, but on the bushes in summer.).

Final note: the author makes no distinction between haiku and senryu. This is in accordance with her view expressed in *Haiku Canada Newsletter*, vol. VII no. 2, that the term senryu has "unsavoury insinuations" and is therefore best avoided by poets writing in English. But for those of us who dare to use the word senryu, one of the essential differences is the absence of a seasonal reference. So how can poems like

the whole bed
yet he lays his head
in my hand

be classified by season words? (You may wish to know that this is, in fact, a "summer mood", in the sub-category "after loving".)

If I may express a personal opinion of the general usefulness of *saijiki*, Wordsworth's attitude, as expressed in 'Expostulation and Reply', is a good one to keep in mind. Although *saijiki* may stimulate us in dull moments, for preference season words should be sought, not in books, but in nature itself, if we're to maintain vitality in our poetry. To a considerable extent, Reichhold has done this. The validity of her book is, therefore, more an example of the process than the product. DJC

* * * * *

John S Rowe: *The Kitemaker's Dream* [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] £ 3.50)

The Kitemaker's Dream won the 1991 Dragonheart Press Poetry Competition and I can quite see why it ought to win prizes. It is a beautifully sustained sequence of 31 tanka, each strictly 31 syllables long, charting the birth, ecstasy and death of a love affair; the fragility of human concourse makes the whole event dissolve into dream at the end:

The kite-maker sleeps
In his dreams he flies with them
His fragile children
The moon casts their silhouettes
On the wall behind his head

Every piece is constructed like this so that the first three lines constitute an entity in themselves while the last two lines are a comment on, or deft extension of, the initial haiku-like statement. So, at the stage of ecstasy:

Where sky and earth meet
Our kites buried in blossom
Sweet abandonment _____
Wild juice of summer cherries
Tasted on each other's tongue

I find this consistently crafted dialectic combined with the extended metaphor of the kite very satisfying; 'kite' represents the constructed dream of love, making it fly (feet off the ground, ecstasy), amorous experiment

('flying a kite'), the difficulty of sustaining a relationship on a high, the relationship itself, life-lines, and, ultimately, letting the dream go:

I release my kite
To the whim of bitter winds
To your memory

The purist would go 'Tut-tut' at the occasional overt simile:

Like wind-tossed flowers
Reaching up to touch the sky
Kites flown in storm-clouds

but we can surely forgive this for when 'kite' functions, which it does for the most part, as real object/metaphor at the indifferent flick of a mental switch, a nice ambiguity results: when the storm-clouds become oppressive

Passion turns to rage
I could not breathe when you left
Your kite still torments
As did the curve of your breast
I break a porcelain vase

Though we do not know what the lady's angle might be, our poet's rage seems totally understandable considering what he has lost, from 'laughter/dancing like kite tails' to the grandly erotic

Lie down close your eyes
Spread your arms wide like a kite
Who cares what they think
Now steal a glimpse of the clouds
Fly like you fly in your dreams

At its high point, the affair brought the poet from the darkness of sleep, or blindness, into that sense of heightened awareness that is supposed to accompany 'being in love':

I helped a blind man
And a kite became his eyes
He shared his visions

I think this is a splendid collection that reveals new things at each reading as you re-focus on the uses of the kite-conceit.

For £ 3.50 I might have expected Dragonheart Press to use their own Stanley knife to trim the page edges to fit the cover of the book rather than leave the task to the purchaser. CB

Sunny Intervals: A BHS Postal Renga

After three days' darkness
rain-lashed
(reading by the fire) -
daffodils!

George Marsh

A wedding, and church
filled with memories once more -
the scent of flowers

Brian Wells

In the cherry bough
a nightingale celebrates
with immortal song

Denise Bennett

He puts down his pen
and through the open window
watches a cat

Michael Gunton

Playful antics
releases sweet aroma
from fresh cuttings
of warm damp grass

*Mohammad Ali
Noor-Cashmore*

On April Fool's Day
chopping firewood, dripping sweat
under sudden sun

Jim Norton

After the postman
passes, pavements are scattered
with pale rubber bands

James Kirkup

Narcissus nods
where orange blossom scents
a foreign pillow

Paul Wood

The yellow flame tree
blazes amongst dark foliage
in the school compound
nine storeys below

Eric Speight

Sudden heat-wave -
two cats under the lilac
ignore the sparrows

Joan Daniels

Warm fingers and thumbs
strum scales on a guitar
interminably

David Cobb

Playing with a button
her only response
to his question

Dee Evetts

Fooled by the heat;
the clematis opens
yet more buds

Brian Tasker

The dazzling flames -
love-notes into
black petals

Prospero

Elder flowers
ending
coming into berry:
sweet scents scatter

Adele Davide

Sometimes a thrush comes -
sits on a telegraph pole
and unloads quavers

Colin Blundell

Heavy with bloom
in these strangely sunless days,
roses light the path

Mavis Pilbeam

'News at Ten' on TV -
honeybees are still
gathering

Richard Goring

Rosebay willowherb,
the loveliest floral name:
mist of rose-purple...

Gerda Mayer

Under a tree
this baby intent
on mother's milk

Fred Schofield

Returning to the house,
eyes full of the brightness
of the windy, washed-out
day of little clouds

Tito

Out of the Mouths.....

Susan Rowley

Ben tells me that to write a 5-7-5 haiku you have to keep stopping to count and that he likes to write (speak) his poetry so that it "flows like a river". The following example flowed straight out in a haiku session we had just after having watched a rainbow from his bedroom window - and we hadn't been talking about rainbows at all!

Rain comes
sun dries it
rainbow in the sky

(Ben Rowley - age 8)

The pavement steams.
 Tower-high, a thrush showers
 half London with song.

The haiku is quoted at the beginning, not the end, so that readers who find little merit in it need go no further. Those who like it may wish to see how it grew.

Perhaps well over a year ago, and months after the event, I made some notes as the basis of a haiku: 'town - thrush - high up - song spreads - early summer?'. And there the jottings remained till I read Richard Goring's tanka in *Blithe Spirit* vol.2 no.1 (January 1992): *In silent stillness / of a clouded cold grey dawn / a single thrush sings, / high in the leafless maple / and fills the air with sweet sound.*

Though this picture is in some ways different from my conception, the common features - 'a single thrush sings - high - fills the air' - were sufficient to recall my abandoned notes and I resolved to write the haiku.

The subject came first: A thrush tower-high ('tower' may suggest a town but the bird could be imagined in a treetop) showers - with song (there is no attempt to describe the song: readers would know it was musical, so the emphasis is on the distance the singing carries).

Perhaps tower took me back to 'town' and 'early summer', and showers suggested rain earlier in the day. So these gave me *The pavement steams*.

Having forgotten where I heard the thrush, I wanted a 'town'. Tower(s), and perhaps a vague recollection of the Thames embankment, pointed to a part of London: the two syllables seemed right - showers London with song. But 'London' is vast and so I interpolated half, a limitation if only symbolic.

Was the haiku finished? To make 5-7-5, I could add a syllable but rejected the idea of an epithet for pavement: it was used as an urban image and not for any particular quality (solid, flat, formal, etc.).

The second line might end after 'thrush' but I made the conventional seven syllables and this does emphasise showers.

Such words as 'pavement', 'tower', 'showers' and 'London' could all be used in far different contexts. Though it may seem pretentious to say that the haiku is meant to be 'life-enhancing', its associations may justify such an impression.

To conclude with a word of caution. Though most of the notes on which this article is based were made just after the completion of the haiku, in the growth of even a short poem, who is bold enough to affirm that he has accurately traced and faithfully set down the mental processes involved?

Season Corner: Summer

stormy summer's day
between peals of thunder;
the ice-cream man's bell

Brian Tasker

hot breezes drag
perfume from tall trees
evoking dreams

in the warmed shallows
urged by the tide
glistening pebbles move

challenging the waves
the children's excited screams
join with the gulls'

Ruth Robinson

quick zoom past of bee
adds distant hum to meadow
of warm July sounds

near tranquil water
a seed drifts quietly by
the woman writing

Annie Bachini

Season of foreign
students, bare breasts on the beach
and sand between toes

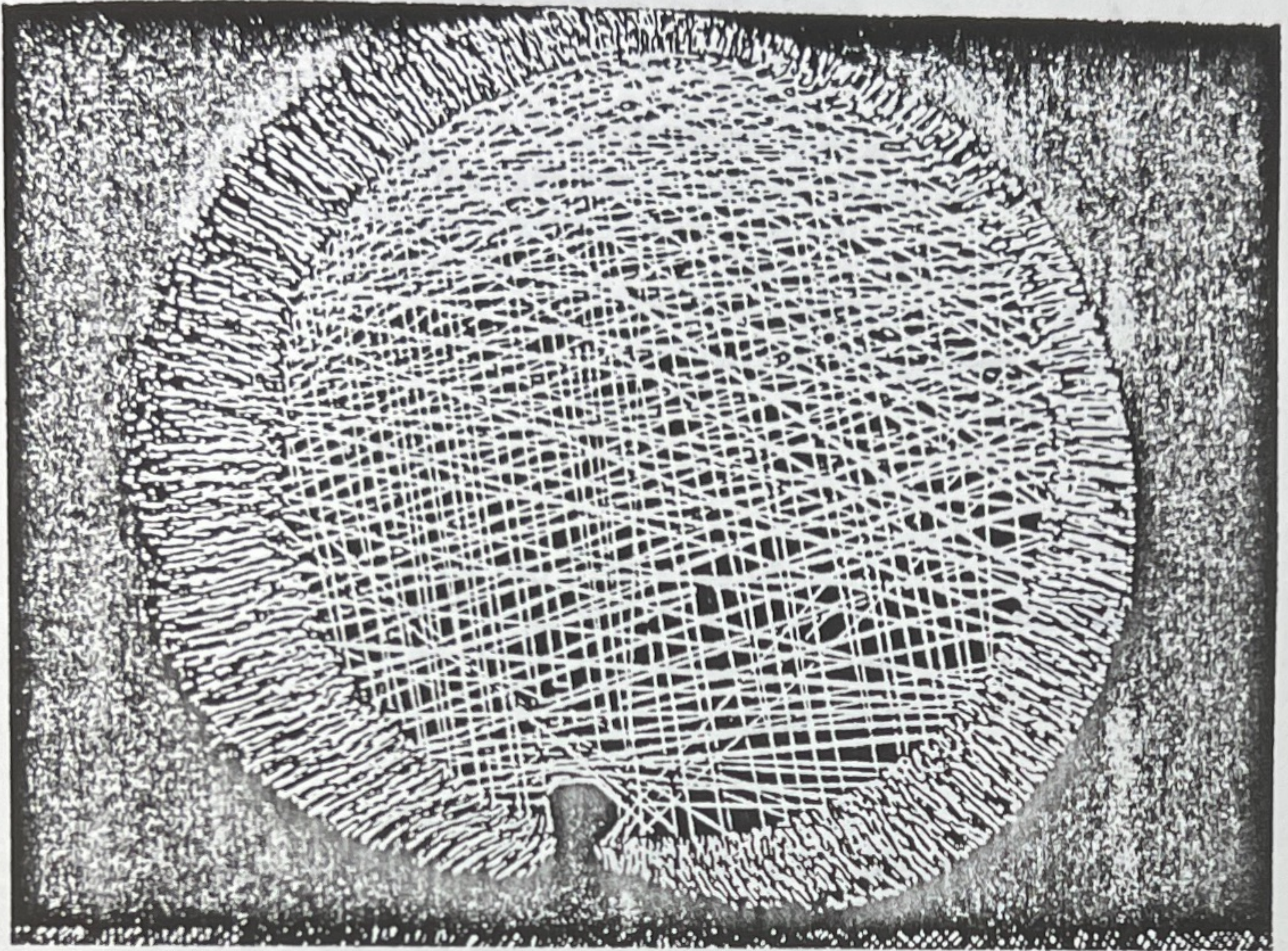
August foliage
has suffered middle age spread
and green double chins

Eric Speight

Eighty-four degrees -
butterflies lingering
after the sun sets

Joan Daniels

I caught sight of you
only when I opened wide
the cluttered summer



I saw a flower
unfurl before exploding.
It started summer.

Stanley Pelter

Waiting for the dawn.....
each breath brings me closer to
smells of honeysuckle

So close! the swallows
dip and turn at speed, just hairs
on my neck disturbed

Mohd. Ali Noor-Cashmore

in a passing car
just time to see
the batsman, out

hot summer night
music from open windows
a clap of thunder

after mosquitoes'
nocturnal whine; starting
the new day from scratch

after long hot days
reluctantly -
the night

Jackie Hardy

A bluebottle
pilots its corpulence
through my room

In the beechwood
unbearable beauty of
filtering sunlight

A naked woman
lies dreaming in summer shade:
compost heap seethes

Bruce Leeming

Grasshoppers converge
to gossip in the long grass
of a noon heatwave

G Cullum

Thunder
Before the rain...
And after the rain,
Thunder.

(Shwedagon Pagoda, Rangoon 9/77)

Secret corner:
Occasional sunlight
On the black lily.

(Chigasaki, Kanagawa 5/80)

Tito

The old water house
a swallow approaches and enters
an empty window

As evening falls
the clouds have come to a halt
time the mushrooms stirred

Sunlight on old brick
now towards the end of August
apples begin to colour

Sunlight and shadow
the cemetery gate rusting
keeps the passing days

Dermot O'Brien

Forest stillness
then a sudden roar of insects:
all the birds are dead

A dewdrop
sagging between thorns
hammocks a greenfly

Edward Glover

When the light goes on
the fragile legs of craneflies
dance on the ceiling

Pamela Johnson

finches song swings
from branch to branch
against a cerulean sky

wedding-cake back
of a swan glides into shade
under the iron bridge

leaves in the wind loud
as traffic, their undersides
up-lifted like hair

Adele Davide

Holiday lakeside -
Flotillas of serene geese
Gaggle of bikers

Dandelion seeds
And dragonflies thread the air
Between the kite strings

Susan Rowley

Time for Tanka

The book-safe's damp smell
decayed leather-bound Ledgers
fine copper-plate writing -
the only memorial
to how many long dead clerks?

I found her note books -
scribbled flower arrangements,
breathless handwriting
- someone's lectures verbatim -
and now there is only dust

Eric Speight

pointless arguments
hearing you put on your coat
and leave in the rain:
a shepherd on the skyline
stamps back and forth, back and forth

Elisabeth Bletsoe

Dew is on our sandals
a honed blade in our hands.
Today we shall find a bamboo
that has caught the melodies
of far-away flutes

Coiffured clipped
and elegant the poodle
walking with a slovenly old man
tugs hard at her lead
resenting his company

Edward D Glover

Serrations

Here in the valley
the wind rushes to its home
on the distant crag,
a torment whose banshee tones
await the luckless climber

G Cullum

they grow so fast!
their little shoes last only
a few months -
but she'll need no more now
dead in a bloodsoaked blanket

(In memory of Vedrana Glavas and the other child killed by snipers
when an attempt was made to get children from a Children's Home
in Sarajevo out to safety in Germany, August 1992)

M J Gunton

So time is after
All real, and life's mystery
Is a duration

Can it mean a thousand clocks
Will sing the millenium?

C P James

Cumulus clouds plod
From the western horizon,
Washing the gaunt hills
And coaxing the low flat plains
To show their lush verdant green

Kenneth W Brooks

Silhouetted reeds
Fishing the air for meaning,
As the clouds pass
Mirrored in rippling silver
A man nods over his creel

Susan Rowley

After the bath she
leans naked on the blue
window box: red blossoms
and two peeping breasts
pinkish in the evening light

Graham Ackroyd

continued on page 33

The Pathway

Ion Codrescu (Romanian) and Darko Plažanin (English)

după ploaie
frunzele de trifoi
își păstrează stropii

after the rain
every leaf of clover
keeps its drop

(from the anthology produced for the Constanta International Festival of Haiku, June 1992)

Marianne Kiauta (two tanka in Dutch and English)

twee, drie keer vannacht
keken we in elkaars ogen
de maan en ik --
kon je je armen uitstrekken
om me te beschermen

twice or thrice tonight
we looked into each other's eyes
the moon and I --
if she had arms,
would she fold them round me?

onbekommerd
zingt een merel de dag vaarwel -
met de laatste tonen
komt versluierd de maan op;
hoe verlang ik naar later

lustily carefree
a blackbird bids day farewell
with its last fluting
a veiled moon rises
how I long for later

Michael Facherty (English) and MJF/Jose Carillo (Spanish)

a rare night of Spring,
I lay down my pen and take up
love like a new task

que noche tan rara de la Primavera
en que la pluma yo suelto,
y tomo el amor como tarea nueva

Gabriel Rosenstock (Irish/English) and Hans-Christian Oeser (German)

cognaíonn tú
do bheol íochtair
uisce le m'fhiacra

biting your lower lip
you make my mouth
water for you

du beisst dir auf die unterlippe
und mir wässert
der mund nach dir

(from the collection entitled *Cold Moon*)

David Cobb (English) and Gabriel Rosenstock (Irish)

after the snowman
melts into the lawn --
picking up his smile

i ndiaidh don fhear sneachta
leá ar an bhfaiche --
a mheangadh á phiocadh suas

Marianne Kiauta (Dutch) and David Cobb (English)

in een driftbui
raakt zijn valse gebit los,
eventjes pauze

in a fit of rage
his false teeth come adrift -
a pause from shouting

Alain Kervern (French) and James Kirkup (English)

Il pleut noir
Les ombres s'accroupissent
Au fond de l'aube

Black rain
Shadows crouching
In the pit of dawn

David Cobb (English) and Marianne Kiauta (Dutch)

a little horned snail
with its incunabulum
ascends the boulder

de kleine hoorn-slak
met zijn incunabulum
beklimt de kei

(the English version was a winner in this year's Itoen Contest in Japan)

Time for Tanka (*from page 31*)

Moonlit shadows
are summer's ruined treasures.
We sigh
for lost tomorrows,
for love's inconstant pleasures,
and time's unvanishing sorrows

James Kirkup

Blind worm of anger
gnaws unceasing, feeds itself,
consumes and destroys,
yet may be guided into
wondrous creativity

Richard Goring

Three Part Renga

Geoffrey Daniel - Eric Speight - Joan Daniels

More snow on the wind -
the gullies of Ben Challum
shading into white

Daniel

the sheep slowly moving down
to shelter they remember

Speight

overweight with snow
the lowering sky bulges
against the mountain

Daniels

struggling to make ends meet -
old trousers in the New Year

Daniel

But see them waddling
trousered, line astern, coming
home with the shopping

Speight

The bus lumbers up the hill,
wheels protesting at each turn

Daniels

out from the edge, gulls
on the angle of the wind
circling their stillness

Daniel

In fog, the barge turns down stream
and topples off the world's end.

Speight

Orion sparkles
with Sirius at his heels,
for eternity

Daniels

looking into mine, your eyes
are the distance still to go

Daniel

“Go”, she said, “Get out!” -
and kept my bloody trousers -
frosty that night, too

Speight

In the gutter a dead cat;
beside it a child in tears

Daniels

My Mum and Dad laugh
at the daftest things - what fun
to be old! How strange

Daniel

You see, I'm a new boy here -
never been eighty before

Speight

Moments of magic:
moonlight and magnolias
in a minuet

Daniels

Salem, 1692 -
last dance on the short rope's end

Daniel

Cut them down, poor souls
Those who judged in God's name now
themselves stand condemned

Speight

Hell's melting pot boils fiercely
as the lost ones find their way

Daniels

navigation light
- enough for what maps we have -
heading into the dark

Daniel

But light, white light liberates
in a joy's silent singing

Speight

As free as the air -
birds sing, butterflies tango,
sunsets tint the sky

Daniels

one more turn in the garden -
chill, in a breeze from nowhere

Daniel





Hand Made
In
A Garden Shed
In
Bunyan Land