

The Pan Haiku Review

editor: Alan Summers

The inaugural issue:

the single line haiku & two-line haiku special
plus haiku sequences

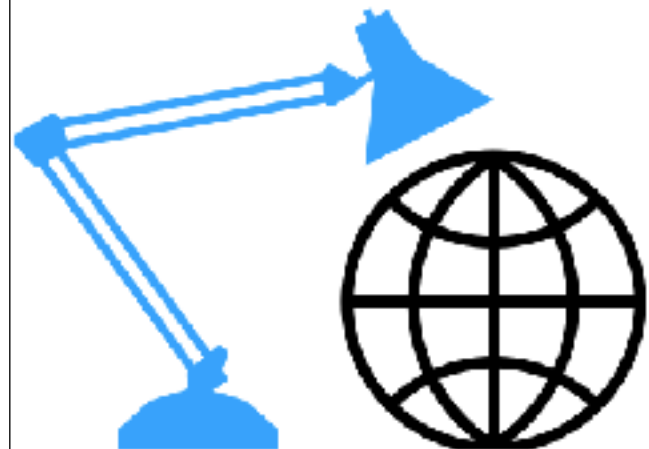


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"1 Issue"

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The Pan Haiku Review
ed. Alan Summers

The Inaugural Issue
Spring 2023
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Introduction

The Pan Haiku Review carries on the tradition of the *Blōō Outlier Journal*, taking turns looking at different genres or approaches to haiku; senryu; haibun and sister genres; tanka etc... The last *Blōō Outlier Journal* issue (which is now absorbed by *The Pan Haiku Review*) went out with a bang with one of its senryū (a single line) as a winner of a 2022 Touchstone Awards for Individual Poem award. There were just under 1300 poems nominated by poets, readers, and editors around the world. That last issue had senryū individually chosen by myself and Pippa Phillips and we both realised it was special in our independent sections within that last issue.

once more around the dance floor IV pole

— Lorraine A Padden

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

I'm now excited to bring a number of new features in this inaugural edition of PHR including the unabridged review of Cherie Hunter Day's award-winning **Miles Deep In A Drum Solo** haiku collection. The collection became a Touchstone Distinguished Books Award Winner 2022.

Another feature is Michael Lindenhofers email dialogue on a one-line haiku that was posted online for one of the British Haiku Society's prompt challenges, plus another correspondence with Michael over the 2-line duostich challenge. PHR has another new feature with **The Blue Key Series** which I hope you will enjoy as well.

Writing one-line haiku on a regular basis kind of all started in earnest, for me, around October 2012; before then I'd only written a few of them, and realised that this was a missed opportunity. Since late 2012 I've written nearly 400 single line haiku, and written extensively about 1-line haiku in various interviews, articles, essays, and international conferences. Within this issue is a sampling and centralised resource. Enjoy!

The Pan Haiku Review is not only a journal's issue/edition, it's an anthology and

compendium . . .

A collection of information about a particular subject

Alan Summers

PHR founder, editor

<https://www.callofthepage.org/the-pan-haiku-review/>

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PHR's "2ssue" haiku+kigo:

Tercets only (3-line haiku) they can be both long and short and 575 versions welcome as well. It's all about the seasons, whether kigo or your own approach to seasonal references in haiku. Look out for the announcement at CoTP towards the end of 2023 for the Winter issue.

Mini-Journal Features for 2024 & 2025: The Long Haiku (575 and beyond) ed. Alan Summers; Haibun Manoeuvres ed. Alan Summers; Planet of Tanka with Karen Hoy & Alan Summers

artwork/photographs

Cover: Alan Summers

Interiors:

Shloka Shankar

Richard Downes

TextArt - Thomas Tilton with Barbara Anna Gaiardoni

Alan Summers

Kati Mohr

Articulation of the Single Line Haiku

The expanded edition
Alan Summers

A style-agnostic approach

Is haiku as one poetic line in English—*rather than over three lines (tercet)*—where we could capture more of the original Japanese essence?

“In adopting the tercet, those who write haiku in English are doing the exact opposite of those who write haiku in Japanese: practically all Japanese haiku writers use a monolinear form.”

“On Haiku” Hiroaki Sato (New Directions Publishing Corporation, 2018)

Let’s see if the solo line of haiku in English reveals its inner landscape of negative space, and “untold story,” with its own poetic tension. We might not be able to obtain the concept with the practice of ma—間, which has been essential across most of Japan, though we can attempt our own versions.

“Ma is a fundamental Japanese principle of interval, or pause, that applies to both space and time.”

Ken Rodgers “Ma a measure of infinity”
Kyoto Journal issue 98: Ma (2020)

*...**Ma** refers to any practice where absence is intentional, allowing one to further appreciate what is present. Within Japanese culture, it can be found in several disciplines including architecture, gardening, music, poetry, shodo (calligraphy), and ikebana (flower arrangement).*

Ma (間) and Food: Making Time and Space for Thoughtful Consumption
Kokoro Care Packages 2018 article by Britney Budiman

One of Japan's most popular haiku poets perhaps suggests **Ma**:

青空にとびたき風船お歯科と持つせなの子よ
aozora ni tobitaki fuusen o shikato motsu sena no ko yo

Taneda Santōka (種田 山頭火) 1882–1940

Whether a comma is introduced or not, we also have liminal realism, a wonder of “the real” *approached differently*:

into the blue sky, child with a balloon
into the blue sky child with a balloon

versions by Alan Summers

We can achieve various elements in any number of lines, though staying on the single line of haiku moves our creative muscles differently, as we avoid breaking the *continuous horizontal*.

“In form, in fact, English writers are more venturesome, more willing to experiment than their Japanese counterparts.”

“On Haiku” Hiroaki Sato (New Directions Publishing Corporation, 2018)

I'd like to discover whether a single line of haiku has its own alchemy of sound and rhythm, content and context, and poetic vitality, within the confines of English. What is it about any single line of poetry (and other writing genres) that appeals to us, and how does that *transfer* to the single line of haiku.

A line is...a moment...intrinsically non-narrative...and stopping is the friendly nemesis of narrative. The moment has only itself. The line...is not subordinate to anything else. It does not need...other lines. A line takes the time to listen to the words it holds, and asks the reader to do the same... every argument invariably suggests thinking about the line, not simply using it to make the writing "look like a poem," or simply to tell a story without regard for what a poem as a form might have to offer.

Some Thoughts on the Integrity of the Single Line in Poetry©2011 Alberto Ríos
(*A Broken Thing: Poets on the Line* ed. Emily Rosko & Anton Vander Zee, University of Iowa Press)

More about the single line:

A line is a unit of language... The poetic line” is the fancy term for a line of poetry; it can stop at a single word —an “of” or “the” or “hippopotami”— or keep going until it hits the margin, or, even, with correct formatting, go beyond the margin. The use of a line operates on principles which are distinct from and not necessarily coincident with grammatical structures, such as the sentence or single clauses in sentences.

The Poetic Line (Part I) | The SparkNotes Blog (Emma W, 2016)

I feel we are catching up with Japanese haikai writers, and after all:

you who fall cherry blossoms be hippopotami

Nenten Tsubouchi (1944 - present)

(桜散るあなたも河馬になりなさい)

Haiku Four Seasons (December 2011, Tokyo, Japan)

English version by Alan Summers

It's perhaps mostly down to the perseverance of American haiku pioneer Marlene Mountain (1939-2018) who was still writing ground-breaking single line haiku into her final year, and a few others such as Canadian Ruby Spriggs (1929-2001), that haiku in one line (outside of Japan) are now a common rather than exotic sight on the page and across social media.

This one line haiku has stayed with me ever since I found it, studying haiku for five years back in the 1990s, before I would allow myself to lead any kind of haiku workshop:

my head in the clouds in the lake

Ruby Spriggs

Frogpond 6:2 (1983)

It's like a riddle yet it has the vitality, power, and mystery of nature, if we stay long enough and still enough as readers. Sometimes one line haiku can be mystical, even oblique, though carry the weight of poetry in their veins. From the ultra short and yet iconic:

pig and i spring rain

Marlene Mountain
Frogpond 2:3 (1979)

To a longer and lyrical:

together as we dry there is the listening to rain

Marlene Mountain
Frogpond 4:1 (1981)

Jack Galmitz concludes in his article about Marlene Mountain:

She is, in short, a giant in the field of haiku poetry. Let's end with a somewhat enigmatical poem she wrote, one that exemplifies her sensitivity, her constant human need for association and closeness to others, her ability to invoke aporia to expand rather than to retract meaning:

close to someone in the stars white seeps inward

Marlene Mountain
then I must go to the Mountain: (space reserved) for Marlene Mountain
by Jack Galmitz (Roadrunner 12.2 / 2012 ed. Scott Metz)

Does one-line haiku accomplish something differently to the technique of juxtaposing imagery, then that which happens in the traditional Western 3-line presentation? Does the *invisible text* count for more, or at least as much as the *visible words*. Does a standalone line of verse become its own catalyst, whether something intangible, or relaying the classic Japanese vertical layers of alternative, additional, and complementary allusions that lie beneath a surface meaning?

There's an old adage that if a 1-line haiku can be easily split into a 3-line haiku then it's not a one line haiku. I disagree, it's about *haitatsu*, a term I use about "delivery." It's about delivering the visual look, and how we are carried along it, that is if we let go of any potential *reader conservatism*. As the complex Japanese language systems (plural) are so different from the single Western Alphabet, I do feel the syntax method of many English-language one-line haiku can more closely resemble Japanese haikai verses.

Take for example the classic haikai verse of Matsuo Bashō (1644–1694) which would normally be vertical:

夏草や兵どもが夢の跡

Let's transliterate it first, with the Romanised Japanese (romaji), mostly for non-Japanese readers, and then place it into English in its original order of 'words/phrases/grammar' in the haikai verse:

natsu-gusa ya / tsuwamono-domo-ga / yume no ato

summer grasses (:!) / strong ones' / dreams' site

(University of Oregon, USA, webpage sadly unavailable)

Should we smooth out the verse so it's "poetically rendered?" For me it's already potent, though we mostly like our poetry within a certain lyrical template. I've attempted a few translations, but can they pack the same punch as the original Japanese? Here's one I adjusted for this article:

summer's grass soldiers traces of dreams

(version by Alan Summers)

How do we enter any line of poetry, and especially where one line is the entire 'poem' with no 'back up'. We know words already affect us, they move us for better or for worse, thankfully poetry focuses on involving us in an exchange with the universe, and ourselves, sometimes challenging, sometimes otherwise.

64 crayons white the least used

Margaret Walker

- o "Getting it Wrong" haibun, *Babylon Sidedoor Journal* ed. Alan Summers (January 2022)
- o "re:Virals": The Haiku Foundation commentary feature on some of the best contemporary haiku and senryu written in English (*re:Virals* 330, January 2022)
- o Long-listed — Touchstone Awards for Individual Poems (2022)

We can or might recall those big packs of 64 crayons, though what does "*white the least used*" mean in context with coloured crayons. What is it about white crayons, I guess, when there are black crayons, as well as green, blue, and brown, for outlines of homes, grass, sky or sea, mud and baked soil. Perhaps we can look up the "Crayola Color chart" and flick from poem to chart, and back, for additional assistance. There is perhaps a straightforward 'linear' interpretation but while we are interpreting, why stop, as poetry readers, there may be dragons, there may be metaphorical language, often the gold standard of free verse and Form poems, so exclude haikai poems.

So what is a line in any genre, and how do we 'turn' that essence, or even DNA of a single line into a haiku?

First of all we can successfully fail, and out of this, just like a novel, evolve from early draft versions all the way through to our chosen 'release version'. *American Gods* by Neil Gaiman is an interesting example (various published versions from 2001 through to 2013):

"A novel can best be defined as a long piece of prose with something wrong..."

Neil Gaiman, on a plane to Singapore in July 2005, re *American Gods* unabridged version (2013 Headline Books)

The single line of haiku can also be navigated from start to finish with something ‘creatively’ wrong with it.” Or as Rosalyn Eves puts it:

“...the idea of imperfection: Nothing we write is going to be as perfect as we hope... But I think this imperfection is a good thing. . . So, to those of us still struggling to learn how to write the [genre] we’re on, here’s to imperfection. Here’s to working hard, to reaching toward our vision—but also, at the end of the day, simply trying to write something that makes us happy, warts and all.”

Rosalyn Eves: Neil Gaiman and Imperfection (June, 2013)

If we look back at the ‘line’ whether success, failure, or dynamic combination of the two, it’s about words arranged in a row, ending other than just stopped, by the right-hand margin:

When a line is created it’s “...where a reader has to turn back to the start of the next line, [which] was known in Latin as the “versus”, which translates as “turn”, and is where the modern English term “verse” comes from. It is one of the strongest points of a line, which means that words that fall at the end of a line seem more important to a reader... [as well as] the start of a line. It has been suggested that a line is supposed to be the length of a breath, so that a long line should leave you breathless, or a short line should make you feel like you’re hyperventilating. This reason may be debatable, but an alertness to the frequency of the line-endings is part of reading poetry.”

“About Line” from The Poetry Archive

I’d also say it’s how the middle *leans back* into the beginning and also *enters* the end part. It’s how the start, middle, and last words *react* with each other and bring in the reader. We often see the three stages of SM&L (start, middle, last) in novels, plays, movies, as well the actual screen and film scripts (plus directions & storyboards etc...), and other avenues of creative writing, and how they interact and coalesce into a final piece, into one connected *whole*.

I’ve said ‘last’ rather than ‘final’ word(s) as a haikai verse never ends, it trails into white space. A haiku also has its origins are from the poem called *renga*, where a starting verse creates multi-diverging couplets plus an overall anti-linear multi-stanza poem run by a group of poets with the guidance of an ‘overseer’, with SM&L throughout, yet avoiding “*resolution*.”

This following haiku from founder/editor of *Hedgerow*, and a former editor of *Blithe Spirit*, struck me in many ways. Is it really just a walk through the woods during the seasonality of bluebells? Is it about loss, regret, perhaps the passing of childhood as one and then eventually both parents leave us?

bluebell woods you left too early

Caroline Skanne
Frogpond 41.2 Spring-Summer 2018

The more I delve into the poem and not just quickly read it, the more layers that unfold, at least for me. The poem could also be said to be of two parts:

bluebell woods
you left too early

This is one reading, though let's go back to SM&L. As a reader we have quiet license, to interpret and/or re-interpret a poem, especially as short as a haikai verse, which contains a little of the Japanese *Ma*. Bluebell woods evokes an early 'first' wonder of a child, or even a new parent, or both, of course. Now if I see **'you left'** as the middle, it's a kind of hinge:

bluebell woods **you left** too early

How do we create a hinge so a window, or door, can open for the reader?
from: "ginko: Thoughts for a haiku writing walk" by Alan Summers (2018)

The 'beginning' and 'middle' suggest, for me, that one person left the nature spot while the other person stayed to linger. If we see **'the middle'** and the last two words only, are we still in the bluebell woods, is it a past event, or even metaphorical. Has one person *'left behind'* both the bluebell woods too early (a couple), or has there been the loss of a loved family member, who once regularly walked those particular woods? Is it many things, many timelines in just those amazingly few words.

A single line is also called by the word stich, pronounced like "stick," which describes one line of poetry. The word verse can refer to one line of poetry as well, as in a poetic verse, but it can just as often refer to a poem in its entirety. However, it isn't wrong to refer to one line of poetry as a verse.

Wallace Field, Certified Educator at Enotes

One of our finest British one-line practitioners, from the North of England, is Stuart Quine (3 November 1962 – 24 March 2020), who died of covid-19 complications. He brought and combined lyricism, and poetic expansionism, with aspects and flavours of the Japanese haiku:

almost weightless this empty skull that held the robin's song

Stuart Quine
First published: *Presence* 57 (2017)
Collection: *Wild Rhubarb* (Alba Publishing 2019)
Award: 3rd Place, Haiku Society of America's Merit Book Awards 2020

It could be made into a tercet, with enjambment after '*weightless*' and '*held*' for instance, though the majesty of that single line would not carry this reader in the same way with as the sole line of haiku lyricism.

after the fair candy-coloured ponies grinning in the rain

Stuart Quine
From "*Sour Pickle*" one-line haiku by Stuart Quine (Alba Publishing 2018)

slung between tenements the snap of washing in a three-peg line

Stuart Quine
"*Sour Pickle*" (Alba Publishing 2018)

Those two haiku barely restrain themselves from leaving the outer perimeter (or barrier) of the margin. They pulsate with such energy, and are beautifully alive with internal and sensual phrases such as *'grinning in the rain'* and *'snap of washing'*.

One line haiku often contain *singularity* in which a small change causes a large effect. Keywords such as *'almost'* *'after'* and *'slung'* along with *'held'* and *'snap'* help the single line to *"sing uninterrupted."*

Another haiku that lends *"beyond the margin"* effect with sound, light & shadows, and vibration:

freight train afterimage the black caboose full moon rattling trestles speeding

Jo Balistreri

The Pull of the Lonely Single Line of Haiku by Alan Summers

Japan Writers Conference 2021 (Tokai University, Japan)

The poet **frances angela**, born in the North of England, now residing in London, is an incisive exponent of the one-line haiku, whether it's a standalone verse, or part of a haibun. She teases grammar and syntax, as shown in this example:

landmarks the lighthouse without us

frances angela

From the haibun entitled **"date"**

Blithe Spirit vol. 26 no. 3 2016

Our familiar landmarks of youth can become obsolete. This is not just a poem about a lighthouse that entered our childhood imagination, it's the potential loss of all that is good about childhood. Adults often discard important physical and internal landmarks prominent in their history, in their

youth. Notice the “jump in narrative” from ‘landmarks’ straight into ‘the lighthouse’ and the “jump” to ‘without us’ that encapsulates and distils a longer discourse with ourselves. A strong almost aggressive use of white space, and negative space, astutely combines to create a greater expanse in our “reader mind”.

At first glance this next one-line haiku might appear difficult to apprehend, or accept, if you become overly linear and logical. Though like me, becoming immersed, suddenly you could be digging yourself out of a snowdrift: A one line haiku can do that, swirl its elements around us!

a howl of sirens in waves of snowflakes

Iliyana Stoyanova
Under the Basho (2018)

At first you’d think the howls of sirens are snowflakes, then perhaps they are ‘inside’ the snowflakes ‘inside’ a snowstorm. That’s the beauty of a single line of haiku, it’s quite logical, yet adds a default surreal and parallel echoes, coaxing and enveloping liminal realism. It shows an actual truth even from another angle, bringing two images together, that might not have obvious relationships with each other, and doesn’t detour to lend labouriously explanations and “*spells itself out*” so much it diminishes the poetry of the poem. Emergency services and their sirens are common in towns, cities, and in rural areas: We cannot perhaps see these particular emergency vehicles, or even the kaleidoscope effect of flashing lights (cherry or blue lights) almost enmeshed in particles of snow, and their sounds just enough to hear them, even in a snowstorm. How wonderfully, evocatively, stretching our senses!

Liminal Reality: those sceneries *disconcertedly familiar* therefore uncomfortable in their perceived or actual realised normality:

closing a full moon the clear sky curtains

Alan Peat
from *Lost Marbles* haibun
Drifting Sands Haibun, Issue 13 (January 2022) guest editor, Adelaide B. Shaw

My own personal reading is of an *almost-cusp-of-morning-still-night*, where a process starts to leave the night behind but is not quite there yet. Or is it, might be the reverse as night reclaims its grip on a day that's ending its assumed role.

If I assume the former, it's certainly unusual phrasing, yet captures the passing of night into its various components before there is our recognised 'full morning'. It's a time of transition, as well as a street of houses '*pulling back*' their curtains. I'm reminded of the progression from night into morning with *Under Milk Wood* by Dylan Thomas.

We have one—or two—verbs, the obvious verb commences the line, and '*curtains*' could be both noun and also the action of curtains admitting in the day. Of course it could also be 'closing curtains' for the night:

closing [a full moon the clear sky] curtains

It's an interesting example to show that words are not always required to stay in their logical grammatical/syntactical order, that haiku can eschew logical preoccupations, and experiment with poetic diction through the non-linear lens. And after all, shouldn't we be style-agnostic? A multi-skilled, discipline-agnostic mindset: The ability to wield many viewpoints to mesh them together into something uniquely reactive in a positive manner.

Haiku can absorb the human into the natural and mechanical layout of a cycle, here's a couple that embrace the night that plays its part in every 24 hours:

alone tonight a single malt

Margaret Walker

- o Blōō Outlier Journal, Winter Issue 2021 ed. Alan Summers
- o Long-listed, Touchstone Awards 2022
- o *Schrödinger's MA and the segue axis* by Alan Summers (Haiku North America 2021)

The above haiku makes me think of the lonely verse by this poet:

even if you cough, alone

— Hosai Ozaki (1885-1926)

English version by Alan Summers

Japanese:

せきをしてもひとり

— 尾崎放哉

We have the overt use of *'alone'* which can conjure up interpretative memories of solitude embraced, or regretted. The first example begins with *'alone'* which *'travels aloneness'* all the way through the whisky. The second haiku has *'alone'* at the very end, poignantly leaning the poem back into its previous words.

This next one is a transition of night into day, where *'turns'* and *'blackbird'* suggest that the *'key'* is both literally the author arriving home after a very late night, and that it's a *key turning point*, where a division between night and morning is split by blackbird song. Both *metaphorical slant* and *surrealism* form partners with *liminal realism*:

nightfall the key turns into a blackbird

Alan Summers

"I approach liminal realism through an ecopoetic critical lens, emphasizing how it works a kind of interspecies magic, situating the reader in-between human and other-than-human worlds."

Professor Bénédicte Meillon, *Ecopoetics Of Reenchantment: Liminal Realism & Poetic Echoes Of The Earth* (August 2021)

Is the key, an ordinary door key or when night slowly 'turns' into morning. Perhaps it's someone who has finished their nightshift, and about to enter their home. Perhaps the last thing they hear before '*turning in*' for a well-deserved rest, or sleep, is the tuneful song by the bird while they are turning the house-key. And of course hours later they get up for work again, and their world turns full cycle, back to work, then back home and repeat.

Three words, those small heroes of grammar, are what makes this haiku succeed in my opinion:

the & a (definite and indefinite articles)

into (preposition)

The single line haiku could be divided into these "areas" aka sections, phrases etc...

- o nightfall
- o the key turns
- o a blackbird

And as a tercet:

nightfall
the key turns
into a blackbird

It doesn't succeed as a tercet for me, it's a bit like going down a set of steps visually.
Let's see what happens if I attempt a short long short line visual:

the key turns
into a blackbird
nightfall

It does 'work' as a tercet but it's a bit *da dum da dum da dum ho hum* flat effect:

"the key turns"

then

"into a blackbird"

then

"nightfall"

Whereas bringing back 'nightfall' to start the poem we gain more nuance, more poetry:

nightfall the key turns into a blackbird

Though the word order can play with us, as readers, suggesting:

the key turns nightfall into a blackbird

Though I feel if I had made it into that word order I lose impetus in 'the line' and that 'nightfall' almost disappears, lost in a middle position. I don't feel 'nightfall' works effectively as a pivot or hinge word, and deserves to be at the front of the poem.

The key is both concrete (house-key or shop key) and symbolic (a metaphorical answer to what is night, what is real, what is creating a song, either the blackbird or the 'song'/'music' of the planet (its rhythm, spinning in space, gravity etc...)).

This next haiku is a fully sunlit day and also suggestive of music symbolically:

the open lids of grand pianos sailing a sun-struck wall

Jo Balistreri

- o NOON | journal of the short poem, issue 16 (February 2020) ed. Philip Rowland
- o re:Virals 272 The Haiku Foundation's weekly poem commentary feature on some of the finest haiku ever written in English (December 2020)
- o A New Resonance 12: Emerging Voices in English-Language Haiku ed. Jim Kacian and Julie Schwerin (Red Moon Press 2021)

This poem starts quietly until we read past '*grand pianos*' into its verb. Here the verb "*sailing*" with '*open lids*' and '*grand pianos*' makes this feel like an animated film, plus surrealism and liminal realism. It's a single 'run on' clause but the light, shade, and movement that embraces the action of intense sunlight throwing shadows, is taut and vivid as if pianos are really sailing ships.

And just as a planet can make its own music (look up the science) so what if...

through the fields the dogs the humans the sky as birdsong

Alan Summers

This haiku can be read with all the words in black:

through the fields the dogs the humans the sky as birdsong

or minus the faint grey font:

through fields dogs humans sky birdsong

Try reading out aloud just the grey parts:

the the the the as

Perhaps mimicking a parental/childhood dynamic of the soothing verbal balm of

“there, there, there, aaaaah...”

It brings to mind this almost like a lullaby, and music of course, by or in the sea effect:

as an and you and you and you alone in the sea

na mo na to na nomi umi yue ni

汝(な)も汝(な)と汝(な)のみ海(うみ)ゆえに

author: Richard Gilbert

[translated into Japanese by Itō Yūki]

Published: *Haiku in English: The First Hundred Years* (2013) ed. Jim Kacian, Philip Rowland, Allan Burns, Billy Collins (Introduction)

Childhood, be it our own or someone else (family, or witnessing how children interact with the world in any current 'adult' state, and a healthy defiance, even at the adult-inflicted carnage of war:

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

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

Or from a parent's perspective of a child entering their next stage of growth and development:

teenager in the house and other ways of knowing

Kat Lehmann, USA
Prune Juice Issue 37 July 2022

Perhaps many poems are utterances connecting our childhood and awe when we saw the 'great elements' of sun, sea, and stars for our 'first' time we truly noticed them.

Lastly a workshop exercise or two to coax you into trying different approaches, and where we can creatively and accidentally cause poems like the examples that have been given.

Workshop exercises:

The cut-up technique (or *découpé* in French)

This is where compositions are "made by chance." If you can print out a sheet or two of paper, with as many of your words and phrases as you like, cut up them up with a pair of scissors: It's old school but incredibly effective visually, and also tactile.

The method was popularized by British poet Brion Gysin, and William Burroughs, in the 1950s. David Bowie famously used cut-ups, and Kurt Cobain worked with William Burroughs in the 1990s. It's still used by writers and musicians for overcoming writer's block, or finding new or different inspiration, and there's also a cellphone App called "*Cut-Up Engineer*" (updated October 2022).

Paper cut-ups can be a useful trick to slow down our poems with too much left-brain linear and logical description, and can allow for more right-brain collaboration. It's also a great warm up exercise before you attempt your 'main' writing!

My 1st cut up:

the ghosts of goodbyes

the alliterations of lost / memories

drive / dwindling / headlights on the highway

woodland spiralling folklore

'the ghosts of goodbyes'

This felt concrete enough as there are many goodbyes, from childhood, to our very last ones.

I looked at:

"drive / dwindling / headlights on the highway"

I thought perhaps:

dwindling headlights on the highway

Could two unexpected pieces work together?

e.g.

the ghosts of goodbyes dwindling headlights on the highway

or

ghosts the goodbyes dwindling headlights on the highway

or

ghosts the goodbyes dwindling into headlights on a highway

or even:

ghosts the goodbyes dwindling into headlights into highway

I have yet to make a definitive decision on which version, each time I choose a favourite and then another version, and again it's a tie between all of them. Perhaps the last version works as an amalgamation that captures aspects of the preceding two verses.

Another cut up:

the red of fox / weathered church / blue wind

These three cut-outs might have potential, although I'm wary of contrasting (directly) two different colours in a haiku:

the red of fox a weathered church in the blue wind

What if I remove one colour?

the red of fox a weathered church in the wind

or

the fox a weathered church in the blue wind

or

a fox the weathered church in the blue wind

or

a fox the weathered church in blue winds

or

weathered churches a fox in the blue wind

or

the red of fox a weathered church in the wind

or perhaps even:

churches in the wind the weathered red of fox
or
churches in the wind the weathered red of a fox

or this:

the weathered church in blue winds a fox

the weathered church of blue winds fox by fox
or these versions:

the weathered church a fox in blue winds

the red of fox a church weathers in the wind

Once the cut-ups form an interestingly potential number of drafts, for 1-line haiku (or any kind of haiku for that matter), we can start tweaking them, or if we've already started, we can continue to tweak them over time. All of the drafts can be left unread for days, weeks, months, or longer, so that we come back to them as *"almost strangers"* gaining a more objective and usefully 'distanced' point of view. That *"stranger's viewpoint"* could better ascertain which version works best, or make something more adventurous. The *"patience of a stranger's method"* could assist us in new directions that continue with or without the use of the cut-up technique again.

So there is no need to hurry, to decide, about which version. The more cut ups, or other drafting methods, the more we can decide which haiku slowly rise up through a word document. As they rise through a document towards the 'page one' position they are eventually considered ready with that one final version to send off somewhere. If that 'final version' isn't working after a few times, we can look back at the 'penultimate' versions we have kept on record.

Second Workshopping

Warm Up Idea/Alternative :

The Momento Method

*Think of the single line of haiku as a meme or a memento,
where you want people to remember them on the tip of their tongue:*

Momento

noun.

The **definition** of a **momento**, commonly spelled **memento**:
anything that reminds someone of something.

One example of **momento** is:

“first ever beach visit”

Another example of a **momento** is *“a baby's footprints”*

I immediately thought of a one-line haiku that had the energy, movement, and memorability that would carry a meme, and photographic streaming video effect of a special “momento”:

Srinivasa Rao Sambangi wrote this:

green meadow the mother chases bare feet baby

This monoku has a delightful movement throughout, and in its many parts. It's stunningly brilliant, and yet should it work? We could say 'why not' to this perhaps "more grammatically correct" phrasing instead:

a bare foot baby

i.e.

green meadow the mother chases a bare foot baby

It works okay, but do we want just 'okay'?

Let's tuck into those words and phrasing, get in between them, and have fun and deep-dive, understanding why this one-line haiku gloriously works. Get the feel of the greenness, between our own feet, and between the baby's own feet. As well as the 'perfume' of the greenness, its texture, then the fun or frantic jerky movement of both parent and baby running across grass and uneven ground, the surrounding scenery blurring in the race to catch up with the baby, the use of middle ground and back ground images:

What is the middle ground of an image?

The element of a photo (haiku imagery in this case) closest to you is what makes up the foreground. The furthest element away from you is the background, while the middle ground makes up the area in between.

- o green meadow
- o the mother
- o bare feet

Here's another one with movement but where mother and son are still connected, whether seconds after birth, or metaphorically. The parental connection often stays long after birth, here a boy-child, years later, becomes playful as a pretend astronaut, or as an actual one, taking his first space walk in deep space. Does the umbilical cord ever disappear?

umbilical cord a space man's first baby steps

Alan Summers

Movement is a potent addition if not component to haiku and memory is also a wonderful tool to incorporate. That's whether we use a memory/reminiscence of our own, or instigate or tease a memory from the reader themselves.

Reminiscence

- A story told about a past event remembered by the author/poet/narrator.
- A characteristic of one thing that is suggestive of another.

memories
recollections
reflections
remembrances

In Japanese the term (noun or verb) of reminiscing is:

Omoidasaseru

思い出させる

Translated into “**Made to remember**” or perhaps better we are “**coaxing (ourselves and/or others to remember)**”.

Note that “memento,” is spelled like “memory” and “remember.”

A memento is something that can help you remember an important memory.

Summer is a season strongly remembered as we might equate with long childhood summers, and the time for adults to take a holiday. Fireflies (hotaru 蛍 [ほたる]) are a seasonal reference, and Japanese kigo for mid-summer. Is this a special summer recollection I wonder. Summer is often the time for magical memories both literally and figuratively, as we look back to our earlier times as a youngster. Is this haiku a mixture of past memories, present loss, and also the magic of the natural world. Just look up “fireflies in literature” and how they embrace us imaginatively in memorable ways:

while the grasses hold fireflies on the windowsill

Iliyana Stoyanova
Under the Basho, one-line haiku 2016

The author came from Bulgaria, and resides in the UK. Fireflies in Bulgaria are called Светулка and are winged beetles, which flash on and off, and so are from the Luciolinae, one of the largest subfamilies of fireflies (Lampyridae). There are two Japanese species of *Luciola*, collectively known as hotaru (螢), which are highly significant in Japanese culture and folklore. They are symbols of the hitodama (人魂 or 人玉), the souls of the newly dead.
WIKIPEDIA

What is interesting with this fine monoku is how I can choose to misread it for extra beauty. Misread it? It's not an unusual technique in haiku.

So what could be a literal reading, first of all? One version and example could be this.

while the grasses hold

An intriguing phrase, and 'while' and 'hold' bracket "the grasses" and already start to lift this from the risk of mere straight prose. I'm reminded of Walt Whitman:

"The significance of Grass, in American poet Walt Whitman's "Song of Myself", as part of his epic work "Leaves of Grass" is that a single blade of grass represents an individual in society." —eNotes educator Michael Ugolini

fireflies on the windowsill

This feels straightforward, even if it means these wondrous creatures are on a windowsill, perhaps outside a girl's bedroom window? It feels folkloric segueing into a fairytale.

How can I misread it, to bring another magical interpretation? Well, I mentioned brackets didn't I? The bracket method or technique, or 'reading' is a strong feature in some haiku, be they one line or more. Here are my bracket interpretations:

while [the grasses hold fireflies] on the windowsill

I imagine a girl or young woman with the window partially open to the evening or the night, and her elbows resting on the windowsill, gazing outwards, attracted by the flashing lights of almost mythical creatures, and dreaming stories that might become real when she is older. Inside my brackets, there is a straight concrete phrase of 'the grasses hold fireflies' and yet, and yet, do the grasses really hold the fireflies just as are the hopes, dreams, and ambitions of a girl really held, or held back, for whatever reason? Never suppose a monoku is the sum and order of its word! There is magic in re-interpreting our first reading of these magical verses, and the single line of mystery amongst the everyday.

Did I mention kigo? Here's another one and super recent:

dew-covered crocus forgiven again

Lorraine A Padden
Haiku Dialogue Feature: – Simply Precipitation (2) April 2023
Simply Guest Editor Craig Kittner

Most often thought of as a Spring flower (certainly as a Japanese early Spring kigo, crocus (クロッカス) although サフラン (saffron flower) is late Autumn. Plus the saffron crocuses flower in Autumn (September to November). It's also known as the 'penitent's rose' and blooms when someone loves us, and forgives what we do or have done. I wonder if the author knew, when they saw the crocus bloom, maybe as an indoors plant that coincidentally they required being forgiven, whether by themselves or by another. The phrasing looks simple with these two parts:

dew-covered crocus
forgiven again

Would the poem, the single line work as well in reverse?

dew-covered crocus forgiven again

vs

forgiven again dew-covered crocus

Definitely not in my book, that last two words “*forgiven again*” feels so powerful and necessary as the ‘last words’. The crocus, often a gift, is an indoor pot plant. It’s also highly visible or visual either as a border in a garden or in cold mountains such as the Alps where they wax lyrical protecting themselves from snow and other harsh elements, as well as woodland, scrub, and meadow. We need to be forgiven, and any visual guide as potential for a penitent, this PHR editor included, is welcomed.

momento/memento

Just like the movie (***Memento***, 2000 American neo-noir psychological movie), there can be a *memento puzzle* to be solved and hidden in the first few ‘moments of the words’ and rediscovered as we progress throughout any poem.

These poems can be biographical happy moments/memories/incidents of course, or “blue ruin”.

Blue ruin haiku can be sad/poignant even destructive, through family tragedy, personal trauma or other circumstances in society outside our happier moments. Sometimes we need to voice the less pretty side to a life:

season of lesser pain weeds wild right through me

Robin Smith
Prune Juice Issue 38 (December 2022)

pages turning in silence the hospice

Alan Summers

this small ache and all the rain too robinsong

Alan Summers

talking into the sun the idea we don't die last buddha rays

Alan Summers

Or a common issue in society:

imbibing steam from a passing take-out coffee homeless boy

Alan Summers

Whether we create new words (neologisms) through design or error...

soonlight it switches the night snowfell

Alan Summers

...or we want even plain and ordinary words to *compact power* (and magic) within a single line.

childhood street still avoiding the cracks

frances angela
Blithe Spirit vol. 26 no. 3 2016

Compression is admirable without compromising an expansiveness, and incredibly short haiku can be achieved, now and then. Perhaps this four word haiku is a good exception to going ultra-brief but still gifting us a larger 'reading':

one bed two autumns

Marcie Wessels
whiptail: journal of the single-line poem Issue 5 (November 2022)
(nominated for The Haiku Foundation Touchstone Award for Individual Poem 2022)

One of many of my own interpretations is of a couple entering the autumn of their lives, both as individuals and an enduring relationship. It can also be also a graveyard in the Fall/Autumn where the couple will one day lie under the roots and leaves at least figuratively.

So we are looking for “compact” but not so compressed that its acting against the effect of ‘the line’. What better than to engage both ‘compact’ and ‘compressed’ with lyricalness and expansiveness, often the alchemy of both shorter and longer haiku, and one of its finest poets:

stepping out of the gate to taste the midnight rain

Stuart Quine
Wild Rhubarb one-line haiku
Alba Publishing (2019)

winter solstice darkness pools in the unrung bell

Stuart Quine, Presence 57 (2017)

new year’s day only the wind comes to my gate

Stuart Quine, Presence 14 (2001)
Collection: Wild Rhubarb (2019)

alone on the shore finally the peace of nothing left to say

Stuart Quine, Presence 56 (2016)

Conclusion

I feel it's impossible to pin down exactly why a single line haiku works even if a three line version might appear as good, as effective, even to apparently better serve us: It's often a decision between presenting a line of poetry in one horizontal 'strike' or as a series of enjambments (duostich, tercets, or quatrains). Perhaps it's up to the reader as the "end game" in our poem, or as "final arbiter."

Finally, don't be held back from any views given about haiku, be it your own or by others, because you may end up creating your own unique way of writing haiku across a single line. Don't let anyone, including yourself, stop you from doing that. If you ever consider a haiku collection of your own, I hope you'll include a few single line versions, they are great for variety, and to carry us across a single wave on the shoreline.

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imbibing

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Alan Summers

First published: British Haiku Society journal *Blithe Spirit* vol.33 no.1 February 2023 ed. Iliyana Stoyanova



poems

strong knock on memories door Mother's recipes

Carolyn Winkler

honey bee in subtle

Edward Cody Huddleston

'Twas brillig the rising corn moon's pale horse glimmer

Alan Summers

his moccasin soles worn smooth of childhood

Michelle V. Alkerton

all the underground railways summer weaves

Alan Summers

so many juliets

sea grass quivers in your backdraft a player friends warn me

all night you in me moonlight frizzles our bodies

deserted beach our fingers dig YES into the hidden dunes

you drift I wander paths cooling with absence

autumn's blush you show for the occasional booty call

a beggar's cardboard sit with me once more among the wildflowers

your facebook a new face

kisses posted at *our* beach I weep to the fleeing gulls

Pris Campbell

beach wedding
bouquet tossed to the loudest dolphin

Pris Campbell

chocolate kisses
always there when I need you

Pris Campbell

yellowhammer sing on into the night the longest day

Clive Bennett

an old love shared buttercup in hand

Christopher Peys

dreaming honey from hawkweed pooling rain

John Pappas

moonrise the barcodes of winter trees

Joseph P. Wechselberger

jumping gene a shade more or less mother

Daya Bhat

home birds embrace the bokeh migrant flamingos

Daya Bhat

Koyo caravan
pilgrims leave the maple

Daya Bhat

fresh snow e a
 l p
the squirrel's of faith

Ellen Kom

childhood
fireflies

memories
in jars

Mark Gilbert

fading foothills the marriage lost in creeping sepia

Shelli Jankowski-Smith

and then right out of the blue
velvet brushing her knees

Shelli Jankowski-Smith

perfect spring sweater a closet full of mothballs

Barbara Anna Gaiardoni

the wind this morning deadheading the roses

Ellen Kom

echoes from the river summer

Lorelyn De la Cruz Arevalo

city moon swallows on power lines

Lorelyn De la Cruz Arevalo

condensation on the window pane –
yesterday's doodling

Paul Callus

gifting a gold tiger
lily pendant to the baby girl

Bipasha Majumder (De)

harsh winter arriving
a flock of missiles

David Josephsohn

Ruby-Crowned Kinglet the gleam from Sunday's garnet throne

rs

Nagano cedars I wander the winter of past lives

rs

returning him to the earth
the mountains inherit our loss

rs

a fresh box of Q-tips
cleaning out my birdbrain

rs

heavy tattooed neck bending
the inscription

Sheila Barksdale

all the hauled laundry bags,
Donkey Rescue coin boxes, sagging

Sheila Barksdale

all the wrecking balls of Santa hats that moth

Sheila Barksdale

distant landskein who will inherit what?

Sheila Barksdale

until we meet solitude poems

Bryan Rickert

after tasting her this hunger moon

Bryan Rickert

bat wings cursive
the long twilight

Bryan Rickert

ebb tide
leaving our legs entangled

Bryan Rickert

V of the canyon still moist from the night before

Scott Wiggerman

made from cardboard paper anniversary

Scott Wiggerman

gunshot night
the scent of gravity

Subir Ningthouja

small shy face in the kitchen native orchid

Alice Wanderer

in my one open eye thousands of stars

Alice Wanderer

river water through my finger clouds

Anna Maria Domburg-Sancristoforo

warm earth under Van Gogh's bare feet chrome yellow

Anna Maria Domburg-Sancristoforo

the artist's assembly of leaves falling

Keith A. Simmonds

the full moon in my wine glass

bouquet of clouds

Keith A. Simmonds

red anthuriums its five year span of drunk butterflies

Keith A. Simmonds

police tape tailing a green comet

Marilyn Ashbaugh

fission chips wrapped in evening news

Marilyn Ashbaugh

under a leaf

the zombie ant awaits nirvana

Marilyn Ashbaugh

coloring spring purple iris

Rebecca Drouilhet

clouds scudding across the CT scan

Beverly Acuff Momoi

early morning sky pink tulip magnolias

Beverly Acuff Momoi

cold moon—

light the gravel road home

Beverly Acuff Momoi

knotweed

you don't want to know

Beverly Acuff Momoi

rob the bank
teller's nameplate

Curt Linderman

wilted white melon flowers rising sun

scented dragon fruit blossom full moon

Tuyet Van Do

before the rain
low flying dragonfly

in time of sadness
what song do you sing

Tuyet Van Do

quietnightshelterblizzardmorning

Bidyut Prabha Gantayat

unsuretomorrownightshelter

Bidyut Prabha Gantayat

addressless letter
nightshelter

Bidyut Prabha Gantayat

meeting in the library wild rabbit moon

Deborah Karl-Brandt

to write or not to write ex best friend

Deborah Karl-Brandt

nothing to hold back

spring rain

Deborah Karl-Brandt

Below Zero

hard frost waking up without you

iced over limbs coated in longing

emptiness the expanse of the sky

new snow lost in yesterday's tracks

freezer burn eating my sadness

numb all over the cold you left me in

Susan Burch / Bryan Rickert

the spider web snaps this small life of mine

Matt Cariello

winter dusk me and my cat staring

Matt Cariello

writing a poem to Issa
I stop to pet my dog

Matt Cariello

the moon holds water –
Basho's wine

Matt Cariello

When the crescent look like a bowl.

mourning doves recalling our swan song

Kelly Sargent

wayward river ripples night stars

Kelly Sargent

airtight alibi
a sudden draft

Paul David Mena

always under construction
the carpenter's house

Paul David Mena

a child and a puddle exchange places

Yvonne Waern

winter sunset

sweet potato soup

Bonnie J Scherer

pregnant

the bulge of snowdrop bulbs

Bonnie J Scherer

blossom our first kiss

Anne Curran

green-winged teal a cacophony circling harrier

Anne Curran

sulfur fertilizing the pistol's angry tongue

Robert Witmer

winding a watch the road danger

Robert Witmer

bullets scything paths and soldiers

Marilyn Humbert

cabbage moth clouds among daisies clouds

Marilyn Humbert

Shadows of ENIAC

analog day the pencil points of expectation

post processing the analog day mixed signals

rotary dial a princess phone analog day

analog day clock hands circle dried up streams

typewriter dings analog day of carriage returns

a digitized font autocorrects another analog day

Peter Jastermsky

Ray Caligiuri

ten nipples for the last of her pups

R. Suresh babu

simcha

the lightness of memory pink zinnia

for my father

Shloka Shankar
(pink zinnia)

the dream again holding me in the darkness

Margaret Walker

misunderstanding
a tiny flower in the crack

Daniela Misso

flames of wires in the wind ...
full farewell bonfire

Daniela Misso

shadows of white egrets spinning a dream

Daniela Misso

each rainbow in a bathtub

Daniela Misso

the taste of red sunset bhut jolokia

Meera Rehm

crack of brahma muhurta :
the Ganga crawls out of mist

Meera Rehm

No Wry Catcher

Now spring-loaded maul rather than careful judgment — wear a cup down south.

Gerard Sarnat

bird-light forest bathing the night mare on top of me

every kinky whim on tap duty his wife

sadistically raped. . .

i espy the predator in us all

~~deleted~~

it left

Lorraine Pester

cycling headwind cycling

Keiko Izawa

eel dinner her long and winding story

Keiko Izawa

in the absence of crows
spring bird soprano metal

Keiko Izawa

hunched moon
the stand-up comedian's same old story

Keiko Izawa

still the energized bunny
looking forward to each day closer to rainbow bridge
concerto grosso pond waterfowl woowooed
abbey schnauzer's excited body slamming me
clicking zoomies blow-dry salt and pepper
square sit for after-bath dried good girl bites cranberries
i'm fred you're ginger cheek to cheek up the steps
a monarch hitches on the schnauzer stroller walk
lights out bedspread landing fifteen ghostly pounds

Lorraine Pester

windless swaying mantis

Vladislav Hristov

aging the hay that rots away

Vladislav Hristov



winter rain—
a smorgasbord of my mood

Shloka Shankar

red star dying maple leaf

Charles Harper

False Spring

equinox so long since solstice
agitating the geese
our bush warbler tunes up
by fits and starts a japanese tit
four warm days yes three cold no
for the white-eye no cherry blossom
is that a leaflet fluttering
tempting a thrush to whistle

Charles Harper

picnic ready our kites forgotten skylark unseen

Clive Bennett

misplaced people like the breeze not the wind

Vandana Parashar

reliving fakery every hour the cuckoo in a clock

Vandana Parashar

sea and sand between my toes
the grief in waves

Vandana Parashar

the moment cloud chooses to cross the moon
coming all this way to die

Vandana Parashar

imagination playing anytime friends

Margaret Walker

tea sweet and cold tomato sandwiches
half-finished jigsaw puzzle

Margaret Walker

The Long Red Thread

an investigation by Michael Lindenhofer

This article started as email correspondence in late February 2023 after I posted a single line haiku of mine around the last week of January 2023.

The email correspondence grew and grew and it felt too good an opportunity for us not to publish it.

Michael Lindenhofer opened the initial email discussion:

Dear Alan,

About a month ago, you posted a one-line haiku on the British Haiku Society's page on Facebook:

long red thread how the last one leaves the park is vapour

I have engaged myself with this one-liner for quite a while, or rather, this one line has engaged me, not to say haunted me.

At first I wanted to post my thoughts on your poem as a comment on Facebook, but in the meantime it seems too long for that. That's why I'd rather write to you directly.

Breaking it down into logical pieces that make sense to me, this is what I get:

long red thread / how the last one leaves / the park is vapour

I tend to understand "red thread" in a figurative sense and not as a leaf disease of the grasses of the cold season. Maybe it works with the fungus, but I haven't had a breakthrough with it yet.

There are various mythological references. In German, a "red thread" is understood to be a trace, a path or also a guideline. Something runs through something like a red thread. That's my native understanding. And I have read that the term is used in this sense in other European countries, too.

Now the verb "leaves" comes into play. Usually you hear, "I've lost the thread". Actually, it should read: "The thread has been lost". The combination of "thread" with the verb "leave" makes it even more interesting, as it emphasizes the process of leaving, as opposed to losing, which is more sudden and perhaps unnoticed. And again: it is not we who leave the thread, rather we are left by the thread.

This red thread is a "long" one, which gives it meaning and significance. And it is also something changeable. Every time, every stage of life has its own red thread. And accordingly, it is now the "last one" that leaves. Perhaps "long" is also an indication that the thread has simply gone on too long. Just as the winter that just goes was a long one. A sense of relief resonates.

But the most intriguing piece in this one-liner is the word "how". At first it was irritating. How to understand "how" in this context? I was tempted to replace "how" with "when". Even more so as the corresponding word in German (wie) can also have the function of "when". I went through various pages on English grammar and found no indication that "how" could introduce a subordinate clause with a pronounced temporal reference, as it does in German. This word works like those 3D images, which often remain closed at first glance. You have to dedicate yourself to them and look at them for a while so that the spatial dimension suddenly opens up.

Are there people in the park? People strolling around? Maybe. Maybe not. It makes no difference because it is the vapour that surprises us. It could be one of the first days of early spring. The sun regains its strength and warms the damp ground. A sight so magical that the long red thread leaves. Something else takes over.

Q: How is it that the red thread leaves?

A: The park is vapour.

The expression "the park is vapour" gives emphasis to this last part in the poem. Instead of an adjective after the verb, there is a noun. I read it as "the park is nothing but vapour". In Japanese, you could probably add kana at the end. In the poem, the syntax takes care of that. Great!

Deconstructing, I have tried to reconstruct your original experience. I kept going until I finally had this “aaaaaah”... Nevertheless, what remains is the question: Am I on the wrong track?...

Even more so since the question arises as to why the poem is a one-liner when, in the sense of my interpretation, it would do quite well as a three-liner?

I really appreciate your often enigmatic style, though I must admit I still haven't been able to crack some of your haiku. Whereas the experience in this case is rather the reverse, namely that the poem decodes me. This sometimes takes time.

"Does Fish-God Know" has a permanent place in the pile of books on my sofa armrest for months, wandering up and down.

Warmest regards
Michael

Michael Lindenhofer
Linz, Austria

Alan's reply with quotes from Michael's investigation:

re:

long red thread how the last one leaves the park is vapour

(Alan Summers)

I had not even recorded this haiku in a document. I read and re-read Michael's commentary, and began working on a response to do it justice.

Michael says:

Breaking it down into logical pieces that make sense to me, this is what I get:

long red thread / how the last one leaves / the park is vapour

I didn't necessarily write it with those pauses in mind, as I was fugue writing, though looking at it in a conscious state, it feels logical:

long red thread / how the last one leaves / the park is vapour

or

long red thread how the last one leaves / the park is vapour

or

long red thread how the last one ... / leaves / the park is vapour

Placing myself back, but consciously this time, to my fugue writing, it was a single sweep of words, an immediate reaction to a writing prompt, where an abrupt perhaps anti-tense decision was made where 'leaves' acts as a verb (present tense), and rubs up against 'is' in an opposite sense of verb tense. Remember this is my unconscious mind holding the reins with my conscious mind the passenger, going along for the ride!

"is" :

Recently, I have received a number of questions about the word *is*. Is *is* a verb? Is it a preposition? Is it a noun? What exactly is its function in a sentence?

A *state of being* verb: State of being verbs do not express any specific activity or action but instead describe existence. The most common state of being verb is to be, along with its conjugations (is, am, are, was, were, being, been). As we can see, is is a conjugation of the verb be.

from: Is "Is" a Verb? Is the Word Is a Verb? - Writing Explained

But *leaves* is also a noun, both literally, as we are in a park, and also a nod to ***In a Station of the Metro*** by Ezra Pound:

The apparition of these faces in the crowd:
Petals on a wet, black bough.

April 1913, Poetry
(founded as Poetry: A Magazine of Verse) est. Chicago 1912

'In a Station of the Metro' by Ezra Pound is the quintessential Imagist poem:

“the observer views “petals on a wet, black bough,” which is to say they are looking at the leaves of a tree, likely following rainfall. In this image, the reader is presented with the idea of small, fleeting, and weak elements of beauty within the natural world.”

Andrew Walker - Poem Analysis, Accessed 21 April 2023.

The poem is Pound's written equivalent for the moment of revelation and intense emotion he felt at the Paris Metro's Concorde station.
WIKIPEDIA

It's worth reading a lot of different resources on this poem that flew out of Vorticism into founding imagism which is often a dominant driving force in some Western approaches to haiku. Vorticist poetry focuses on locating the movement and stillness within the image. Pound is credited with coining the term Vorticism and founded Imagism (the use of precise images).

Michael says:

I tend to understand "red thread" in a figurative sense and not as a leaf disease of the grasses of the cold season. Maybe it works with the fungus, but I haven't had a breakthrough with it yet.

I feel I am a contrary writer, I move out of the literal into the shadows of allusion, para-reality, hyper-reality, metaphorical language, where concrete imagery is an anchor where I can float far out to sea but still come back from my intent.

Michael says:

Now the verb "leaves" comes into play. Usually you hear, "I've lost the thread". Actually, it should read: "The thread has been lost". The combination of "thread" with the verb "leave" makes it even more interesting, as it emphasizes the process of leaving, as opposed to losing, which is more sudden and perhaps unnoticed. And again: it is not we who leave the thread, rather we are left by the thread.

Agreed. And of course "leaves" is not just a verb or a noun or both, but a statement, of transitoriness:

Definition of transitoriness: shortness; the state or quality of lasting only for a short time; the brief touch of inspiration, when we are then left with ourselves and how we drive forward with that, on our own initiative.

I've also used alliteration in particular (plus assonance and rhyme etc...) to create this micro-phrase within the poem:

long red thread how the **last** one **leaves** the park is vapour

i.e.

long last leaves

Is that the imperial hail of long last the king, emperor, despot, or a salute to nature and so far we can not as humans individually outlast other/rest of nature.

long red thread how the last one leaves the park is vapour

And back to the verbal reading:

how one leaves (the park)

how one leaves (the park) is vapour

Michael says:

But the most intriguing piece in this one-liner is the word “how”. At first it was irritating. How to understand “how” in this context? I was tempted to replace “how” with “when”.

While the child might endlessly say or ask ‘why?’ do we not later as adults ask “how?” as much or more than why or when?

Also it’s about “**how** the last one leaves”

Michael says:

Are there people in the park? People strolling around? Maybe. Maybe not. It makes no difference because it is the vapour that surprises us. It could be one of the first days of early spring. The sun regains its strength and warms the damp ground. A sight so magical that the long red thread leaves. Something else takes over.

Exactly! It’s the great cycle, the bit players (humans) leave the theatre (park) and there is either a three-act or five-act structure to the rest of the play (morning-day-night) or pre-morning, morning, evening, twilight, night, and each has its part to play independant of the various life-forms. After the sun begins to take its bow in one place (sunset) it begins again (sunrise) in another venue/theatre.

Michael says:

Deconstructing, I have tried to reconstruct your original experience. I kept going until I finally had this “aaaaah”... Nevertheless, what remains is the question: Am I on the wrong track?...

There is the sadness or poignancy of a day ending, the park closing (literal and metaphorical) and the humans go away (leave the park) and a red thread of sundown divides the human-active/interaction in theatreland (the park) and the closure or cessation of human-seeming integration. We are not really part of many things outside of ourselves, like Alexander the Great, we entered the world with nothing and leave it with nothing, however clothed or covered we are at the final end.

The question might be what is it really all about? What is the last second, and what is the next second with us or another us.

Michael says:

Even more so since the question arises as to why the poem is a one-liner when, in the sense of my interpretation, it would do quite well as a three-liner?

A single red thread seems fitting to travel along a single thread of haiku, especially as in Japan, haiku is a one line poem, albeit vertically, although in newspapers they can often be horizontally, and take away a few letters, and what do you have?

horizon

1. the line at which the earth's surface and the sky appear to meet.

"the sun rose above the horizon"

2. the limit of a person's knowledge, experience, or interest.

The rest is vapour, isn't it?

Or the red thread is sunrise to sundown, the opening and closing 'red strip/line'. Before and after the park is a park is a park with the mist burnt off later after sun up, and descends as the last temporary visitors leave the park. It's own cycle.

Michael says:

I really appreciate your often enigmatic style, though I must admit I still haven't been able to crack some of your haiku.

I can be guilty as other poets in whatever genre, of exploring beyond the first line of defence (our personal barriers and ones set up by our peers).

Michael says:

Whereas the experience in this case is rather the reverse, namely that the poem decodes me. This sometimes takes time.

Wonderful, that is what is intended, thank you!

Michael says:

"Does Fish-God Know" has a permanent place in the pile of books on my sofa armrest for months, wandering up and down.

Note:

Does Fish-God Know

- <https://area17.blogspot.com/2012/10/does-fish-god-know-haiku-collection-by.html>
- <https://area17.blogspot.com/2013/02/new-book-review-of-does-fish-god-know.html>

Echoes

reading his steps on the stairs

not counting my words locked away

slammed door silence left behind

broken kaleidoscope a stained glass world

the letter folds in tears

Margaret Walker

Semi-Detached

magazine house picture perfect no one home

new window old condensation buildup fogs both sides

cover-up the circles under my eyes

cold shoulder breakdown on the side of the road

roundabout scattered puzzle pieces of me

edges and corners the family jigsaw incomplete

Margaret Walker/*Marcie Wessels*

since stars seem still fireflies

Srini

grey dawn skyscrapers rising cranes creak and groan sing sad songs

Julie Constable

anxiety multiplying rabbits

Susan Burch

haystack moon when every pain is a needle

Susan Burch

the original size queen
Goldilocks

Susan Burch

as seen on TV
amateur porn

Susan Burch

redheading my inner fox

Debbie Strange

sirocco

we learn sand's language

Debbie Strange

snow-capped

wrapping my scarf in clouds

Debbie Strange

two magpies early nesting bottle tops

Marilyn Ward

lego flowers piecing together a love affair

Marilyn Ward

worm turning the earth over to spring moon

Tracy Davidson

slumbering snake tail full of rattles

unenchanting
the mirror tells me what I'm not

moon jellyfish
no sting in his latest tale

Tracy Davidson

Tayto crisp packet
a thousand holes pecked

Noel King





Tayto was established by Joe 'Spud' Murphy in 1954 at a time when most crisps were imported from the UK and were unflavoured bar the small blue bag of salt included in each bag to enhance the flavour. Spotting a niche in the Irish market, Joe Murphy set up his own crisp factory.

<https://taytocrisps.ie/history/>

<https://www.tayto.com/about/>

red red red – wounded toy soldier
blood on Mum's carpet

Noel King

somewhere in her poem there's a rabbit hole

something in you triggers the burned fields in me

Marcus Liljedahl

work lunch mostly smiles and nods

Debbi Antebi

one word after another migrating geese

Debbi Antebi

what peroxide cannot remove his words

Claire Vogel Camargo

mom's last sounds in my ear

Claire Vogel Camargo

reluctant on the red moon, period

Janak Sapkota

summer shower, a little girl shares an umbrella with a statue

Janak Sapkota

in the ancient roots in the garden

so what the hanging tree

scarlet like the letter i put on every morning

UNVAXXED

not wanting it to be true i count again

still in line for the shower's silence

the dark angel hovers resurrected

a rushing wind i find myself in the clouds

Susan Beth Furst

ash wednesday i become a cinder

Susan Beth Furst

the crowd over the moon

Grand Slam!

Susan Beth Furst

snowplow rumbling Christmas carols

Nancy Orr

sunlit morning prayer

Nancy Orr

sinking feeling skipping
stones

Nancy Orr

In Newfoundland

Signal Hill the world ends in fog

moose and loon jingling pockets

waterproof backpack baptized in coffee

slowly through the Narrows my ship

dawn spindrift not missing anyone

Ruth Holzer

a drip from its stem anxiety of this iris

Ruth Holzer

proxy war
trig homework

Jerome Berglund

Book of Exodus

permanent record necrotic appendage

connecting flight grandma's recycling

candle snuffer hourglass marking

stop evil floor wax scientific method

modern rest area weighing station

miller high life coach purse

karmic particles living in sin

ducks flying low leaving California

Jerome Berglund

midnight dealer in the light of a flickering crucifix

Stephen Toft

october morning dew on the razor wire

Stephen Toft

dying star a sun sign of the future

Eavonka Ettinger

skin off their backs zest

Eavonka Ettinger

beneath the tidal wave
moon babies

Eavonka Ettinger

skyward the pines shape the snow

Pravat Kumar Padhy

cross-beddings on the rock surface once the river flowed towards sunrise

Pravat Kumar Padhy

dappled sunlight

a deer as if in Schrödinger's cat

Pravat Kumar Padhy

floating thoughts the lotus pond

Mariangela Canzi

dove after dove over the wire fence No Trespassing sign

Chen-ou Liu

snowonsnowonsnow
rowsofcardboardtents

Chen-ou Liu

bed sheets on the clothes line
my son's hide-and-seek with his shadow

Chen-ou Liu

winter rain puddles gathering streetlights

Joshua St. Claire

snow plows through the ice green shoots

Joshua St. Claire

The noose of morning rises with the cream

Michael H. Brownstein

clouds hung wrong on the horizon

Michael H. Brownstein

Kalbaishaki
my verses look for a harbour

Debarati Sen

slam book —
chipped wall paint smells of childhood

Debarati Sen

I call his bluff red morning sky

Adele Evershed

the scent of jazz my thin place

Adele Evershed



MILES DEEP IN A DRUM SOLO

CHERIE HUNTER DAY

Book Review

by

Alan Summers

Miles Deep In A Drum Solo

haiku by Cherie Hunter Day

(Backbone Press, Durham, NC: 2022)

36 pages, ISBN #978-1-7363467-5-4 \$10.00

Winner of the Backbone Press Haiku Book Contest

available from backbonepress.org

There is a variety within this haiku collection from 3–line haiku to single line haiku, and a vertical haiku, with a freshness that digs in and delights on a quiet yet compelling axis. The collection, for me, continues to sing long after a first or second reading, and into further readings.

This impressive collection has four sections with a total of sixty haiku:

I
the
new
normal

II
a
shortfall
of
small
doors

III
the
rollover
of
unused
data

IV
leftover
persimmons

Each section title is taken from a haiku: three tercets (3–line verses) and a 1–line haiku though I won't spoil your discovery by reproducing them here. I found all of the haiku stunning in their evocation, and the opening haiku acts as a welcome, and a reassurance that we are in the right place as readers.

The haiku tercets (3-line verses) are exemplary examples of enjambment, and as a constant student I personally benefit from this author's work, as to when to create something phrasal (2-lines) and hold it with astute juxtaposition with the 'other line'. It's a study of how and why haiku can hold power with a reader, despite its iconic shortness of delivery, and yet lend an engagingness that compellingly lingers. I've read and read all the 3-line haiku, grouping them together, and also alongside the other haiku approaches as laid out in the collection, and I simply marvel. It was really impossible to select one tercet above all the others, as they all wanted to come along! I had to regretfully refuse their wishes, for that is the future reader to decide. Here is one, though they are all so different in tone, and subject:

star jasmine
scent at the beginning
of acquiescence

It's an intriguing haiku, and that long word that appears to repeat 'scent' due to the consonance of the s-letter, from star scent to 'sense' or 'scents' in acquie[scence] feels deeply personal and also open and embracing of this reader (me).

Which brings me to the universal poet's dilemma:

"Choosing the form for a poem is a process built from endless negotiations..."

Jane Burn, *How To Write A Poem* (August, 2022)

Poetry Wales (founded 1965): The national poetry magazine of Wales

It's that negotiation even before a poem or collection is released to the world, and of course with both our known and unknown readership who will encounter the writing once it's publically free.

The impulse to flood the review with all kinds of haiku is close to overwhelming, though I will control this, just to a handful of single line haiku, quoting from my Japan Writers Conference presentation *The Pull of the Lonely Single Line of Haiku* back in 2021. This is partly because a single line haiku can hold a different set of dynamics, though those same tensions are healthy for any type of haiku or other creative writing. I'll look at *haitatsu* (literally 'delivery') which is a term I've adopted and use when looking at haiku, and particularly with a single line, rather than the popular Western three horizontal lines.

Some single line haiku can be challenging, if not daunting, for the reader. We might feel we will get something completely wrong, even though we might be starting out on an adventure! The author is negotiating first with their poem, and then with each and every reader, which is not an easy task. How far do we compromise, or risk abandonment? The single line haiku are a companion force to the 3-line haiku in this collection, and both

balance beautifully with their alternate tensions and *haitatsu*. Two main suggestions to recognise about any single line haiku, as about a third of this collection is made up of them, and they are a sublime addition:

Any single line should always be propulsive, though as Cinderella once said in one of her movie adaptations: “*Never destroy magic with reason.*”

and secondly:

“The inner landscape of white space, and negative space, is untold story plots.”

—Alan Summers

If we go further than just being a close attentive reader, and become “the closer reader” we will find ourselves with a multiverse of poems within each haiku, and beguilingly lose ourselves.

For instance I’m a sucker for the comfort of crows (my own collective noun) so let’s start with this example by Cherie Hunter Day:

crow program running in the background

My personal take on this is the soothing anchor of crows cawing in the background, of something ancient, somehow a reminder that not all that glistens in our modern world will continue to be a constant: In the background of ‘advancement’ will be the original ‘computer program’. Quoting a line from my haibun *The Thoughtful Raven*, as they are fellow corvids, I find the author’s haunting 1-line haiku has that feeling of “*God is in the detail of ripples of silence inside the caw*” with all the deep gutturals and negative spaces.

A line takes the time to listen to the words it holds, and asks the reader to do the same. There are...other ways to think about a line...the point is, every argument invariably suggests thinking about the line, not simply using it to make the writing “look like a poem...”

Some Thoughts on the Integrity of the Single Line in Poetry by Alberto Ríos

(*A Broken Thing: Poets on the Line* ed. Emily Rosko & Anton Vander Zee (University of Iowa Press, Sept. 2011))

I invite readers of this review, and the collection, to consider that haiku can appear as if pulled from the *middle* of an *overheard* conversation. These brief poems may avoid **set up and conclusion** and thus we only have ‘*the middle*’ instead of a linear and logical narrative we might otherwise prefer from a poem, or even a novel. We might now need to place ourselves into a situation where we are compelled participants of “telling a story backward” though it’s a gift to be included both as a ‘companion’ storyteller and as an interpreter of fragments of a story.

“There are no sensible straight lines. There are curves, unfamiliar side streets, cul-de-sacs...”

—Jane Burn

Another single line haiku from Cherie Hunter Day:

petal rain we imagine a different ending

Perhaps this is cherry blossom rain, or any time that petals might rain down on us, or something else? That different ending, is that while watching a film, at home or somewhere else, or are we the film, and something has ended differently, for better or for worse? Perhaps we can consider the reverse narrative which has its place within the incompleteness of haiku verses as well:

“The beginning of the reverse narrative is the end of the story but the start of the audience's experience...” What Is a Reverse Narrative? Jake Shore (2017)

Haiku are often thought as ‘now’ though they quickly become an ‘active past’ that yet hangs around the periphery of our present timeline existence: We are unpeeling “*the effect before the known cause*” and arriving at this “*end at the beginning.*” And are we not time travellers in our own lives navigating the dash between birth and cessation?

last time I heard you became dusk

Another by Cherie Hunter Day, and Jake Shore might say it’s “telling a story backward” especially if like me, you accidentally miss the first few seconds of a movie such as “Memento” (neo-noir mystery thriller, 2000) which is told in reverse narrative. I personally found it more fun to have missed out on the ending, which started in the first few seconds, and where the end of the movie was not resolved, and only delivered the beginning, or perhaps ‘the middle’ to unravel.

Cherie Hunter Day recently stated about a haiku:

“While the details that spawned the poem remain hidden, there is an open invitation to the reader to invest the poem with their own experiences. I’m curious to see what the other readers have to say about the connections conjured up by this haiku.”

We negotiate constantly as people in this world, as participants, or as bystanders, and in the world of haiku, as a reader, we have the same decisions to make. However you treat this collection I sincerely feel it will be a rewarding time well spent.

Alan Summers

founder, Call of the Page

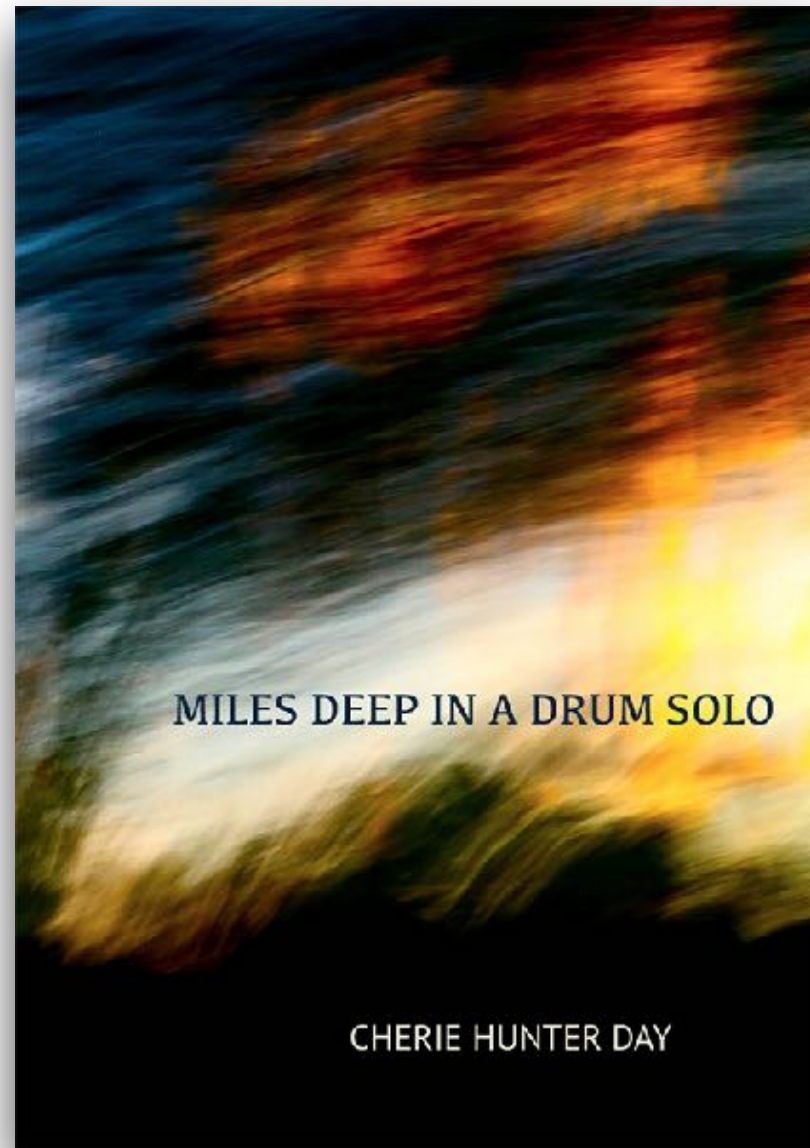
also check out, fresh off the press:

Cherie Hunter Day's The Rattle Inside

https://www.josephsalvatoreaversano.com/post/new-chapbook-release-cherie-hunter-day-s-rattle-inside?fbclid=IwAR06U44ROz3M0Wpe_oLO_0Np8IriJ-uY4E43XzFDQeXHyGncU0WxjWLNLZE

https://www.josephsalvatoreaversano.com/_files/ugd/9b7908_e270a92ac4c64fada6053567591ca6ae.pdf

<https://www.josephsalvatoreaversano.com/half-day-moon-press>



<https://backbonepress.org/haiku-collections/miles-deep-in-a-drum-solo/>



poems

snowflakes on the wire ellipsis of crows

Hifsa Ashraf

dandelion wind hatching new dreams

Hifsa Ashraf

full moon of sky turning to wine

Julie Bates

waving surrender
a field of cosmos

Julie Bates

cough mixture of viruses

John Hawkhead

claiming via stealth tax feathers under the cat's paw

John Hawkhead

gazing down into her
white noise over hailstones stars

John Hawkhead

children's party under the oak acorn caps

Lorraine Haig

deep breath another intake of conscripts

Lorraine Haig

every finger, an eye
above the fold

petro c. k.

the breath of birth
tongue piercing the sky of silver

petro c. k.

winter birthday slush at her door

Helen Buckingham

police constable
no flashing light

Helen Buckingham

house for sale beams full of holes

Helen Buckingham

a whistle through pursed lips purple magnolia

Cherie Hunter Day

winter silent summoning of a worldview

Cherie Hunter Day

still winter rain
the rhythmic sound of knuckles

Lakshmi Iyer

end of autumn
mother hates the smartphone

Lakshmi Iyer

A photograph of a tree trunk with a 'NO' sign and a scythe on a branch. The image is in black and white. The tree trunk is on the right side, and a branch extends from it towards the left. On the branch, there is a small sign that says 'NO' and a scythe. The background is a textured wall.

We demand it has a right and then give it a new name like freedom

artwork/monostich©Richard Downes

An Indian Slice of Life

rooster's call
the dawn breaks the darkness

filter coffee
the chicory-coloured sky

teapot stains
i scrub my conversations

cutting board
we take turns to be silent

rolling the chapattis
i learn to shape my etiquette

watering the plants
the high's and low's of our roots

grandma's cookbook
the dog's ears stuck to each other

dinner time
we pass on a small prayer

Lakshmi Iyer

moonflowers in her hair east meets west

Lakshman Bulusu

a conch on the beach
her almond eyes

Lakshman Bulusu

the pickpocket has my dead brother's smile

Patrick Sweeney

moon moth powder on the metal deer fencing

Patrick Sweeney

taking all my time
vanity mirror

Bona M. Santos

sour milk
school recess lunch trading post

Bona M. Santos

waning moon
clouding the leafless orchard

Manoj Sharma

window watching the death of a bumblebee

Manoj Sharma

fireflies filling up the break up

Manoj Sharma

two crows
road-kill feasting

Lewis Colyar



Here in this place a pathway to escape the blows of brutality

artwork/monostich@Richard Downes

in silence I listen to
sparrows leaving a stain

Goran Lowie

tree stealing my song
to boot it up again

Goran Lowie

trapped on the mountain-
that one stubborn cloud

Sally Quon

from the refrigerator-
blueberries calling

Sally Quon

watching the snow drifting into sleep

Sally Quon

catalpa tree throws off its leaves
early winter snowstorm

Michele Rule

unfenced pool
making angel's wings

Richard L. Matta

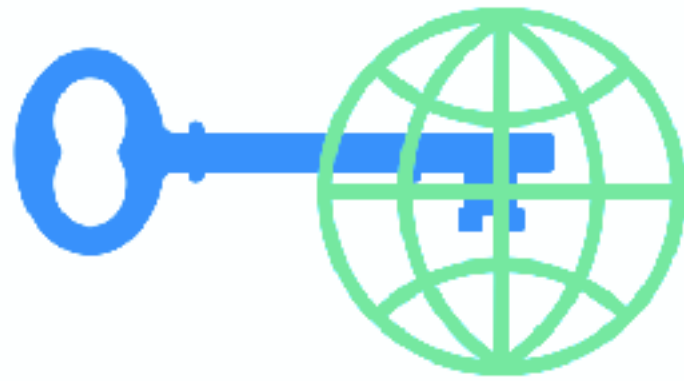
the puppet uncorking a new bottle

Richard L. Matta



In this place reconciliation of the past for present futures

artwork/monostich©Richard Downes



blue key haiku feature



Headhunting Monoku
— Jo Balistreri



DFR

Jo Balistreri



Headhunting Jo Balistreri

flocks of snow geese leapfrogging stubbled barley moon

of a screech owl soundless haunt

across the hallway burnt toast messages

skating grief-thin ice your most cheerful voice

a garden snake uncoiling his gloved hand in the wood pile

between falling a bearded iris raindrop's hint of blue

my horse on the edge of breathing my head his flank

the blue enamel pot winter nestling



poems

bees in the lavender
passing motorbikes

Annie Bachini

depressed piano keys
a white butterfly

Annie Bachini

the baby she didn't have wild rose

Nancy Brady

his sketches find
the south wind no longer warm

Nancy Brady

*a place on the wall
blowing leaves*

Nancy Brady

in the nightmare being lost maze

Nancy Brady

origami paper flowers a virtual garden

Iliyana Stoyanova

watercolour paper flower lake

Iliyana Stoyanova

my old ways unraveling dead parents

Cynthia Anderson

childless except for the inner one
going off the deep end

Cynthia Anderson

distracted the tail wagging the roadrunner

Cynthia Anderson

when it couldn't get any colder
the chain saw next door

Cynthia Anderson

Detritus

veiled cracks the earthquake waiting to happen

death never distant the instinct of ants

wadded paper poem drafts starting fires

all sunshine the proverb heats up

moving mountains of dust haboob

buried up to the eyeballs sidewinder

Cynthia Anderson

two days after the first dose the world falls into starlings

Kat Lehmann

long night
a life without me

Kat Lehmann

the only to heal day lily

Kat Lehmann

not hysteria

first true leaves

Kat Lehmann

in another's shoes
winter stalk field

C.X.Turner

snow disappears inside this opening moonflower

C.X.Turner

dementia the night rainbows her memory lapses

C.X.Turner

dog walkers' protest
in the breeze

C.X.Turner

road hockey shouting
frozen rat curbside

Lev Hart

winter sunset
sparrows high & low on barbed wire

Lev Hart

coupling trains boomboomboomboomboomboomboomboomboomboom

Lev Hart

my aunt's stroke –
the cat plays with a rubber ball

Hassane Zemmouri

my aunt's smile
the cat tickles her

Hassane Zemmouri

my aunt's laugh the same after the stroke the cat tickles her foot

Hassane Zemmouri

everyone in the grave of their own tree

Yasir Farooq

I lean against the waving branch
one more branch

Yasir Farooq

window tree
the invisible branch

Yasir Farooq

the top deck of a slow bus clouds

Steve Mason

wild violets' scent no more in need of some stranger's hand

Michael Lindenhof

yellow dusk spreading butter a piece of bread and dreams

Michael Lindenhof

In my room

jazz blizzard blows head to toe

scissors waving cut flower fingers point

magic country kicks up dust where all roads go

the sun comes dancing on goldfish ponds

family cradle day cry soft voices

chanting colours hand puppets search the dark

Steve Mason

note: part of an improvised electronic music performance

reading between his lines
my thoughts porcupine

Kala Ramesh

between her laughter rolls a tear glistening

Kala Ramesh

cloud peaks
to find my wings

Kala Ramesh

appetite ten-headed Ravana i recall

Kala Ramesh

forest floor the clogs termites wear

Robert Kingston

a trio of jackdaws
missing the first dawn wave

Robert Kingston

cold dark death they chop the ice to dig his grave

Martha Wallace

brain cloud the cow jumps over the sun

Martha Wallace

stitches undone together my past

Sushmitha V

the sun behind clouds my father's smile

Sushmitha V

sour mango pickle
the descent into old age

Shrehya Taneja

butterfly effect the alarm on snooze again

Shrehya Taneja

gravity the great inconvenience of it

Wilda Morris

cutting through his argument sharp tongue

Wilda Morris

fifty-five birthday candles...

the hanging plant singed

Wilda Morris

October Day

pigeons forage inside Union Station

a siren and flashing lights

Chicago wind I could fly too close to the sun

Mom's Place "a gathering place" she'd have shunned

apple core on the sidewalk a starling grabs it from sparrows

her daily exercise picking up cigarette butts on LaSalle Street

cardboard bed in the park a couple shares a thin gray blanket

another siren

Wilda Morris

O F O O F F O O F O —each wheel a spin of spring wind

John Zheng

missing dumplings made by mom—
the moon a full sack of flour

John Zheng

roadside blues marker
bullet holes threaded by sunlight

John Zheng

fuyugomori—
my shipwrecked dreams

Ganesh R.

a rolling stone i navigate conversational landmines

Ganesh R.

a dip in the ganges—
the preparation for future sins

Ganesh R.

toy hospital
lonely songs fix the cry box

Alan Summers

snowswiftly
a fieldfare descends homewards

Alan Summers

bindweeds sometimes along the path an anxious white

Giorgio Bacchi

punctuating his talk h i c c u p s

Teji Sethi

spring, summer, autumn, winter
raining bullets

Teji Sethi

in the knots of an umbilical cord dreams

Teji Sethi

pebbles
how many river meets in her path

Teji Sethi

unwanted what else can I be a caterpillar

Richa Sharma

within me she writes the waiting grass

Richa Sharma

spring pillow
I dream a comeback

Richa Sharma

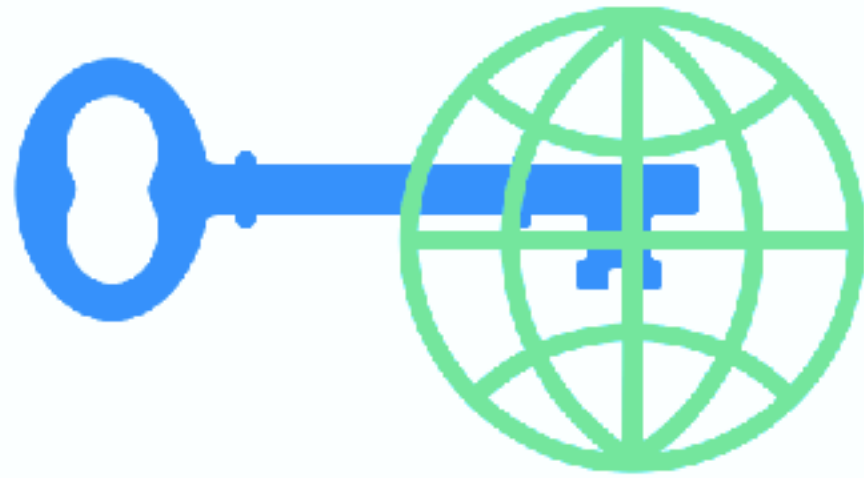
fruit bread
the evening rain

Richa Sharma

Delayed/staggered sequence

ringing an empty street

Jenny Fraser



blue key haiku feature



DPR

Orrin Préjean



The Arc of Orrin Préjean

The Arc

of

Orrin Préjean

grandkids playing my youth somewhere around here

beautiful black man among sunflowers

beans in the crockpot granny watching 'Young & the Restless'

yellow jonquils an amicable divorce

abandoned train station: some of my best graffiti art

patch of cosmos; sometimes wild wind lives in my veins

erasing the day's events more whiskey more silence

your beautiful lies flapping in a breeze; American flag

grassy knoll: the things i write in my diary

travel by train out of a dream into the sun

child's innocence where have i left myself

in
one
azalea
all
mama's
pain
and
some
joy

unwashed dishes i don't answer his texts

quiet dusk he leaves his aggression inside me

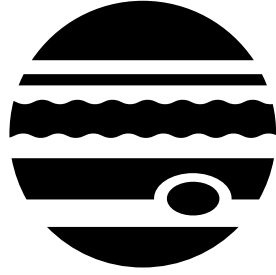
'another black life...' mood dark as coffee grounds

for tyre nichols

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

<https://www.npr.org/2023/03/30/1166850701/tyre-nichols-sacramento-renaming-skate-park>

<https://abcnews.go.com/US/tyre-nichols-timeline-investigation-death/story?id=96695791>



poems

a yam hand axe half-peeled in my neanderthal claw

David Boyer

the day Caesar dies a pink seagull in baby-colored air

David Boyer

never managed to apologize to
the heat

David Boyer

fetid wind from the belch of the cave
dweller's Tupperware

David Boyer

the sea fog arrives to hide the lies of a woman poet

Miho Kinnas

falling asleep, your back turns red
I go home to drink a glass of wine

Miho Kinnas

you dislike making love in darkness
evening primrose stands in the rain

Miho Kinnas

the fields of goldenrods where you lost your earring

Miho Kinnas

another death notice today a movie star

Christine Wenk-Harrison

walking the labyrinth
raindrops on flat water

Christine Wenk-Harrison

your stare frozen computer screen

Valentina Ranaldi-Adams

transition

new moon
all is dark

crescent moon
light appears

quarter moon
light equals dark

full moon
all is light

Valentina Ranaldi-Adams

promise of summer
the screw twisted anti-clockwise

Amoolya Kamalnath

paper white conjunctiva loaning the moonlight

Amoolya Kamalnath

this moment as if I've written my death poem

Amoolya Kamalnath

A heady concoction

scent of eucalyptus under the canopy forest song

summer fire the broker an also-ran

mango blossoms this year early rains

this green belt in ghat roads sandal paste

child taking classes the sensei briefs his counterpart

exchange programme the letters left behind in the mailbox

moving on the flight of the geese until this day

writing recipes the taste of ingredients from fresh paper

Amoolya Kamalnath

gran's stories in dune grasses: saudade

Arvinder Kaur

my name with cherry tomatoes: chef lover

Arvinder Kaur

桜の手足がしなるのコットンキャンディー

the cotton candy where the limbs of the cherry trees bend

Jesus Chameleon

love in the time of war mourning doves

Neena Singh

dark clouds hover
the thunder of unshed tears

Neena Singh

zinnia phlox pink climber roses honeybees my garden in Chandigarh

Neena Singh

the jacaranda tree blooms
a sparrow's world

Neena Singh

second-guessing my being I need to talk

Tazeen Fatma

the denial to let go comet trail

Tazeen Fatma

budget highlights

I crunch on puffed rice

Tazeen Fatma

autocorrect
my courtesy turns rude

Tazeen Fatma

Delayed/staggered sequence

ringing an empty street my bike along the edge

Jenny Fraser

the endless song of three notes my mother sang a lullaby

Mike Gallagher

her hands open a wild animal to the sky

Marcie Wessels

round vowels
a hole filled with ancient dirt

Marcie Wessels

another Monday
Prufrock's coffee spoons clatter

Marcie Wessels

Fresh Out

cold cereal morning cupboard crickets

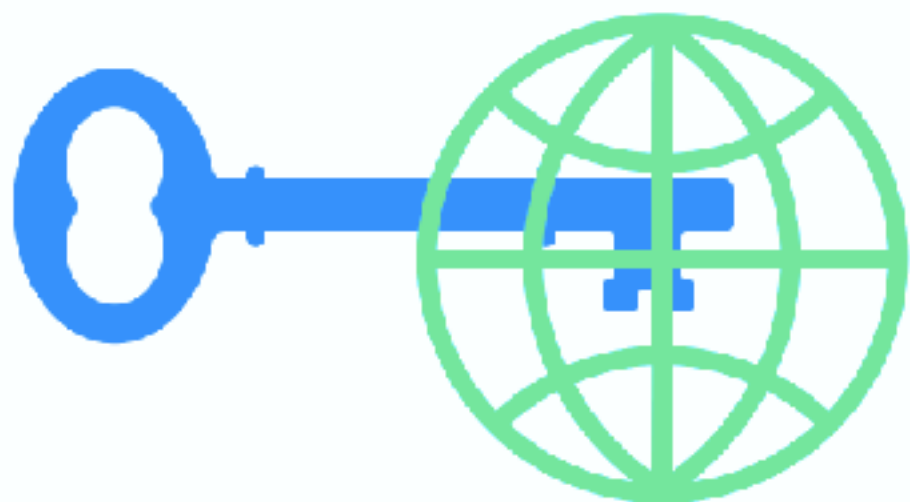
free pantries bare bellies every day scarecrows

another harvest moon pie from the dumpster

past the expiration date throw away children

crying over the spoilt milk of human kindness

Marcie Wessels/*Margaret Walker*



blue key haiku feature



DHR

John Wisdom

The Vertical One Line Haiku of John Wisdom

The Vertical One Line Haiku
of
John Wisdom

after
the
storm
a
twisted
pine
perfuming
the
yard

between
the
oak
branches

yellow

here
there,

a finch—
gone

mist

rising—

a

spindly

legged

new-born

calf

licked

clean

In
and
out
of
the
trumpet
vines—
a
hummingbird
bird ...
here,

there,

gone!



poems

Specters

blue wall
an old crow's new name

bonfire smoke
a book's spine cracks

dogs in the shadows
another black rain

Marcie Wessels

students through the open door spring

Gideon Young

Thanksgiving whisky listing grievances

Gideon Young

sweeping the sidewalk

the scent of mint

Gideon Young

heavy sky packing his stuff into boxes

Stephanie Zepherelli

pinwheels spinning rapidly sufi dancers

Stephanie Zepherelli

raindrops polka dot my solid-color dress

L. Teresa Church

old wooden clothespins hold a line of sunlight

L. Teresa Church

spring shooting a hibiscus in full bloom

Aishwarya Vedula

monday blues blooming butterfly pea

Aishwarya Vedula

magnolia bud—
her urge to deny

Aishwarya Vedula

pulling the horizon further away a fishing trawler

Minal Sarosh

trees in winter fog I see her grief clearly

Minal Sarosh

before the fight
her *okay* becomes *k*

Prashanth V

a modicum of photons stunted bamboo

Prashanth V

masking your black lies concealer

Prashanth V

summer sky airplanes displace the quiet

Rupa Anand

dawn down Ganga ghat donkey turd

Rupa Anand

spring obsession
diary pages stained yellow-brown . . .

Rupa Anand

wetland chill
the stride of woolly-necked storks

Rupa Anand

Delayed/staggered sequence

ringing an empty street my bike along the ocean's edge at the time

Jenny Fraser



*Duostich:
Navigating
Unicorns
by
Alan Summers*

duostich: pronounced DUO + STICK

With a deep bow to Michael Lindenhofer for being a catalyst, via email, to writing about the 2-line haiku approach.

Dear Alan,

I have been studying some of your 2-line haiku quite a while to get a feel for the line breaks. Really, it's not so easy...

They basically consist of two components, each claiming its own line. A third line would be too much of a good thing. And welding them together into a single line would not help either, because the seam would stand out too clearly. In the real one-liners, the basic components are so neatly put together that the seams are barely visible. Sometimes one shimmers here, sometimes there.

— *Michael Lindenhof*

Let us begin with this almost 8 year old article by David Grayson, and this partial quote:

“
...two-line haiku remain, in fact, “unicorns”
”

Writing Haiku: The Two-Line Form by David Grayson
Frogpond 38.3 • Autumn 2015

<https://www.hsa-haiku.org/frogpond/2015-issue38-3/Grayson-2lineHaiku-Fp38-3.pdf>

“The majority of English-language haiku published today is, of course, written in a three-line format. One-liners have comprised a smaller (but increasing) share in recent years. But two-line haiku remain rare.” — David Grayson

The Western tradition of haiku as a 3-line poem only was reinforced at least from 1947, post-WWII:

Kenneth Yasuda wrote that haiku is a “one-breath poem in three lines.”

James Hackett recommended that haiku poets “write in three lines . . .”

The early translations by Blyth, Henderson, and Yasuda were composed in this form. The Beat poets mainly wrote three-line haiku, which includes Jack Kerouac’s popular work. — David Grayson

Interestingly they appear to be an all male group! Thank goodness for Marlene Mountain and Ruby Spriggs etc... showing that the power of the line needn't be constrained or restrained into a dictated role and appearance across three lines. Thankfully our pioneers have enabled us to discover our own poetry and haiku across a single line. Are we yet to make the leap to regularly write duostich?

Nearly eight years after this Frogpond journal article, where David Grayson says:

While it seems unlikely that this format, which sits between the two preferred options, would be especially demanding, the two-liner does feature unique constraints. — David Grayson

We have seen examples where the third line is simply tucked into the second line (or even the opening line) yet still highly visible as an elephant in the room.

Perhaps we are so overly influenced by many things said and dare I say it, even policed, around haiku in three lines, that it interferes with simply writing the poem itself.

*“English-language haiku has grown more diverse over time. It remains to be seen if two-line haiku become more common or remain sparse.”
— David Grayson*

Michael Lindenhof said:

I have been studying some of your 2-line haiku quite a while to get a feel for the line breaks. Really, it's not so easy...

I guess a couplet or duostich that has to be its own complete poem, possibly embracing the renku aspects of link and shift, is often a challenge. I've been writing duostich (pronounced duo-STICK) since 1994.

vee of a gumtree
four egrets black against the sky

Alan Summers

Commended, New Zealand Poetry Society International Poetry Competition 1994

Publication credits: *the old moon and so on* The New Zealand Poetry Society Inc. (1994); Scope feature, FAWQ, Australia May 94; Azami #20 (1994) Micropress yate, July 95; Azami #27 ed. Ikkoku Santo (Japan)

Collection: *sundog haiku journal: an australian year* sunfast press 1997 reprinted 1998

It could be a tercet:

vee of a gumtree
four egrets black
against the sky

or

vee of a gumtree
four egrets black against
the sky

Although the enjambment, how the lines are 'split' to make a 3 line count, appear clumsy in their execution.

What about a one-line haiku version?

vee of a gumtree four egrets black against the sky

I certainly prefer the energy of the single line version over the compromised tercet examples.

But do I achieve the two images of a vee of two branches in the gumtree, and four birds dark against the sky, and then they 'enter' the v-shape?

I feel that is better accomplished over a two-line construction:

vee of a gumtree
four egrets black against the sky

Three line haiku are often constrained by a Western notion of enjambment and what a haiku is, and what it should look like on the 'page'.

Do I compromise again with this duostich?

winter's end
a wardrobe slaps closed

Alan Summers
Tinywords issue 21.1 March 2021
Presentation: Haiku North America 2021 Conference: *Schrödinger's MA and the segue axis* by Alan Summers

Do I force it into a tercet:

winter's end
a wardrobe slaps
closed

winter's end
a wardrobe
slaps closed

The first tercet version almost works but feels it's a three statement construct:

1. winter's end
2. a wardrobe slaps
3. closed

I don't get the inclusiveness of the atmosphere that I wish to be generated. Let's see if a 'monoku' works better:

winter's end a wardrobe slaps closed

It's a little bit better although it does feel crude and almost shouting that the end of the winter season is "a wardrobe slapped closed" as if it's a blunt force trauma simile or metaphor instead of a more gently immersed figure of speech in one reading and not disrupting the simple last seasonal guest or employee or manager etc... doing house management and closing the vacation venue for the season.

A wardrobe could slap an end to the winter season but again, the duostich seems to have the superior enjambment or coupled power of the (two) lines in parallel and relationship.

Michael said:

They basically consist of two components, each claiming its own line.

Alan:

In a way it is like that, each line is vital and to a certain extent independent but supplement/complement each other into a stronger poem over two lines, and no more.

Michael said:

A third line would be too much of a good thing. And welding them together into a single line would not help either, because the seam would stand out too clearly.

Alan:

A third line or one forcefully added to one of the other two lines would defeat the point of a 2-line poem.

Michael said:

In the real one-liners, the basic components are so neatly put together that the seams are barely visible. Sometimes one shimmers here, sometimes there.

Alan:

Real single lines, be they haiku, a meme, a strapline to an advert, or one starting or closing a short story or novel, will feel just right, and natural even if the method shifts around the syntax to engage the reader.

Just as water finds its level, I feel it's similar to finding if a 1-line, 2-line, 3-line or 4-line haiku approach has found its 'ground-grip' on the page.

carpet of leaves
a long division leaves no remainder

Michael Lindenhof

Michael's first duostich uses the oft-used simile of a carpet of (leaves, or snow etc...) which I read in the literal sense even if the approach is figurative:

- o departing from a literal use of words; metaphorical
- o figuratively refers to a metaphor. A metaphor is a direct comparison between two things.
- o Figurative language is the use of non-literal phrases or words to create further meaning in writing or speech. Figures of speech are an example of this, such as similes and metaphors.

Hence with *carpet* we can surmise it's a layer of something covering the ground (leaves = Autumn, snow = Winter or maybe early Spring).

Now the second line makes this really interesting and moves us away from an overused phrase (that of 'carpet of leaves'). I recall persuading Michael to keep this as two lines as a tercet loses the power that I felt I was witnessing:

carpet of leaves
a long division leaves no remainder

versus

carpet of leaves
a long division leaves
no remainder

versus

carpet of leaves a long division leaves no remainder

Of course there is the immediate aspect of 'leaves' being repeated at the end of the first two lines in the tercet version, plus that makes it a blatant rhyme as it's the same two words. I struggle to get past the puns on 'leaves' and stating leaves twice as last words in the first two lines. I can't see the poem anymore, only an assortment of accidental or deliberate rhyme due to the same word repeated twice. The enjambment that gives us the last line of 'no remainder' jams up the syntax in an obstructive manner, to this reader (me).

- carpet of leaves
- a long division leaves
- no remainder

1. carpet of leaves
2. a long division leaves
3. no remainder

Leaves starts as a noun in the first line and ends up as a verb in the second line, but it jars with me. Yet if we return to the duostich we have this as a the second/final line:

a long division leaves no remainder

Long division is a written mathematical method of dividing a large number, usually by another large number. Remainder can mean something that is left behind, a trace of something.

As its 'own line' it allowed to see beyond the generic simile or metaphor of a covering of leaves as a "carpet" and see the greater image. The ground surface is covered by leaves, a process of Autumn in the Northern Hemisphere in an equal amount to the earth it's covering. And those leaves will mulch down providing homes for insects as well as nutrients for the soil. It's the magic of nature, and equal amounts leave no waste or traces left over, as part of the great circle of life. I would never have felt this with either the tercet or the one-line approach, as "leaves" was getting in my way rather than carrying me as a reader and an *experiencer*.

An *experiencer* is an entity (reader) that receives a sensory impression, or can embrace something in such a manner that they can enter a state of being the locus (place) in an event or activity. Haiku can do that, and line decisions can take us on a journey or become like a snarl up in traffic.

brake lights in morning fog
tea's molecules

Michael Lindenhof

I just love this! It brings a smile whenever I read it. The two line decision is perfect for me.

brake lights in morning fog
tea's molecules

versus

brake lights
in morning fog
tea's molecules

versus

brake lights in morning fog tea's molecules

I just don't see the 1-line or 3-line versions working. The 3-line (tercet) version makes a crude hinge line and the ungrammatical syntax loses its charm:

brake lights
in morning fog

in morning fog
tea's molecules

or

brake lights
in the morning fog

in the morning fog
tea's molecules

The corrected grammar version also loses charm for this reader with the hinge line creating this couplet:

in the morning fog
tea's molecules

It just reads awkwardly silly to me.

The 1-line version also fails with its ***run on approach or device*** of

brake lights in morning fog tea's molecules
or
brake lights in the morning fog tea's molecules

The reading jars for me, even when I love subversions in grammar and syntax.

fog tea's molecules

Okay, it's quirky but the gimmick dominates.

The phrase "fog tea's" makes my inner tongue sting as if jabbed.

As much as I like the idea of "in the morning fog" and an image of brake lights from a car or truck, that fuzzy image I also get if it's raining hard, I don't receive the magic of:

brake lights in morning fog

vs

tea's molecules

I love the humour, and I can also allow my literal logical side enter, and feel this is at a motorway rest stop venue. Either the driver has their own thermos of tea, and I can taste that old-fashioned taste and smell of the plastic components, cap etc... of childhood family vacations on the road, or they are wrapped around a big mug of tea imbibing the steam before entering the hot sharp substance of the liquid, perhaps absorbing the tea's molecules. It takes me back to the multi-snow storm journey I took in a small car from South West England to the North East of England, and recovering in a coffee chain shop almost closed due to snow damage but determined to serve motorists and truck drivers.

So two lines, multiple sensory experiences, which if reduced or forced into other formats would not carry the same sorcery of two lines, with so much wonderful white and negative space swirling around those two lines.

Okay, a few more examples of duostich from me:

winter's end
a wardrobe slaps closed

—ALAN SUMMERS

ISSUE 21.1 | 23 MARCH 2021

the fallen leaves in every war zone of dad's photos

Alan Summers

Glint

an ebook collection by Alan Summers

published by Proletaria *politics philosophy phenomena* ed. Elancharan Gunasekaran (February 2020)

<https://proletaria730964817.files.wordpress.com/2020/03/glint.pdf>

Originally a single line, somehow the technical dynamics (with Elan's suggestion) created this new/different tension of the two line enjambment which won us over.

night clouds the pull of the sound-fox

Alan Summers

hedgerow a journal of small poems #108 (2017) ed. Caroline Skanne

straight falling snow
the small talk in prison

Alan Summers
hedgerow a journal of small poems #108 (2017) ed. Caroline Skanne

Os Sacrum
this pear on Plato's diaphragm

Alan Summers
Bones - a journal for contemporary haiku Issue 0.1 2012 reissued 2013
Collection: Does Fish-God Know (Yet To Be Named Free Press 2012)

six-year-olds who work out past
L tense forms of imaginary verb

Alan Summers
c.2.2. Anthology of short-verse ed. Brendan Slater & Alan Summers
(Yet To Be Named Free Press 2013)

girl in an owl
a human gun for yellow

Alan Summers

c.2.2. Anthology of short-verse ed. Brendan Slater & Alan Summers
(Yet To Be Named Free Press 2013)



Creation of The Birds
by Remedios Varo (1957):



cooler moonlight
the crow-flecked trees flow

Alan Summers

Desert Rain, Haiku Nook: An Anthology ed. Jacob D. Salzer & the Nook Editorial Staff (2022)

<https://jsalzer.wixsite.com/desertrain>

disembodied voices, darkness, light
express train jolts

Alan Summers

Point Judith Light (1994 & 1995) ed. Patrick Frank

Kafka's insect
. . . I share half-lives I didn't want

Alan Summers

Does Fish-God Know (YTBN Press 2012)

aberrations of rain
epipubic bone retracts the lever

Alan Summers
Does Fish-God Know (YTBN Press 2012)

Blood Moon
my Rhesus positive rising

Alan Summers
Does Fish-God Know (YTBN Press 2012)

rattle of rain
the crumbs in giants' pockets

Alan Summers
Does Fish-God Know (YTBN Press 2012)

Angel Beach

phytoplankton for the great whale

Alan Summers
Does Fish-God Know (YTBN Press 2012)

the shadows that don't belong

daffodil trail

Alan Summers
Yanty's Butterfly Haiku Nook: An Anthology (2016)
ed. Jacob Salzer & The Nook Editorial Staff ISBN-10: 1329915410. ISBN-13: 978-1329915411
<https://jsalzer.wixsite.com/yantysbutterfly>

leaf drop

a shrew journeys its path

Alan Summers
Yanty's Butterfly Haiku Nook: An Anthology (2016)
ed. Jacob Salzer & The Nook Editorial Staff ISBN-10: 1329915410. ISBN-13: 978-1329915411

the Alice Hole flickers
pulling rabbits from a shadow

Alan Summers
our best haiga ed. lavana kray (April 2022)

the Alice Hole flickers
pulling rabbits from a shadow



photo: hikka/Alan Summers, 2022

What better way than to end on David Grayson's final words back in 2015:

"If poets do produce more two-liners, they may discover new strengths of the form and overcome some of its constraints. As it stands, haiku poets will benefit if they consider the two-line format as a viable option when composing their work."

— David Grayson



poems

into my poems booklice

Tomislav Sjekloća

no one to admire it
daytime firefly

Tomislav Sjekloća

writer's block
cloud shaped clouds

Tomislav Sjekloća

memory of her shape
etched on my fingers

Ravi Kiran

slate sky ray of light the old barn almost holy

Marion Clarke

gone overnight rose nightingale heart pain

Marion Clarke

single apple
the wind has its way

Marion Clarke

a sense of something better
wild bluebell

Marion Clarke

my solo party at 1 am
K-dramas

Vidhi Ashar

south korean drama series

Korean dramas (Korean: 한국 드라마; RR: Han-guk deorama) popularly known as K-dramas, are television series in the Korean language that are made in South Korea.

dust motes—
the undervalued artists

Vidhi Ashar

counting down to the last days empty road

Vidhi Ashar

aurora the sparkle of sequins

Dhaatri Vengunad

QR Code your foot in the door

Dhaatri Vengunad



Feature:

Curating Area 17

Travelling the single line of haiku

Curating Area 17: Travelling the single line of haiku

Hiroaki Sato states that it's been the practice in Japan, from early haikai days, to create monolinear poems:

"...for the great majority of Japanese haiku writers and commentators, the haiku is a one-line poem."

He quotes the critic Nihira Masaru:

"One-liness is an indispensable part of the haiku form"

"On Haiku" Hiroaki Sato

(New Directions Publishing Corporation, isbn 9780811227414 Dec 2018)

<https://www.ndbooks.com/book/on-haiku/>

言い訳する日しない日蜆汁の湯気
—宮崎斗士

Romanised Japanese:

iiwake suru hi shinai hi shijimi-jiru no yuge

—Toshi Miyazaki (宮崎斗士)

Publication details:

Collection: *"Sonna Ao"* (*That Kind of Blue*)

by Toshi Miyazaki, pub. Rikka Shorin, Tokyo 2014

a day to make excuses shijimi clam shell soup

English version by Alan Summers

Who wouldn't want to take a break from the daily grind with an amazing meal that also has health benefits? Shijimi clams are rich in amino acids, minerals, taurine, and iron, where you can recover from fatigue as well as receive beauty benefits!

The haiku is simple in execution, it connects to those of us who want a clear day ahead of us, and a well earned respite, not easy in this frenetic world we inhabit.

The white space, hidden or text that is not necessary to reveal, I'll show here, for example:

a day to make excuses [let's have] shijimi clam shell soup

KIGO ALERT!

'*shijimi*' (corbicula clam) is a Spring kigo.

The month of March is said to be in the middle of Spring according to the haikai saijiki.

shijimi clams:

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

saijiki

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Saijiki>

Shijimijiru 蜆汁, しじみ汁 **miso with corbicula clams**

brackishwater clam, short-necked clam,

Yamato-Shijimi (Corbicula japonica) corbicula miso soup

It is said to be good for your liver and helps with a hangover.

In the towns of the Edo period, young kids would catch these small clams in the nearby lakes and sell them in the morning for the miso soup. The call of "shijimiiii, shishimiiii" were heard everywhere in Edo. It is one of the "tastes of mother" that are always remembered.

Dr Gabi Greve Washoku — Japanese Food Culture and Cuisine (April 2008)





How do one line haiku in English build up so the reader has a whole poem to hang onto?

So what happens with a one-line haiku that has one horizontal line instead of three? One-line haiku can appear in various guises, needing to contain some aspects of the gaps between fragmentary sections of haiku (*fragment/phrase* or *phrase/fragment*) that we see in the three line versions. Above all, it's the invisible text, the not-said, the unsaid, the gaps where no text is apparent that counts as much as the words that we see. Even if a reader does not consciously read into those spaces, those white echoes of non-text may act as a catalyst for the reader to stray a little deeper into the poem.

Example:

eye of the song a blackbird touching the void

Alan Summers

Winner, The British Haiku Society Awards 2018

Haiku Section judge: Scott Mason

Judge's commentary by Scott Mason:

"A Rubik's ku of perception and intuition held together with synaesthesia, the winning one-liner beguiles and haunts me. What and where is the "eye" of a blackbird's song? How does that eye "touch" the void? What void are we talking about here anyway – some nexus of negative color (blackness), sound (silence) and capability? ... the focus of Emerson's "transparent eyeball" turned inward? These questions and others draw me into a state of dreamlike reverie, impelled by a creature in equal parts totem and flesh. (The last "literary" bird to transport me like this was a thrush, in Burnt Norton.)"

Emerson's "transparent eyeball"

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

Burnt Norton and the thrush

http://www.english.illinois.edu/Maps/poets/a_f/eliot/norton.htm

Burnt Norton (the first poem of T. S. Eliot's Four Quartets.):

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

"Stunning. Wallace Stevens does come to mind--only you did it with one line. It's beautiful to read out loud and haunting."

—Jo Balistreri USA

each window its own night train

Alan Summers

Honourable mention

The British Haiku Society Awards 2018

Haiku Section judge: Scott Mason

Scott Mason, Judge's comment:

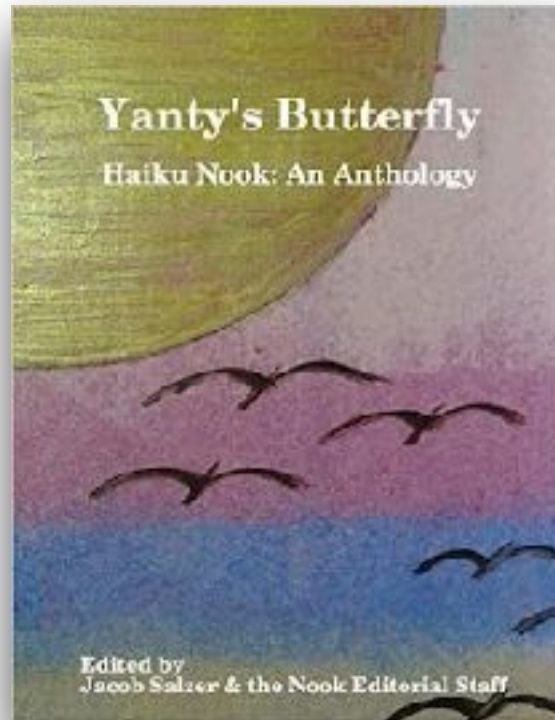
"This linear portmanteau has more than a one-track mind."

"You captured that elusive sense of being the conductor of one's own train. I've felt this. All alone in that vastness." —Jo Balistreri USA

As the author, this haiku was taken from my experience on the Caledonian Sleeper to Scotland. Also watching my wife set off or arriving by train from various meetings etc... each window is a story, each person is a story, each glance is a story. Are we are our own window...on a night train to somewhere?

Enjoy working out the different approaches, the tricks where nouns are verbs or vice versa or both, where meanings are like the White Rabbit from Alice in Wonderland, taking you down a rabbit hole far far away from a hot English Summer picnic of a day, or Dorothy's Oz, where her silver shoes (the book) or ruby slippers (the movie) take you somewhere that is no longer your Kansas homeland.

As well as guest poets further down, I will start with examples from this anthology:



Yanty's Butterfly: Haiku Nook Anthology
ed. Jacob Salzer and the Nook Editorial Staff (2016)
ISBN-10: 1329915410 ISBN-13: 978-1329915411
<https://jsalzer.wixsite.com/yantysbutterfly>

Here are some wonderful examples of monoku from the **Yanty's Butterfly** anthology, and from invited guests.

a cold moon secrets of the gallows

Yanty Tjiam (1981–2015)

The word *secrets* is a noun, but it could also read, misread, or double-read as a verb, not just a noun (i.e. a cold moon secrets as in hides or stashes away something of the gallows? Cold moon makes this a winter season verse in traditional haiku.)

snailish motion the grey clouds my heart

Fei Zhan

Yanty's brother brings in a poetic line with *snailish*, (such a wonderful word), and it becomes an adjective with 'snailish motion' so that grey clouds move slowly, even sluggishly. Fei Zhan decides to imaginatively replace the oft used adjective *sluggish*.

Also, does something grey, that might be sad, cloud his heart too? Is *clouds* both a noun and a verb? There is more than one meaning and way of reading this poem.

after rain midnight dreams a hedgehog

Alan Summers

Italian writer Marina Bellini asked, while working on an Italian translation: "*is it the hedgehog who dreams or somebody else?*"

I replied, on Facebook post, *“It’s from a direct experience, from my low level balcony, and a use of multiple interpretations and playfulness that one line haiku can really utilise.”*

I added: *“For the reader it could be the hedgehog or a human (fellow animal) that roams and dreams or it could be Midnight itself that dreams and conjures up a hedgehog, the most delightful of creatures.”*

rocking chairs just when the still of night

Lovette Carter

Lovette brings in an iconic image of the rocking chair, and disciplines herself to avoid the temptation to fill in the gaps between the words. Often we want to say and put as much if not everything into our haiku, and because it’s so short there’s an urge to jam more into the brief verse. Allow the haiku to breathe; it’s good to allow the reader to have fun with the white echoes that resonate out of the invisible text that sits both in-between and outside our black ink. The two words, *‘just when’* are expertly applied in-between *‘rocking chairs’* and *‘the still of the night.’* Surgical precision counts even more in one-line haiku than its regular counterpart of the three-line version.

Haiku from any approach of line number will tackle all kinds of issues, and topics. Haiku are traditionally linked to the seasons in general, rather than nature, as haiku came out as urbanization and the industrial revolution exploded in Japan. As more, and more urban landscapes appeared, so did issues of what became a modern society removed from its agricultural roots.

smiles in sunshine sociopath

Gabri Rigotti

The noticeable rise of the sociopath in films, TV, and certain business practices, has made us aware that there other models of human behavior out there. The smiles in the sunlight can be as deadly as a badly lit back alley. Of course there are good sociopaths and *‘sunshine sociopath’* is an interesting couple of words to take from the verse.

unfaithful lovers lying still

D Grover

Here we have the technique of making a word that has at least a double meaning/alternate meaning; there's great sadness despite the playful pun of 'lying'. See how the poem expands because there is not just one layer of meaning to be instantly got at, but at least a second layer of meaning, and both can direct us to memories of film, and TV or of friends or family who may have been unfaithful at least once, perhaps.

dark matter the dreams i cling to

Brendon Kent

Brendon brings in science which has become a popular motif with many of us, as we move through the industrial revolution into new sciences including quantum mechanics. We may realise that nature, and science, are not as we thought back in the previous centuries. Perhaps there is still time to start growing up and move away from our childish obsessions, that we literally believe we own the planet and all its non-human denizens.

Here, Brendon has his dreams he is clinging onto, and perhaps dreaming of quantum mechanics or the Philip Pullman trilogy, *His Dark Materials*. Or is this haiku combining more than one thought, where we have dark thoughts, and wonder if our dreams matter. Should we cling to those waking dreams or our wide awake ambitions we had as a child?

sunset in the slaughterhouse blood a color

Nicholas Klacsanzky

Nicholas worried that his poem might gross people out, but haiku can quickly take on issues around last century, and this century, because haiku came around at the close of the 19th century, when Shiki took aspects from the hokku verse of previous centuries, and made it a particular type that could take on difficult subjects. Out of the tens of thousands of haiku that Shiki wrote, he covered the topic of his dying from spinal tuberculosis directly and indirectly.

e.g.

雪の家に寝て居ると思ふばかりにて

original haiku by Shiki

yuki no ie ni nete iru to omou bakari ni te

Romanised (aka romaji) transcription: Atsuro Kagawa and Sachiko Iwabuchi

sick in bed I think of being sick in bed snowbound

English-language version by Alan Summers

Nicholas originally had a three line version, where he asked for feedback, which was a good strong draft version, but the preposition of *'in'* was an issue regarding a line break...

e.g.

sunset
in the slaughterhouse--
blood is just a color

It could have easily moved to:

sunset
the slaughterhouse
blood is just a color

sunset
the slaughterhouse blood
is just a color

sunset
the slaughterhouse
blood is a color

But the linebreaks, the enjambment, wouldn't quite work, so the one-line format worked perfectly as the enjambment is internal, with abruptive shifts, and a lesser need for correct syntax and grammar. In fact, when the preposition 'in' is a problem, it can become a strength of the one-line haiku. I'd say this has one of the many advantages that makes one-line haiku stand apart from a three-line haiku.

In July 2015, Jacob Salzer, the Managing Editor of Yanty's Butterfly posted in the Nook haiku group:

"I find that haiku reminds us to use caution with our words, and also helps us realize the value of a single word. In terms of "economy of language", one-line haiku makes full use of very few words, even more so than three-line haiku. The depth, and layers of a single word often really comes alive in one-line haiku, as it's presented in a refined format, making familiar words both fresh and insightful.

Three-line haiku often allows us to pause between 1 or 2 lines. With one-line haiku, that pause can be created through an extra space, though it's not always necessary. I appreciate how one-line haiku can often be read differently, despite its condensed form. Double-meaning, and double-interpretation is a frequent discovery.

A high-quality one-line haiku is like a focused laser beam that can pierce through dense layers of thoughts. This is where I find its value. While three-line haiku has this ability to quiet the mind, even for a moment, I find one-line to be even more effective in allowing the reader to embrace the gap between thoughts. Our day-to-day duties comes to a standstill, just for a moment. Welcome to the world of one-line haiku."

Jacob came up with this highly memorable one-line haiku:

mountain without a name child gazing

Jacob Salzer

The poem went through a process of discussion, and revision in the Nook group; the friendly, yet insightful dynamics of a group that can fully trust each other brought us this stunning final version. I cannot begin to tell you how many different interpretations I get from this six-word line of poetry, with its gaps and spaces in between, and its white echoes where black ink text riffs, and expands because of the invisible text lying in-between, as well as underneath the spaces around the visible text.

We at first glance might see that there are two sections:

1. mountain without a name
2. child gazing

And:

1. mountain
2. without a name child gazing

And of course, a mountain has no name; it is, and needs no human appendage of an identity, and the same goes for a very young child. They are simply there, and need no names for each other.

Of course a three-line version could work with '*without a name*' acting as a hinge/pivot line:

1. mountain
2. without a name
3. child gazing

mountain
without a name

without a name
child gazing

But something is lost, as if the spelling out for the reader reduces the tension, resonance, and multiple types of ways of reading this. It would still make for a fine haiku, but shifting it up a notch by making it a single line of poetry, it allows us to travel that single line, creating *veloquality* that the three-line haiku doesn't have in so much abundance.

Edwin Lomere was the main collaborator in the critique, as was I, but hats off to Edwin, and Jacob himself, where Jacob was pushed to produce this tight piece of literature.

As with many of the Nook participants, it was incredibly difficult to select just one example of only one line haiku from them. Many more appear both in the anthology.

full moon night the side we don't show

Eva Limbach

Eva brings in the moon, a potent symbol across literature, and none so much as in haiku, and its earlier literary partners: the hokku, and renga/renku.

Here, Eva brings in psychological depth, with the fact that we are individuals, and a society, (or a part or section of society), and so we have other sides to our nature we might not choose to show in the daylight hours.

The use of '*night*' is important even though we think of the moon as a nighttime presence. Is it a full moon, and night is the side we don't show?

e.g.

night, the side we don't show

The night is the side we don't show

And breaking up the one line haiku so you can see this possible interpretation, and also highlight that gap where no text rests, at least in visible ink:

full moon *night the side we don't show*

Or is it just one of those spine-tingling *full moon nights*, where the moon dominates the night sky, over the stars, amidst the scurrying of smaller lifeforms?

Two words that power this haiku are '*night*' and '*don't*', both expertly inserted. Haiku requires a skill to make sure a word pulls more than the weight of its surface meaning, and more than the letters it contains.

river bank I fill out an unknown space

Malintha Perera

Malintha brings us other depths, where we are along a river bank, perhaps quite literally, and I'm reminded of *Alice in Wonderland* before she went down the rabbit hole. The purely concrete image of a river bank is brought up a number of notches when it is combined with the abstractness of "I fill out an unknown space."

The juxtaposition of both sections of this haiku expand into our minds, and that's the skill of placing two fragments of text together that generate more energy than on their own or just placed with a very simple companion fragment...

e.g.

*river bank
three cows
under a cloud*

And as a one line version:

river bank three cows under a cloud

My examples above are deliberately flat and a statement to emphasize skill in choosing the right words in the right positions, and nothing else. My fun verse, more doggerel than poem, makes for a lovely pastoral scene, but they do not generate tension, or spark the thoughts of the reader.

Poets are generators with their poems, and avoid just producing a nice image that makes us coo with an aaah, as we rarely go back time and time again, and receive something new and insightful each time.

a grasshopper on concrete chalk drawings

Michelle Hyatt

The grasshopper is another symbolic image from country/farm childhoods, early school perhaps, and the story of Pinocchio, although that was a cricket, very different species. Here, Michelle adds concrete quite literally! Is it just a grasshopper on a concrete chalk drawing, a sidewalk hopscotch? Would an insect be there if children are jumping up, and down, and along, and across a game drawn on a sidewalk? And why concrete, and not just sidewalk? Are the chalk drawings on the sidewalk, and the grasshopper has come into this highly urban concrete jungle of a town or district of a city?

Is nature creeping back in, despite our efforts to concretise everything along with glass, and steel? The use of subtle alliteration with concrete, and chalk also shifts this into a deeper resonance using musicality to add to the tension of the piece, like a certain well-judged musical score to a scene in a movie.

This reminds me that haiku techniques have been used in film making with Russian/Soviet director Sergei Eisenstein, and Japanese films like Ozu Yasujirō's work, and Tokyo, were quickly copied by Hollywood, and other Western movie-makers, and here we have a camera pan technique which culminates in a zoom, and a cutaway, from the grasshopper to concrete structures to the drawings on a sidewalk along a certain street.

Dave Read says of one line haiku:

I tend to use a one liner instead of three when:

1. I want to increase the pace of the poem, blur the images together;
2. In cases where the juxtaposition is less pronounced; or
3. If there is more than one possible place at which the pause between images can be interpreted.

In the age of computers and how we use them for leisure almost around the clock, an iconic image that has become stronger, and stronger, and integral in many people's communications to each other, is the emoticon, that started with a smiley as a yellow face image, became distilled as :-)) and further as :) and then multiplied into thousands of variations.

capturing her emoticon man

Dave Read

Here we have a present participle starting the haiku, and is this a romantic notion of a woman capturing the man of her dreams in real life, or a man capturing a woman of his dreams amidst the crazy fast pace of society? Or is it just a Facebook or Twitter or other social media technique of using an emoticon by one person that appeals to another person, and it goes no further than the second person utilising the emoticon for their other social media messages?

Is man short for mankind in general or a man in particular, or is about a woman whether in a romantic light or a more sinister way? Or is it a modern way of saying a particular man has stolen her heart in a 21st century technological way? Dave's haiku is just four words, and yet, I can take so many different viewpoints from this, and, (like so many of these haiku), I could write a story, from a short fiction piece to a novel, to a screenplay for the next leading romantic movie couple.

piercing light sparrows in pairs

Willie Bongcaron

With this haiku, we go back into nature, and with sparrows flying in pairs. What is the piercing light? Perhaps the headlights on full beam from a car containing a tired human worker after a long and busy day. Sometimes, as the Beatles pop group of the 1960s sang, it feels like an Eight Day Week.

I hope the traveler arrives home safely, unless it is not car lights. Is it a powerful torch, and someone has to get up in the night for some reason, and sees what caused a sound breaking into her or his sleep?

Is the piercing light those Crepuscular rays known as sunbeams, Angel lights, Sun rays or God rays? That brings me to think about Saint Francis of Assisi and his love for birds.

The name Crepuscular [Latin word "crepusculum" means twilight] because they are often witnessed during the twilight hours (dawn and dusk), those in-between hours not yet day not yet night. Haiku can act as mystery stories where the ending is not revealed.

As I mention sleep more than once and not just with the preceding haiku, here's another one that expands into the mind with...

the world closes into sleep on me

Edwin Lomere

Haiku are not nature poems that just capture the natural history of the birds, trees, and insects. We forget the whole world is nature, including the human denizens, and their towns, and cities. A world of cities has sprung up since the advance of the Industrial Revolution from the U.K. to the States; Europe; Asia; Indian sub-continent; and Australasia, and so many other places. Setting aside the time zones, the feeling that the world of

humans goes to sleep the same time as the author is a fantastic notion. This is quite simply a beautiful, magical and mystical piece; a scene larger than could be caught in a grain of sand or a snow globe.

twilight forest a barcode

Francis Franklin

Francis sublimely captures a thousand, or ten thousand, years into a haiku, starting from the first primordial forests, to the dark, mythological super forests that began to be broken down for human dwellers, and still do such as the Amazon. Also contained are the woodlands of folklore, mystery, and sometimes terror, in the imagination of those who read HC Andersen's stories, or the folktales collected by the Grimm women, and their husbands. Ah, so you thought it was just the Grimm men who captured the dark wonderful scape of closely knitted forests weaving in and out? No, the women brought them to the men, and that collaboration brought stories that might have otherwise been eventually lost in time.

Now, those tamed forests become products for furniture, and of course, books, each with a barcode to buy in a shop or online. But, the forest is still there, in our minds, and in our insecurities as a human race, as we set out to conquer the world (well perhaps again, in our mind). Four words, and yet again I could write a Grimm or HC Andersen style story, or a modern mystery (be it Science Fiction or Fantasy), or a 21st century folklore meeting primordial trees through the leaves, and branches of time.

Guest Poets

belugas atop the snowbank two blue boxes

Marianne Paul

Under the Bashō 2015:

<http://archive.underthebasho.com/archives/2015-issue/one-line-haiku/1545-marianne-paul.html>

The connections work wonderfully well with caviar in blue tins on a bank of ice in a shop counter, and whales being stranded on sand banks, but this time on a shop display, and not stranded on on a beach/sandbank but the shop's own version, that of a snowbank, and of ice, and a reminder that this is potential wonder of the children of beluga whales literally put on ice, never to be born, but eaten as an exclusive starter dish at a dinner party, perhaps.

Blue boxes also makes me think of coffins, this time especially designed for whales, and why I'm surprised we have not made extinct. But of course the beluga is harvested, its young harvested, just as adults harvest human young in business from music to clothing to darker pursuits. My connections might not be what you, the reader or the original author intended of course, but once the poem is out there, a reader makes their own home around it.

For more of Marianne Paul's incredible one-line haiku:

<https://www.literarykayak.com/one-line-haiku.html>

crows until the world is silhouettes

Polona Oblak

“A sentence fragment, it doesn't read quite as smoothly as would a complete sentence, yet it has a pleasing musicality. The first word, not being paired with a verb as in a sentence, creates a soft pause in our perception of the poem. . .”

Paul MacNeil, The Heron's Nest

Volume XVII, Number 4: December 2015

<https://theheronsnest.haikuhut.com/December2015/editors-choices.html>

Crows have long fascinated humans, and poets. After all Matsuo Bashō (1644-1694) wrote about them in one of his most famous hokku:

枯朶に烏のとまりけり秋の暮
—松尾 芭蕉 (1680)

a crow perches the dry autumn evening

English version: Alan Summers

Transliterations one Japanese character less:

枯朶に烏のとまりけり
A crow perched on a dry oak

枯朶に烏のとまりけ

A crow perches in a dry forest

枯朶に烏のと
Crows and crows

枯朶に烏の
枯朶に烏
crow

枯朶に
in depletion

枯朶
drought

枯
withered

keeping him up the moon in the man

Joseph Aversano

Joseph told me that this was about the troubled times in his country mostly from outside forces, and tensions in the Middle East in general. For those of us in other parts of the world, we can be isolated from the terrible minute by minute experiences of what mass violence brings in all its shapes, and sizes.

Do we get this from the poem? Probably not, but it drove Joseph to write this wonderful one-line haiku. I know of the myth in some countries, and cultures that there is a man in the moon, and I wonder what this mythical being must see, watching planet Earth, or as I see it, the Water Planet. The moon effects our tides, and often our hearts and mind. The section 'the moon in the man' is fresh and thought-provoking. Enjoy the tripping up of the tongue in the verse, and how you might get different readings.

hospice window box full of wildflowers

Hifsa Ashraf

We might think of a hospice as just a place to die, but surprisingly those near death can be more full of life than those who feel they have an extended guarantee. Just as much as flowers have a brief moment to bloom and blossom, so do humans, and thankfully both can take something from life, even when it's short-lived.

The monoku starts powerfully already with its very first word, and then the second one makes me think someone is looking out, perhaps sadly. But the monoku keeps on giving word by word. We now have a window box, is it empty, full of dust and cobwebs? The next word says full, so I am already guessing it's not those two thoughts - yes, even a monoku is worth reading s-l-o-w-l-y in order to savour the meaning or meanings gradually. The penultimate word is 'of' and I still continue to be surprised it's not just flowers, but wild ones. Did the patient somehow collect them, or a relative, or a member of staff? What a glorious gift by whomever made such an effort, when it could have all so easily been shop-bought seeds or potted plants just 'plonked' into the window box.

The power of the poetic line shines through the monoku:

[hospice window box full of wildflowers](#)

And would be somewhat diluted through line breaks:

e.g.

[hospice
window box full
of wildflowers](#)

lone tricycle blue in the whirlwind of leaves

Mary Kendall

Who is blue, feeling melancholy? Is it the tricycle, or a person or a couple coming across an abandoned child's bike? Is there a whirlwind of leaves or a whirlwind of emotions, perhaps felt by one person now also feeling abandoned? Or a couple whose child has grown up and left the family home. There is so much that can be read into this poem and it will thrive under our imagination.

Before I conclude I wanted to add two British practitioners, starting with Kate B Hall, President of the British Haiku Society (**BHS**), whom I've recently reviewed:

http://area17.blogspot.co.uk/2016/11/portable-words-other-side-of-electric_11.html

almost forgotten in a drawer - a photo of sea mist

Kate B Hall

The furniture drawer is a great reservoir of forgotten and almost forgotten memorabilia. Kate weaves concrete imagery in something that lies betwixt reality and super-reality. Is it a straight photo or postcard or the actual sea mist contained in that drawer? I am also instantly transported to a Narnia type land of magic where instead of a wardrobe we enter a voluminous chest of drawers.

To frances angela, one of our very finest British and international haiku poets, and incisive exponent of the one line haiku either as standalone verse or part of a haibun.

landmarks the lighthouse without us

frances angela

From the haibun entitled *"date"* Blithe Spirit vol. 26 no. 3 2016

There is often a sharp yet also subtle and resonating poignancy with this haiku, as our familiar landmarks of youth become obsolete. Can a man-made object lose its way without us? Yes, I believe so. This is not just a poem about a lighthouse or lighthouses in general, that used to be manned by humans, and entered our childhood imaginations. This is the potential loss of all that is good about childhood, and how adults often discard important landmarks of not just their history, but our youth.

childhood street still avoiding the cracks

frances angela

Blithe Spirit vol. 26 no. 3 2016

A standalone haiku this time, who doesn't remember their first childhood home, and immediate street? It's often where we learn and survive some of our first steep learning curves, and life's lessons, good or bad, or in-between. Haiku is so often about the in-betweenness of things and none moreso than sidewalk/pavement cracks where it was best to avoid the places where paving slabs meet.

green meadow the mother chases bare feet baby

Srinivasa Rao Sambangi

This monoku has a delightful movement throughout, and in its many parts. It's stunningly brilliant, and it shouldn't work, as you could say 'why not' this phrasing instead:

a bare foot baby

or

bare feet babies

But tuck into those words and phrasing, get in between them, and have fun understanding why it gloriously works.

bluebell woods you left too early

Caroline Skanne

This struck me in many ways. Is it a simple walk through the woods at the magnificent time of bluebells? Is this a couple where one of them is not as enamoured of wildlife as the other partner? Is it about loss, perhaps the further loss of childhood when we lose not just one parent but both parents?

The more I read the poem the more layers, from a partner who might have left to get something practical, but missed a particular sighting, a moment that will have to be let go. Or something about letting go of childhood, and do we really have to let go of everything?

a church steeple harpoons the moon forced childbirth

Robin Smith

Second Place, Fourth Annual Senryu Contest, Sonic Boom (2018)

Judge: Alan Summers

This senryu delays its effect by using three very innocent opening words in its one-line delivery. We still don't know what the senryu will be, and it feels almost haiku in content at this early stage of reading it. There then follows a very intriguing and unexpected verb, reminding me of whales being killed, and of course a very famous novel. The verb is followed by the action of spearing the moon, but it's the two devastating words that conclude the senryu that brings everything together, into a complex and controversial issue.

The poem itself and its visceral combination of imagery, is of a woman invaded by a foreign agency (single object, group of people, organisation, etc). It uses strong concrete imagery. It's a very uncomfortable senryu due to the unease that the different types of concrete images combine into a deeply disturbing metaphorical language that is equally physically discomfoting. Secondly, we don't expect forced birth, forced sex (rape) maybe, but then rape comes in many ways, from within marriages, or by a family friend or relative, and/or by political or confused religious understanding. The senryu is revealing in that the act of birth has been denied any chance of a celebration from the pregnant woman due to another type of violence or clearly made threats, and so contradiction is laid over contradiction, and dogma reigns over basic and obvious human rights, and when we stay silent.

Does senryu have to be funny? Just as haiku came out of hokku verses – by Basho, Chiyo-ni, Issa and Buson, – and changed forever the earlier formats, so does senryu, although it keeps the name of its various origins from the Floating World (Japan) and the poet Senryū Karai (1765-1838). If senryu should successfully lay bare the smoke and mirrors of society, and its illusion that all is well, and correct, righteous, and morally superior, then this is senryu. Where haiku is rarely a 'message,' senryu can sidestep all of the conventions of its haikai brother, or use them to its own ends.

This senryu kept demanding to be heard, and to be placed within the winning section. I did not choose this senryu, it choose me, and again it makes me face myself, in all honesty, and my role in the world as a human, and as a male human.

scorched earth not a blade in sight

Helen Buckingham

This could be read in so many ways, which can be a strength in haiku as it becomes more inclusive, allowing different readers to have their own valid thoughts about a poem.

Is this about our entire planet (Earth) which is experiencing extreme weather conditions, or about one specific area, one plot of land?

Having lived in Australia, in Queensland, this verse could be about back burning by agricultural practice to rejuvenate the land, or a fire protective measure: Or carelessness or arson.

But with 'not a blade in sight' is this about farming equipment, or as the author lives in Britain, is about the time when the island was at constant war with itself, or with invading countries? During the Medieval Ages, off and on for decades, there seemed to be constant warfare, and when not tearing up the land in battle or slaughter, with sword, spear, arrow, other bladed weapons, there was a scorched earth policy, a trick learnt from the Romans, and those before them.

Scorched earth practice:

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

I didn't know of the author's intent, although she has affirmed this was her reasons for writing this verse, only that for me there is a chilling pun that there are no blades of grass, and also no blade type weapons, as the destruction to land and people has been fully accomplished.

While Matsuo Bashō in his *hokku poem* was noting a famous battle site, saddened by a great warrior's death, it's been often adopted in modern times as a "haiku," and showing the pointlessness of war and its sometimes temporary mark on the planet. So perhaps this haiku poem by Helen Buckingham also does the same too, but without celebrating war itself?

Matsuo Bashō's hokku (*haikai* verse):

夏草や兵どもが夢の跡

Matsuo Bashō (1644-1694)

from his haibun, *Oku-no-Hosomichi, The Narrow Road to the Deep North* (1689 to 1691)

web links for versions into English:

<http://area17.blogspot.com/2006/04/bashos-summer-grasses.html>

<https://wkdhaikutopics.blogspot.com/2007/02/warrior-tsuwamono.html>

magpie nest the blackthorn winter passes over

Clive Bennett

I love the term 'blackthorn winter' and how the natural history of the author's area is described. Our UK winters can feel too long, and like many Northern Hemisphere countries, if we are lucky, there is the Spring season to bring colour and a little warmth. The haiku successfully combines two strong April seasonal references:

A **Blackthorn Winter**, in rural England, is a spell of cold weather in early April which often coincides with the blossoming of the **blackthorn** in hedgerows. The pure white of the **blackthorn** blossom, which appears before the leaves, matches the snow or hoar frost covering the fields nearby.
WIKIPEDIA

Magpies usually breed from two years old, although some may breed at one year. They build large, domed nests in thorny bushes or high up in tall trees. The female lays on average six greenish-blue eggs, heavily spotted with brown, in April, and incubates them for 18 to 19 days. Magpie Life Cycle
- The RSPB

sunshine after rain the forest stretches

Clive Bennett

The simple opening words, which start the resonance of this poem, move into a second wonderful 'phrase' of 'the forest stretches'.

The forest continues to hold a part of our imagination from fairytales to lore of the land doesn't it? But in fact this is also from direct observation of natural history in the author's homeland.

I've also written about the forest many times, including these two, starting with my very own pink moon haiku!

phlox moon the different shades of its forest

Alan Summers

Note: phlox moon/pink moon=April/Spring

Publication: Australian Haiku Society's Spring Equinox Haiku String 2019

And:

a dreaming forest busy as Hitchcock

Alan Summers

Publication: weird laburnum ed. Michael O'Brien (May 2019)

What I love about Clive Bennett's monoku is how the feeling of the forest stretching highlights that the forest is like a living being made up of smaller beings whether flora or fauna. The choice of 'stretching' resonates long after I've read the one line haiku!

See more of Clive Bennett's monoku:

<https://area17.blogspot.com/2020/04/the-area-17-profile-poet-series-clive.html>

Anna Maris guest 'featurette'

Three one-line haiku with commentary from myself, and Anna Maris, the author of '*days blur*':



drifting clouds the kitchen spider branches out

Anna Maris says:

"This poem could be about the world being in lock-down for humans, but how nature carries on very happily without us. By describing the drifting clouds outside, we are still very clearly confined to the kitchen. So it is of course also about boredom, the ability to simply sit there and watch the spider weaving its web, accepting the way things are or perhaps also inability to care about mundane things like housework."

I like how we begin with one natural image of clouds drifting by. We can feel the narrator is indoors, inside the kitchen, which is perfectly normal: We like kitchens with a window to the outside world while we drink coffee or prepare a meal. The subtle fact that a spider is branching out does suggest either neglect or confinement or both. I must admit, learning from my Queensland experiences, that it's handy to have a spider or two create webs to keep the insects down! Pairing 'drifting clouds' with 'the kitchen spider branches out' is masterful in its juxtaposition of two imageries.

re-learning to knit eyes closed light rain

Anna Maris says:

"Here we have a story about body-memory. How tacit knowledge can be long forgotten by the mind, but still stay in our hands or our senses. It is a poem about re-birth of skills, coming back to simple things in life, taking time to craft, grow and learn instead of running around, over-consuming and forgetting the real value of what is around us. Rain is the sort of undemanding weather, which somehow creates space to do those things that there are usually no time for, but it can also be about transformation, cleansing and renewal."

The visual rhythm as well as on the tongue when reading out aloud is wonderful and shows a wonderful juxtaposition between the nature image of 'light rain' and "re-learning to knit' even with our eyes closed.

days blur into one another self isolation

Anna Maris says:

"It is hard to explain your own poetry, but when I write something that I am genuinely pleased with (which sadly happens quite seldom), it is as if the creative force is not my own, but an entity of its own that touches me. This poem was a simple observation about the loss of a sense of time, where days blur into one another, but also became a poem about finding another self in isolation, an alter ego, more insightful and better than my usual self. This is the main attraction with one line poetry – the so many ways it can be read."

I certainly feel dissatisfied with many of my own poems, even if they win awards! I think it's a common factor amongst poets and other artists, to ever strive 'forward' regardless. Confinement is sometimes an excellent tool for a writer, and the unease around the current pandemic, will certainly re-evaluate writers. I like how I can read this various ways:

days blur // into one another self isolation

days blur into one // another self isolation

days blur into one another // self isolation

Writers already write from the inside, 'their' inside, their internal thoughts & mechanisms, and internment/confinement/isolation. This has famously been the case down the centuries, creating some stunningly personally wide-open writing. I hope this kind of writing continues to support people in the current pandemic social isolation, as it will with whatever is the next wave of social disruption.

All three one line haiku are working on an invisible thread that weaves its magic over many re-readings.

To see more of Anna's work from this free ePamphlet collection:

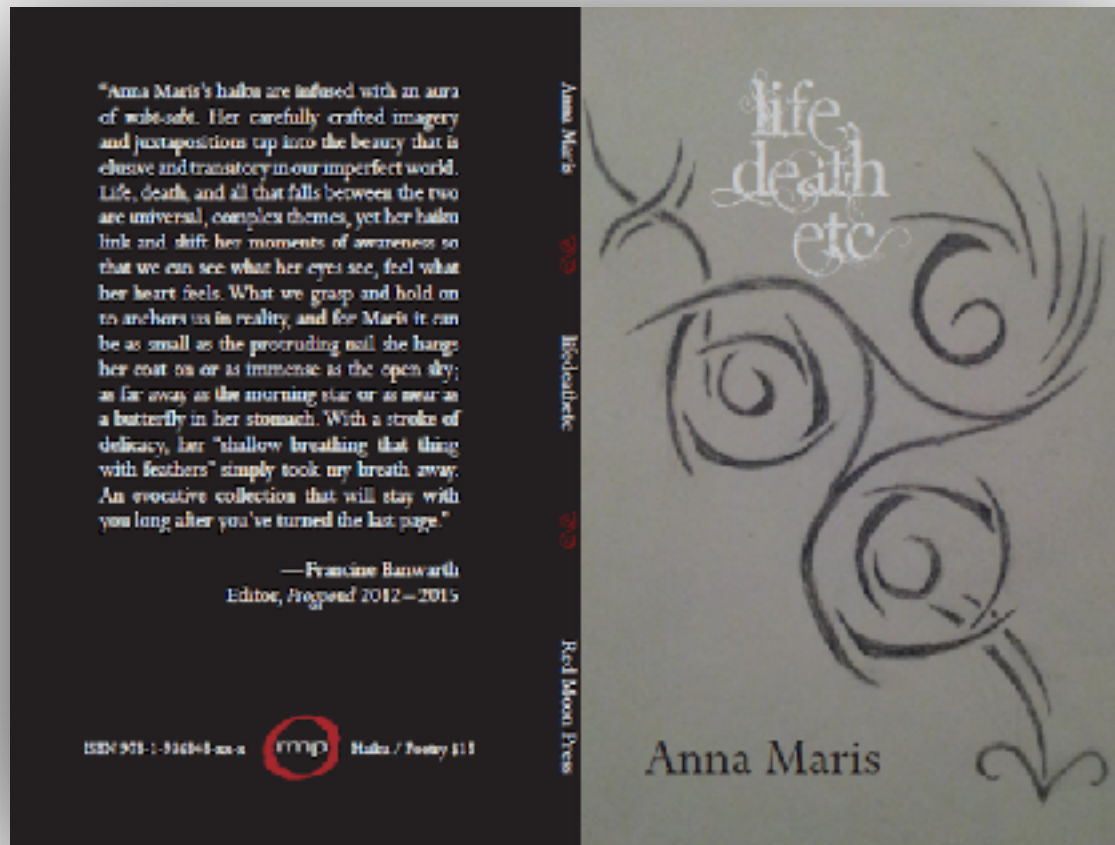
days blur by Anna Maris

<https://proletaria730964817.files.wordpress.com/2020/04/days-blur.pdf>

Anna Maris

Chair of the literary section of the Swedish Author's Union, and a board member of the Swedish Haiku Society. Anna is also the founding editor of the haiku journal *Blåeld*. She has two earlier haiku books, published in Swedish.

A full-length English and Swedish haiku poetry collection, entitled **lifedeathetc / livdödetc**, is published by Red Moon Press:



<https://redmoonpress.com/product/stronglifedeathetc-livdodetcistrong-haiku-by-anna-maris/>

guest '*featurette*': *Susan King*

daffodils tight-lipped not yet ready to sing

Susan King

I said about this piece:

I love how I can see my own versions from the original.

e.g.

daffodils // tight-lipped not yet ready to sing

But it's done so that it would not work as a duostich (pronounced 'duo' 'stick')

i.e.

daffodils

tight-lipped not yet ready to sing

or as a tercet:

daffodils
tight-lipped not yet ready
to sing

or as suggested, putting the flowers at the end:

tight-lipped not yet ready to sing daffodils

This wouldn't work in my opinion.

Although this could work:

tight-lipped not yet ready to sing
daffodils

But the author (Susan King) has created the optimum placement of word order with:

daffodils tight-lipped not yet ready to sing

It's the perfect storm of a one line haiku!

Why? It plays with the reader, and it's utterly re-readable!!!

Susan King, the author says:

"Alan Summers, many thanks for this masterly critique. I have been experimenting with the word order and am pleased that you concur with the final choice! I would be honoured to have this poem featured in Area 17"

decluttering until my one-eared lamb

Susan King

Awarded: The Museum of Haiku Literature Award
Blithe Spirit vol 31 no. 1 (February 2021)

Alan:

Every word counts in a haiku and even more so in a one line haiku. See how each word travels like a train bringing us to the final destination. But every 'stop' or 'station' of a word is vital as part of that journey.

Here are three more wonderful one line haikai verses from Susan King!

no stars tonight the neon glow

Susan King
(Blithe Spirit)

Haiku need not have a big bang conclusion, but permeate with atmosphere and a different kind of resonance.

early morning meandering snail trails

Susan King
(Presence journal)

This has a wonderful alliteration in its second and third words, and I love how I can personally [also] read this as:

early morning [meandering snail] trails

It's as if I'm going out on my very early trail, myself, and keeping me company are both late night and even earlier morning journey where I journey a special silver trail equally as valid as the "Yellow Brick road"!

Bach briefly an upper case God

Susan King
(Prune Juice)

This is a startling and evocative haikai verse. This reader [me] can certainly run with multiple interpretations. It's sublime!

Bach's Holy Dread:

The composer has long been seen as a symbol of divine order. But his music has an unruly obsession with God.

The New Yorker (January 2, 2017 Issue)

<https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2017/01/02/bachs-holy-dread>

Prune Juice <https://prunejuice.wordpress.com/about/>

Guest spot *'featurette'*: *Hemapriya Chellappan*

deepening autumn a caged bird's song

Hemapriya Chellappan

Modern Haiku, issue 51.2 Summer 2020

<http://www.modernhaiku.org/issue51-2/index.html>

The beauty of haiku is that it can be interpreted on so many levels. Funny you should ask me. I always had this innate talent for art but I only properly learnt to paint or write after I got married and stayed alone in a strange city away from home. My relatives thought I know nothing or rather I was good for nothing.

My first publication on a haiku journal took them by surprise. They didn't understand why I was alone in my room all those years locked away from the world outside. They didn't understand why I was buried in books and encyclopaedias. They didn't understand why I was shy. They didn't understand "my song".

I was always clouded with self-doubts and regrets of not having done anything to hone my skills. Then it rained on me. One day. Words, they freed myself from me.

Alan says:

Pure haiku seasoning in those first two words!

The poignancy of a caged bird, which even if we didn't have Hema's thoughts, we might guess was about her.

moon forest the murmur of a brook

Hemapriya Chellappan

The Poetry Pea Journal of haiku and senryu (summer edition 2020)

In folktales and fantasy, an enchanted forest is a place of magic and danger. It's a home to witches, monsters and fairies. Sad, but in reality such a place like that doesn't exist. If you want it to be woods can be spellbinding. Imagine the moonlight piercing through a dense canopy of gnarly forest and make it look it's straight out of Lord of The Rings. Legend has it that trees can find admired ways for winds to make itself heard. Just don't expect the trees to talk.

the trees nod in agreement

Alan says:

A fantastic opening two words!

Bringing sound into a haiku is always a good technique. This is sublime, the murmur of a brook by moonlight.

wherever my legs take me kitchen sink

Hemapriya Chellappan

Under the Bashō (March 2020)

Ufff, those of you who know me know that I hate doing dishes. Maybe hate is a strong word. I despise doing dishes. If you finally get done with the mountain of dishes in the sink, THERE IS ANOTHER. If someone will give me a dollar everytime I do dishes. I'd rather NOT.

Alan says:

Ah yes, I tend to be somewhat bound to the kitchen sink too. I have been washing dishes since the age of six years old!

All these one-line haiku show various successful techniques. Fantastic work!

Also catch Hemapriya Chellappan in

"The Area 17 Profile Poet Series'

<https://area17.blogspot.com/2020/04/the-area-17-profile-poet-series-hats.html>



All of the one line verses are good examples to leave on while we ponder why a single line of poetry as a standalone poem should exist, and so successfully.

So how does a one-line haiku in English work, where the wider recognised three-line haiku is often both common and more popular? I think we have started to find our answer, and it's the power of the line in poetry with a haiku tweak.

Despite its brevity in any form: from one-line, or two-line to three-line, or even four-line formats, there is a certain musicality, rhythm, and speed to haiku, even if it feels like an anti-musicality production of words. Words sing, and poets hope to catch a song from them.

One more guest poet's word on one line haiku, and this is from the Managing Editor of the anthology *Yanty's Butterfly*:

snow on the sun navigating childhoods

Alan Summers

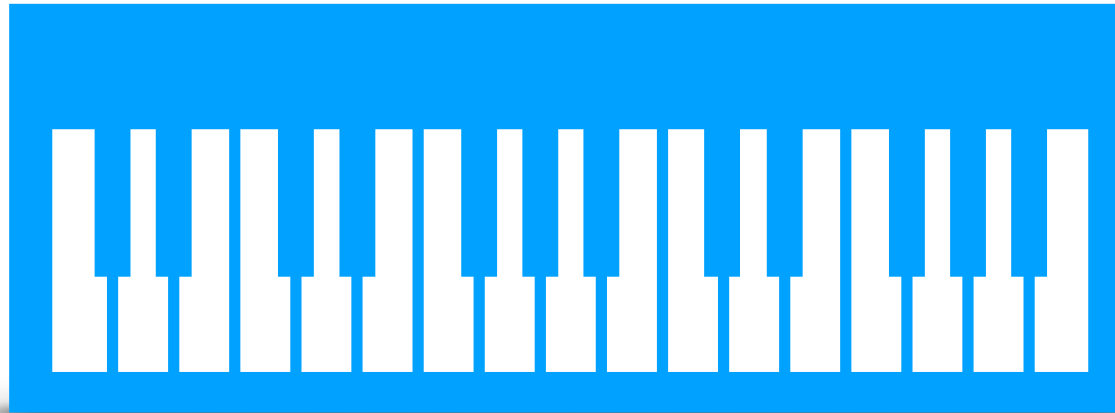
An excellent monoku: “snow on the sun” is unique as I don’t think people would normally think of it that way, and “navigating childhoods” leaves plenty of room for the reader to participate. There is a balance of concrete and abstract in this one-line haiku.

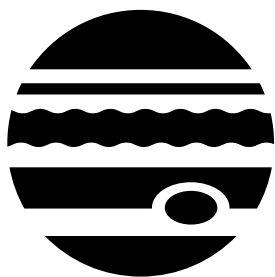
—Jacob Salzer, Managing Editor, September 24, 2016

Conclusion

If you ever consider a collection of your own, I hope you will include a few haiku that walk the single line.

Travelling the single line of haiku - one line haiku / monoku / monostich©Alan Summers
first created at Area 17 December 2016





poems

on his suit an ink black night

Geethanjali Rajan

aham the abugida of her superconscious

Raghav Prashant Sundar

still in grief's penumbra dead sunflower

Raghav Prashant Sundar

neurosurgeon for a day—
high school reunion

Raghav Prashant Sundar

a dream bookmarked

after Langston Hughes

Norma Bradley

tucked away in a drawer my mother's voice

Norma Bradley

pop of a soap bubble rainbow oozing

Geethanjali Rajan

Gifts

parked in thick foliage green shadows
embracing the afternoon sun rustles
gaur :: backing out the staring contest
gently lifting the dead Indian pitta from the path
sun-basking Croc says *ha ha ha*
dusk a small heart-shaped leaf falls on my lap
after a hunt the roar of tiger *echoing echoing*
night watch the chital's antlers silver-lined

Sushama Kapur

door almost shut
first snow

Engin Gülez

letting the city lights —
wavering flame

Engin Gülez

wall writing winter moon revolt

Engin Gülez

when enough flowers bloom mountains play

Engin Gülez

her facial hair grows on me

lifting a heavy sponge
why these tears?

the way I meant to say it—
camellias

mothersmother

Tony Williams

fresh grave ants in and out

Maya Daneva

segueing into the dark night
a river in spate

Geethanjali Rajan

last star the baby falls asleep

Maya Daneva

Delayed/staggered sequence

willing me into itself the ocean's breath

Jenny Fraser

pollen bitter I shake black pepper on my grits

Lenard D. Moore

she grates garlic into the purple pot

Lenard D. Moore

afternoon
from leash to water meter a pitbull

Lenard D. Moore

spring day off
I check my retirement funds

Lenard D. Moore

gathering snow deciding to try

Mark Gilbert

a personal nebula a bruise which fades

Mark Gilbert

eye of the hurricane
the scarecrow's guts

Mark Gilbert

moon so bright the tree leaves stars
I prefer to put tigers here

John Hudak

dad slippers walking on bardo plants

John Hudak

Spring snow the redness of the cardinal

John Hudak

newly molted the gaze of dragonfly

Sushama Kapur

night drizzle
treading lightly over starlight

Sushama Kapur

MENstruating a monthly week off

Lorraine A Padden

her ringlets lengthening breaststroke

Lorraine A Padden

strike and a split
another post-bowling Friday night

Lorraine A Padden

white falling rose petals ambulance door

Bee Jay

immortal after physical death metaverse

Bee Jay

dinner at the same time at different times lunar eclipse

Sue Courtney

i before e except after c . . . and the rest

Sue Courtney

not only but also . . .
cherry blossoms

Sue Courtney

sudden rain again the cloth line becomes wet

Mallika Chari

spring breeze
the colours in her mother's scarf

Mallika Chari

desertdreamsnowwaterationshades

Herb Tate

ghost face at the window breath

Herb Tate

one-sided love where to place the dot

Bakhtiyar Amini



A DREAM PUSHER AT MY DOOR
— BARBARA ANNA GAIARDONI

Text
ART

a dream pusher at my door

Barbara Anna Gaiardoni

published: horror senryu journal. ed. Thomas Tilton
(March 2023)

<https://horrorjournal.blogspot.com/2023/03/barbara-anna-gaiardoni.html>

<https://www.instagram.com/p/CqczD4fulj-/>

horror senryu journal. ed. Thomas Tilton

<https://www.instagram.com/horrorsenryu/>

<https://horrorjournal.blogspot.com/>

dott.ssa Barbara Anna Gaiardoni

[Pedagogista&Love Writer](#)

barbaragaiardoni@postercert.it



Enjoy more spookiness if you dare...

<https://horrorjournal.blogspot.com/search/label/Alan%20Summers>

taking a deep breath to hold spring

Bakhtiyar Amini

rubble/voices

Rob McKinnon

scarecrow's stretched arms
gorged birds

Rob McKinnon

everything passing
the moon follows

Rob McKinnon

the comfort of his steady snores winter rain

Mona Bedi

peace bouquet as if anything matters

Mona Bedi

the moonflower so swiftly fades morning dew

Marta Chocilowska

a mossy cross by an old chapel a lonely pine

Marta Chocilowska

a life of dreams
ashes in an earthen pot

Geethanjali Rajan

another little white wine in the lie

Michael Henry Lee

stubbing out the cigarette with her fingers war refugee

Eva Limbach

defying the war a single dandelion

Eva Limbach

waiting area —
we scroll through other people's live

Eva Limbach

post-war-soldier
the prayers of yesterday online

Eva Limbach

banded warbler crossing the language barrier

Barbara Sabol

golden rooster crows open the day

Barbara Sabol

cemetery walk to nowhere in the end

Christopher Calvin

shattered window wide open new world

Christopher Calvin

family gathering the wishbone splinters

Barrie Levine

her cool breath across the baby's spoon
rippling pond

Barrie Levine

a length of spider silk monostich

Barrie Levine

Delta blues . . .
drift of the night through the night

Barrie Levine

channeling the white camellia and I die a little

Ella Aboutboul

moth wings my touch moving walls

Ella Aboutboul

storm gifts the woods take back the black-eyed children

petro c. k.

rain drops the strain of Andromeda

petro c. k.

open wide tattered roses and old lace her mouth

Lynne Jambor

the unresolved argument bruised mushy pears

Lynne Jambor

under the moonlight
the old me fading away

Nadejda Kostadinova

twittering sparrows how many times to believe

Nadejda Kostadinova

a caffe during working hours
free range people

Nadejda Kostadinova

carpet of leaves
a long division leaves no remainder

Michael Lindenhof

brake lights in morning fog
tea's molecules

Michael Lindenhof

her last shadow my only thought

An Mayou

resetting the clock my wrinkled hands

An Mayou

Messenger enjoying her sunrise with my sunset

Francis W. Alexander

gravity losing its grip on the missile

Francis W. Alexander

further back Sicilian wolves' parallax ending

R.C. Thomas

not seeing the light dome land snail's low deepens

R.C. Thomas

Boiling soup: hot and spicy

clutch of the falcon cold moon

wild lilies intimacy of the unknown

exhaust fan hot exchanges of family quarrel

monologues of a broken feather empty nest

generosity of a butcher sleeping tiger

the vampire's stride discovering new lands

alighting albatross I make a wish

wings of a wet butterfly old age

Bidyut Prabha Gantayat

I will run out of poetry eventually.

Noah Berlatsky

some words she forgets
she prays

Roberta Beach Jacobson

widow's lily the complicit silence of a bell-ringer

Mircea Moldovan

autumn blaze maple
neighbor's cough turns red

Cezar Ciobica

windshield wipers clearing sky of crows

Cezar Ciobica

rush hour traffic helicopter seeds

Ed Bremson

kissing you, again,
the sun touches the sea

Kimberly Kuchar

scarlet scarf
lures the hummingbird

JL Huffman

dressing room mirror opening night execution

Kimberly A Horning

bootstraps a pear and dime shift

Kelly Moyer

tracksuits thinning the clanship of porridge

Kelly Moyer

losing my shadow in the falling mist

Henryk Czempiel

Blue Bayou

dip me in indigo
torn jean memories

Marjorie Pezzoli

shearing the white lies
black-sheep of the family

Eric Lohman

lifting mother's head again to the spoon
autumn leaves now a deeper brown

Eric Lohman

two chickens praying soft boiled eggs

Shayna Shanes

sun behind the clouds behind the sun blinds

Suraja Roychowdhury

wood through the barn paint
morning never suspected

ten or twelve in the dance
a turkey barn of polkas

all the crawdads we tried to catch summer evening

what to do with three empty desks at school shooting

Dan Schwerin

abundance podcast bruises show

Tim Roberts

wishing well fallen leaves hide counterfeit coins

Tim Roberts

folding into morning prayers peregrine

Nick T

wisps of robin song percolating tai chi

Nick T

same hill steeper this year

this year steeper same hill

Nick T

teenage stubble a kick in the coffee

wrapping the tree to tree dandelion clocks dusk to dusk

moon-impaled the night blue the ink black tendrils reach further

each seven starling murmuration some stars more quiet than others

swallow tattoos the white noises over the yardarm

shadow stairs and carousels turning the mariner's albatross

winter into Yayoi Kusama's *Obliteration Room*

as much rust as rustle in abandoned dreams

polishing the fish kettle *where next*

Alan Summers

barrier fence strengthening our hyper-territorialism

Corine Timmer

in search of nirvana nerve gas

Corine Timmer

after your foot surgery
holding onto my sanity one cookie at a time

Leslie Bamford

sun sparkling on blue water
summer dreams

Leslie Bamford

through the eyes of an old dog river dreams

Leslie Bamford

happy hour doing my best to smile

Leslie Bamford

fuzzy teeth I can't brush you away

Kimberly Kuchar

chalk on the tongue sweet nothings

Kimberly Kuchar

same plants as the park crematorium

Alan Peat

in my step too a false spring

Alan Peat

both of us naked
seduced by the birdsong

Alan Peat

carousel too many stars

once upon a fairytale keys as weapon

aphasia clouds gather and disperse

wolf & red-riding unalphabaptised

newborn eyeing the universe new moon

Roberta Beary

overthinking fireflies in a closed glass jar

Devoshruti Mandal

alone with a gossip itching

Devoshruti Mandal

a cricket creaks
winter night

Devoshruti Mandal

a little to live on acorns

Roberta Beary

a n t s nitpicking the love stained sheet

Roberta Beary



Kati Mohr | pi.and.anne

~~HORSE MANE~~ tell me what you want

~~HORSE MANE~~

art by

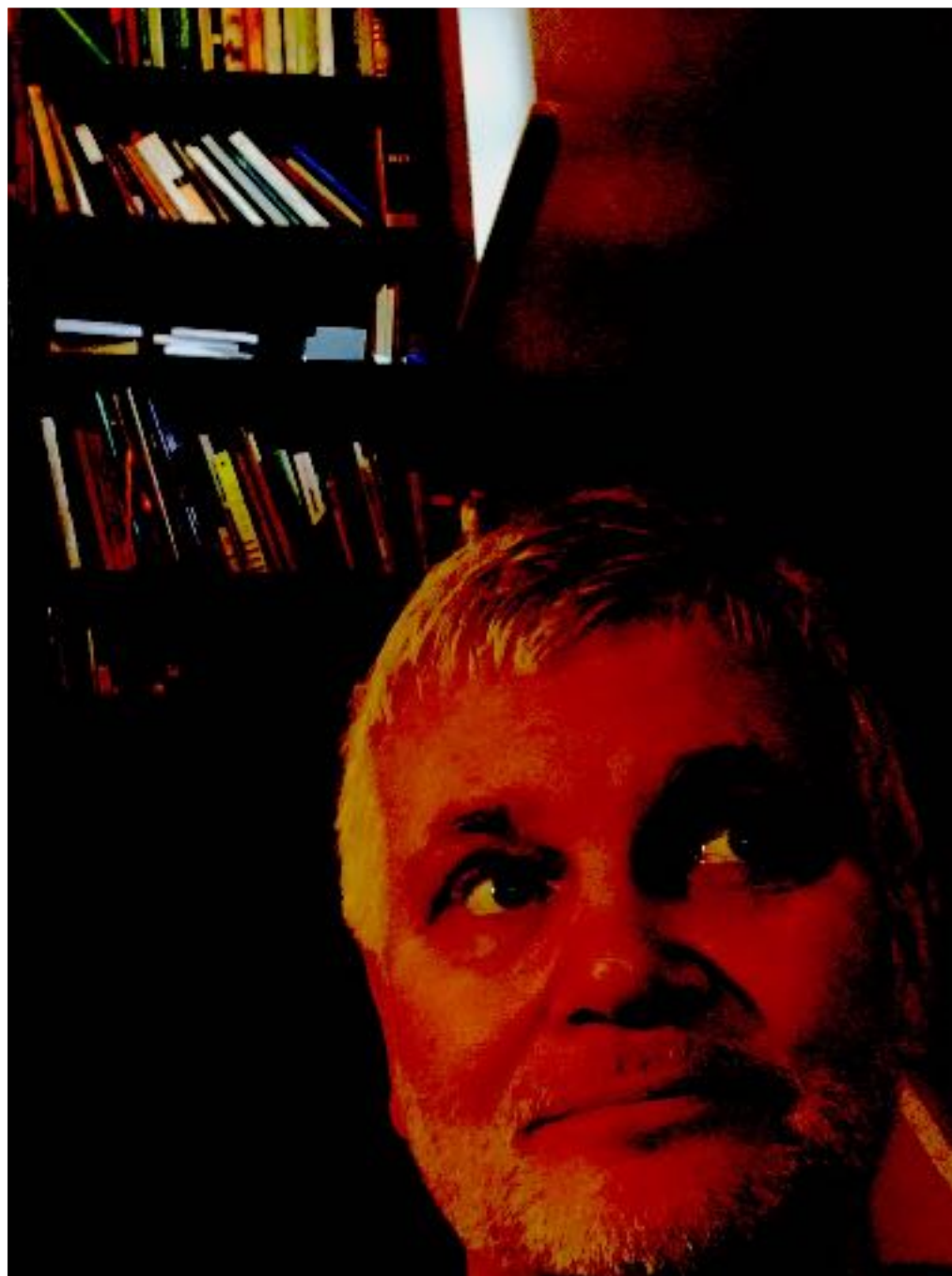
Kati Mohr

@pi.and.anne

Kati Mohr | pi & anne

<https://www.instagram.com/pi.and.anne/>

What's Next?



The Blōō Outpost

The Blōō Outpost

The Blōō Outpost

The Blōō Outpost

THE BLŌŌ OUTPOST

The Blōō Outpost

THE BLŌŌ OUTPOST

THE BLŌŌ OUTPOST

The Blōō Outpost

The Blōō Outpost

The Blōo Outpost Report: What's Next?

First of all, a huge thank you for the poems, and surprises such as artwork, correspondence that found its way into this issue, and all the well wishing.

Secondly, the second issue!

PHR's "2ssue" haiku+kigo

Tercets only (3-line haiku)

They can be both long and short and 575 versions are welcome as well.

It's all about the seasons, whether kigo or your own approach to seasonal references in haiku.

Look out for the announcement at CoTP towards the end of 2023 for the Winter issue.

Also:

Mini-Journal Features for 2024 & 2025:

The Long Haiku (575 and beyond) ed. Alan Summers

Haibun Manoeuvres ed. Alan Summers

Planet of Tanka with Karen Hoy & Alan Summers



<https://www.callofthepage.org/the-pan-haiku-review/>

The End

Finis