

# Geppo *Haiku Journal*

XVI: 5

*Yuki Teikei Haiku Society of the USA & Canada* September-October, 1993

## Awards: YTHS Kiyoshi Tokutomi Memorial Haiku Contest, 1993

Scratching my elbow  
the fingernail leaves a mark—  
first chill of evening

*First Prize*  
*Clark Strand*  
*New York City, USA*

The sightless old man  
tracing his initials . . . carved  
on the withered tree

*Second Prize*  
*Helen Dalton*  
*Honolulu, Hawai'i, USA*

long winter evening—  
the sweetness of a carrot  
comes out in the soup

*Third Prize*  
*Clark Strand*

### *Honorable Mention*

*(in alphabetical order)*

Her perfume wafting  
before I spot my daughter  
at the airport

*Vi Mathieson*  
*Aspley, Queensland, Australia*

a red-letter day—  
grandma letting the toddler  
pull up a carrot

*H. F. Noyes*  
*Politia, Atticas, Greece*

A glimpse of satin  
hiding behind the front door  
my sister's perfume

*Frances Roberts*  
*Los Gatos, California, USA*

under the warm sun  
the merry-go-round and I  
counterclockwise slow

*Kohjin Sakamoto*  
*Kyoto, Japan*

ending the long drought  
raindrops stuff the tiny holes  
of the window screen

*Helen J. Sherry*  
*San Diego, California, USA*

first day of the year. . .  
my brother's eyes folding light  
for the final time

*Elizabeth St Jacques*  
*Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario, Canada*

jumping from the swing  
the little girl leaves some warm  
dampness on the seat

*Elizabeth St Jacques*

the newly born baby  
lying on her mother's breast  
smiles through her first dream

*Clarissa Stein*  
*Upper Ferntree Gully, Australia*

slicing a ripe pear  
understandable at last  
the sweetness of age

*Clark Strand*

Taking the short cut. . .  
one red mitten hanging low  
from the withered tree

*Louise Somers Winder*  
*Hartfield, Virginia, USA*

*The judge was Tadashi Kondo, presently judge of the English division of the annual Basho festival in Iga-Ueno, Japan. He was a charter member of the Haiku International Association and co-founder and director of the Association for International Renku. The Society is extremely grateful for his assistance.*

**Renku vs. Renga:  
The Evolution of Form And Language  
by Patricia Machmiller**

Should the linked verse being written in English today be called renga or renku? I recently posed this question to Kiyoko Tokutomi, the co-founder of the Yuki Teikei Haiku Society, to get her opinion. Her preference after some thoughtful reading and discussion is either haikai no renga or renku, but not renga.

Renga, as she pointed out, refers to the formal poetry of the ancient Japanese courts. It used the form of the waka, later called the tanka, a 31-syllable poem characteristically in two parts--the first a 17-syllable verse followed by a 14-syllable verse. In waka and tanka these two parts were dependent upon each other and both were necessary to successfully complete the poem. Renga developed as a court entertainment in which one person, usually a person of honor, would write the first 17-syllable verse called a hokku, then a second person would write the second 14-syllable verse, the wakiku or side verse, to link to the first verse. A third person would write a third verse of 17 syllables which would be followed by a 14-syllable verse by still another participant, and so on, the renga being created out of alternating 17- and 14-syllable verses, each link being written by a different person from the one who wrote the preceding verse. The total number of verses varied, but 50 or 100 verses was not uncommon. The style of the renga was elegant and graceful; the language used was formal, classical, and poetic.

In the sixteenth century a variation of renga referred to as *haikai no renga* developed in the popular culture of Japan. Haikai, according to Makoto Ueda in the introduction to his book, *Basho and His Interpreters*, means playful and, as such, "allowed more freedom of imagery and diction and a more

relaxed aesthetic in general." The game became one of "eliciting laughter through the use of puns, witticisms, parody, slang terms, and vulgar subject matter." It was later in the seventeenth century that Basho through his work elevated haikai no renga to a major literary art form. The linked verse written today has the flavor and vigor of everyday language and subject matter that characterized haikai no renga. It is this aspect of modern linked verse that Ms. Tokutomi cited in declaring her preference for using the phrase haikai no renga over renga.

In citing her preference for the term, renku, over renga, she points to the original Chinese ideogram for the "ga" in renga. She notes that it is the same ideogram as that used for the "ka" in waka and tanka and that it means literally 31. She is of the opinion that since the time of Basho, the hokku has become so free of the wakiku that it can indeed stand alone as a 17-syllable poem and to use the term renga is, in fact, somewhat misleading since in modern linked verse the 17-syllable hokku has the characteristic of being independent and whole in itself, and the link between the hokku and the wakiku is more tenuous, more subtle, and much more distant than that of the two parts of the tanka. In fact, in a tanka the first seventeen syllables would never be able to stand alone complete in themselves. Thus, the "ka" term is an entirely accurate depiction of the waka or tanka form. And probably renga, too, in its infancy. "Ku" as in haiku or hokku, on the other hand, is an "all-inclusive word," according to Ueda, "which designates a haiku, a hokku, . . . or any haikai verse." Thus the name renku, combining as it does the idea of linking in the term "ren" with the very particular definition of verse conveyed by the term "ku," seems to be the most precise as well as most historically correct designator of the form produced by the very messy group process known as renku writing.

Please send your three haiku for next issue and your votes for ten haiku in this issue with your three favorites circled on a single sheet of paper to:  
*(Don't forget to write a challenge kigo haiku!)*

**Jean Hale, editor**

to reach her before **October 15, 1993**

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Dinner plate  
Falls to the floor and blooms  
White flower

p319

Saying  
Something I didn't understand  
My friend dies

p320

Morning twilight  
Dogs bark call and answer  
Hunger for her

p321

Niagara Falls,  
somewhere through mist  
a whitening sound

p322

sudden vertigo,  
the moon falling  
into a dark pond

p323

crunching a snail,  
the collie turns  
& pees on my foot

p324

Nightmare Haiku Park . . .  
Triassic era kigo  
and Jurassic rhyme

p325

"I love Bonsai"  
heart-shaped magnet note-holder  
won't stick on the fridge

p326

Meditation walk . . .  
distracted by black blues tunes  
and an old knee sprain

p327

Sitting by the pond  
the boy I once was keeps wishing  
the frog would jump. JUMP!

p328

Laughter fills the night  
Reveling goes on and on  
Mary-Jane is there

p329

Warblers listen  
to the song of the forest  
A gentle stillness

p330

lighting my lantern—  
a warm circle of light  
and deer mice

p331

the homeless man  
everything he owns  
stored in his mind

p332

winged seeds  
seeking their fortunes  
on this spring breeze

p333

On porch rail alone  
first cicada seen this year  
not one screech heard yet

p334

Zippering up her dress  
he pins on fresh cut rose buds  
her armcast corsage

p335

flooded confluence  
creates this fast spreading lake  
fleet of red-barn roofs

p336

Dusk: the few birds left  
drain out of a wider sky . . .  
soon the first snowflakes

p337

Around the great oak,  
hiding in the fallen leaves  
empty acorn shells

p338

Icy night: the curve  
of the new moon, heavy with  
twenty-eight dark days

p339

the whale's tiny eye  
moon in the  
summer sky

p340

taiko drums  
reverberating  
in the hard rain

p341

black clouds  
merging with the night mountains  
into one

p342

Love letter in shreds  
Scattered lightly in the breeze  
Heavy on the heart

p343

Novel in his lap  
Sitting on a grassy knoll  
Examining life

p344

Raging waterfall!  
Nature designing itself  
Water carving earth

p345

the fog has burned off  
seagulls descend to the street  
to see what awaits

p346

salty air. . .  
new maritime museum  
salutes the past

p 347

dark empty room—  
moonlight through the window  
lights up the bed

p348

someone called  
but nobody around me  
a shooting star

p349

the garbage piled  
on the roadside  
lingering summer

p350

ships going out  
and coming in  
still daylight-saving

p351

fragrance of old rose  
permeates the garden air  
ghost of past weddings

p352

midsummer day morn  
aromatic scent of thyme  
fairies danced last night

p353

this month's bright full moon  
cast shadows in the garden  
Luna seeks a mate

p354

peony unfolds  
petal on pale pink petal  
revealing secrets

p355

Eastward through long day  
newly hot sands, still cold sea  
outer banks beckon

p356

Woman traces name  
like Braille to knowing fingers  
still blinded by tears

p357

sudden rain—  
cows continue  
chewing their cud

p358

a white butterfly  
in and out of the handbag  
slung on her shoulder

p359  
by the waterfall  
spilling over a boulder,  
a smooth madrone root

p360  
playing touch football  
by the war memorial . . .  
First names like our own.

p361  
Deer, fallen from grace;  
the light in its eyes dies out . . .  
Fire from autumn leaves.

p362  
Raiding the village  
to ride off with pumpkin pies . . .  
Falling leaf barrage.

p363  
summers end—  
    a lower sun fringes  
        the mullein

p364  
    autumn sun—  
outside the library a student  
    sprawls on the lawn

p365  
out my childhood window  
tree silhouettes  
    grown up

p366  
clear water  
in the trailside trickle  
velvet tadpoles

p367  
prayers for rain  
the long mid-west drought  
comes too an end

p368  
scorching sun  
the shriveled aloe  
turns to bronze

p369  
Doctor's office:  
dark shapes in the ceiling light . . .  
were flies waiting too?

p370  
Distant traffic growls  
in counterpoint to frog calls  
and bird arias

p371  
Withered tree  
encrusted with rust lichen . . .  
squeaking in the wind

p372  
a steamroller lays  
the boardwalk flush  
with the beach

p373  
navigating  
by the stars  
fireflies

p374  
hay field  
bleached bales bundled  
by blond brushcuts

p375  
wind shifting  
    dead preying mantis  
    its big eyes gazing still

p376  
two squirrels  
holding their territories  
the peach tree

p377  
car accident  
    in the afternoon heat  
    blood splashed yucca blossoms

p378  
couple in the park  
taking synchronized licks  
of their ice cream cones

p379  
colors melting—  
beach parasols  
in the rain

p380  
vacation over  
repossessing the house  
from spiders

p381  
around a corner  
and down the hall, a friend's voice  
turns into summer

p382  
into the hot sun  
the running ink of the diary  
fished out of the pond

p383  
my unmarried friend  
talks of care for his parents  
in the autumn rain

p384  
Still hot at twilight . . .  
Down the creek below the church  
a mourning dove calls.

p385  
My zucchini plant  
drooping in the August sun,  
praying for some fog.

p386  
Green canoe drifting . . .  
fishermen pull patiently  
on empty lines

p387  
Thunder argues  
lightning commands the sky—  
rain blesses barley

p388  
Blue rowboat;  
between careful parents . . .  
little boy loosens hand

p389  
withered summer field  
the sprayed milkweed;  
a butterfly

p390  
another season  
reflected in summer sun  
Christmas tinsel

p391  
leaving her grave  
the dirt  
clinging to my shoes

p392  
dry creekbed—  
on a stone, a splotch of sun  
settles the butterfly

p393  
luminous green  
through the tip of a horsetail  
late afternoon sun

p394  
summer sunset . . .  
the truck pulls a dust cloud  
through tree shadows

p395  
children's shouts  
over and above  
the squeal of swallows

p396  
a moment of thunder  
here and there  
raindrops dampen the dust

p397  
this midsummer dawn  
pair of mantis wings on porch--  
fatal love affair

p398  
over green meadows  
monarchs search for milkweeds--none  
lost generation

p399  
on garden sundial  
lazy red dragonfly marks  
afternoon hours

p400  
lying on tatami  
in a room full of fireflies  
the evening cool

p401  
mountain stream  
a raccoon bends  
to lick the moon

p402  
red leaves strewn about  
glowing in the morning sun  
autumn leftovers

p403

at daybreak the stars  
sink into the lotus pond  
hiding there 'til night

p404

dry wind of summer  
leaving by the garden gate  
spinning dust-devil

p405

ravished by the storm  
virgin reeds along the bank  
bend to nature's will

p406

angelic brushes  
paint an Autumn masterpiece  
signed in red and gold

p407

child's first day at school  
in the yard an empty swing  
causes sudden tears

p408

full moon—  
the young tree's only leaf  
turns red

p409

autumn leaves . . .  
my last letter  
left on his casket

p410

red leaves falling . . .  
grandfather's oak  
shades the sundial

p411

Chopping wood  
to the beat of the woodpecker:  
silence listening

p412

Spider's casting  
line across my doorway:  
caught the big one

p413

Bees can't resist  
yellow pears: on ladder  
tasting one

p414

summer sky blue  
hydrangea cheers grey winter days  
dried in dining room

p415

busy day dusk falls  
will 'o wisp fireflies beckon  
dancing into woods

p416

kingfisher hovers  
helicopter wings whirring  
I float lazily

p417

Swirling on night eddies,  
a myriad of fireflies  
fill the air with joy

p418

Spring peepers have gone—  
now filling the nights with song  
droning cicadas

p419

down curls her dark hair,  
deeper yet stare her brown eyes  
filled with galaxies!

## *A letter from the Philippines*

We have received a letter from Federico Peralta in Quezon City. He sends us a haiku gift which follows.

October moonlight--

grandmother threads old needle  
mending memories

small spider swaying  
on bare nylon cord clothesline...  
my pendulum clock

aural glow upon

the face of my sleeping child  
my soul's reflection

Mr. Peralta was born in 1954 and is the father of two children. In addition to writing, he collects haiku and books of haiku. He is looking for a publisher now; we wish him every success. Some years ago he lost his sight due to *retinitis pigmentosa*.

He writes: "I wish this letter to be more than an exchange of haiku but friendly notes and thoughts, too. Let friendship blossom in the field of haiku." He would enjoy hearing from any of the members who might wish to send him their haiku or publications.

Write to: Federico Peralta,

**Special thanks to member Margaret Drake Elliott** for her gift of "a few stamps to help out." This was a very thoughtful gesture, because postage is one of our greatest expenses. Thank you, Margaret!

**Members' votes for July-August haiku:**

Kate Walters p232 p233-15 p234-11  
Sandy Supowit p235-7 p236-10 p237-1  
Robert Gibson p238-7 p239-13 p240-5  
George Knox p241-1 p242-1 p243-3  
Kenneth Tanemura p244-16 p245-3 p246-5  
Richard F. Bruckart p247-7 p248-6 p249-10  
Gloria Procsal p250-37 p251-12 p252-8  
Teruo Yamagata p253-4 p254-1 p255-1  
Sister Mary Ann Henn p256-1 p257 p258-1  
Dara McLaughlin p259 p260-1 p261-22  
Robert Major p262 p263 p264-20  
Patti Emmett p265-2 p266-1  
Lesley Einer p267-35 p268-1 p269-3  
Neill Megaw p270-11 p271-4 p272-4  
Naomi Y. Brown p273-3 p274 p275-14  
Pamela Connor p276-19 p277-9 p278-15  
Laura Bell p279-8 p280-2 p281-3  
Tom Clausen p282 p283-1 p284-1  
Earle J. Stone p285-1 p286 p286-287  
Floyd E. Jack p288 p289 p290-11  
Dorothy Greenlee p291-19 p292-8 p293  
Margaret Chula p294-11 p295-37 p296-25  
Gene Doty p297-19 p298-2 p299-14  
Bryan Sharpe p300 p301  
Hank Dunlap p302-5 p303-2 p304-9  
Harriet D. Black p305-12 p306-1 p307-11  
June Hopper Hymas p308-9 p309-5 p310-1  
Michael Dylan Welch p311-29 p312-2 p313  
Patricia Machmiller p314-15  
Pat Shelley p315-4 p316 p317-24

down the muddy road  
small boy with can of tadpoles  
Mother's day surprise

*Kate Walters*

floating in the moat  
a white swan makes a path  
through fallen cherry blossoms

*Kenneth Tanemura*

a great whale rises—  
the pale light of sea and sky  
shimmers in his eye

*Gloria Procsal*

Summer shower ends.  
From an overhanging pine,  
drops dimple the lake

*Robert Major*

decorating his grave  
the same damn red roses  
he sneezed at each spring

*Lesley Einer*

hydrangea  
moonlight on each  
rain bead

*Naomi Y. Brown*

June rains—  
the old porch swing creaks softly  
into the night wind

*Pamela Connor*

new shoots  
greening the old cat's  
burial mound

*Pamela Connor*

Pure white peonies  
transplants from Mother's garden  
Her spirit alive

*Dorothy Greenlee*

sultry afternoon  
in Grandma's junk mail  
Frederick's of Hollywood

*Margaret Chula*

midday nap  
the morning glory  
curls into itself

*Margaret Chula*

locust trees  
hung with white blossoms  
her sleeping breath

*Gene Doty*

summer solstice  
the lizard on the patio  
motionless

*Gene Doty*

how quickly it melts—  
the hail  
in your hair

*Michael Dylan Welch*

hundreds of windmills  
across brown-turning hills  
only one moving

*Patricia Machmiller*

still pond  
among the waterlilies  
people upside down

*Pat Shelley*

*Note: When your Geppo haiku are reprinted in another place, please remember to credit Geppo Haiku Journal as the publication in which they first appeared. We are proud that so many excellent haiku first appeared in Geppo.*



## Challenge kigo: fireworks

bursting  
    over the full moon  
fireworks  
*Michael Dylan Welch*

glass highrise  
reflections of fireworks  
and their echoes  
*Christopher Herold*

fireworks display  
children scream—then scream again  
flash of lightning  
*Maggie Chula*

propped up broken leg  
rest of world out having fun  
    fireworks on TV  
*Dorothy Greenlee*

Two on a blanket  
    waiting for the first rocket—  
        BLOOM! her hand finds mine  
*Neill Megaw*

last year's fireworks  
watching them with my aged father  
was enough  
*Kat Avila*

roman candle  
shattering light . . .  
the shape of stars  
*Gloria H. Procsal*

Chrysanthemum burst!  
    Sky fills with iridescence—  
        Child's open-mouthed wonder  
*Dara McLaughlin*

viewing fireworks  
    from the distant hilltop  
        just us two  
*Tom Clausen*

fireworks  
for a moment the stars  
dim  
*Lesley Einer*

gaudy bursts  
of fireworks  
    the moon unmoved  
*Donna Gallagher*

fireworks!  
the whiteness  
of men's throats  
*Jim Kacian*

last night's fireworks  
    vivid colors in me still  
    this morning's dream  
*Naomi Y. Brown*

the 'dead' volcano  
sputtering red fireworks  
into the night sky  
*Pamela Connor*

a box of fireworks  
once more promising his mom  
    how good he'll be  
*Jerry Ball*

autumn twilight:  
two or three fireflies flicker  
still not too late  
*Gilbert Schloss*

fireworks  
a frightening thing  
her face  
*Laura Bell*

smoke hangs in the air  
after the final FIREWORKS  
parking lot car wash  
*Earle J. Stone*

thunder and lightning  
no need for man-made fireworks  
on this stormy Fourth  
*Kate Walters*

Fireworks!  
In the dark sky: lights up  
your face  
*JoAn Soileau*

fireworks after dark . . .  
lights, smoke, deaf'ning boombambooms  
OOOOOooooos, AAAAHHHhhss, cleanuptime  
*George Knox*

clematis climbs fence  
shoots firework yellow stamens  
    soft purple petals  
*Christine D. Michaels*

we sit in silence  
as if keeping a vigil  
waiting for fireworks  
*Pat Machmiller*

Midsummer night's gleam  
coruscating shaking sky  
fireworks enthrall!  
*John Tabberah*

Drinking and shouting  
fireworks booming and flashing . . .  
the far, silent stars  
*Bryan P. Sharpe*

*Compare the function of the kigo in each of these haiku. Can you substitute another kigo for 'fireworks' and still have a good poem? Read the haiku aloud. Which ones are the most natural? The most successful? What elements of craft contribute to this? Which elements of content? Which have the most pleasing sounds? How might you revise them, if they were your own work? —J. H. Hymas*

## Challenge kigo for August/September:

### Shooting star

(The Japanese, *nagare-boshi*, literally translates as "drifting star"). The phenomena that appears like a star flying across the sky is called a shooting (drifting) star. It occurs most often in mid-August (the time that the earth passes through the debris left from the tail of a comet.) It will appear suddenly, arcing across the sky, and disappear within seconds. It is caused by the friction of cosmic dust or debris entering the earth's atmosphere producing high temperature radiation (heat and light). The radiation occurs around 100 kilometers and travels at about 50 km/second. Many shooting stars burn up in the atmosphere. Those which are large enough to survive the trip to earth are called meteorites or aerolites.

This year's Perseid shower (so-called because it appears to originate in the vicinity of the constellation Perseus) was the best seen in 200 years; we hear from Japan that a teacher in one of the localities persuaded the shops to turn off all the lights so that his students could get a better view of this celestial event.

purple-colored drifting star  
falls and  
goes out

Nenpuku

I forget where and when  
I saw the shooting star

Tatsuko

The time of death is close  
a drifting star ducks under  
the other stars

Seichi Yamaguchi

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