

fridays 4 future

THÉO STADE AVEC NOUS!

1930
ROSE MASH

Samkvæmt útgáfu samþykktar
teikna eða lista myndirna
Auglýsingar eða sé sem verður
verður krafist greiðslu fyrir
margvísun
Úr tilgrunni
Öllum þar að gæta þess að ganga vel um
ásmíðingarnetta eða þrýta. Þetta á alnig
ásmíðingarnetta. Á munnviki og þá
nema með leyfi
Efni gagn samþykkt þessari varða seldum
nema þingi selding liggj við
Myndavörðun



1

Mó... studöqum klukkan 12.

Blōo Outlier Journal issue 4
the senryu special
Winter 2022
editors Alan Summers & Pippa Phillips

Blōō Outlier Journal *senryu special* New Year's Eve (Winter) 2022 issue editors Alan Summers & Pippa Phillips

*If haiku has its 'aaaaaah'
then senryu has "oh" or "oh!"*

Blōō Outlier Journal senryu special

Winter 2022

Editor-in-chief Alan Summers

Guest editor Pippa Phillips

Cover: artwork/photograph©Alan Summers

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About guest editor Pippa Phillips

Pippa bio:

"Pippa Phillips writes short things and long things. She wishes she lived closer to the ocean."

Pippa can be found at:

@pippaesque on Instagram, Twitter, TikTok

Pippa Phillips was also a guest editor

for *failed haiku A Journal of English Senryu*

vol. 7 issue 78 (May 2022)

<https://failedhaiku.com/2022/05/31/dishing-up-issue-78/>

<https://www.haikuhut.com/FailedHaikuIssue78.pdf>

About Alan Summers

• <https://www.callofthepage.org/about-1/>

• <https://haikubasecamp.wordpress.com/2022/08/24/about-alan-summersfee/>

Blōō Outlier Journal link:

<https://haikubasecamp.wordpress.com/2022/10/23/the-blōō-outlier-journal-volumes/>

Contents

- The Process
- Alan's selected Senryu
- Pippa's selected Senryu
- **Independently Jointly selected Senryu**
- Alan's *The O of senryū*
- Pippa's *Thoughts About Senryu*

The Process

An experiment was carried out by me, Alan Summers, that both editors would make selections entirely on their own. The submission details were to submit 1-2 previously unpublished senryu (no theme was chosen) within the Submission dates of November 1st to November 20th 2022 (Tuesday 1st November to Sunday 20th November 2022).

As we might have different tastes as poets and editors the fun was that Bl̄ōō Outlier Journal would publish each editor's selection as a separate entity.

There would be times when there was an overlap and that would be fascinating, as well as when only one editor selects a senryu that the other editor did not select. There was no wrong decision, and it also gives the poet more than one shot at being accepted.

I created a word document once the deadline was passed, and then sent them to Pippa. We made independent choices in our selections. It was fascinating to receive Pippa's selection, and that we made both the same choices, and different ones, of course. The Joint Selection section is where we independently overlapped, and so this is an extra section.

Interestingly, in Pippa's deeply insightful article or 'thoughts' on senryu, each one of her chosen senryū to highlight appeared in the Joint Selection as well.

This process, and where the same senryu (and their authors by default) appear twice or even three times is unusual, hence 'outlier' in the journal's name. This isn't 'just' a single issue of the journal, but a hybrid combination of an investigation into some current approaches to senryū, and also an 'anthology' of a number of senryū.

Note: senryū is the singular AND the plural spelling!

You can also see the various choices through a colour code:

Alan's selection: **cayenne ink**

Pippa's selection: **midnight ink**

Joint selection: **plum ink**

It was a wonderful coincidence that the senryu Pippa selected for comments in her article were also joint selections!

Alan's Selection

not how I remember it creeping sepia

Pippa Phillips

reproducing the unconditional love of my mother ash clone

Pippa Phillips

derelict playground
ghost laughter echoes
of the school bully

Marion Clarke

nothing magic about the trip mushrooms

Marion Clarke

burning sage
for the shooting
in Colorado

Shonin

lesion biopsy--
she leaves her phone
on silent

Lafcadio

gathering my thoughts
on the terrace at dawn
yours are here too

Henryk Czempiel

barbie doll
the one and only playmate
i never owned

Kala Ramesh

promising the world climate change

Robyn Cairns

her coat no longer on the hook

Margaret Walker

in this rough and tumble my blanketosis

Arvinder Kaur

magpie wallpaper
the room comes alive
with tittle-tattle

Bona M. Santos

even as yellow iris bloom those that suffer

Norma Bradley

Mom's silent outrage
the nursing home widow slides
her hands down dad's back

Shelli Jankowski-Smith

bulking up...
the cotton bulge
in my blue light specials

Peg Cherrin-Myers

my first impression...
his red palomino
riding baby's back

Peg Cherrin-Myers

toy doctor kit the girl sticks out her tongue mid-war

Marcie Wessels

theurgetodoeverythingnow

Chidambar Navalgund

on the chopping board
a row of walnut halves
resembling miniature brains

Sylvia Lees

election flyer
paper and policies
recycled

Nick T

low alcohol lager
I worry about
the sugar content

Nick T

in her room now empty threadbare sun

Susan King

divorce papers
both sign
in the same blue

Daya Bhat

moonbow
at the kitchen window
mom's shadow

Hifsa Ashraf

reaching home
a snowman
in the mirror

Joanna Ashwell

fragile content
skipping the birthday again
due to health issues

Deborah Karl-Brandt

dime store turtle
life span
in a box of flakes

Barrie Levine

online obituary
the finality
of closed comments

Barrie Levine

cemetery jog
deciding where
to go

Laurie D. Morrissey

clerk checks her id
she credits
the botox

Kerry J Heckman

turncoat debate...
my son
takes his father's side

Baisali Chatterjee Dutt

when loneliness
is greater than the miles
clicking on 'buy'

Claire Vogel Camargo

the screech of brakes
suddenly becoming
bystanders

John Pappas

Christmas choir
foundation cream hides
her bruise

Ravi Kiran

plaiting hair
grandma pulls in
her curling giggles

Minal Sarosh

all of the raspberries
with grandson
on tiptoe

Neena Singh

first time singing
with parents...
the little girl slows down

Yasir Farooq

once more around the dance floor IV pole

Lorraine A Padden

dawn hearing my anxiety before birdsong

Engin Gülez

sleepless night tossing and turning my options

Ruchita Madhok

every few minutes a new vocabulary of breathing

Shloka Shankar

gaslighting notions a multiverse of

Tazeen Fatma

cold toilet seat
this broken economy
keeps biting

Robert Kingston

in this world
even the hippo that wears a tutu
sweats blood

Patrick Sweeney

museum visit –
the small boy's trail
of his missing father

Amoolya Kamalnath

tapping the edges
of my mother's hourglass
to pass the time

Mark Forrester

in memoriam
using the adjectives
I had failed to say

Geethanjali Rajan

scintillating
pillow talk. . .
Siri with me

Meera Rehm

shooting stars the right to bear arms

Elisa Theriana

he calls me a ho green giant

Susan Burch

#mondayblues I play the world's smallest violin for myself

Susan Burch

eulogy
only we know
our truth

Vandana Parashar

just when I think
I understand her
enigma machine

Bryan Rickert

holding the door ajar filled with thoughts

Eavonka Ettinger

dealing with
a lot of tension
bra strap snaps

Eavonka Ettinger

his great-grandson
newly born
no one tells him

Maureen Weldon

waiting to hear
the name of my mother...
annual bereavement mass

Maya Daneva

ostracised I change my will

Paul Beech

self-adhesive name label new every day

Marcie Wessels

a name change
for potter's field
we're all janes

Lorraine Pester

tequila shots
the grizzled gringo hits on
a gang member's girl

Lorraine Pester

doffing his cap
coming into the silence
among us

Mike Gallagher

Christmas Eve—
vintage port and stilton
with Marley in chains

Jo Balistreri

the dog park
sniffing each other
out

Jo Balistreri

pie piper...
even the blind mice
smell the coffee

Susan Beth Furst

Aunt Lula's apple butter
I, too, use a cauldron
creeping sepia

Susan Beth Furst

moon shadow
the blue sound
of our silence

Isabella Kramer

handle with care first snowflakes

Eva Limbach

lingering war
in my timeline
latest lifehacks

Eva Limbach

qualmageddon
I leave my bedroom
apocalypse-ready

David J. Kelly

black on white
the summing up when
pawn turns queen

Subir Ningthouja

family gathering
room full of people
and elephants

Tomislav Sjekloća

just married
we name our cars
Romeo and Juliet

Richa Sharma

children bearing children unbearable

Tracy Davidson

the club I don't belong to yet obituaries

Bruce H. Feingold

superman coffin yet another mass (shooting)

Debbie Strange

I'm not dead
why so nosy
autumn flies?

Christopher Jupp

painstakingly sketched
for visitors, not to scale
hospital floorplan

Sheila Barksdale

shifting tides
the maternity ward
over the mortuary

John Hawkhead

a relic from the war ...
his steel-plated Bible
the bullet hit

Joseph P. Wechselberger

vitamin jars
planning my own
surprise party

Mike Fainzilber

dried up river
another padlock
on the bridge

petro c. k.

shadows on the wall chasing sleep

Clive Bennett

morning window—
the declawed cat watches
a pigeon

Keiko Izawa

september skyscraper
the stylist viewing
an undressed fuji

Keiko Izawa

spring breeze . . .
the jungle-green
of a plastic bag

Hemapriya Chellappan

victim victimizer accordion people

Jerome Berglund

-end of Alan's choices-

Pippa's Selection

Pippa placed an asterisk against some poems she also particularly liked, though not every senryu could be examples in her essay.

disenchanted
my all put in
a peach cobbler

Shonin

lesion biopsy–
she leaves her phone
on silent

Lafcadio

walking with one
who pauses at every step
i learn to slow breathe

Kala Ramesh

son's death
her unexpected
constellation

Ella Aboutboul

loud sirens
the opinions
I deem necessary

Vidhi Ashar

city graffiti—
once a while a voice
among gibberish

AJ Anwar *

the all-too-familiar body language puppet show

Arvinder Kaur

even as yellow iris bloom those that suffer

Norma Bradley

Anesthesia room
getting wheeled out I offer
news from far away

Shelli Jankowski-Smith *

vitamin jars
planning my own
surprise party

Mike Fainzilber

word flies in my google doc

Chidambar Navalgund *

before Zoom meet—

I pluck

my chin hair

Stella Pierides *

colours of the rainbow pills on her nightstand

Susan King *

coins tossing
in the busker's bowl
afternoon wind

Hifsa Ashraf

beach-side stroll
our footprints on sand
as if we didn't

Hla Yin Mon*

online obituary
the finality
of closed comments

Barrie Levine

book club
we discuss
mammograms

Kerry J Heckman

girl talk...
I overhear my sons
discuss their crushes

Baisali Chatterjee Dutt

the slower click
of her worn castanets
his no-show
 again

Claire Vogel Camargo

holiday party
explaining again
about our miscarriage

John Pappas

the scent
of what is left of me
petrichor

Ravi Kiran

elopement
the family picture
she takes along

Minal Sarosh

grandpa is a horse
the old dog runs
alongside

Neena Singh

tangled in highwires
the frantic flutter
of a kite

Meraki

reverberating in mayamalavagowla first home

Raghav Prashant Sundar *

mayamalavagowla =
The first raagam (melodic scale) that is taught to students of Carnatic music.
—Raghav Prashant Sundar

genetically predisposed the death of a daughter

Raghav Prashant Sundar *

eggsitstense

Engin Gülez

the weight of
our fossil fuel habit
lashing rain

Ruchita Madhok

the slow ripening of a poem selah

Shloka Shankar

delicate curves of a seed pod speculum

Lorraine A Padden *

adjusting my line of sight world affairs

Tazeen Fatma

the cold breath
on my neck
jury duty

C.X.Turner

full moon tide
she pulls the blanket
over her head

Robert Kingston

wait until the leaves are done talking

Patrick Sweeney *

drip drip drip
the kitchen faucet
and you

Bonnie J Scherer

final diagnosis –
the doctor misspells
my name

Geethanjali Rajan

Walden Pond . . .
only two bars
on my phone

Mark Forrester *

nebula the birth of a new word permacrisis

Meera Rehm *

second marriage
he likes his eggs
over easy

Elisa Theriana

as if another donut would help this solitude

Bryan Rickert *

eulogy
only we know
our truth

Vandana Parashar

cocktail sun
stringing along a birdsong
her bikini

Lorelyn De la Cruz Arevalo

he recalls
his first mescaline trip
summer heat

John S Green

toy doctor kit the girl sticks out her tongue mid-war

Marcie Wessels

another summer wishing i was born in a different era

Sankara Jayanth Sudanagunta

election...

what does the other side think
of cherry blossoms?

Sankara Jayanth Sudanagunta

ontologically perched
atop *The Language of God*
a desiccated fly

Marianne Paul *

the scent
of my ancestral home
in a new home

Ram Chandran

a brief kiss
on the way
shift changeover

Subir Ningthouja

grandparents' place
this floor used to be
lava

Tomislav Sjekloća *

festival riots
I hide God
in the closet

Richa Sharma *

third rock
another marriage
that won't last

Tracy Davidson

new moon the back of my head walking away

Cynthia Anderson *

peeling the scars off the body politic

Debbie Strange

after birdwatching the roast chicken

Bruce H. Feingold

midges flying into a sentence

Christopher Jupp *

online radio
yet another ad
for boner pills

Chris Langer

lonely night
the mosquito knows
everything about me

Bakhtiyar Amini*

blood moon
dad warns my sister
about boys like me

John Hawkhead *

that scratchy sound a record makes
before the song starts ...
burial day

Joseph P. Wechselberger

her coat no longer on the hook

Margaret Walker

mass extinction . . .
a row of taillights
to the megachurch

petro c. k.

senryu
-ish *

Roberta Beach Jacobson

scattered peas—
I try to bring together
parts of me

Mona Bedi

mirror store —
everywhere I look
me

Bill Waters

family movie night —
everybody
double-screening

Bill Waters

divorce papers
both sign
in the same blue

Daya Bhat *

of daughters –
raise birds, not bubbles
says grandma

Daya Bhat

-end of Pippa's choices-

Independently Jointly selected Senryu

disenchanted
my all put in
a peach cobbler

Shonin

blood moon
dad warns my sister
about boys like me

John Hawkhead

unwanted fondles end-tunnel lights are fake news

Pris Campbell

that scratchy sound a record makes
before the song starts ...
burial day

Joseph P. Wechselberger

her coat no longer on the hook

Margaret Walker

assisted living anything but

Marilyn Ashbaugh

before roe after wade wire hanger

Marilyn Ashbaugh

mass extinction . . .
a row of taillights
to the megachurch

petro c. k.

senryu
-ish

Roberta Beach Jacobson

scattered peas—
I try to bring together
parts of me

Mona Bedi

mirror store —
everywhere I look
me

Bill Waters

family movie night —
everybody
double-screening

Bill Waters

New Year's Day
sky on the winter napkins
is different

Michael Lindenhof

son's death
her unexpected
constellation

Ella Aboutboul

divorce papers
both sign
in the same blue

Daya Bhat

six washing machines . . .
his medical aprons
are still dirty

Bipasha Majumder (De)

book club
we discuss
mammograms

Kerry J Heckman

second marriage
he likes his eggs
over easy

Elisa Theriana

as if another donut would help this solitude

Bryan Rickert

over you
I choose myself
over you

Vandana Parashar

cocktail sun
stringing along a birdsong
her bikini

Lorelyn De la Cruz Arevalo

he recalls
his first mescaline trip
summer heat

John S Green

the dog park
sniffing each other
out

Jo Balistreri

all alone—
the old watering can
by mother's grave

Isabella Kramer

onyx moon rising his final last smoke

Helen Buckingham

beach sunset
an orange lifebelt
just in case

Keith Evetts

men o pause the red signal counts down

Lakshmi Iyer

another summer wishing i was born in a different era

Sankara Jayanth Sudanagunta

election...
what does the other side think
of cherry blossoms?

Sankara Jayanth Sudanagunta

ontologically perched
atop *The Language of God*
a desiccated fly

Marianne Paul

a brief kiss
on the way
shift changeover

Subir Ningthouja

grandparents' place
this floor used to be
lava

Tomislav Sjekloća

old coast road
turning
to when there was no road

Lee Hudspeth

closing time
the wishing well's wishes
all let go

Lee Hudspeth

the last pastry
left on the tray ...
good manners

Daniela Misso

cold war
father and I
talk trivia

Christa Pandey

festival riots
I hide God
in the closet

Richa Sharma

toy doctor kit the girl sticks out her tongue mid-war

Marcie Wessels

spring breeze . . .
the jungle-green
of a plastic bag

Hemapriya Chellappan

girl talk...
I overhear my sons
discuss their crushes

Baisali Chatterjee Dutt

the slower click
of her worn castanets
his no-show
again

Claire Vogel Camargo

holiday party
explaining again
about our miscarriage

John Pappas

loud sirens
the opinions
I deem necessary

Vidhi Ashar

city graffiti—
once a while a voice
among gibberish

AJ Anwar

the all-too-familiar body language puppet show

Arvinder Kaur

Anesthesia room
getting wheeled out I offer
news from far away

Shelli Jankowski-Smith

vitamin jars
planning my own
surprise party

Mike Fainzilber

before Zoom meet—
I pluck
my chin hair

Stella Pierides

colours of the rainbow pills on her nightstand

Susan King

beach-side stroll
our footprints on sand
as if we didn't

Hla Yin Mon

online obituary
the finality
of closed comments

Barrie Levine

genetically predisposed the death of a daughter

Raghav Prashant Sundar

final diagnosis –
the doctor misspells
my name

Geethanjali Rajan

delicate curves of a seed pod speculum

Lorraine A Padden

adjusting my line of sight world affairs

Tazeen Fatma

the cold breath
on my neck
jury duty

C.X.Turner

wait until the leaves are done talking

Patrick Sweeney

drip drip drip
the kitchen faucet
and you

Bonnie J Scherer

midges flying into a sentence

Christopher Jupp

into the fountain
the last leaf falls -
too soft to break the sun

Deborah A. Bennett

Planet Pizza...
I am cleared
for landing

Tony Williams

moorland rain
the nuclear plant
just miles away

Tony Williams

online radio
yet another ad
for boner pills

Chris Langer

a long night alone
no moon or star twinkles
no cat in my lap

Linda L Ludwig

lonely night
the mosquito knows now
everything about me

Bakhtiyar Amini

farmhouse party
in every table
a cucurbit flask

Mallika Chari

autistic son
every jigsaw piece
has a place

Marilyn Humbert

new moon the back of my head walking away

Cynthia Anderson

peeling the scars off the body politic

Debbie Strange

late strawberries
suddenly too late
to dance the cha cha

Anna Maria Domburg-Sancristoforo

pianissimo
the grammar of my autumn days

Anna Maria Domburg-Sancristoforo

after birdwatching the roast chicken

Bruce H. Feingold

nocturnal emissions
howls of canyon coyotes
keep coming

Scott Wiggerman

Walden Pond . . .
only two bars
on my phone

Mark Forrester

nebula the birth of a new word permacrisis

Meera Rehm

elopement
the family picture
she takes along

Minal Sarosh

eggsitstense

Engin Gülez

the weight of
our fossil fuel habit
lashing rain

Ruchita Madhok

**END
of
the joint “overlapped”
choices**

A child wearing a dark jacket and a patterned hat is sitting inside a large, yellow, ring-shaped sculpture. The sculpture is mounted on a pedestal. In the background, there is a street with a silver car, a building, and a sign that says "Geirsgata". The sky is clear and blue.

The

O of Senryū

The O of senryū

by Alan Summers

*If haiku has ‘ah’ or ‘aaah’
senryu has “oh” or “oh!”*

Senryū writers can break a lot of perceived rules. I'd say if a senryū writer wishes to include or exclude kire, ma—間, and seasonal references, then they are free to do so. Senryū is about pinning something down about human society, and sometimes to tweak the nose of haiku writers of course.

And of course senryū tackle politics and politicians as they impact the planet and not only human issues. Senryū can be another way about ‘talking’ about politics, which is ripe for satire.

*bobbing apples
I imagine
my political rival*

Alan Summers

Joint 3rd, Private Ohio Zoom Kukai (December 2022)

Bobbing apples can be associated with the Celtic festival Samhain, or with Halloween.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Apple_bobbing

See how even the hokku & haiku use of seasonal references can actually be used for senryū as a parallel device to drive home a satirical image.

War is a topic that both haiku and senryu tackle, as the growing pains of haiku came about when protesting against Japan’s decision to enter WWII (look up the New Rising Haiku movement in Japan). Now that we are into the hybrid era(s) of WWIII, both haiku and senryu continue to be obliged to show and even remind some of us:

*melting snow
a child's only drink
with invasion*

Women, children and other non-combatants are lucky, if they can emerge from bunkers and apartment blocks, to access any snow to melt into drinking water. Many die of dehydration. Is this haiku or senryū, as melting snow (雪解け yukidoke) is a mid-spring kigo? Here it's a vital act to melt snow, with fire as there'll likely be no electricity, to drink, and also cook, as water pipes have been destroyed by an act of war/attrition.

*do bullets
go to heaven?
snow angels*

How many humans, including children become permanent roadside snow angels for all the wrong reasons?

*the swear box
becomes a cough box
dwindling change*

We have built up resistance against Sars-Covid-19 virus yet we are still vulnerable to anyone who inconsiderately coughs close to us, or coughs or sneezes into any small to medium retail outlet or home. A cough now means it's more likely to be Sars/Covid, or equally deadly influenza, with coronavirus common cold in close second place.

Haiku and hokku poems have their own humour. Here there is an outdoor toilet, with its roof caved in, and cobwebs have criss-crossed its missing ceiling space and the sky.

*the old dunny's roof
no longer holding out the sky–
moonlit cobwebs*

Alan Summers

3rd Prize, Canadian Writer's Journal poetry competition (1995)

Publication credits:

Canadian Writer's Journal Vol 12 No.3 (1995)

haijinx - *haiku with humor* vol. I issue 1 (spring 2001)

A mention of the moon places this haiku firmly into Autumn. There is the suggestion of the human species with ‘dunny’ (Australian slang) but the rest of nature has taken over from the human occupation, or even complimented if a stray human uses the facilities, with a free panoramic view of the stars. Of course as haiku has its own humour, so senryu does too, and this might be a haiku but it’s close to being a senryū as we have the topic of a toilet. In this case an outdoor toilet (dunny) without a roof, and we might wonder how the walls will remain standing, and if an unlucky individual was caught out in more ways than one. I can see this haikai verse flipping between haiku and senryū so perhaps it’s a chūkan (中間/third/intermediate) type of using overt humour dangling between the two genres (hokku/haiku and senryū).

I’ve included some senryu from Blōō Outlier Journal guest editor Pippa Phillips to highlight.

All of the interpretations are by me, alone, and how they impact me as I read them.

*missed call–
the spaces between
the tulips you sent*

Pippa Phillips

failed haiku A Journal of English Senryu

Volume 6, Issue 68 ed. bryan rickert

July 2021

<https://failedhaiku.com/2021/07/31/issue-68-is-up-and-we-have-another-co-editor/>

We have the addition of a Spring season reference, and that a specific flower is given, which has various symbology, often sad, as well as other meanings. We have a missed telephone call and apparently no voice or text message was sent as a follow up, except we have a delivery of flowers, namely tulips, which can be symbolic of passion/love or an allusion to Romeo and Juliet, or martyrdom/protest.

The sender might have a different version of what tulips symbolise to the receiver of the flowers. Sometimes we need to clearly communicate and not leave spaces that are not easily interpreted correctly. This is my own interpretation, and I do find “the spaces between’ haunting when we also have that ‘missed call’ and the past tense version ‘sent’ instead of a more possible present tense ‘send’ which could feel positive.

pulling the wings off my daddy issues

Pippa Phillips

Prune Juice Journal for English Senryu & Related Forms

Issue 37 – Senryu & Kyoka (July 2022) ed. Tia Haynes

<https://prunejuicesenryu.com/2022/07/31/issue-37-senryu-amp-kyoka/>

It's almost impossible for some of us to be free of parental issues. The cliché sometimes is that daughters are close to fathers, and sons closer to their mothers. If any of those relationships are not healthy. Some of the internet research results were not really useful, and I felt this was more objective and non-judgemental: <https://www.healthline.com/health/what-are-daddy-issues>

The unexpectedness that follows the phrase “pulling the wings off” works exceptionally well. We see how important it is to get the order right, as this wouldn't work half as powerfully “my daddy issues” & “pulling the wings off” as the published poem.

the last lilacs— adjusting the purple of my prose

Pippa Phillips

Prune Juice Issue 35 – Senryu & Kyoka ed. Tia Haynes November 2021

<https://prunejuicesenryu.com/2021/11/05/issue-35-senryu-kyoka/>

Purple prose is the over-the-top flowery prose text that can interfere with a narrative flow by drawing so much attention to the over-perfumed phrasing. Here is another senryū that uses flowers. If lilacs symbolize first love, then perhaps the opening line is the very last chance or experience of love. Lilacs may be a Spring flower, though they bloom April through to June. Selecting very carefully it's possible to have those two months of bloom in Spring though.

The last two lines suggest that perhaps this poem's protagonist, whether a writer in romance novels, or a poet, is looking back on their life, perhaps regret, or embellishing, or perhaps being more realistic and pragmatic. Perhaps the purple prose is no longer required and they have something substantial in their lives now. A fascinating senryū.

*a week
and it still won't blossom—
watercolor practice*

Pippa Phillips

Prune Juice Issue 34 – Senryu & Kyoka July 2021 ed. Tia Haynes

<https://prunejuicesenryu.com/2021/07/01/issue-34-senryu-kyoka/>

This senryū suggests the author or protagonist is hoping that a piece of self-created artwork will stand in place for failed green fingers perhaps? It may be that they are learning the art of watercolour painting and cannot conquer it in a matter of days, just like we cannot control a lot of things.

*through a window—
the neighbor's window*

Pippa Phillips, USA

Prune Juice Issue 33 – Senryu & Kyoka

March 2021 ed. Tia Haynes

<https://prunejuicesenryu.com/2021/03/01/issue-33-senryu-kyoka/>

This senryū is a highly successful *duostich* where we might want at least one more line, but that's left up to us. There's an echo of Alfred Hitchcock's *Rear Window* based on "It Had to Be Murder" a story by Cornell Woolrich (as William Irish) published in *Magazine* (February 1942). It's an excellent "starter" or "ender" to a short story or even a novel too! Of course this could be social comment about overcrowded housing, and that despite other choices, often cheap housing packs people together unnecessarily closely.

*sudden rain—
I open an umbrella
inside me*

Pippa Phillips

failed haiku: A Journal of English Senryu

vol 7, Issue 82 guest editor: hemapriya chellappan

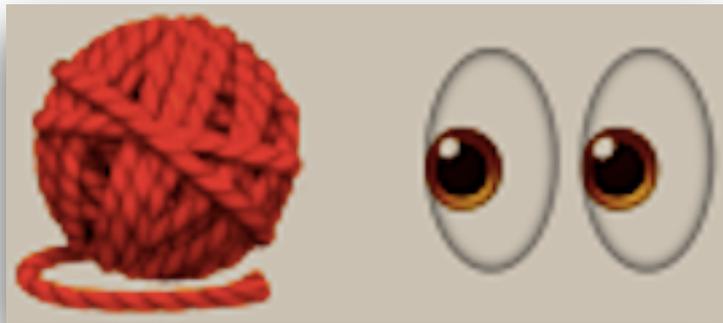
(September 2022)

<https://failedhaiku.files.wordpress.com/2022/09/failedhaikuissue82.pdf>

Senryū (singular and plural spelling) cover a wide spectrum of human physical acts, but also of introspection, and both of these effects on the wider world, and how we sometimes experience nature other than in certain determined manners. The use of what appears to be surrealism is to suggest a greater truth. Has the author been caught out by the rain and wishes they a better choice of clothing, so much so, that they “open an umbrella inside” of themselves. Or has the rain brought on melancholy.

Here, we have the natural phenomenon of rain, and it’s unexpected, so far this feels like a haiku, which continues to feel that way into the second line of the tercet. Senryū need not worry about a third line acting as a surprise, which some haiku writers like to create. The last line here feels like a René Magritte visual, making the unseeable into something visible in a constructive and poetical manner.

For instance, opening an umbrella indoors is considered bad luck as it’s disrespecting the Sun God but here the umbrella is not opened ‘indoors’ as per a building, but emotionally and connectively inside the internal workings of the poet. Magritte’s method was of severing perceived relationships from their expected nature, and revealing language as traps and uncertainties. Perhaps the author or protagonist requires protection from the elements, and is symbolism for the confusing bouquets and brickbats (praise, then taken away, replaced by barbs and slurs made in public or behind a person’s back).



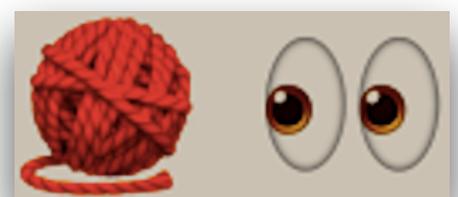
Senryu

(singular and plural spelling) can be a tricky area as more research uncovers it’s not as simplistic as we assumed, but a loose description that might apply to Western (but not necessarily Japanese practice) might be that it unearths, unpeels, or observes human society activity at its most vulnerable. Sometimes showing or talking directly about the elephant in the room.

—Alan Summers

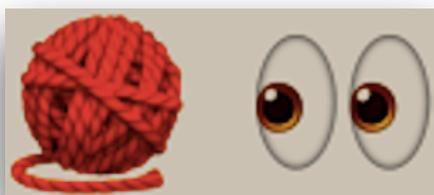
“Senryu is about humanity, with all its warts, or despite them.”

Alan Summers



Senryu characteristics:

Downright satirical; social commentary; latest human society topics, fads, trends, bloopers.
Parody or visceral examination and even self-examination.
Inappropriate humour/appropriate humour, irrepressible humour.
Disparaging, poker face sardonicism, irony, sarcasm.
Atrocities in war and politics.



Senryu often relies on:

社会思想

Shakai shisō

(thoughts on society)

社会への洞察

Shakai e no dōsatsu

(insight into society)

Makoto Ueda (1931–2020), author of fifteen books about Japanese poetry, former Professor Emeritus of Japanese literature at Stanford University, felt that this was one of the most famous senryu of all time:

役人の子和にぎにぎおよく覚え

anonymous

pub. Yanagidaru vol. 1 (1765)

Romanised (romaji) version:

yakunin no ko wa ni ginigi o yoku oboe

Alan Summers: Alternative version

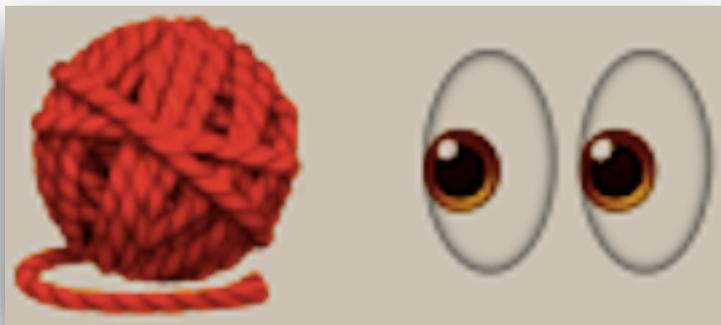
the official's young son quickly quickly he grabs each bribe

Makoto Ueda considered that the original mocked the government official for his over-enthusiasm to take bribes which his really young son also rapidly learns to copycat.

役人の子わ
yakunin no ko wa
son of an official

にぎにぎおよく覚え
ni ginigi o yoku oboe
grasp/grab & remember well

“*niginigi*” a derivative of “*nigiru*”: “to grab” “grasp” or “to grip,”



“Senryu are short aftertastes like *amuse-gueule*, or small arms visual gunfire, and potent as a longer satirical poem. But they can also be bittersweet, ironic, poignant, truthful, painfully revealing verses and I feel think honesty has an even higher register in senryu, if thoughtfully done. Senryu verse can act as vital checks and balances in our own lives: It feeds a need of a different place than haiku.”



curious haïjin
pull the tails
of old dragons
and roar

Fuller

“...astounding volume...the most tangled of dilemmas is best unraveled
by the women of this world” —Liam Wilkinson,
Former Editor, *Prune Juice*.

“Like a woman, this book is an artful treasure that can truly be called a
modern classic, aesthetically pleasing and emotionally rousing...”
—Dianne Collins, Award-winning author of *Do You QuantumThink?*
New Thinking That Will Rock Your World.

“This book’s bittersweet, ironic, poignant, truthful, and painfully
revealing verses will delight the taste buds of readers...”
—Alan Summers, *Japan Times* award-winning writer;
Editor, *Notes From the Gean*.

“thought-provoking, creative, charming, and page-turning”
—Jennifer Lawler, award-winning author of the Dojo Wisdom series.



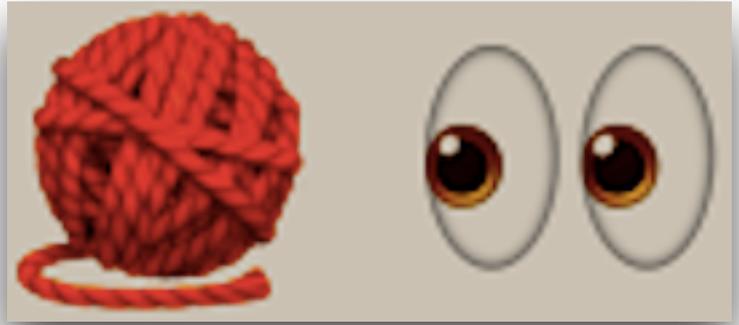
Alan Summers from:

Pieces of Her Mind: Women Find Their Voice in Centuries-Old Forms
Omega Publications (2012) ed. Susan Galletti Campion *et al*

<https://poetrysociety.org.nz/affiliates/haiku-nz/haiku-poems-articles/archived-articles/womens-voice-senryu-has-its-place/>

<https://www.amazon.co.uk/Pieces-Her-Mind-Multiple-Contributors/dp/0985035064>

There are so many favourites it's impossible to list them all, but here are just a few:



self-adhesive name label new every day

Marcie Wessels

Identity has always been important, however we see it, or perhaps don't notice it in a safe or even privileged environment. I'd say even in what is still termed as 'normal' we tend to stick a label on ourselves in different situations (any kind of shared living, parents, students, tenant or friend's groups etc...), work, and of course social, and all the little in-between situations that arise daily or sporadically depending on whom we meet by accident or design. I'm also reminded of *revertigo* where you meet someone from the past and you revert to a personality trait and set of mannerisms from years ago: Even if we are middle-aged we might revert back to insecurities as a teenager etc... Or a pack mentality defence mechanism or just an immaturity or vulnerability we thought we had escaped from, and matured.

toy doctor kit the girl sticks out her tongue mid-war

Marcie Wessels

This is an incredibly vivid piece, with that remarkable "*sticks out her tongue mid-war*" if we approached it with no specific gender, or recognise the male-dominated creation of war, where often women of all ages will work in a manner to bring the conflict to an end: "the girl sticks out her tongue mid-war."

To be honest, the line "the girl sticks out her tongue mid-war" is enough to be a *senryū* of high quality in itself. Then we have the joyful, positive, and yet poignant "toy doctor kit" when we know many people when adults choose the non-combative version of civilian or military medical services. Here a girl chooses her game to be positive, whether she dreams of being a doctor (nurse, surgeon etc...) when she is older. And what is "mid-war"? Is it a time of no war (yet) or a temporary truce or other cessation, or simply bang in the middle of the war, missiles, bullets, bombs, tanks etc... and she has the determined desire to play a game and one of healing. Very powerful *senryū*.

the screech of brakes
suddenly becoming
bystanders

John Pappas

Things can happen very very quickly even in 'normal' civilian situations. A bus, coach, car, bicycle, or motorbike can be part of a terrible road traffic accident. We might be on foot, shopping, or sat down at a café, somewhere in peacetime, even, and from being a passive consumer we become an active participant, a witness, hopefully unharmed. Things can turn on a dime or sixpence, anywhere, anytime. Great word choices 'screech' 'suddenly' and 'bystanders' brought together by 'becoming'.

all of the raspberries
with grandson
on tiptoe

Neena Singh

I can almost feel myself on tiptoe as well. I never knew any of my grandparents but have met thousands in action and know how special they can be. Here a grandparent is having fun with their grandson, both as an adult guardian but also to share a childhood both gone and one still happening. The approach to this poem is longest line first, and it's almost as if the line lengths mimic a tree's shape.

There's more to this, as the information is given in a poetic order, involving us, rather than 'telling' us something as a passive bystander. If I reversed the poem into a short long short tercet (3-line verse):

*on tiptoe
all of the raspberries
with a grandson*

We'd need to add 'a' or 'my' or 'the' before grandson otherwise it's a bit of a clunky line. In the original, poetically we do not need something before 'grandson':

If I stretch out the first two lines:

all of the raspberries with grandson

Reading those first two lines, but as two lines, it's a rich and involving phrase already. All three lines over a single line:

all of the raspberries with grandson on tiptoe

A wonderful line, but Neena Singh has astutely used 'enjambment' where the breaking of the poem over different lines creates a stronger tension. Those first two glorious lines giving us a family image are shot up several notches by the third and last line of 'on tiptoe'.

There's a lot of craft in a simple image of two generations fruit-picking!

first time singing
with parents...
the little girl slows down

Yasir Farooq

The wonder and trepidation of a first time is simply but wonderfully captured here. Another example of an unusual order of line lengths, and an astute judgement with each line using enjambment. The longest line being the last line is vital. Always be wary of too much linear logic, as we are dealing with poetry first, enabling a flow of information in its pace and order. If logically written out, and being controlled by the perceived short long short line order:

first time singing...
the little girl slows down
with parents

This is an okay poem, but there is always room to push our poetry muscles. The choice of ellipsis in the original is far more than a simple pause, it allows the reader to engage in the first few shy and awkward moments of the really young girl before we reach that next and last line. Is she slowing down as she was singing too quickly, due to nerves, or that her parents are singing a little too slowly, in general, or that they too are a little shy and stumbling over the song lines? I feel there is an immense amount of teamwork being suggested between parents and their very young daughter, where both generations benefit.

her coat no longer on the hook

Margaret Walker

The words 'no longer' will often carry a deeply poignant tag of loss. As my family have suffered another loss this is all the more sad for me. How the belongings of a lost one, who has died, will often have their clothing and other belongings packed away, some given to surviving loved ones, and perhaps much will be passed onto charities. This is a good case for slowing reading the piece instead of a rush from start to end. A rush reading might just give us the idea of someone doesn't have their coat on a hook therefore they have temporarily gone out on a trip.

Pause reading can be a useful device to gain more from a poem:

her coat /pause/ no longer /pause/ on the hook

once more around the dance floor IV pole

Lorraine A Padden

A song of defiance and freedom perhaps for one who is gravely ill but will not let something medically limiting to deny them a dance, even around a hospital ward.

NOTE:

IV poles, or intravenous poles, are medical devices designed as a slender iron or aluminum portable pole with adjustable height, a 4-5 wheeled base for stability, and 2 to 4 hooks on the pole top that provides a secure place to hang bags of medicine or fluid for administration to a patient.

The phrase 'once more' is potentially poignant, and in conjunction with 'once more around the dance floor' might only mean the venue is about to close for the night. Yet the last two words change everything:

once more around the dance floor // IV pole

Here the device of leaving IV pole are necessary, rather than bring it to the front of the senryū.

cold toilet seat
this broken economy
keeps biting

Robert Kingston

Here the first three words are better at the front of the poem rather than:

*this broken economy
keeps biting
cold toilet seat*

or

this broken economy keeps biting cold toilet seat

Sometimes the vital sting in the poem are best served up front, sometimes as the very last words.

The genre of senryū will of course attract an aspect of the toilet, when we are most vulnerable and undignified. What better than to combine that topic with that of politics, and its boast of safeguarding a country's economy, allegedly. Using 'cold' and 'broken' with 'biting' really brings in texture that adds to the humour and reality of the situation.

museum visit –
the small boy's trail
of his missing father

Amoolya Kamalnath

This poem grabbed me very quickly. A child and a missing father, where both may be panicking on what would be an ordinary visit to somewhere. What's brilliantly achieved here is the avoiding of plain telling which leaves the reader little to do except be passive. Instead, the boy is leaving a trail, unintentionally perhaps, while frantically looking for his father. The trail maybe the sound of his close to hysterical voice, or a mixture of things, even sweet/candy wrappings as he sustains himself. There maybe an inference that the mother is following the trail of the boy, perhaps aided by someone from the museum. We hope they all catch up with each other fairly promptly at least. There is a hint that some museums create treasure hunts and explorer trails. Has the father invented one of his own challenges for the boy, that can also be considered. Study and devour the phrasing and structure of this senryū, and the craft and decision to go the extra mile in how the words follow each other.

in memoriam
using the adjectives
I had failed to say

Geethanjali Rajan

Sometimes when someone dies we realise that we have not said enough, in the right way, to them. I didn't use an adjective, as far as I can recall, but when I came to the hospital to see my dead father before they took him to the morgue, I did say for perhaps the first time ever "I love you" despite a long and difficult relationship. Whether the person in the poem wishes to have said positive things or were not able to be more direct, we cannot know for sure. It is enough to say that we need more honest dialogue with people who have played such a vast role in our lives perhaps.

#mondayblues I play the world's smallest violin for myself

Susan Burch

This senryū, which uses a hashtag, popular in many social media platforms, is followed by the world's smallest violin. That violin may be a metaphorical one of course, where we use images to suggest how we feel inside. As the phrase is not "I play the violin for myself" I can feel it's a not a literal violin, although that image would also be incredibly poignant. A person expressing great sadness as a musician, but in private, with absolutely no one else around. Here it is "I play the world's smallest violin for myself" and the size of the metaphorical violin is also an added layer of poignancy.

a name change
for potter's field
we're all janes

Lorraine Pester

Note:

A potter's field is a burial place for paupers and strangers.

Is Potters Field a real place?

Currently, the Department of Correction (DOC) maintains and operates the City Cemetery, commonly known as Potter's Field, located on Hart Island, in Long Island Sound. The cemetery on Hart Island is purportedly the largest tax-funded cemetery in the world. [Hart Island - Data Team - New York City Council](#)

The author has also used the term 'janes' which could mean Jane Doe, where such names are often used to refer to a corpse whose identity is unknown or unconfirmed. This has included the United Kingdom where the usage of "John Doe" originated during the Middle Ages.

A potter's field, paupers' grave or common grave is a place for the burial of unknown, unclaimed or indigent people. "Potter's field" and is of Biblical origin, referring to **Akeldama** (meaning *field of blood* in Aramaic), stated to have been purchased after Judas Iscariot's suicide, by the high priests of Jerusalem, with the coins that had been paid to Judas for his identification of Jesus.

The priests are stated to have acquired it for the burial of strangers, criminals, and the poor. Prior to Akeldama's use as a burial ground, it was a site where potters collected high-quality, deeply red clay for the production of ceramics, thus the name potters' field. SOURCE: **WIKIPEDIA**

This senryū could well mean that as so many girls and women are abducted, trafficked, and eventually end up being killed or die from induced drug addiction, that these anonymous fields of corpses might sometimes be better called something after 'Jane'.

From an author of female gender the last line is chilling in its context of Potter's Field, on various levels, even if the person's name has always been known:

"we're all janes"

Each line of a poem is as important after all, and that line makes the poem all the more powerful.

Christmas Eve—
vintage port and stilton
with Marley in chains

Jo Balistreri

I couldn't resist a Christmas haiku, and one that alludes to one of the strongest fictional short stories around this season.

The structure looks like a haiku with its season fixing reference, and a strong cut, but it's definitely a senryū! Marley was already in chains as per the story, so I immediately thought is there someone who might be termed a kind of Marley during Christmas, and not an expected Scrooge? Or is it that the author wishes no disruptions to her Christmas festivities and that includes Marley and the other instructional ghosts? A great example of flipping a haiku on its head so that it's a senryū instead!

v i c t i m v i c t i m i z e r a c c o r d i o n p e o p l e

Jerome Berglund

The double-spacing of each word is disturbingly effective. It's the age of division and ultra-polarized opinions, or more often 'guided spite' with the aid of social media. Hate speech is legitimised and often backed up in deed with few and rare repercussions. Who can we trust nowadays, as respected public figures show more than an ankle of clay? The brutally blunt phrase, separated by extra spacing, is that too many people concertina between what is accepted, and what can be forced to accepted. A haunting phrase is "accordion people" with or without its spaces.

For older articles on senryū:

“Being Human - the ordinary intensity”

A look at senryu, the sibling of haiku, senryu contest results and commentary, and a very funny checklist!

<https://area17.blogspot.com/2018/06/being-human-ordinary-intensity-look-at.html>

The Golden Carousel of Life: Senryu

An Application to be a) human

by Alan Summers

<https://tinyurl.com/senryuCarousel>

What is "senryu" again?

Commentary and results of two senryu competitions - the sibling genre of haiku

<https://area17.blogspot.com/2018/07/what-is-senryu-again-commentary-and.html>

About kire, kigo, seasons, MA, negative space:

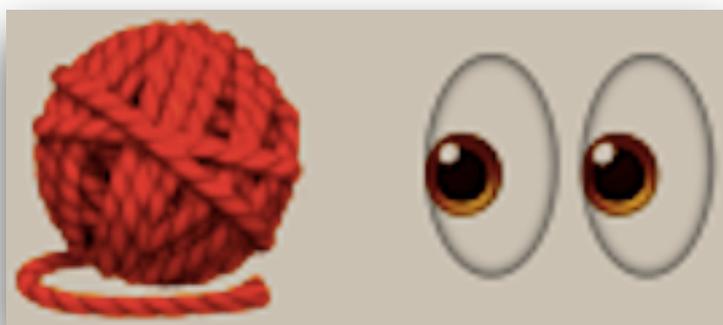
More than one fold in the paper: Kire, kigo, and the vertical axis of meaning in haiku by Alan Summers

<https://area17.blogspot.com/2014/04/more-than-one-fold-in-paper-kire-kigo.html>

MA (間) and Negative space in haiku:

<https://area17.blogspot.com/2014/03/negative-space-in-haiku-writing-poetry.html>

The O of senryū©Alan Summers 2022
photo/artwork©Alan Summers
Reykjavík, Iceland



Thoughts About Senryu

by Pippa Phillips

I have often heard it said that senryu in Japan is a very different thing than it is in English-language micropoetry, a comparatively artless and superficial form of micropoetry. Others argue that even in Japan, the line between haiku and senryu is not always clear, the matter often only settled by the author's declaration. Meanwhile, it is a common sentiment among English-language micropoets that whether or not a poem is a senryu comes down to the presence of humanity, the absence of nature, and humor.

It is useful to pursue a notion of senryu as distinct from haiku in English-language micropoetry in order to understand how and why it works. I think of senryu as derivative of what haiku *isn't*—but what I reject is the notion that haiku is fundamentally about nature in such a way that senryu disincludes the use of natural elements. Instead, I believe the fundamental subject of haiku is the relationship between the eternal and the ephemeral. Senryu, in contrast, expresses the full spectrum of emotions and aesthetics beyond that liminal band. Haiku holds the objective as an ideal; senryu can follow the subjective to its depths. Its art is in the articulation of human emotion.

as if another donut would help this solitude

Bryan Rickert

Here, Rickert's monoku is a plaintive rumination undercut by self-deprecation. Senryu is often the ground for the artful practice of *karumi*, the aesthetic practice of lightness.

beach sunset
an orange lifebelt
just in case

Keith Evetts

Evetts' poem uses juxtapositions of natural and unnatural color, and the primal danger implicit in the sun's demise, to evoke parental anxiety. Like Rickert's poem, a sense of humor complicates the emotion.

Anesthesia room
getting wheeled out I offer
news from far away

Shelli Jankowski-Smith

In Jankowski-Smith's poem, *karumi* creates a sense of dreamlike transcendence.

midges flying into a sentence

Christopher Jupp

Jupp uses literalism to create a playful, self-reflective articulation of the act of creating a poem. Senryu can also be the province of more abstract ruminations.

new moon the back of my head walking away

Cynthia Anderson

For instance, Anderson juxtaposes her inability to perceive the back of her head with a moon-viewer's inability to perceive the new moon.

Walden Pond . . .
only two bars
on my phone

Mark Forrester

Forrester's perfect use of ironic location expresses the modern person's inability to disentangle themselves from technology.

wait until the leaves are done talking

Patrick Sweeney

While Sweeney's serves as a counterpoint.

beach-side stroll
our footprints on sand
as if we didn't

Hla Yin Mon

Mon's playful, manifold implications create the effect of a beachside memory, faded to pink. Perhaps *karumi* is a dominating aesthetic in senryu because it complicates emotion, thereby rendering it subtle. However, emotional restraint is not necessary in senryu; some of its strongest examples are full-throated expressions of emotion.

delicate curves of a seed pod speculum

Lorraine A Padden

Padden's monoku plants hope in the prospect of new life.

genetically predisposed the death of a daughter

Raghav Prashant Sundar

The combination of clinical language and the depersonalisation of the poem's subject in Sundar's monoku evokes the feeling of annihilation that death brings, creating a strong expression of grief.

festival riots
I hide God
in the closet

Richa Sharma

Sharma's poem makes the political personal: there is a feeling that the protagonist is forced to desecrate God in order to preserve his faith.

blood moon
dad warns my sister
about boys like me

John Hawkhead

In Hawkhead's poem, the feeling is primal but complicated. There is an allusion to Susan Burch's Touchstone winner:

blood moon
he doesn't take no
for an answer

Both poems examine a fundamental rot, a sin as old as society, from the side, alternately, of the victim and the accused. Hawkhead's poem suggests that violence against women implicates, or entangles, all men—whether this is fair, if the protagonist is guilty or not, is an ambiguity that the poem settles into.

While haiku transports, senryu dives into the human, as it lives and is negotiated by the self and other.

Thoughts About Senryu by Pippa Phillips 2022

Regarding karumi:

karumi かるみ or 軽み

meaning lightness, from karui 軽い (light)

“A lightness of touch”

Matsuo Basho explained that he wanted this approach to haikai verse like *“a shallow river over a sandy bed”*.



Some Thoughts on Senryu by Susumu Takiguchi

<https://poetrysociety.org.nz/some-thoughts-on-senryu/>

Karumi: Matsuo Bashō's Ultimate Poetical Value, Or was it?

by Susumu Takiguchi

<https://thehaikufoundation.org/juxta/juxta-1-1/karumi-matsuo-bashos-ultimate-poetical-value-or-was-it/>



[photograph copyright Alan Summers](#)

A poster of Greta Thunberg outside the Icelandic Punk museum, Reykjavík, Iceland
The tiny museum's collection is squeezed into a former underground public toilet.

end