

Journal of the Akita International Haiku Network

Serow

Selected Haiku in English and Japanese



Featuring poetry by

Rachel He • Shizue Nobe • Kaito Ogiwara • Kala Ramesh •
Minal Sarosh • Tsugoshi Toshiaki

Kamoshika

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SEROW [ser-oh]

(n) a goat antelope of the genus *Capricornis*, of eastern Asia, related to the goral. From **Lepcha** *să-ro* (Tibetan goat). **Japanese:** *kamoshika* 氈鹿. **Russian:** cepay.

Akita prefecture, situated in western Tōhoku, is home to an abundance of nature and wildlife. Its mountains, sea coast, lakes, and rivers are home to a variety of creatures and beasts. While one may regularly see foxes, tanuki, deer, or even bears when out for a drive or when strolling through Akita's bucolic landscape, spotting a **serow** (known to the local people as a *kamoshika*) is rare indeed.

Serow live in Akita's lush forests. While some animals may find the region's steep, densely wooded mountainsides too treacherous, and its cold, snowy winters too harsh, *kamoshika* thrive here all year round.

These ancient creatures are most often seen at dawn and dusk—those mystical times, when it is not fully day and not fully night; not fully light and not fully dark. Because of their elusive nature and the fact that they are most active at such mysterious times of day, Akita people have come to believe that seeing a *kamoshika* is auspicious and may bring good luck.

Composing a perfect *haiku* is like trying to catch sight of a serow. Although one may try and try, the perfect words for composing a *haiku* are often elusive. As with spotting a *kamoshika*, writing a masterful *haiku* occurs only at rare times when the poet least expects.

セロ [ser-oh]

(名) 広義には、ウシ目、ウシ亜目、ウシ科、ヤギ亜科のヤギ族。 地方：東アジア。ゴールルに関する説もあり。

語源学 **レプチャ語**： *să-ro* (チベットのヤギ)。**和名**：カモシカ(氈鹿、羚羊)。
露語： *cepay*。

東北の西側に位置する秋田県は、自然に恵まれ、多くの野生生物が生息しています。秋田の山々や海辺、川や湖では様々な生き物が生活しているため、ドライブに出かけたり田舎道を散歩すれば、キツネやタヌキ、シカ、時にはクマにも出会うことが出来るでしょう。一方で「**カモシカ (Serow)**」と地元の人々から呼ばれる動物に遭遇することは、とても珍しいです。

カモシカは主に緑豊かな森林に生息しています。しかしそこは、樹木が生い茂る険しい山腹で、冬は雪が降り積もり寒さが厳しいため、一般の動物が生息するにはあまりにも過酷で危険な環境です。けれどもカモシカは、この場所で一年中暮らしています。

太古から生息するこの動物は、夜明けや夕暮れ時...空が美しい色に染まる曖昧で神秘的な時間に姿を現します。理解しがたい彼らの生態や、一日のなかで最も魅惑的な時間帯に姿を見せることから、秋田ではカモシカと出会うことは非常に幸運で、カモシカは幸せを運んでくる存在として信じられています。

完璧な俳句を詠むことは、カモシカを見つけることに似ています。何度考え直しても、ぴったり合う言葉が見つからない日もあります。すばらしい俳句は、カモシカと遭遇するときのように、書き手すら想像していなかった瞬間に生まれるものなのかもしれません。

Serow

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カモシカ

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Welcome to Serow.

The theme of the **8th Annual Akita International Haiku Contest** was “impermanence” (*mujō* 無常), or in other words simply “change.”

This past year, the **Akita International Haiku Network** experienced its fair share of change, especially behind the scenes of the annual *haiku* contest and *Serow*. Some of our key personnel have moved on, either because they have physically left Akita, retired, or both. Unfortunately, this resulted in the end of our trilingual (Japanese, Russian, and English) *haiku* contest. AIHN began this *haiku* contest in 2012 as a show of friendship and good will between the people of **Vladivostok**, Russia and **Akita**, so it is truly regrettable that the tradition of publishing Russian *haiku* has come to an end. We hope, however, that we can maintain the strong bonds that were created with Russian speaking *haiku* poets throughout the world.

Mujō and Its Meaning

Mujō is a **Buddhist term** meaning that all living things are continuously passing through the phases of birth and death; which is to say that nothing is static or lasts forever. This concept may be further extended to all worldly things, aside from living beings.

Nothing is eternal. Nothing is settled. When the winds of impermanence (*mujō no kaze* 無常の風) blow, our lives disappear like the morning dew, or are blown off the branch like the petal of a cherry blossom in the wind.

When “impermanence” is thought of this way, it sounds rather depressing! The opposite, however, is true—by always keeping in mind that the things in this world are ephemeral, it should lead us to find beauty and happiness in the present moment. The reality is that sometimes it is hard to tell whether the change we witness is happy, sad, wonderful, awful, or some mix of emotions. Regardless, as *haiku* poets we should be attuned to noticing even the slightest changes in the world around us as examples of *mujō* and recognize how precious they are.

For an example of *mujō* in *haiku*, let’s consider the following by **Yosa no Buson** 与謝蕪村 (1716–1784), which I have translated:

ご挨拶

第 8回秋田国際俳句コンテストのテーマは「無常 (impermanence)」、別の言い方をすれば「変化 (change)」でした。実際に2019年は、かなり多くの変化が起こった1年でした。秋田国際俳句ネットワークに影響を及ぼした変化もあれば、日本中に影響を及ぼした変化もありました。

秋田国際俳句ネットワーク (AIHN) も、毎年恒例の俳句コンテストやSerow出版の裏側で、いくつかの大きな変化がありました。AIHNの主要なメンバーの一部が、秋田を離れたたり、退職したり、またその両方の理由で脱退していったのです。残念ながらこのことで、3か国語 (日本語、ロシア語、英語) で行われていた俳句コンテストは終わりを迎えました。AIHNは、このコンテストを2012年にウラジオストク、ロシア、秋田の人々の友好親善の証として始めました。ロシア語の俳句部門を含めたコンテストを今年も続けられなかったことは非常に残念です。

「無常」とその意味について

無常とは仏教の考えのひとつで、一切のものは生じたり滅したりして変化し、永遠に変わらないものは一つもないという意味を表します。この概念は、生きている生物だけではなく、この世の全てのものにまで及ぶとされています。

何事も永遠不変ではありません。無常の風が吹けば、我々の命は朝露のように消え、あるいは風に吹かれた桜の花びらのように枝から吹き飛ばされてしまいます。

このように「無常」について考えると、無常とはやや憂鬱なものに感じられます。しかしその逆もまたしかり...この世のものは永遠ではないということを常に念頭に置いておけば、今のこの瞬間に美しさや喜びを見出せるはずです。現実には、我々が目にする変化が幸せなものなのか、悲しいものなのか、素晴らしいものなのか、恐ろしいものなのか、それともそれらが入り混じった感情なのかを見分けるのは難しいことがあります。いずれにせよ、俳人として我々は、無常と言われるような世界の、ほんのわずかな変化をとらえ、それらがいかに価値のあるものかを認識すべきでしょう。

無常に関する俳句の例として、与謝蕪村 (1716-1784)のこのような句があります。

花散りてもとの山家と成りにけり

Flower petals scatter—
The mountain lodge has returned
to its old form

花散りてもとの山家と成りにけり

hana chirite moto no yamaga to nari ni keru

Flower petals scatter—
The mountain lodge has returned
to its old form

Here we find two examples of impermanence. In this *haiku* Buson writes that “*hana scatter*”—this is the first example. *Hana* is a general term for “flower” but here Buson means specifically **cherry blossoms**. Since the late 12th century cherry blossoms have been a popular motif in Japanese poetry and the quintessential **symbol of impermanence**. The reason is that Japanese people eagerly anticipate cherry blossoms (or, *sakura*) to bloom, signifying the end of winter and the coming of the warmer spring weather. Unlike other more robust flowering trees and shrubs in Japan, cherry blossoms are usually blown off their branches or knocked off by spring rains within a few days of blooming—or even in just a few hours! Cherry blossoms are only in their prime momentarily, and thus serve as a poignant reminder of “change” in this world. But what emotions does this elicit? On one hand seeing cherry blossom petals blowing around like snow in the wind is very beautiful, but on the other hand it is sad that such beauty disappears so quickly.

The second example (the mountain lodge returning to its old form) is a more explicit example of change. But what is its “old form”? Has the cabin collapsed under the weight of the winter snow and is decomposing into the earth? Or is it a summer home to which its occupants have returned and are cleaning it to make it livable again? Here, the reader does not know which emotion to associate with *mujō* and is left wondering how to react to the scene Buson succinctly describes.

For this contest, we encouraged writers to submit *haiku* with an impermanence (*mujō*) theme. We hoped that *haiku* poets would take us up on the challenge not only to introduce them to a popular theme in Japanese *haiku*, but also to encourage them to reflect on the world around them.

—the Editor

この俳句には、「無常」の例が二つあると思います。蕪村の俳句に書かれた「花散りて」、これが最初の例です。「花」は「Flower」の一般的な総称ですが、この蕪村の俳句では特に「桜」を意味します。桜は12世紀後半から、日本の詩歌において親しみのある題材で「無常」の典型的な象徴です。その理由は、冬の終わりと暖かい春の訪れを告げる桜の咲くのを、日本人が待ち望んでいるからです。日本のより頑丈な他の花の木や低木とは異なり、桜は多くの場合、開花してから数日間、あるいはたった数時間のうちに、枝から吹き飛ばされたり、春雨に激しくうち付けられたりします。つまり桜の花が咲き乱れるのはほんのつかの間のため、したがって桜はこの世の無常を痛切に思い起こさせるのです。しかしこれによってどのような感情が引き起こされるのでしょうか？雪が舞い散るように桜の花が風に吹かれている姿はとても美しい一方で、その美しさがあっという間に消え去るのは悲しいことです。

二つ目の例「元の山家と」は、より明確な変化の例です。しかしこの「元の山家」とは何なのでしょう。冬の雪の重みで小屋が崩れたため、土に小屋が分解されている様子なのでしょう。またはこの小屋の所有者が戻ってきて、また住めるように掃除をし、夏の住み家になっている様子なのでしょう。ここで読者は、どちらの感情が無常と結びつくのか、蕪村が簡潔に語るこの場面をどのように考えたらよいのか疑問に思うことでしょう。

今回のコンテストでは、「無常」をテーマにした俳句を提出していただくよう皆様にお願いたしました。

私達AIHNは皆様に、日本の俳句界において有名なテーマについて紹介するだけでなく、身の回りのちょっとしたことに心を配ることに挑戦してほしいと思っています。

編集者より

Acknowledgements

The Akita International Haiku Network would like to thank most sincerely the following organizations. Without their support, the success of the 8th Annual Akita International Haiku Contest (formerly, the Japan–Russia Haiku Contest) would have been unattainable.

(listed alphabetically)

Akita International University

Akita Prefectural University

Akita University—Global Center for Higher Education

Asahi Haikuist Network

Haiku International Association

The International University of Kagoshima

North Asia University

協力

ご支援下さった皆様、多くのご協力をいただき、誠にありがとうございました。

秋田県立大学

秋田国立大学高等教育グローバルセンター

朝日新聞「Asahi Haikuist Network」

鹿児島国際大学

国際教養大学

国際俳句交流協会

ノースアジア大学

Akita International Haiku Network Personnel

Chief Director...

Hidenori Hiruta

Judges

English section...

David McMurray

Japanese section...

Hidenori Hiruta, Kazuhiro Kudo, and
Kyoko Uchimura

Translators

English Translations by...

Hidenori Hiruta

Japanese Translations by...

Hidenori Hiruta, Reina Tsuchida

Serow Staff

Editor...

Ben Grafström

Assistant Editor...

Hidenori Hiruta

Art Director...

Jason Tacker

Layout & Design...

Ben Grafström

秋田国際俳句ネットワーク 会員のスタッフ

会長...

蛭田秀法

コンテストの選者

英語部門...

デビッド・マクマレイ

日本語部門...

蛭田秀法、工藤一紘、内村恭子

訳者

英訳者...

蛭田秀法

和訳者...

蛭田秀法、土田怜奈

「Serow」スタッフ

編集長...

ベン・グラフストロム

副編集長...

蛭田秀法

アートディレクター...

ジェイソン・タッカー

レイアウト & デザイン...

ベン・グラフストロム

8th Annual Akita International Haiku Contest Winners at a Glance

English (Open)

Kala Ramesh (India)

Minal Sarosh (India)

English (Student)

Rachel He

Tsugoshi Toshiaki (Seifu Nankai High School, Japan)

Japanese (Open)

Shizue Nobe (Miyazaki City)

Japanese (Student)

Kaito Ogiwara (Akita International University)

第8回秋田国際俳句コンテスト 特選者の名簿

英語部門・一般

カーラ・ラメシュ(インド)

マイナル・サロシュ (インド)

英語部門・学生

レイチェル・ヒー

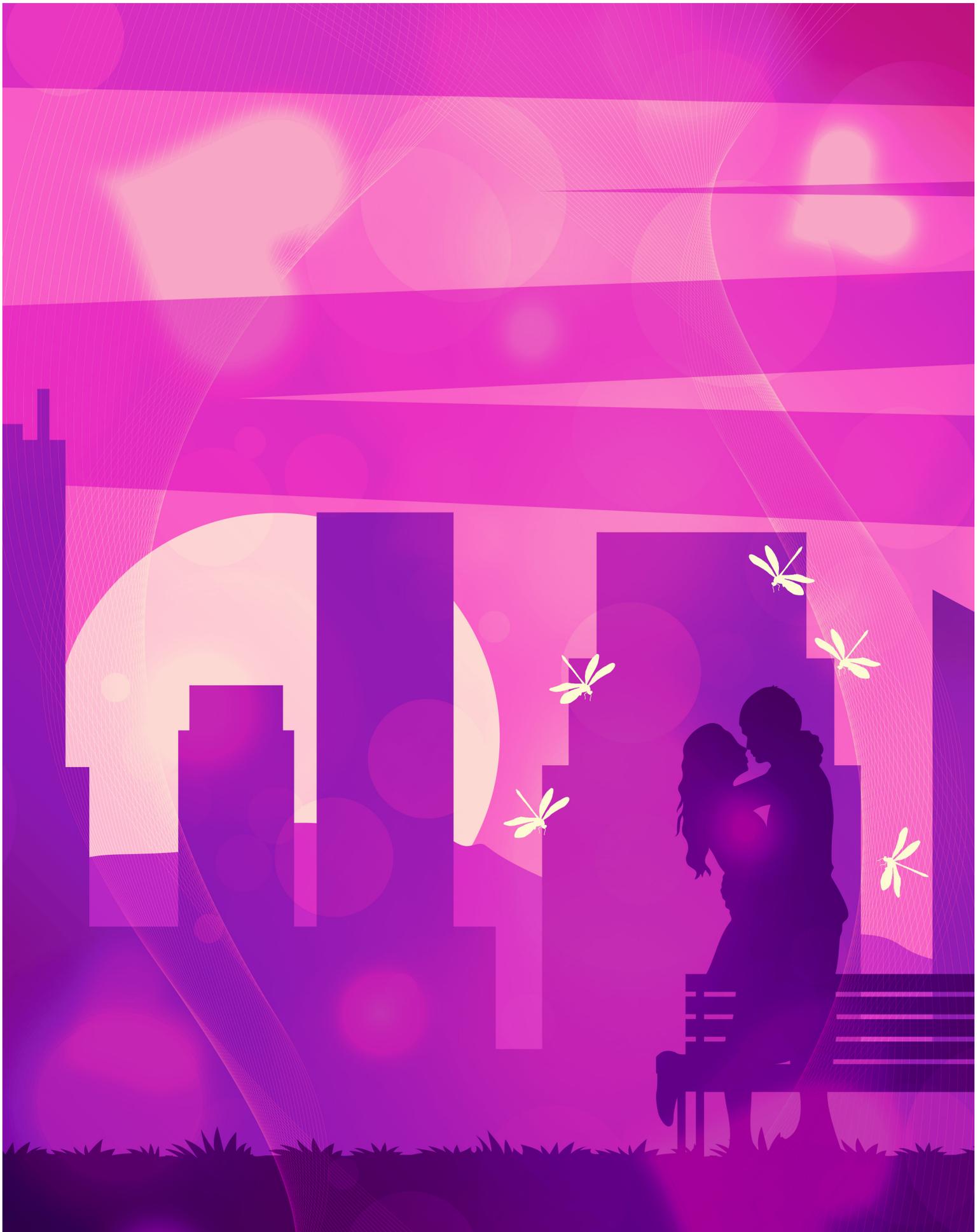
津越俊瑛 (清風南海学園高等学校)

日本語部門・一般

野辺静枝 (宮崎県宮崎市)

日本語部門・学生

荻原海登 (国際教養大学)



English (Open)

英語部門・一般

**scented twilight...
the reason dragonflies
pause in flight**

香りのある夕暮れ...

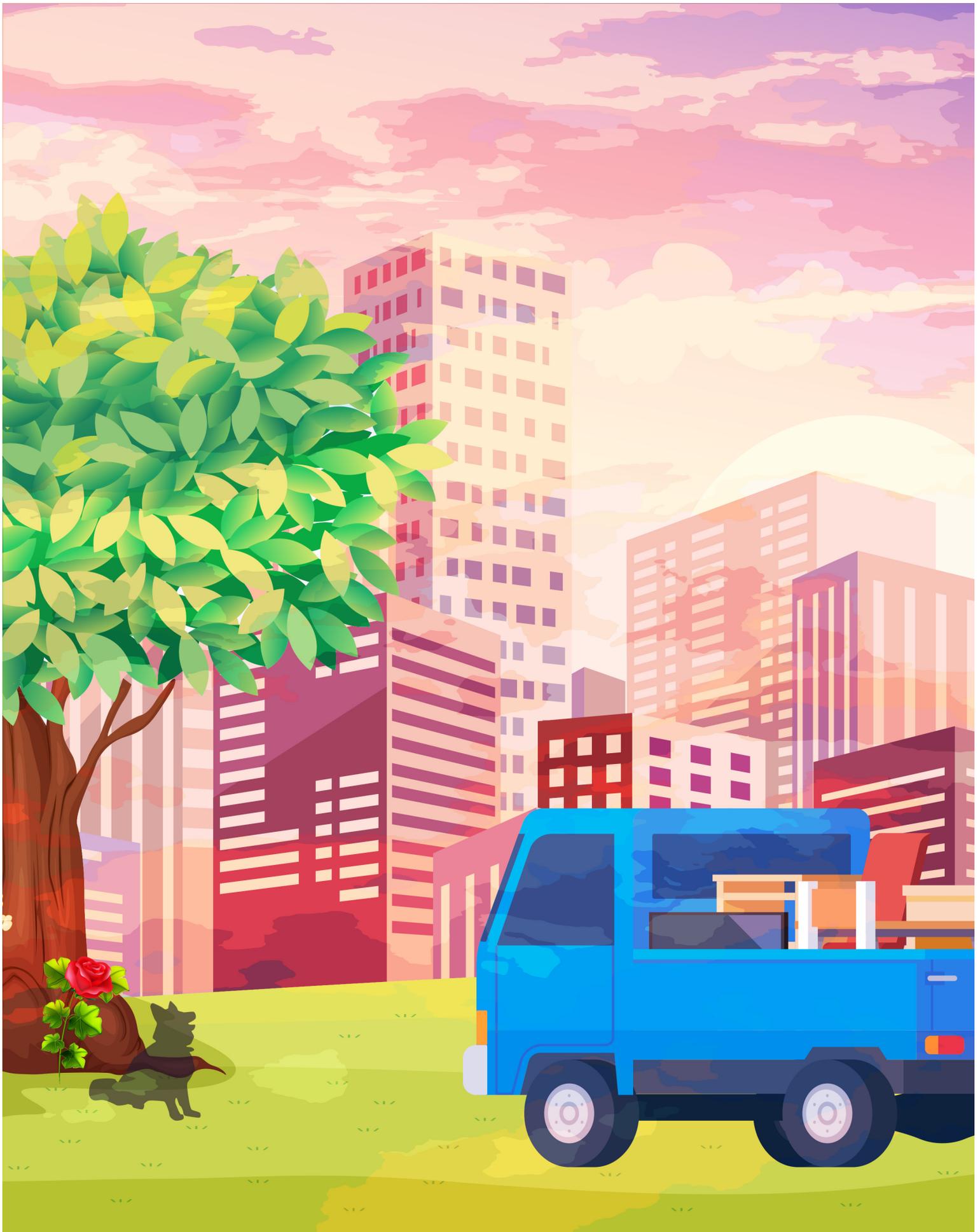
トンボの理由

飛行中の一時停止

*kaori no aru yūgure tonbo no riyū hikōchū no ichiji
teishi*

by

Kala Ramesh
(Pune, India)



English (Open)

英語部門・一般

**moving house
they plant a rose tree where
their dog was buried**

引っ越し

彼らはバラの木を植える
飼犬が埋葬された所に

*hikkoshi karera wa bara no ki o ueru kaiinu ga maisō
sareta tokoro ni*

by

Minal Sarosh
(Ahmedabad, India)

English (Open) 英語部門・一般

Haiku of Honorable Mention 入選

371 English *haiku* were submitted from the following 56 countries:

Argentina, Australia, Bangladesh, Belarus, Belgium, Bosnia–Herzegovina, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, Columbia, Croatia, England, Finland, France, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Hong Kong, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Lithuania, Macedonia, Malaysia, Mexico, Montenegro, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nigeria, Pakistan, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russia, Serbia, Slovakia, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Tanzania, Thailand, Tunisia, Turkey, Ukraine, USA, Uzbekistan, and Vietnam

Ranieri Christiane (Wittenheim, France)

her hand	彼女の手
from my hand escapes	私の手から逃げる
flight of the butterfly	蝶の飛行

Lilia Racheva (Rousse, Bulgaria)

breeze,	そよ風、
mamma leafing	母さんがさっとめくっている
the family album	家族のアルバムを

Isabella Kramer (Nienhagen, Germany)

abandoned attic	見捨てられた屋根裏部屋
a little barn owl	小さいメンフクロウが
waiting...	待っている...

Marilyn Ashbaugh (Edwardsburg, USA)

low call of the loon...	アビの低い鳴き声...
yellowed letters from lost friends	行方不明の友人からの黄ばんだ手紙
gathered near the fire	たき火の近くに集められた

Goda V. Bendoraitienė (Klaipėda, Lithuania)

following google maps	グーグルマップに従って行く
on both sides of childhood road	子供の頃の道路の両側に
endless stubblefield	切れ目のない刈り株畑

Agnes Eva Savich (Austin, TX, USA)

finding	見つける
my inner lizard	私のトカゲを
winter sun	冬の太陽

Frank Hooven (Morrisville, PA, USA)

somewhere within	どこか
wild mint—	野生のミントの内側に—
last year's garden	去年の庭

Steliana Cristina Voicu (Ploiești, Romania)

returning from the trip...	旅行から戻って...
the plum tree in front of the house	家の前の梅の木
dressed in gold	山吹色に身を飾っている

Sambangi Srinivasa Rao (Hyderabad, India)

A-bomb Dome	原爆ドーム
lining up for a selfie	自撮り写真のために一列に並ぶ
I say smile	私は「笑顔」と言う

Izeta Radetinac (Novi Pazar, Srbija)

Howling wind	ヒューヒュー鳴る風
old hen in fear	恐怖の老鶏
leaves the nest	巣を離れる



English (Student)

英語部門・学生

**Looking through photos
Recalling happy times
Wrinkled hands turn pages**

写真を見ながら
幸せな時代を呼び起こす
しわくちやの手でページをめくる

*shashin o minagara shiawasena jidai o yobiokosu
shiwakucha no te de peeji o mekuru*

by

Rachel He
(affiliation withheld)



English (Student)

英語部門・学生

bonfire

darkness gorging

flare

たき火

闇の峡谷

ゆらめく炎

takibi yami no kyōkoku yurameku honoo

by

Tsugoshi Toshiaki

(Seifu Nankai High School, Japan)

English (Student) 英語部門・学生

Haiku of Honorable Mention 入選

22 students from 9 different countries entered original *haiku* to this year's contest. The following ten received honorable mention.

Paulina Artimon (Scoală Gimnazială Elena Rares; Botoșani, Romania)

wind of change	変革の風
children protesting against	抗議する子供たち
deforestation	森林破壊に

Aidan Dwyer (Akita International University/ Drexel University)

Arm away from the sea	海から離れた岬
Salt stains the air I breathe in	塩が私の吸い込む空気を汚す
I'll stay for the day	私は今日のところは滞在します

Tatiana Galankina

Baby carriage in the park.	公園の乳母車。
The first snowflakes on the faces of sleeping babies	眠っている赤ちゃんの顔に最初の雪片

Jesse Downing (Akita International University/ Millsaps College)

one more semester	もう一学期すると
college season's come to an end	カレッジシーズンが終了する
time for something new	何か新しいことのための時間

Mekala Dinesh Srikar

school reopens—	学校が再開する—
a higher line on the wall	壁のより高い線
my new height	私の新しい身長

Simonova Vladislava (Vocational education center №1; Kharkiv, Ukraine)

The cherry tree	さくらの木
Is the same age as mine	私と同じ年齢です
but already higher.	しかし、もう私より背が高い。

Tsuyuki Niina Dubik (Akita International University)

Everything is still	すべてが静か
The snow finally arrived	ついに雪が降ってきた
Leaving not a sound	音もなく

Runa Aota (Akita International University)

Lying on the bed	ベッドに横たわっている
His whiskers are whiter now	彼のひげがもっと白くなっている
Wrinkles on his hands	手にはしわ

Shimomura Riho (Akita International University)

Footprints on the snow	雪の上の足跡
Family rushes to the	家族が急ぐ
Warm home full with love	愛にあふれた暖かい家へ

Fredrick Elumah (Olabisi Onabanjo University, Nigeria)

faulty traffic lights	欠陥のある信号機
a girl on the other side...	向こう側の女の子...
a foggy morning	霧深い朝



Japanese (Open)

日本語部門・一般

初みくじ微笑みほどの運を引く

hatsu mikuji hohoemi hodo no un o hiku

First fortune slip
drawing such a luck—
smiling

by

Shizue Nobe 野辺静枝
(Miyazaki, Miyazaki City)

Japanese (Open) 日本語部門・一般

Haiku of Honorable Mention 入選

20 poets submitted *haiku* in Japanese. Other than from Japan, *haiku* were submitted from countries such as Croatia, India, Nigeria, Spain, and the USA. The judges of this category agreed that the following poets and *haiku* deserved Honorable Mention.

Teruko Takahashi 高橋照子 (Sendai, Miyagi)

きのうまで語りし媼無常門

kinō made katarishi ōna mujōmon

The old woman

yesterday's talking friend—

today she passed way

Sumito Yamamoto 山本純人 (Saitama)

ランドセルちいさくなつてゆく小春

rاندoseru chiisaku natte yuku koharu

The school bag

getting smaller

in the tenth month

Mikio Iwanaka 岩中幹夫 (Okayama)

学び舎や雪が融ければ分かれ道

manabiya ya yuki ga tokereba wakare

michi

The school building—

snow melts, with

forked roads appearing

Rajan Geethanjali (Chennai, India)

高潮や取り残された鳥の声

takashio ya tori-nokosareta tori no koe

Tidal wave—

birds' voices

left behind

Taku Hori 堀卓 (Fukushima)

変化球打たれ最後の夏終る
henkakyū utare saigo no natsu owaru

The breaking ball
 hit, with the last summer
 over

Kiyomi Sumekawa 染川清美 (Yao City, Osaka)

産声や夫の腕に響く夏日
ubugoe ya otto no ude ni hibiku kajitsu

First cry resounding
 in my husband's arms—
 summer day

Liliia Galimzianova (Tatarstan, Kazan)

夢雲 富士山 ベースジャンプ 空母 神風
yume kumo Fujisan beesujanpu sora kūbo
kamikaze

Dream. Clouds. Mount Fuji.
 Base jump.
 Aircraft carrier. Divine wind.

Rika Inami 稲美里佳 (Akita)

武家屋敷しだれの朽葉 風に舞ふ
buke yashiki shidare no kuchiba fu ni
maefu

Samurai residence—
 decayed leaves of weeping cherry trees
 dancing in the wind

James Harry Morris (Tsukuba, Ibaraki)

殉教の小雪の道に転びけり
junkyō no koyuki no michi ni korobikeri

On the light snowy road
 to martyrdom
 I fall

Hidenori Hiruta 蛭田秀法 (Akita City, Akita)

紅玉の実をもてしめる七竈
kōgyoku no mi o mote shimeru
nanakamodo

Rowan trees
 turning the berries red—
 last stage



Japanese (Student)

日本語部門・学生

彼岸花紅ともに燃え尽きる

higanbana kurenai tomo ni moe-tsukiru

Spider lilies
seem to burn out
in red

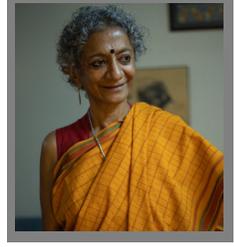
by

Kaito Ogiwara 荻原海登
(Akita International University)

Features

Getting to Know *Haiku* Poet

Kala Ramesh



Haiku poet *Kala Ramesh* hails from *Chennai*, on the Bay of Bengal in southeastern *India*. Her haiku (along with a haiku by *Minal Sarosh*; see page 35) were selected as the winners of the 8th Annual Akita International Haiku Contest's English Open category. Here is what she had to say about the theme "impermanence" and composing haiku:

***Nitya* (Permanence) & *Anitya* (Impermanence)**

It was such a pleasant surprise to be named one of the winners of the **8th Akita International Haiku Contest**. Of course it's not about winning a prize as such because contests and prizes are here today and gone tomorrow... but working on the theme of "impermanence," which is not new to our *haikai* world, gave me the challenge of making a fresh verse and not using images and words that have been done to death!

It wasn't easy. So I did the next best thing, which was to imply "impermanence" by describing just the opposite! Let me give an example: only when there is sunshine do you understand the beauty of shade and vice versa; lockdown versus mobility and so on! To focus on impermanence, which in Sanskrit is *anitya* (*nitya* means eternal, permanent), I needed to show continuity, continuation, and longevity. Simple! So the images in my *haiku* should have the brevity and impermanence that reflect the *haiku* spirit, but also allow the story to continue in subtle ways.

While reading about *nō drama*, I came across the term *kire-tsuzuki* (cut-continue). The commonest example of this is the pause between every exhalation of air from the lungs and the next inhalation. Another lovely example is our walk—we move one leg, cut the movement, and move the other leg—the two actions together get us moving; there is both a cut and a continuation. For life is all about that movement and nothing in nature is stationery or static.

Most importantly, nothing in life exists in isolation or is unconnected.

This naturally led me to this beautiful concept called the “web of life.” As **Alan Watts** wrote,

“Imagine a multidimensional spider’s web in the early morning covered with dew drops. And every dew drop contains the reflection of all the other dew drops. And, in each reflected dew drop, the reflections of all the other dew drops in that reflection. And so on ad infinitum. That is the Buddhist conception of the universe in an image.”

dewdrops in a dewdrop the dewdrop world

(Kala Ramesh)

In both the **Hindu** and **Buddhist** scriptures, the image of “**Indra’s net**” is used to describe the interconnectedness of the universe, and that is what I have tried to show in my *haiku*:

**scented twilight...
the reason dragonflies
pause in flight**

Line 1: “Scented twilight” is something that continues and is carried on the gentle breeze.

Lines 2 & 3: We all know dragonflies pause in flight. I have drawn a connection between this pause and the scent riding the breeze. The protagonist suggests that dragonflies pause to take in and enjoy the scent emanating from nearby blossoms. Thus the two images are juxtaposed to show the tension between the continuing twilight and the pausing dragonflies.

An art form begins to live, to pulsate with life when it is appreciated. Thank you to **Hidenori Hiruta** and Akita International Haiku Network for being here for us.

—Kala Ramesh

Features

Getting to Know *Haiku* Poet

Minal Sarosh



Haiku poet Minal Sarosh hails from western India. Her haiku (along with a haiku by Kala Ramesh; see page 33) were selected as the winners of the 8th Annual Akita International Haiku Contest's English Open category. She was also the recipient of the Akita Internatinal University President's Award in the 7th Japan-Russia Haiku Contest (now, the Akita International Haiku Contest). Here is her haiku followed by a few words about theme Impermanence and composing haiku:

**moving house
they plant a rose tree where
their dog was buried**

I am indeed very happy on being declared the joint winner of the 8th Akita International Haiku Contest in the English section. This is my second consecutive win, and I thank Akita International Haiku Network for awarding me again. I am much honoured and happy. My gratitude to the discerning jury.

This year's win, has come at a time when the world around us, and the way we live is changing, so fast, right before our eyes, due to the coronavirus pandemic. Nothing is the same anymore. The definition of what we perceived as normal life, day to day living, has changed. Yes, change has always been a part of our lives, and we always knew of our temporary existence here, on earth. But, for life to change so drastically, is something we never expected.

It may well be a clairvoyant coincidence that this year's theme for the *haiku* competition was also on "impermanence." The dictionary meaning of "impermanence" means anything that lasts for a given amount of time, or in other words keeps changing.

My award winning *haiku* is also in keeping with the theme of impermanence. It is about a family who is moving to a new home, a new way of life, and they

mark the grave of their pet dog by planting a tree at the spot where it is buried. They were in a way trying to immortalise, capture that moment, the joyful and loving time they had spent with their pet, as well as show their love and reverence for being a part of their family.

Haiku for me, is just that. It's a poetic form which, with a few succinct words and just two juxtaposing images, captures the moment and connects us to the core of our beings, to life and the environment around us, especially nature, in this ever changing world.

I happened to stumble upon *haiku* as a poetic form quite unexpectedly. This was when I was looking to give a certain form to my short epigrammatic poems. Reading the works of the great Japanese masters like Matsuo Bashō, Kobayashi Issa, Masaoka Shiki, and the contemporary poets also, was a learning experience.

Since then, writing *haiku* has been a very exhilarating and informing journey for me. It has added so much more meaning to my daily life because when I come across a *haiku* moment, which I am compelled to put into words, it's like a draft of fresh air, peaceful, refreshing and exciting at the same time.

In a *haiku* moment, we suddenly find happiness and serendipity. There's also a certain calmness and peace which we experience on being one with the universe. Thus, although, the world keeps changing, and we keep changing, still in a *haiku* moment we are immortalised for posterity.

Hence, my winning *haiku* this year will always be very special to me. I hope that we all survive this devastating pandemic. Yes, *haiku* gives us this hope—the hope of survival!

—Minal Sarosh

Features

Getting to Know *Haiku* Poet

Shizue Nobe



Haiku poet *Shizue Nobe* is from Miyazaki on Japan's southern island of Kyushu. Her haiku was selected as the winner of the 8th Annual Akita International Haiku Contest's Japanese Open category. Here is her haiku along with a few words to **Serow** readers.

First fortune slip drawing such a luck— smiling

I was really surprised and grateful to receive this award, unexpectedly. Thank you so much.

When I went to the Shinto shrine on New Year's Day, I drew an *omikuji* (a fortune). The fortune I drew was not *daikichi* (great luck), but *shōkichi* (little luck). I felt this result would be perfect for me, so I made a little smile—not a big one. This is the story behind my *haiku*.

In 1995 I joined a group of *haiku* poets because my friend invited me. I am glad to say that I have kept participating in this *haiku* group for the past 25 or 26 years without giving up.

I was able to continue until now because my teacher very kindly taught me and the atmosphere of the group is cozy.

Previously, most of the group's members were young, so we went to see flowers, see fireflies, and frequently enjoyed travelling to other prefectures. Those are my fond memories.

After I had surgery on my left hip joint about five years ago, I have been through some hospitalizations and surgeries. I feel like I am falling into declining health.

I also felt as though I was not able to compose better poems, since it was getting harder to think of the perfect words for composing a *haiku* compared to the verses I wrote in my younger years. I realized that if I stopped composing *haiku*, my life would not be rich, so I have decided to write as best as I can.

Thanks to this award, my *haiku* life is going to be more special for me.

初みくじ微笑みほどの運を引く

このたびは、思いがけなく大きな賞をいただけることに本当に驚きと感謝の思いでいっぱいでした。

ありがとうございました。

選にえらんでいただいた句は、お正月に神宮に行き何気なく引いたおみくじが大吉ではなく小吉だったので大笑いではなく今の私にちょうど良いのだと少し笑ったと句に詠んだものです。

私は一九九五年頃(平成七年)友人にさそわれ句会に入会しました。

それから延々と二十五・六年会を止めもせず今迄これたことをありがたかったと思っています。

先生が上手に指導してくださったこと、会の雰囲気がとても暖かかったこと、それが今につながっていると思います。

会のみんなも若かったので、花を見に行ったり蛭などを見に行ったりそれに頻繁に県外にまで足を伸ばして楽しんだり吟行の思い出も沢山出来ました。

五年程前に左股間節を手術して、それから次々と入院手術をくり返し、すっかり体力の衰えを感じるようになりました。

俳句も言葉が思うように出てこなくなり、もう駄目かなと考えることもありましたが、俳句を止めたら生活に張りもなくなると気付き、今私が出来る範囲で詠めばいい、と思うことにしました。

この賞をいただいたことでこれを励みに俳句人生を歩いていこうと思いました。

— 野辺静枝

Special Feature

Pictures & Poetry: *Modern Haiga & Photo-* *Haiku*

Calligraphy, poetry, and painting had been pastimes of Chinese literati long before becoming vogue in Japan. These three aesthetic pursuits evolved gradually in Japan, and in the 17th century combined to form *haiga* 俳画. As the Chinese characters imply, a *haiga* work combines poetry and an image, which at the time meant a humble painting. The artist's masterful brushwork in writing the poem, however, was just as important an element to forming an exquisite *haiga*.

Since *haiga* were composite art pieces, it was common for them to be created by more than one artist. Perhaps most often a painter would lend their talent to illustrate a poet's *haiku* (also referred to a *hokku* 発句 verse at the time), which the poet would write themselves, thus displaying their calligraphy skills, too. Other times a *haiga* would be the product of three artists: a painter, a poet, and a separate calligrapher.

While many modern day *haiga* artists all over the world preserve the traditional method of creating *haiga* with actual paintings and handwritten calligraphy, many others have incorporated digital images and text into their *haiga* artwork to create truly splendid pieces. Also, in keeping with the *haiga* spirit, some artists create the whole piece by themselves, while others work with fellow artists and poets to make a collaborative piece.

For this issue of **Serow**, the **Akita International Haiku Network** invited people from around the world to submit their *haiga*. We were overwhelmed by the response! Which, unfortunately means we can not include all of the wonderful submissions herein. We do however plan to publish a special *haiga* supplement issue that will come out later this year and will contain all of the *haiga* we received. Enjoy!

—the Editor

Haiga by
an'ya
 (Oregon, USA)



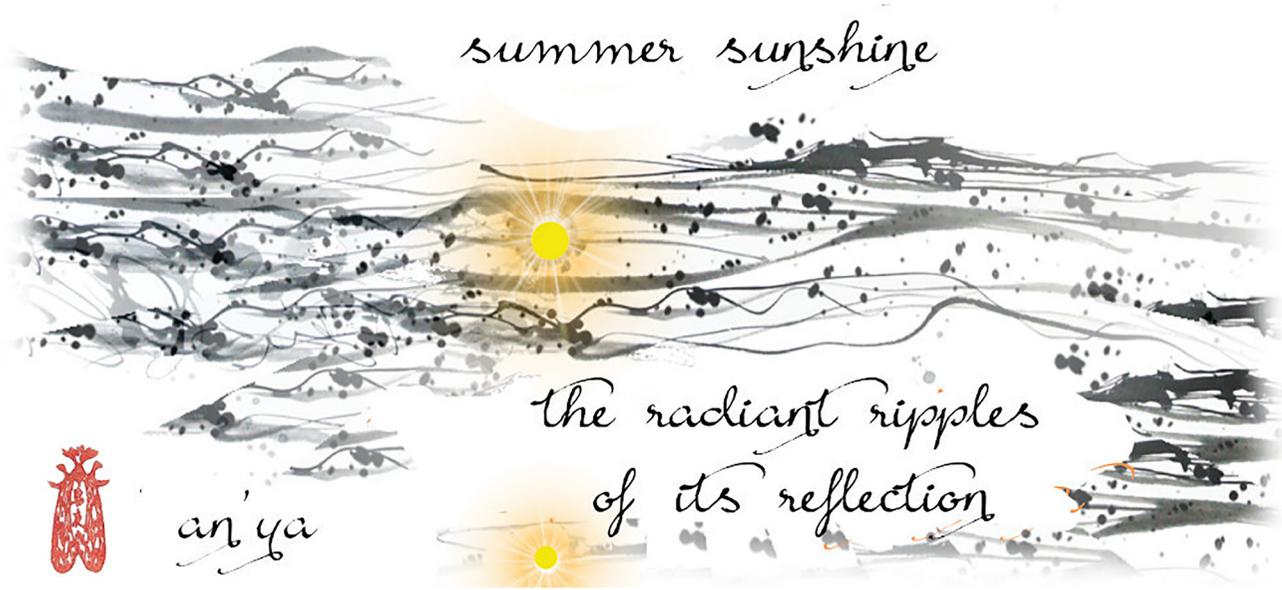
a swallowtail the flutter of wings dusted with pollen

a blood moon
takes its reflection
out to sea

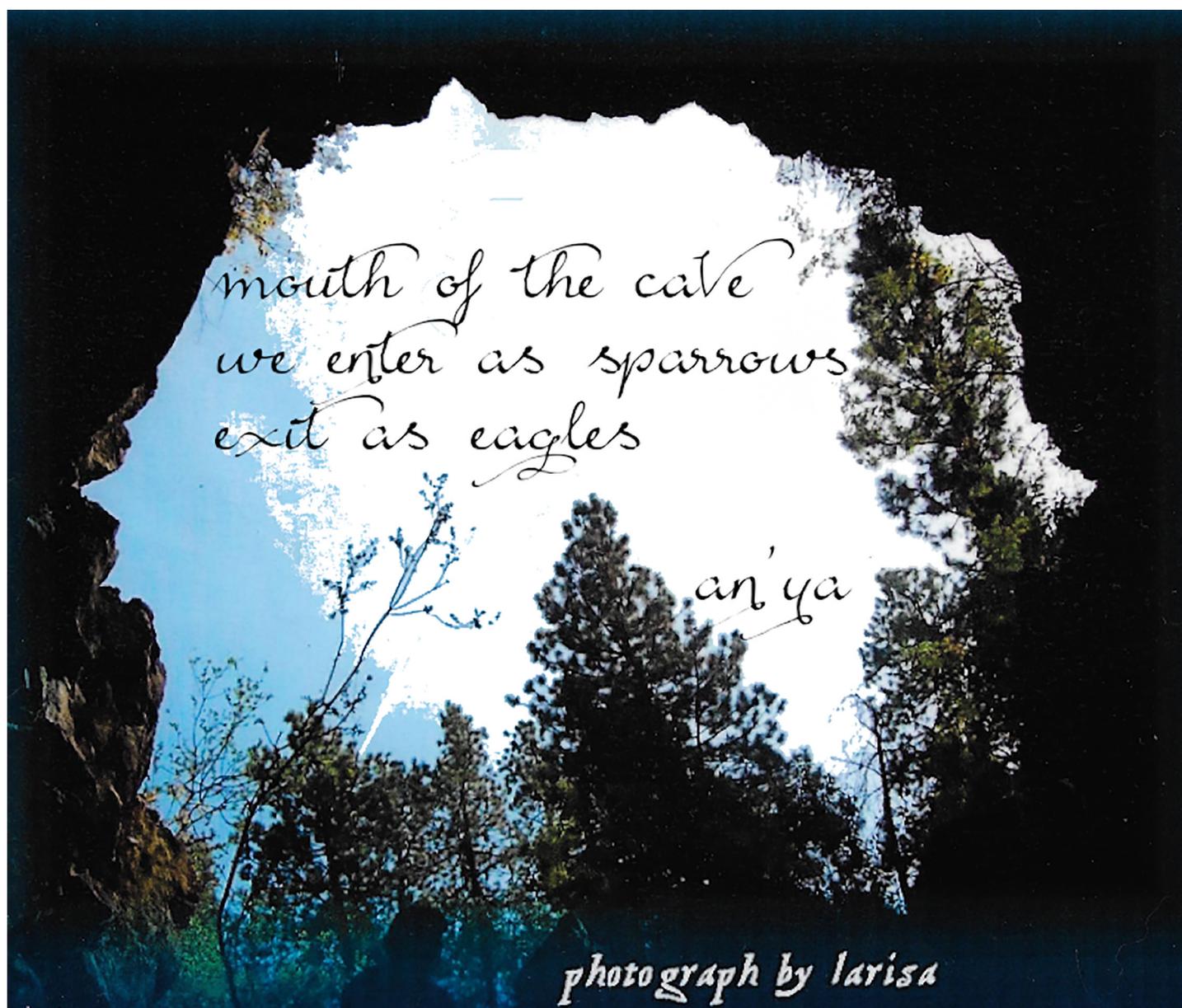


an'ya

a blood moon takes its reflection out to sea



summer sunshine the radiant ripples of its reflection



mouth of the cave we enter as sparrows exit as eagles

feral faces
 autumn winter summer spring



a sibling moon
 an ya

feral faces autumn winter summer spring

Artist bio

an'ya is a world-renowned poetess and *haiga* artist. She is credited with winning more than 150 contests, has edited 9 publications, appears on 13 websites, and her work is included in 23 books. She is the previous editor of the website Haigaonline. She has judged more than 125 contests and is the founder of numerous *haiku/tanka* societies and journals. She has been represented in over 200 literary publications, and her work has been translated into 95 different language dialects. In 2011, an'ya was voted one of the top 10 living *haiku* poets in the world by her peers. Her complete biography is available at: <https://www.tankaanya.com/oeuvre>



Haiga by
Hiroyuki Tsuda 津田弘幸
(Nagano, Japan)

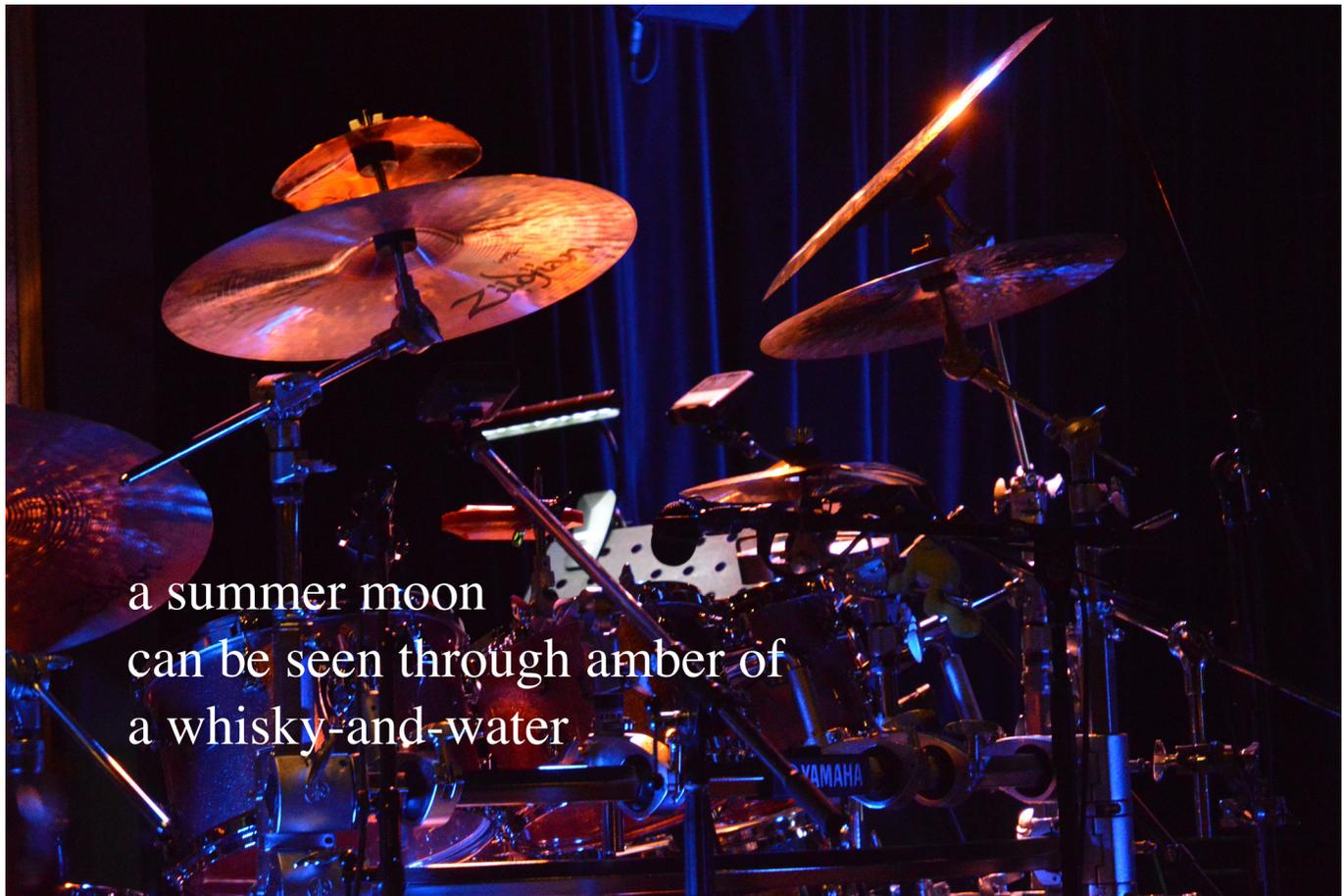


folding my umbrella
on a verdant walkway
I feel a breeze

傘閉ちて緑の小道風覚ゆ



sunlight passes clouds the lingering summer heat in the every warm



a summer moon can be seen through amber of a whisky and water



a wandering bird—
walking along stepping stones
in a garden

a wandering bird—walking along stepping stones in a garden

Artist bio

Hiroyuki Tsuda 津田弘幸 was born on 6 December 1966 in Chiba prefecture, Japan. He received a bachelor's degree in science from Kobe University in 1993. He began writing *haiku* in 2002, and making them available by uploading them online in May, 2011. In 2019 he started making photo-*haiku*; however, he does not belong to any particular *haiku* associations, so far. Other than *haiku* and photo-*haiku*, he loves classical and modern literature, photography, travel, cinema, rock and jazz music. He currently works at a manufacturer of automobile parts in Nagano. Since 2018 he has been a member of the Citizen's Nuclear Information Center (CINIC).



Haiga by

Bob Butkus
(British Columbia, Canada)

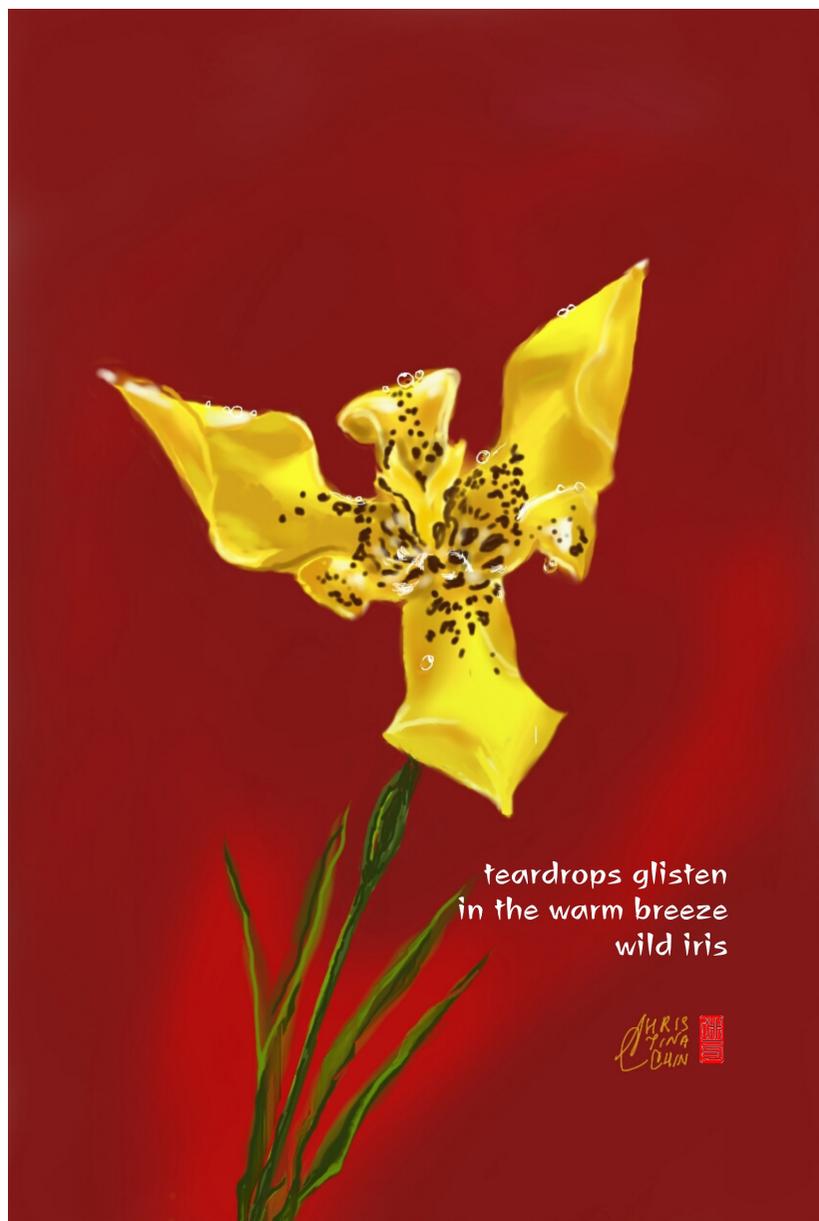


wisp of air
drifts 'round the branches
trembling petals

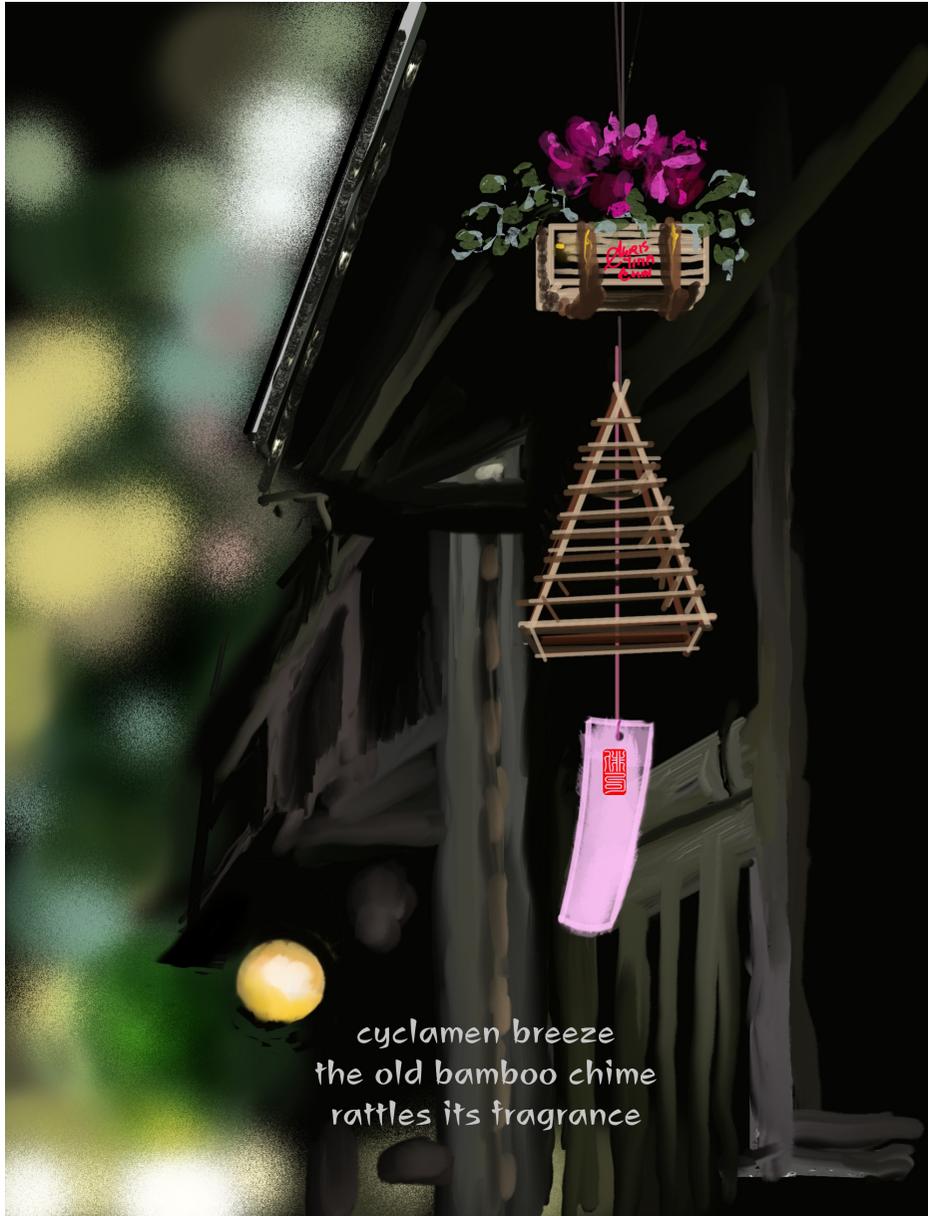
Artist bio

Dr. Robert (Bob) Butkus and his wife spent a wonderful year in Machida, Japan teaching English at Obirin University. During that time, they were able to travel and see many lovely places and meet many friendly people. This photo was taken in his backyard where they have two cherry trees. They now live in Powell River, B.C. Canada.

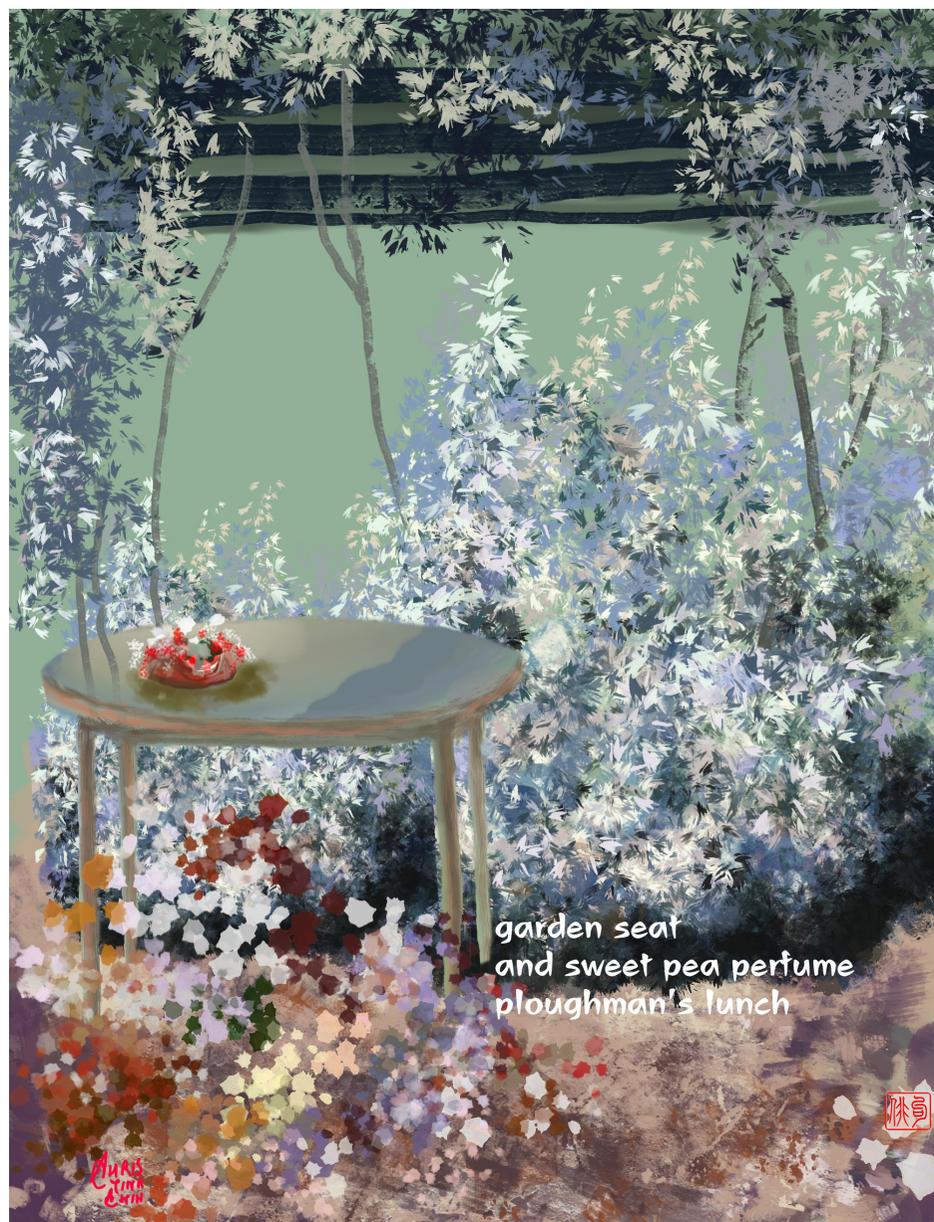
Haiga by
Christina Chin
(Malaysia)



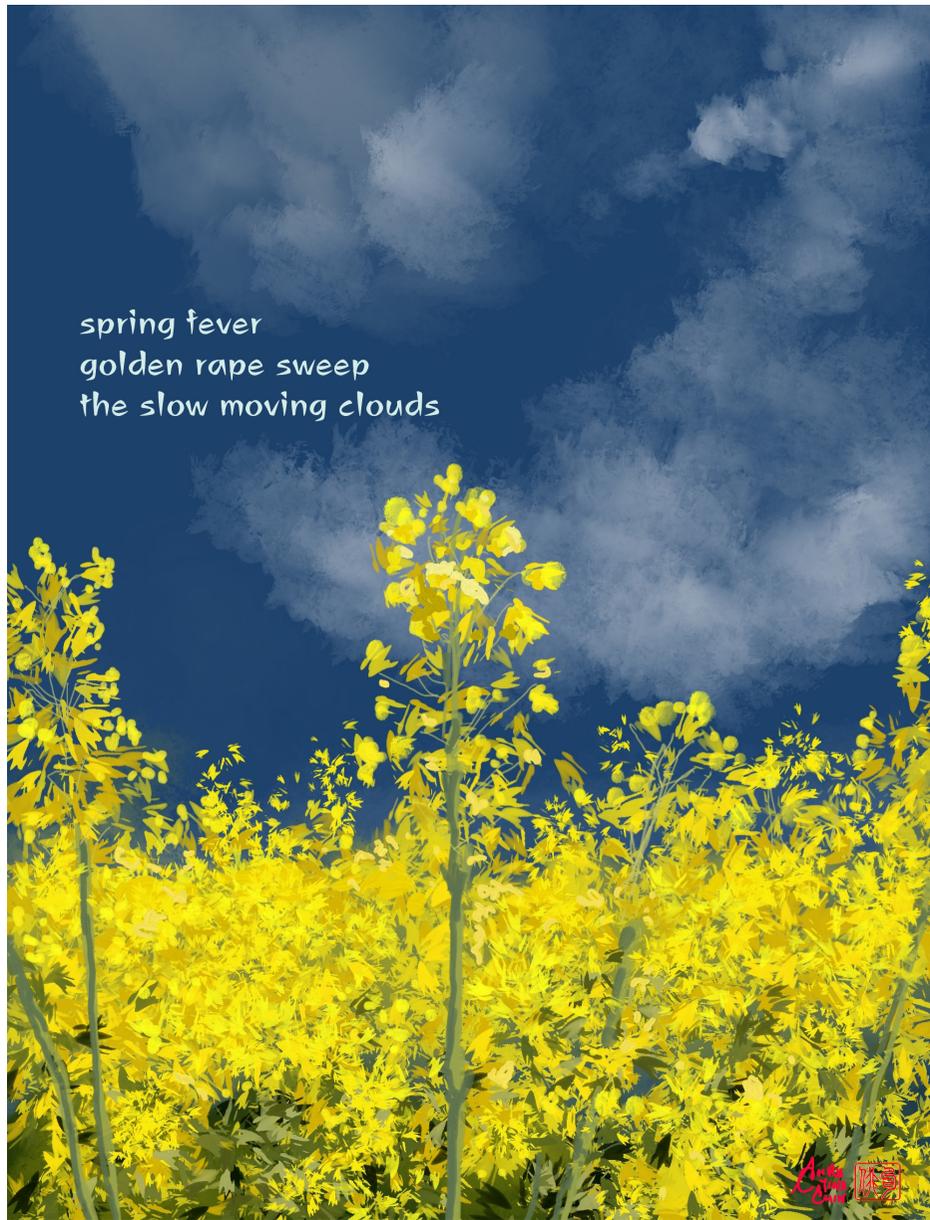
teardrops glisten in the warm breeze wild iris



cyclamen breeze the old bamboo chime rattles its fragrance



garden seat and sweet pea perfume ploughman's lunch



spring fever golden rape sweep the slow moving clouds



thunderhead
a dragon on the kite
blows fire

thunderhead a dragon on the kite blows fire

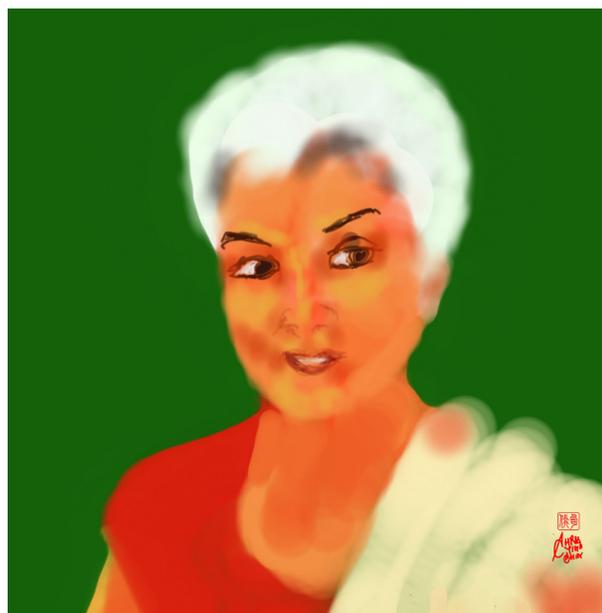
Artist bio

Christina Chin is from Kuching, Sarawak, Malaysia. She writes *haiku*, creates short videos, and participates in art exhibitions. She has published *haiku*, *haiga*, *senryū*, *tanka*, *haibun*, *gogyōshi*, and other Japanese short forms both in print and online. Her work appears in several reputable anthologies and journals such as *Frogpond Journal*, *Wind Flowers*, *cattails*, *Akitsu Quarterly*, *Asahi Shimbun*, and many others.

Christina was awarded Soka City (Japan) 2020 *Haiku Contest's* Outstanding Haiku Prize and also received an Honorable Mention. She is the 1st place winner of the 34th Annual Cherry Blossom Sakura Festival 2020 Haiku Contest hosted by University of Alabama's Capstone International Center, and has many more awards and accolades to her name.

You can find Christina Chin online at: <https://christinachin99blog.wordpress.com/>

She also maintains a blog of featured and published at: <https://haikuzyg.blogspot.com/>



Call for Entries

The 9th Akita International Haiku Contest

Guidelines for Submission

Eligibility: The contest is open to all!

Entry: Only one (1) *haiku* is allowed to be submitted per *haiku* poet.

Theme: Time, Temporality 時、時間性

Categories: “Open” and “Student” Categories for both Japanese *haiku*, and English *haiku*.

*Participants may only submit ONE (1) *haiku*

*Students MUST indicate their school affiliation

Note: Only original, previously unpublished *haiku* should be submitted.

Please visit

akitahaiku.com for more details,

or visit:

<https://tinyurl.com/AIHN2020contest> or use the QR code below.

Submission period:

August 1–October 31, 2020

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Notes

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Inquiries may be sent to:

Ben Grafström

〒010-8502 Akita, Akita City

Tegata Gakuen-machi 1-1

Akita University

Global Center for Higher Education

grafstro@gipc.akita-u.ac.jp