

The Mainichi



Annual Selection 2019 The fine line between too much and too little

Selections and comments by Dhugal J. Lindsay

While selecting haiku, I often come across submissions where the content has been pared down to only a few words. Haiku is a form of poetry and should read as such! Putting all one's attention into making a haiku as short as possible, with no unnecessary words, is not necessarily a good thing. Words deemed "unnecessary" in the eyes of the author, who experienced the haiku firsthand, are sometimes necessary to give readers full access to that same experience. Concreteness is integral to our being able to access a haiku as an experience rather than it remaining an abstraction. Both too few words and too many words of wide, non-specific meaning (e.g., "bird" instead of "hawk" or even better, "sparrow hawk") in a haiku are barriers to sharing your haiku experience.

Sometimes words are necessary not for their meaning *per se*, but rather because they heighten an emotion or otherwise increase the poesy of a haiku. Too much alliteration, perfect or imperfect rhyme, and other poetic artifices can detract from the experience by drawing too much attention to its presentation, but if those artifices can be incorporated without standing out and taking over the poem, then well and good!

The following haiku, selected in 2019, are grouped by author and sorted according to the publication date. Most have short comments appended.

Thanks to all our readers for their submissions and we look forward to more of your haiku in the year to come.

Gabriel Argenti (Misawa, Japan)

A handful
of snowflakes
the wealthy girl

Jan. 1, 2019

Comment: The haiku can be read two ways — that the girl is materially wealthy in terms of money, or just that the snowflakes in her hand make an ordinary girl “wealthy” with the fun experience. In the former case, we might imagine that the girl longs after the simple things, like a handful of snowflakes, or also that the snowflakes she has in her hand will soon melt and disappear, as perhaps her money, too, might do at any time.

Margherita Petriccione (Scauri/Latina, Italy)

January two —
trembling with the grass
under the moon

Jan. 2, 2019

Comment: Feeling companionship with the grass — but we feel it is not just the cold that is causing the author to tremble.

sunbeams —
on the virgin snow
and on the mud

Jan. 16, 2019

Comment: To the sunbeams there is no difference between pure white snow and mud. The mud is beautified.

retirement party —
the way back
full of walls

Jan. 25, 2019

Comment: Leaning on this wall and that in order to hold themselves up, the drunk retiree makes their way home. “Full of walls” makes us imagine that things that were easy to do when the retiree had a salaried position are now not quite so easy.

mountain —
the silence of thistles
and clouds

June 20, 2019

Comment: One can imagine the thistledown being blown away to join the clouds.

the comings and goings
of a butterfly ...
and then twilight

Oct. 16, 2019

Comment: The author relaxes by watching a butterfly until the darkness hides it. One is also caused to think of the way one lives one's Life.

Minami Ichimiya (Ibaraki, Japan)

cold morning
leave some breakfast rice
for my wild birds

Jan. 3, 2019

Comment: If "leaving" was used instead of "leave" then we would imagine the poet placing some of their breakfast rice on the bird feeder for the birds, but since "leave" was used, the poet is wishing that their partner or children will leave some of their rice so the poet has something to feed his birds.

while we celebrate
old mother's birthday
two apricot flowers bloom

April 6, 2019

Comment: The amount of time spent celebrating their mother's birthday, perhaps at a family meal or party, was long enough for two apricot buds to open and bloom. One imagines that "we" is the author and a sibling, and that perhaps they have grown to bloom, as the apricots have, under the watch of their mother.

iris garden
every flower blooms
with no complaints

July 9, 2019

Comment: The flowers play the part they are meant to play naturally. We humans should too!

cast-off shell of cicada
at the entrance to
the Roppongi Tunnel

Sept. 13, 2019

Comment: Cicada nymphs spend years inside the tunnels they dig after they hatch and fall to the ground. They then finally emerge from their tunnels and from their nymph shell — sprouting wings to escape into the heavens.

lawn mower proceeds leaving little flowers as they are	cluster-amaryllis sways along train rails day of my retirement
Oct. 12, 2019 Comment: The tiny flowers scattered through the grass are not tall enough for the mower to cut them.	Nov. 7, 2019

along train rails cluster amaryllises sway day of my retirement
Dec. 14, 2019 Comment: Normally I would not pick a second version of the same haiku but this version is far better than the Nov. 7 version. In this, our attention is first drawn to the train rails: bars of metal that must be followed and do not allow one to stray. The leafless stems of the cluster amaryllis, the roots of which are poisonous and the flowers of which bloom when the souls of the dead come back to visit us during the festival of Obon, sway — something external causes them to move. Then the last line makes us imagine how until this day the author's life has been controlled and defined by his job but now he is swaying about what to do next.

Maria Teresa Sisti (Massa Carrara, Italy)

<p>the new moon — a fallen tooth under the glass</p>	<p>vespers time — the empty nest falls without a sound</p>
<p>Jan. 4, 2019 Comment: The tooth has been left out for the tooth fairy, but beneath the glass it cannot be seen clearly, perhaps only being seen as a glimmer of white — like the sliver of the new moon.</p>	<p>Jan. 29, 2019 Comment: Vespers is the evening prayer so the empty nest falls in the twilight. For some reason “empty nest” and prayers resonates, as does the silence of the nest falling and the sounds of the prayers.</p>

<p>muddy shoes — a butterfly is lost in the wind</p>	<p>wind storm — in the mailbox pine needles only</p>
<p>Oct. 14, 2019 Comment: The contrast between the wet mud and the fragile butterfly is wonderful, with the “shoes” and being “lost” also resonating well. We are caused to imagine the author feeling lost due to external forces, much as the butterfly is lost due to the wind.</p>	<p>Dec. 6, 2019 Comment: No letters in the mailbox — only the pine needles that the wind has blown into it. Whether the word “only” is really necessary is perhaps a matter of taste, with readers who are used to interpreting haiku probably preferring it be left out and those newer to haiku probably preferring it left in to aid in understanding.</p>

Angiola Inglese (Pederobba, Italy)

<p>last night of falling stars — hysterectomy</p>	<p>fog on the poppies — childhood home</p>
<p>Jan. 5, 2019 Comment: It seems that for a long time the woman who is the subject of this poem looked up to the sky and made wishes on falling stars. Since the last line of the haiku is “hysterectomy” we can infer that those wishes were possibly for becoming pregnant. Of course, the stars will still fall but the woman will no longer watch for them, so it is their “last night.”</p>	<p>June 27, 2019 Comment: Poppies conjure the image of soldiers lost in war. Fog suggests a lack of clarity on what to do. Of course, since this is a haiku, both the fog and the poppies are concrete natural entities that exist in this moment that the poet is actually seeing and experiencing. It would seem that the poet has lost some of her childhood friends through either war or other unforeseen circumstances that cut their lives short and that the memories of them are fading as if they are retreating into the fog. Another reading might be that it is the childhood memories themselves that are like the poppies and are fading.</p>
<p>closed eyes in transparent water jellyfish</p>	<p>thin sickle of the moon — ripe grapes</p>
<p>Aug. 15, 2019 Comment: The jellyfish in the water are so transparent that the poet feels it easier to picture them in her mind’s eye, as she believes they should be, rather than stare at the actual creatures. Another reading might be that the poet is swimming or diving with her eyes closed underwater and that the jellyfish are felt through their stings, but the inclusion of the word “transparent” makes this reading much less likely.</p>	<p>Nov. 13, 2019 Comment: One can imagine harvesting of the grapes through inclusion of the word “sickle,” as well as enjoy the contrast in the shape of the sharp, curved sickle and the full roundness of the grapes. This is a much better choice than “curve of the moon” or “the full circle of the moon” would have been.</p>

Rudi Pfaller (Remshalden, Germany)

<p>frosty fields among crows I find no couple</p>	<p>rhubarb looks out of the soil girls in short skirts</p>
<p>Jan. 7, 2019 Comment: Crows always seem to move about singly and not in pairs. The coldness and loneliness of the frosty fields causes us to superimpose ourselves on the crows.</p>	<p>March 28, 2019 Comment: The red bases of the green rhubarb stems remind me of the way the bare legs of schoolgirls glow red in the cold of morning beneath their short skirts. For the rhubarb to still be looking out of the soil it would need to be spring, soon after the rhubarb crowns have been planted in the soil, and the girls would just be changing into their warm weather uniforms.</p>

<p>a crow's shadow flitting over me autumn evening</p>
<p>Dec. 16, 2019 Comment: Crows have traditionally been thought to bring premonitions or as harbingers of bad news, so being touched by one of their shadows on an autumn evening fits well with this. It brings an extra dimension to the image of Basho's haiku about the crow perching on the bare branch in autumn twilight.</p>

Teiichi Suzuki (Osaka, Japan)

<p>young bikers overtaking a cold wintry wind</p>	<p>cold moonlight — the warmth tangible from bare trees</p>
<p>Jan. 8, 2019 Comment: A haiku to give hope in the first days of the New Year.</p>	<p>Feb. 14, 2019 Comment: Though trees are not warm-blooded, the many chemical reactions occurring within them should make them warmer than their surroundings, and it seems the poet felt this at some level of their consciousness. The moonlight perhaps caused the poet to be able to be in touch with his higher-plane self.</p>
<p>numb fingers from Tai Chi — plum in bud</p>	<p>waiting for early cherry blossoms — preschool garden</p>
<p>March 18, 2019 Comment: The early spring air has numbed the fingers so they can no longer be felt. Although one first imagines petals when one sees the word “plum” in a cold setting, in this haiku it is the buds to which attention is drawn. One imagines the fingers to be petals and the buds to be clenched fists.</p>	<p>April 4, 2019 Comment: While the preschoolers play in the sand, the adult keeps watch. Unfortunately, it is hard for an adult to be quite as enthralled as a child in the way in which sand pours from a bucket or how a hole forms in the sandpit, so the adult’s gaze wanders over everything. Wouldn’t the sight of cherry blossoms be a beautiful thing to watch?</p>

<p>piercing wind — Gothic church becomes thin, thinner</p>	<p>first butterfly born from the sunlight missing in it</p>
<p>April 15, 2019 Comment: The spires of the church are already thin and pointed in the Gothic style but it seems as if the cold and bitter winter wind has whittled them down even further.</p>	<p>April 22, 2019 Comment: For many animals, “born” entails emerging from an egg. In the case of many insects, though, there is a metamorphosis from nymph into the adult form. In the case of a butterfly, this nymph is a caterpillar. The caterpillar grows by eating leaves that have grown through exposure to sunlight. The butterfly is “born” from its chrysalis without ever knowing sunshine itself.</p>

<p>weight of red unbearable — camellia falls</p>	<p>spring drizzle — a whole day of rehabilitation</p>
<p>May 14, 2019 Comment: Other colors do not feel as heavy as the pure red of the camellia in terms of their existence. Surely if the flower were pink or white, it would not have fallen off the tree as an intact bloom so quickly?</p>	<p>June 8, 2019 Comment: The weather is becoming warm enough to want to go outside, but the drizzling rain keeps one indoors. It won't be long now until the poet can walk under the spring sunshine outside, so they use this day to prepare themselves. Their mood, though, is that of drizzle, due to the repetitive nature of the exercises.</p>

<p>mauve raindrops from the hydrangeas — June morning</p>	<p>shrine's old trees — sprouts celebrate new era</p>
<p>June 15, 2019 Comment: Some of the petal pigments have dissolved into the raindrops and when they roll off the hydrangea leaves they become “purple rain.”</p>	<p>July 1, 2019 Comment: About two weeks before the Reiwa Era started on the first of May, the reigning Emperor Akihito visited Ise Grand Shrine in Mie Prefecture to pay his respects. Priests and Imperial messengers had reported to the shrine in mid-March his intention to abdicate and this is probably when the sprouts burst forth from the shrine's old trees.</p>

gray-haired barber cutting my gray hair — a peony falls	summer solstice — high jumper rolling over the bar
July 6, 2019 Comment: For some reason I imagine this barber to be one who has cut the poet's hair since the time when it was not yet gray. The peony's flowers are so heavy that the entire stem can fall over as soon as the bud opens. Usually one adds a support to the flower stem to stop it falling over but one could, of course, just cut off the flower. Perhaps when the poet's hair was not yet gray the barber did more to it than just cut it.	Aug. 9, 2019 Comment: The summer solstice is the longest day of the year and is therefore the turning point for the days to become shorter and cooler. It is a good match for the high jumper, who just needs to clear that bar at the peak of their parabolic jump.

listless noon — on the tomato sprinkle salt	a promise of rain — wind chimes quivering a little
Aug. 21, 2019 Comment: Lacking energy and enthusiasm, perhaps drained from them by sweating in the summer heat, a bit of salt might help the poet to pull themselves together.	Sept. 10, 2019 Comment: As if they were looking forward to it. Why, we think ...

sultriness — unmoving white sail on the sketch	recalling days I caught fireflies — grave visit
Oct. 8, 2019 Comment: We feel the sultriness must be caused by the lack of a breeze.	Oct. 15, 2019 Comment: The poet recalls their childhood, when they used to catch fireflies, upon their visit to the grave of their parents. The fireflies seem like souls.

<p>pregnant with the evening glow — ginkgo falls</p>	<p>jellyfish basking in moonlight more weightless</p>
<p>Nov. 11, 2019 Comment: Is it the ginkgo nut that seems pregnant and full, or does “pregnant” refer to the glowing golden light in the ginkgo leaves that is enhanced by the evening sun? Why does the ginkgo nut need to fall in this haiku? Perhaps it is a person who is pregnant and the poet is trying to suggest that through “falls.” We remain unsure and this is one thing that makes this haiku interesting.</p>	<p>Nov. 20, 2019 Comment: “Basking” is an interesting word to use for describing the actions of a jellyfish. I immediately think of basking seals, which would mean the jellyfish were drying out on the high-tide line but as they are described as “more weightless” I change my mind mid-poem and imagine them floating right up to the surface of the water and basking at the air-sea interface in the light of the moon.</p>

<p>temple garden — between sutra chant crickets sound</p>	<p>broken bones of dinosaur’s fossil — milky way</p>
<p>Dec. 9, 2019 Comment: The crickets are chanting their own sutra? Which should we listen to?</p>	<p>Dec. 19, 2019 Comment: Were the bones broken before or after they turned into fossils? Either way, the Milky Way causes us to think back to those ancient times instead of just accepting the fossil as it is here in our time.</p>

Dubravka Scukanec (Zagreb, Croatia)

<p>the first snowflake for the last goodbye to my mother</p>
<p>Jan. 9, 2019 Comment: There is something gentle about the first snowflake where it exists as a separate snowflake rather than just a part of “the falling snow.” It is as if it is a sign from heaven that their mother is being exchanged for it and is now in good hands.</p>

Capota Daniela Lacramioara (Galati, Romania)

without Christmas ornaments —
the tree
full of stars

Jan. 10, 2019

Comment: The stars shine through the spaces between the branches on the tree. Do we really need ornaments?

Aaron Barry (British Columbia, Canada)

Canis Majoris:
heaven knows
he was a good boy

Jan. 11, 2019

Comment: The red supergiant star Canis Majoris in the Great Dog constellation of the Milky Way is possibly the largest known star, but it has been notoriously difficult to analyze and understand its exact nature. Perhaps the boy to whom the poet refers, who has died or disappeared since past tense is used, was also hard to understand? The use of the phrase “heaven knows” ties these two entities together well.

Eva Limbach (Saarbruecken, Germany)

winter graves ... at the old oak's trunk a nesting box	travelling light my well-thumbed roadmap and a whiff of spring
Jan. 12, 2019 Comment: The old oak providing a place for a new generation of birds to be born meshes well with the graves reminding us that we are only here because of our ancestors. The haiku could be improved by replacing "at" with "on" so that the box is attached to the oak rather than just somewhere near it.	April 12, 2019 Comment: Either the poet has the car windows down or they are riding a bicycle since they can smell something that reminds them of spring. I would imagine a bicycle since they are "travelling light."
the empty spot where he used to sit ... first butterfly	summer's end — the cat on my sofa still with no name
May 11, 2019 Comment: I imagine the butterfly to be perched on the park bench where the poet's partner, or someone otherwise large in their consciousness, used to sit. Perhaps he has been reincarnated as this butterfly.	Sept. 30, 2019 Comment: One imagines that the author rescued a kitten and that it has grown into a cat during the course of the summer. Now the summer is ending and the author still hasn't given it a name, though it seems it is here to stay.
father's garden plot — I'm waiting for the weeds to blossom	neither a reason to stay nor to leave — autumn foliage
Oct. 26, 2019 Comment: It seems the father has passed away but the poet cannot bear to do something else with the land. When the weeds flower, it reminds her of when her father's plants flowered.	Nov. 14, 2019 Comment: It is almost as if the author is a leaf, poised between staying attached to the branch and falling to start a new journey.

leaves in the wind
I delete
my old contacts

Dec. 17, 2019

Comment: We are left wondering what has caused the poet to break from her earlier life. Life moves on and the fallen leaves blow in the wind. These leaves must be fallen and sere for the second and third lines of the haiku to mesh with the first; they could not still be green and on the tree.

Agus Maulana Sunjaya (Banten, Indonesia)

bitter wind
a refugee kid
feeds the crows

Jan. 14, 2019

Comment: Probably crows are the only birds that frequent the camp of the refugees — there being no birdhouses or habitat for non-scavenging birds. Even in the cold and bitter wind, the child shows their love of life and of others.

alone
at the end of this path
winter sun

Feb. 6, 2019

Comment: This almost seems like the light at the end of the tunnel that supposedly appears when one is dying.

migratory birds
I follow a stranger's path
back home

July 27, 2019

Comment: This home must be the home of the stranger rather than that of the poet, since "stranger's path" modifies "back home." One sees the lead duck or swan in the V-shaped migratory arrowhead of flying birds as a stranger with the other birds following. I wonder why the author is following a stranger back to their home.

the first
to find summer
a ladybug

Aug. 1, 2019

Comment: It is as if all of summer is distilled into this ladybird, so that in finding it, the whole of summer is discovered.

shooting star my daughter asks about yearning	field trip in the wind dandelion seeds
Aug. 13, 2019 Comment: A child knows of wanting but perhaps not of yearning, as seen in this poem. One imagines the poet making a wish on a shooting star and the daughter asking what the wish was for. Perhaps the father talked of yearning to meet her mother again.	Aug. 24, 2019 Comment: Keeping children under control during a field trip is almost impossible, as they scatter like dandelion seeds in the wind. In this haiku we can visualize multiple children picking multiple dandelions and blowing the seeds off them so that they fill the wind.

after vasectomy the shrill of a cicada	mint balm on the welcome mat a dead monarch
Oct. 1, 2019 Comment: No longer able to produce children due to the surgery, the cicada's mating cry seems so much shriller.	Oct. 21, 2019 Comment: Rather than interpret this haiku as it is written, I chose to understand "mint balm" to be balm mint, otherwise known as lemon balm. Chapsticks or lip sticks tasting of mint are now sold, so one could mistakenly imagine a boy and girl kissing at the front door with the dead butterfly suggesting an angry father might be nearby. Instead I imagine a house with an extensive herb garden and many butterflies.

autumn dusk the darkening of a raven's cry
Nov. 18, 2019 Comment: This is almost a hybrid of two famous Japanese classical haiku — the crow in autumn dusk, and the duck's cry being slightly white. A good starting point for a student of haiku.

Irina Guliaeva (Moscow, Russia)

gold in the store room a jar of apricot jam	different ways to the same end snowflakes
Jan. 15, 2019 Comment: We imagine not only the gold color, but also the poet's happiness at finding such a treasure there.	Feb. 15, 2019 Comment: All snowflakes supposedly have slightly different shapes. This haiku could be improved by adding something concrete in juxtaposition to show what other thing, besides snowflakes, caused the author to think "different ways to the same end."
first rain just a money charm in the wallet	coloring a black-and-white movie bullfinch
March 20, 2019 Comment: As someone reaches for their wallet to buy a raincoat or umbrella, they realize that it is still empty, except for the money charm, which is supposed to attract money.	April 11, 2019 Comment: Though the color of many things in a black-and-white movie cannot even be guessed (e.g. clothes, cars, etc.), a bullfinch not only brings a known color to the watcher's imagination but its song also "colors" the film.
cherry petals wedding dress she once started to sew	fireflies on each blade of grass droplet of dew
April 26, 2019 Comment: The marriage was called off or the prospective groom met with an accident before the marriage went ahead, and the bride-to-be lay down her partially-sewn wedding dress. Falling cherry petals signify lives taken prematurely in Japanese culture, as they are so quick to scatter, so they resonate well with something unfinished.	June 24, 2019 Comment: The dew is a droplet, not "droplets" so the poet's attention is on that one droplet. Since they can see the fireflies, one therefore knows that the poet can see the reflections of the firefly lights, and the blades of grass that each illuminates, scattered over the surface of that droplet of dew, rather than seeing the fireflies themselves. A whole world in a droplet of dew.

<p>my baby's breath long landing of the poplar fluff</p>	<p>making its way through to nowhere raindrop on the window</p>
<p>Aug. 10, 2019 Comment: The poplar fluff is taking a long time to drift to the ground after falling from the tree seedpod. In the silence, the poet can hear the breath of her baby and we are left imagining how many breaths it took until the poplar fluff reached the ground.</p>	<p>Oct. 9, 2019 Comment: Things seen through the window are "somewhere" but when they are no longer seen, then they are "nowhere." Out of sight, out of mind.</p>

<p>elderberry by the military enlistment office all the tints of ripeness</p>	<p>parental house for sale taking a rose apart petal by petal</p>
<p>Oct. 22, 2019 Comment: Some underage youths are trying to sign up at the enlistment office. Just as the elderberries are becoming ripe, so too are the youths.</p>	<p>Dec. 30, 2019 Comment: Introspection and analysis of oneself triggered by the sale of their childhood house.</p>

Lothar M. Kirsch (Meerbusch, Germany)

<p>Frosty night Shivering Like the stars</p>	<p>Scarecrow In the winter sun Still on vacation</p>
<p>Jan. 17, 2019 Comment: The twinkling of the stars is felt as if they are shivering — just like the poet.</p>	<p>March 2, 2019 Comment: The birds have not yet arrived at the field, as the seeds have not been sown. Not only is the poet on vacation, but so is the scarecrow!</p>

<p>The red breast Nibbling rose hips As snow falls</p>	<p>Bright moon A freight plane's passing Shadow hits me</p>
<p>March 12, 2019 Comment: Although we first see the red-breasted robin pecking at rose hips in the snow, a second reading reveals a more erotic side.</p>	<p>July 13, 2019 Comment: An insubstantial shadow becomes almost substantial and solid in the bright light of the moon. This haiku may work even better if the shadow were of a train rather than a plane, as it would bring the experience closer and be more immediate.</p>

<p>No stones Left on the lakeshore Stone skipping</p>	<p>Black hole and The gravitational wave But the butterfly</p>
<p>Aug. 14, 2019 Comment: The passing of time can be felt well.</p>	<p>Sept. 25, 2019 Comment: The lightness of the butterfly and its place in the philosophy of existence make it the perfect partner for the first two lines of this haiku. I dreamed I was a butterfly, or am I a butterfly now dreaming that I am a man ...</p>

<p>At the bus stop A wild bunch of sparrows Then we're gone</p>
<p>Dec. 24, 2019 Comment: One imagines that chaotic flock of sparrows to be a group of young boys as the bus the poet rides on pulls away from the bus stop.</p>

Guliz Mutlu (Ankara, Turkey)

hunger moon the butcher knife on a tavern table	winter moon a pregnant woman shot
Jan. 18, 2019 Comment: The cold light of the moon makes the blade glint and the edges stand out.	Jan. 31, 2019 Comment: The winter moon is full — a hole in the sky. Pregnancy is part of the cycle of life, like the cycle of the tides and waxing and waning moon. That cycle now abruptly ends in the cold of winter.

snow enveloping writing myself a letter to read in spring	north star until I find myself
Feb. 5, 2019 Comment: As the snow piles up and stops one from moving freely, even one's thoughts can become hemmed in and negative. The author has written themselves a letter to help them understand themselves when they are in a more stable and open frame of mind. "Enveloping" is magnificent.	Feb. 19, 2019 Comment: Many of this author's haiku tend to be too short, equating to only two-thirds of the content a haiku is best to contain, and it is hard to assign a concrete image to the words. The present haiku though contains enough, through the words "until" and "find" for us to imagine that the poet is on a journey. The north star has been used as a guide by travelers for eons and the poet, too, will travel for as long as it takes to discover their true selves.

winter light tailor can't sew his own rip	a shared kitchen some mustard seeds for the bee
March 4, 2019 Comment: The light of winter is dim and the tailor's eyes have become old -- perhaps too old to see well enough to sew in dim light anymore.	April 18, 2019 Comment: The kitchen is shared, but perhaps only with the bee.

<p>spring cleaning the bugs in the new app</p>	<p>first butterfly I am new to singleness</p>
<p>May 7, 2019 Comment: Humor done well, as we imagine not just the software application in the phone as having bugs, but also maybe real insects in a new appliance too.</p>	<p>May 20, 2019 Comment: Caterpillars often occur in swarms or at least in patches. After they form a chrysalis and metamorphose into a butterfly, they then emerge as if “new” and can be seen flying around singly. The poet has seen one of these newly single butterflies and thought about her own present state.</p>

<p>half moon should I stay or go</p>	<p>last apricot I look back to starry trees</p>
<p>June 5, 2019 Comment: This haiku works because of the resonance in the uncertainty about whether the half moon is waning or waxing.</p>	<p>June 19, 2019 Comment: The trees have become bare, as the fruit has left them, so when the poet looks back, the stars are visible between their branches.</p>

<p>the cuckoo’s song measured silence between us</p>	<p>red petal a bit of everything in the wind</p>
<p>June 29, 2019 Comment: A cuckoo clock measures the time. The measured silence between these two people may be happening while a wild cuckoo sings, but it could also fall between the cuckoo’s songs. Perhaps in this haiku it doesn’t matter which.</p>	<p>July 3, 2019 Comment: The poet has no idea as to what flower the petal belonged to or they would have given a concrete flower name in the haiku. Since the wind is carrying a bit of everything, perhaps including paper, hair, dust, sounds, birds and goodness knows what else, this uncertainty fits well.</p>

<p>milky way the lifeline of your hand</p>	<p>clouds besides the white egrets full moon</p>
<p>July 12, 2019 Comment: On my first reading of this haiku I imagined “lifeline” to be the life line on one’s palm that fortune tellers use to see how long you will live. Towards the end of this line, it becomes shallower and fades, though we try our hardest to make it out and therefore imagine our fate — to have a longer life. This resonated well with the Milky Way stretching out and fading into the darkness of the sky. On my second reading though, I realized that because the poem says “lifeline of” rather than “life line on,” the actual scene was of the poet holding hands with someone and being lost without that guiding hand. I find it hard to picture the concrete scene with this second version and suggest changing the words to “life line on.”</p>	<p>July 23, 2019 Comment: White clouds are reflected on the surface of the pond because of the brightness of the full moon. Egrets and clouds are scattered together.</p>

<p>cuckoo clock grandma between naps</p>	<p>a crunch of green apple first rain</p>
<p>Aug. 16, 2019 Comment: In haiku when a noun is employed, that noun is at its most “noun-ness” state, so by stating “cuckoo clock,” we imagine the cuckoo poking its head out and the clock to be chiming. Grandma has obviously been woken up by the clock but will soon go back to napping.</p>	<p>Sept. 11, 2019 Comment: Since it is “a crunch of” rather than “the crunch of a” we can imagine that the author has bitten into the apple and “crunch” refers to the piece of apple now in their mouth. With “the crunch” the author could just as easily be feeding a horse. The sourness of the green apple goes well with “first rain.”</p>

swimming to the moon short night	crickets more to say he repeats
Sept. 20, 2019 Comment: Paddling toward the reflected moon on a summer night.	Oct. 10, 2019 Comment: The concrete scene is hard to imagine. Is a man repeating what he said because the listener was distracted by the crickets? Or perhaps “he” refers to one of the crickets? In either case the repetitive nature of the crickets’ song can be felt.

hot on the heels harvest sun	tidying my boots leaving and coming of swallows
Nov. 15, 2019 Comment: We feel not only the heat of the sun on the heels of our bare or sandaled feet, but we can also can feel the flow of time to a farmer, with them already thinking of the harvest, even though the sun is still hot.	Nov. 27, 2019 Comment: “Boots” goes well with migrating birds and we can concretely imagine the place — a shady spot under the eaves where the swallows are nesting and boots can be lined up. An excellent haiku!

autumn moon I am too old to understand	autumn sun even on my wrinkles
Dec. 7, 2019 Comment: Rather than being too young to understand, in this case the poet is too old. The world has moved on and what used to be common sense has been replaced by a different common sense. The cycle is also apparent in “moon” with the end of an era being found in “autumn.”	Dec. 26, 2019 Comment: The warmth of the sun on one’s skin, with this sun not just bathing the beautiful things but wrinkles as well.

Toshio Matsumoto (Osaka, Japan)

The cobweb Sifts my eyes Through a Full Moon	Morning Sunbeam makes Crow's white-steamed Breath Whiter
Jan. 19, 2019 Comment: The expression "sifts my eyes" is perfect and not an expression that anyone is likely to have heard before. Very fresh! It would be better not to capitalize the words, and leave capitalization as a tool to bring attention to a word you really want to stress.	Feb. 20, 2019 Comment: The crow has obviously just landed and its body temperature is still high due to the heat its wing muscles have produced. Its breath is therefore so much whiter.

A Woman next to my house has become an expert to tame a sparrow since losing her husband
May 23, 2019 Comment: A very poignant haiku that could be improved a little by shortening it to "my neighbor now / an expert taming sparrows / since losing her husband"

Szymon Rybinski (Bydgoszcz, Poland)

path through the dunes just for a moment traces of my feet
Jan. 21, 2019 Comment: The wind and flowing sand soon blow away all traces of the author's footprints. What will be left when one's life has been lived?

Goran Gatalica (Zagreb, Croatia)

evening mist — the thick smoke from grandpa's pipe	blizzard — grandmother whispers beside my bed
Jan. 22, 2019 Comment: The word "thick" really makes this haiku wonderful. One feels that grandpa is still quite full of life and it contrasts well with the thinness of the mist.	Feb. 11, 2019 Comment: Although grandmother could actually be whispering "Don't worry love," I imagine that she passed away many years ago. In the cold, silent, otherworld one experiences when enveloped by a blizzard, the dead come back to life and we become children again.
morning prayer — sudden movement of butterfly	adopting a child ... warmth of the winter sun
March 22, 2019 Comment: In the cold morning air the butterfly's moves are sluggish until, it seems to the poet, something said during the prayer stimulated it to move.	April 1, 2019 Comment: Winter days can be so cold, and although wind and rain loom large in the consciousness, the sun is only noticed in passing. However, when one moves into the shade and direct sunlight no longer bathes us, it suddenly becomes very cold. Perhaps the parents in this haiku were unable to have their own child and this felt like a cloudy winter day, with the child now bringing warmth.
wind chimes — she finally accepts my love	early autumn — a soft roll of thunder among the gourds
June 17, 2019 Comment: The incessant jingling of the wind chimes meshes well with the author trying and trying again for their love to be accepted.	Oct. 31, 2019 Comment: The hollow spaces within the gourds are felt as the thunder echoes.

Maria Carmela Dettori (Cagliari/Sardina, Italy)

<p>under the tiles empty nests of swallows — my son at home</p>	<p>slow thaw — migrant swallows under my roof</p>
<p>Jan. 23, 2019 Comment: The comings and goings of swallows to their nests resembles the way a teenage son comes home only to sleep. In this haiku it seems that the son may be home for a longer period, because of the poet's focus on the swallows' nests being empty. This interpretation also works well due to the migratory nature of swallows.</p>	<p>April 3, 2019 Comment: It seems the swallows may have become lost during their journey. One cannot help but imagine the migrants journeying to Europe, sheltered by kind people but still not being settled.</p>

Robert Henry Poulin (Florida, USA)

<p>harvest moon: every mote of ash spread moving seaward</p>	<p>falling snow grandpa at grandma's grave both capped in white</p>
<p>Jan. 24, 2019 Comment: The ash in this haiku must be the ashes of a deceased loved one. After the ashes are scattered, they are still visible on the river water due to the reflection of the full moon. The use of "harvest" here instead of "full" is magnificent, due to all the other images and secondary meanings that it contains.</p>	<p>Feb. 8, 2019 Comment: Both the gravestone and grandpa's hair are covered in snow. He must have lingered in front of his wife's grave for long enough for this to happen, so his sense of love and yearning are conveyed well. This is in addition to feeling the two are together again — connected through the snow.</p>

<p>cold to the bone: cocoon shivers through the night</p>	<p>an old leather shoe: nothing depends on a little red wagon</p>
<p>Feb. 16, 2019 Comment: The author lies in a sleeping bag or wrapped in blankets but is still extremely cold. He thinks of the (boneless) moth's cocoon on his verandah, which is exposed completely to the elements, and imagines that it, too, is shivering.</p>	<p>Feb. 26, 2019 Comment: "So much depends upon a red wheelbarrow" but nothing depends on this little, red wagon that is seemingly no longer used, due to the old shoe sitting in it. Good use of the vertical dimension in alluding to the poem of William Carlos Williams. One feels tempted to modify the first line to "an old rainboot" but the amount of distance in the present, original version is better.</p>

<p>river is never the same scattering mother's ashes from the shore</p>	<p>stop to admire a clutch of purple flowers: fluttering monarch</p>
<p>March 26, 2019 Comment: The water keeps flowing just as time does and everything is always in a state of change.</p>	<p>May 28, 2019 Comment: Though it was the flowers, not the butterfly, that first caught the poet's attention, now they notice the butterfly that is also admiring the flowers. How often in life do the real treasures appear out of nowhere?</p>

<p>dozing butterfly — the temple gong will awaken you</p>	<p>a flash of lightning we stop our anger with the thunder</p>
<p>July 29, 2019 Comment: Am I a man who dreamed I was a butterfly, or am I a butterfly who is now dreaming I am a man?</p>	<p>Aug. 23, 2019 Comment: During the argument, the flash of lightning is sensed to be far away and of no immediate concern. Several seconds after the lighting flash, though, a huge peal of thunder sounds and the argument stops. "Should we shutter the windows?"</p>

losing itself entering the sea — rushing river	acorn pushing up dank forest floor — warm mother's milk
Sept. 6, 2019 Comment: The river and the sea are made of the same substance — water. Water takes the form of the container it is held in, in this case the riverbed and the seabed.	Dec. 4, 2019 Comment: “acorns pushing up / through the dank forest floor” would make this haiku even better because the first and second lines would then run on naturally. The new life sprouting forth meshes beautifully with “mother's milk.”

Devin Harrison (British Columbia, Canada)

old carols in the whistle of songbirds northern cardinals	plastic flowers moths mistaking streetlights for the moon
Jan. 26, 2019 Comment: The tunes of our oldest songs may well have their origins in the tunes of songbirds. The choice of cardinals goes well here with the religious nature of the carols.	July 11, 2019 Comment: A city scene, with no plants around, except for the plastic flowers, and no moon either. Even here, life, in the form of moths, is present.

Stephen A. Peters (Washington, USA)

another hole in the bucket list winter rain	everyone different everyone the same leaves through the rest home window
Jan. 28, 2019 Comment: A nice pivot around the word “bucket.”	Nov. 8, 2019 Comment: People from all different walks of life have ended up in the same rest home. As one gets older we all become united with weak eyes, unsteady legs, forgetfulness, etc. and can finally relate to one another more easily. The dry leaves of many different types of trees blow in through the window but they are all leaves in the end.

Panagiotis Kentikelenis (Thessaloniki, Greece)

midwinter — no grave shows signs of recent visit
Jan. 30, 2019 Comment: No one wants to leave their warm house in the depths of winter — especially not to visit a graveyard.

Mohammad Azim Khan (Peshawar, Pakistan)

winter sun the old gardener in the greenhouse	winter coins warming up in the child's pocket
Feb. 1, 2019 Comment: The greenhouse is warmer than anywhere else — especially as one's bones get old and stiff.	March 5, 2019 Comment: By stating "warming up" we can feel their chill.

Antonio Sacco (Vallo della Lucania, Italy)

winter haze: the puddle's emptiness filled with water	winter rain: on each pine needle a small drop
Feb. 2, 2019 Comment: What is a puddle? Is a puddle still a puddle when it is just a depression in the ground that we have seen water fill previously? The winter haze makes us question those things that are not clearly black or white.	Feb. 13, 2019 Comment: Nice eye for detail.

<p>deep winter — noises of chainsaws echoes of geese</p>	<p>split up — our steps covered by new snow</p>
<p>March 1, 2019 Comment: It would seem the geese are departing for a friendlier place.</p>	<p>March 9, 2019 Comment: The couple decide to go their separate ways and their footsteps are soon covered by new snow — erasing everything about where they have been and come from until this point.</p>

Oscar Luparia (Vercelli, Italy)

<p>winter evening — once it was a game old hourglass</p>	<p>spring breeze it does not matter who I am</p>
<p>Feb. 4, 2019 Comment: Back before the age of mass-produced plastic toys, people played with all sorts of different items — in this case an hourglass. Winter evenings, when we are hemmed in by the snow, make us think back to when we were younger.</p>	<p>May 13, 2019 Comment: It is almost as if the poet is talking to the breeze! The spring breeze blows on everyone equally, not matter who you are</p>

<p>falling stars — hung on the railing a spider's hope</p>	<p>hibiscus flowers — I thought I had quit remembering</p>
<p>May 31, 2019 Comment: The spider's hope is its web, which of course cannot catch falling stars. People often put hopes and wishes on falling stars so these two parts of the poem resonate well.</p>	<p>Aug. 26, 2019 Comment: I cannot put my finger on why "hibiscus flowers" seems to fit so well with the rest of the poem but that is one reason I like it. Perhaps the author visited Hawai'i or the South Pacific with a woman he loved.</p>

<p>faraway thunder — the song of cicadas becomes louder</p>	<p>homemade jam ... my right knee still bruised</p>
<p>Sept. 19, 2019 Comment: When the rain arrives, the cicada songs will be drowned out and there will be no mating, so now they sing louder.</p>	<p>Dec. 23, 2019 Comment: I'm not really sure why these two elements go together so well. Perhaps it's because the fruit in jam is often squashed, or because bruised fruit goes into jam while fresh fruit is eaten "as is." The darker color of jam versus the original fruit also comes to mind.</p>

Tommy Ichimiya (Ibaraki, Japan)

<p>two students talk face to face winter twilight</p>	<p>leaving home nobody sees me off except the cold wind</p>
<p>Feb. 7, 2019 Comment: Students nowadays often only talk via their smartphones. Winter twilight matches well.</p>	<p>April 8, 2019 Comment: So poignant!</p>

<p>decided to endure my dreary life bamboo autumn</p>	<p>no chance to see you for a long time cold tofu</p>
<p>July 17, 2019 Comment: All other plants are green with spring and only the bamboo turns brown as if it were autumn. The thoughts of suicide and the bamboo stand being so thick that it seems one is caged in are also images that come to mind.</p>	<p>July 24, 2019 Comment: The author feels like bland, cold, tofu, lacking color, as he eats his tofu and thinks about how long it has been since he has seen the one he thinks about.</p>

Violeta Urda (Bucharest, Romania)

<p>delayed divorce — icicles hanging from roof begin to melt</p>	<p>spring wind turns over diary pages — first kiss</p>
<p>Feb. 9, 2019 Comment: The addition of “the” or “our” in front of “roof” is needed, but would change the nuance. It seems as if the couple have started to warm to each other again while the divorce proceedings were delayed. “the” would be the more “haiku-esque” addition.</p>	<p>April 25, 2019 Comment: The spring wind flips the pages until the entry of her first kiss is laid bare. Spring, of course, works much better than any other kind of wind would have.</p>

<p>state of war — on the barbed wire a butterfly</p>	<p>patch of sky — grandma is mending a light shawl</p>
<p>July 5, 2019 Comment: This haiku is extremely similar to one by Goran Gatalica of Croatia: thinking of war wrapped in barbed wire fragile butterfly which was selected by Haiku Master Kai Hasegawa as the best haiku in the Basho-an International English Haiku Competition of 2018. It is not uncommon for two poets to have the same idea and use many of the same words and/or expressions when composing haiku. This is called “ruiku” (similar haiku) or “ruisou” (similar thought pattern) in Japanese. Beginners often try to emulate the masters and “ruiku” are common but when a seasoned poet realizes someone else has already made a similar haiku, they should throw their poem away and seek true originality. If the poet had made the last line “a chrysalis,” they would instead be accessing the vertical dimension in poetry and be building on the work of the previous poet.</p>	<p>Sept. 23, 2019 Comment: “Patch” and “mending” go together but the similarity does not detract from the haiku because a concrete image is visible for each, and it does not seem contrived.</p>

Oana Boazu (Galati, Romania)

cat paw traces — the sound of snow stratifying	left to dry hay bales became green after the rain
Feb. 12, 2019 Comment: I can imagine the sound of stratified snow being stepped on by a cat but not of the snow stratifying in the first place. Here only the footprints of the cat are visible, not the cat itself, so the soundless sound is truly perceived.	Oct. 29, 2019 Comment: The hay was not completely dead and sprouts back into life when it is rained upon.

Valeria Barouch (Cologne, Switzerland)

chiaroscuro — winter's mountain canvas only a draft
Feb. 18, 2019 Comment: "Chiaroscuro" refers to strong contrasts between light and shadow, so we can imagine dark, bare rocks and snow on the mountain. As the snow piles up and melts again the scenery changes and this is captured well in "only a draft."

Mario Massimo Zontini (Parma, Italy)

Winter night I think of her — the cold moon	blooming wisteria at the crossroads and traffic as usual
Feb. 21, 2019 Comment: It is almost as if the woman herself is like the cold moon, but reading the haiku again and interpreting the dash as a “kireji,” we realize that it is winter night and the author is remembering his love fondly, but the moon looks down detachedly and coldly on the whims of humans.	June 7, 2019 Comment: The poet notices the wisteria’s purple blooms but those around do not. Even though we are at the crossroads, everything is business as usual.

summer twilight the godwit’s shadow fades on the river spit	All Souls’ Day in the cemetery the wind is colder
Aug. 2, 2019 Comment: The godwit, or sandpiper, has its image reflected in the thin sheen of water covering the sand. As the sun sets, its reflection becomes less and less distinct until finally it disappears.	Nov. 2, 2019 Comment: On this day of remembrance for those who have died, the wind feels colder. Possibly a different second line would improve the haiku by introducing something more foreign to the remainder of the poem since everything goes together maybe too well in the present version.

Angelica Seithe (Wettenberg, Germany)

two pairs of boots facing each other — one on tiptoe
Feb. 22, 2019 Comment: We imagine the relationship between the owners of each pair.

Eleonore Nickolay (France)

Indian summer
my friend's smile
on her last photo

Feb. 23, 2019

Comment: Since it is the "last photo," perhaps the friend is now dead. The cold weather is broken by an Indian summer, where the weather suddenly gets warm. The friend's smile is warm like an Indian summer.

Mark Miller (Shoalhaven Heads, Australia)

gone
from the trembling branch the bird
I'll never know

Feb. 25, 2019

Comment: One can imagine this is spring since the branch is supple enough to be trembling.

roadside stall
with the strawberry seedlings
the snail comes free

March 19, 2019

Comment: If the stall had someone manning it they would surely have brushed off the snail.

after the deluge
facedown in the gutter
a missing person poster

Dec. 12, 2019

Comment: The pivot from dead person to missing person poster is done with style.

Barnabas I. Adeleke (Osun State, Nigeria)

wind chimes are silent ...
overripe mangoes hang
in the treetop

Feb. 27, 2019

Comment: The oppressing heat of summer with no breeze is heightened by “overripe.” The hanging mangoes themselves could be imagined as silent wind chimes.

Alan Summers (Wiltshire, England)

snowmelt
a river begins giving
back its sky

Feb. 28, 2019

Comment: The river water comes from melted snow that fell from the sky. The combination of “snowmelt” and “begins giving” suggests that the “river” is a riverbed and that water is starting to appear in it due to snow beginning to melt. Is the sky reflected in the water? Or perhaps the “snowmelt” is a torrent of water that has flowed under the frozen river, and “begins giving” signifies that the water has reached a lake or the sea. I was drawn to this haiku but still fail to grasp a concrete image of what the poet is trying to convey.

green walnuts
we gather them
before stars

June 26, 2019

Comment: Green walnuts can be used to make liqueurs, chutneys or can be pickled. As they need to be picked before the seed shell hardens into the “nut” which we are all familiar with, this haiku is probably set in late May or June. They were more commonly eaten in the days before mass-produced walnut “nuts,” so “stars” evokes not only the points of light that resonate with each individual fruit, but also the passage of time.

Marina Bellini (Mantua, Italy)

on the train platform I love you — written on snow dust	Father's Day — the branch and the one cut-down have blossomed all at once
March 6, 2019 Comment: This haiku not only expertly paints a picture that tells a whole story, but hints at the way distance can cause love to be more ephemeral and fragile, through the thin "snow dust."	April 30, 2019 Comment: As a father myself, for some reason this haiku resonates with me so much that it was one of my favorites for the year.

Elisabetta Castagnoli (Modena, Italy)

fresh lips on the soldier's cheek — snowflake	the wheat grows ... the green colour of my father's eyes
March 7, 2019 Comment: The soldier is being kissed on the cheek, so we can assume it is not their lover. "Fresh" implies that the kisser is a younger female, perhaps the soldier's daughter? "Fresh" could alternatively imply that the lips were a new pair, not the ones that the soldier is used to, but the juxtaposition of "snowflake" causes us to imagine their young daughter and the fragility of life as the soldier heads off to war.	June 25, 2019 Comment: The addition of the word "grows" suggests the wheat is green and not yet full of seed.

Luca Cenisi (Pordenone, Italy)

light snowfall —
dancing around
her real question

March 8, 2019

Comment: Very good juxtaposition. The cold associated with the snowfall also suggests that giving the honest answer to her question may not be a good idea.

Helen Buckingham (Somerset, U.K.)

snow meanders
through the silver birch trail
all is starlight

March 11, 2019

Comment: Although snow also lies between the birches, it does not stand out as much as the snow that lies on the trail and shines in the starlight.

craft show over
the spider
spins on

April 19, 2019

Comment: The emptiness of the space that the craft show was held in comes across well. “Craft” and “spins” are a little too similar or related for the juxtaposition to cause the sparks of an “aha!” moment so probably another element or entity could be added to the haiku to give it more depth/meaning.

<p>at the foot of the fire escape bluebells tremble</p>	<p>vernal equinox a shower cap of petals for the snowman</p>
<p>April 27, 2019</p> <p>Comment: By using “foot” rather than another word such as “base,” we imagine a person’s foot at the same time as picturing the bottom of the stairs and the bluebells trembling because a foot just passed them in close proximity. This secondary image that is not actually included explicitly in the haiku gives it greater depth. Masterful!</p>	<p>May 1, 2019</p> <p>Comment: The spring equinox occurs around March 20 in the northern hemisphere. It is when the days and nights are equal in length, and a pivot in the seasons is keenly felt. This pivot is expressed well with the juxtaposition of snow and petals. If it were a “hat” or a “bonnet” of petals one could imagine that the petals were falling directly on the snowman and enough of them stuck to its head that it looked like some kind of hat. However, “a shower cap of petals” is not easily imagined, so we can deduce that a child has collected petals and filled a shower cap with them. Whether they have put this on the snowman’s head or whether they have just brought it as a present is not immediately clear.</p>

<p>manning the entrance to The Mining Museum he shrinks from the sun</p>	<p>school’s out make-up on crocuses in the wind</p>
<p>June 21, 2019</p> <p>Comment: The man must have worked in the mines himself and is not used to the sun. For some reason Gollum comes to mind.</p>	<p>July 20, 2019</p> <p>Comment: There are many species of crocus and these can bloom any time from autumn to spring so it is difficult to place this haiku in a particular season. The image of girls putting on makeup as soon as the school bell rings to signal their freedom for the day and perhaps to look their best for the boys suggests early spring — especially since crocuses can sometimes be one of the first flowers to bloom, even when there is still snow. The waxy cuticle that protects crocus petals from frost also resonates well with the girls’ makeup.</p>

<p>October sunset a barrowload of orange</p>	<p>hunter's moon the tawny owl throws its hoot</p>
<p>Oct. 4, 2019 Comment: Since the barrowload is of orange and not oranges, we first imagine that it is full of the orange light of the sunset. Since the wheelbarrow would not actually reflect orange if it were metal, we then imagine it is full of oranges, pumpkins or some other load of orange fruit or vegetables, and that it is they that are glowing in the orange of the sunset.</p>	<p>Oct. 30, 2019 Comment: Owl and "hunter" of course fit well together so the novelty in this haiku is in "throws." Its hoot is thrown like a hunter would throw his spear.</p>

Cezar-Florin Ciobika (Botosani, Romania)

<p>new music to listen to this week melting ice</p>
<p>March 13, 2019 Comment: Perhaps the author has been hemmed in by the snow and did not visit their favorite music shop over the winter. Now as the ice is melting, their psychological ice has also melted and they are out and about, doing new things.</p>

Vincenzo Adamo (Trapani, Italy)

plum jam — grandchildren can not read the dialect	a cicada ... at the temple in the morning my mother sings
March 14, 2019 Comment: The handwritten label on the jar of homemade plum jam was written by the children's grandmother in her local dialect. This haiku speaks to the homogenization of so much language and culture that has accompanied modernization.	May 25, 2019 Comment: The poet's mother is singing but it is not clear if the cicada is singing or not. We imagine reincarnation of either the mother into a cicada or vice versa because the scene is set at a temple.
mother's day ... a swallow hatches in another's house	courgette flowers — my mother at the wash-house toils and sings
June 1, 2019 Comment: Rather than the swallow hatching in a different nest, which is highly unlikely, "another's house" must refer to a human's house in which the swallow's nest is found. Through the phrase "in another's," the bird and the human are both placed on the same level. "Mother's Day" is an interesting juxtaposition.	July 4, 2019 Comment: Courgette flowers or squash blossoms are the large yellow flowers of the zucchini bush. They are highly perishable and not found often in stores, so we imagine those in the haiku to still be attached to their parent plant. The large yellow petals remind one of billowing garments.
the empty chair — where Grandpa used to sing a nightingale	full moon night ... the beggar writes a letter to the powerful
July 22, 2019 Comment: Reincarnation?	Aug. 17, 2019 Comment: Strange things happen on the night of a full moon!

sick wife
the autumn breeze
caresses me

Oct. 28, 2019

Comment: Solace in the autumn breeze but a reminder that it touches all equally and one day the poet too will enter their own Autumn.

Christine Horner (California, USA)

first wind in the pines —
all the animals I've known
come to mind

March 15, 2019

Comment: "Animals I've known" suggests not just a list of animals in general but only the ones that the author has known on an individual, personal level — such as pets. In this case "all" does not necessarily suggest many different species of animals — just many different individuals. The past tense suggests the majority of these animals have passed on. The "first wind" is both still cold, bringing pathos to the poem, but also suggests a new beginning.

K. Ramesh (Chennai, India)

farm house visit ... the smallest puppy keeps on barking	crickets chirping ... the white curtain full of moonlight
March 16, 2019 Comment: At first read it seems like the youngest puppy, with the least experience of humans, keeps barking at the visitor, but since puppies are born in a litter they are all around the same age and should have the same experiences. Rather, "smallest" suggests a runt. Perhaps it barks to be noticed and/or to show it has stamina, even though it is the smallest.	Aug. 22, 2019 Comment: There is a fairytale feel to this haiku.

Maria Chiara Miduri (Turin, Italy)

foggy morning carrot soup boils in the kitchen
March 21, 2019 Comment: The steam from the boiling water resonates with "foggy" and the orange of the carrots is brought to life when contrasted with the gray of the fog.

Billy Antonio (Pangasinan, Philippines)

reunion wild sparrows in the yard
March 23, 2019 Comment: The kind of reunion is not explicitly stated. Is it a class reunion, a reunion with one's parents or siblings or a dear friend? It would be good to add more concreteness, as long as the nuance that it is a reunion between the sparrows themselves and also between the sparrows and the poet is not lost in doing so.

Julia Guzman (Cordoba, Argentina)

waning moon — grandpa eats every day less	Midnight ... The brightness of the puddles among the scrubland
March 25, 2019 Comment: Perhaps “waning” and eating less and less every day are too similar, but the cycle of life is alluded to in “moon.”	Sept. 3, 2019 Comment: Usually poets tend to state explicitly “full moon” or “starry night” when they intend to refer to the reflections of light on water bodies in the remainder of the poem. This poem beautifully suggests the moon without bringing attention to it.

shooting star — the baby blows his first candle
Oct. 23, 2019 Comment: A shooting star will only ever fall once, just like the baby will only ever have one first experience at blowing a candle — a birthday, one would assume.

Ramona Linke (Beesenstedt, Germany)

near the willows the brook breathes frost	old friends how slowly the brook
March 27, 2019 Comment: The brook feels like a living thing through “breathes,” and willows are known for their magical properties — perhaps they brought the brook to life?	Dec. 3, 2019 Comment: Rivers and streams suggest constant motion and often allude to the passage of time or happening — aka “water under the bridge.” So it is with this haiku, but the freshness is that one’s attention is drawn to “how slowly” the brook flows and this makes us imagine the connections between the old friends much more vividly.

Eugeniusz Zacharski (Radom, Poland)

battlefield in the tangle of branches the moon	waning moon leaving she leaves a void
March 29, 2019 Comment: The many tangled factors that lead to war are suggested, as is the chaos that accompanies an actual battle. The moon is everlasting though it goes through cycles — much like human history. This is a nice, clean, concrete image, so it works as a haiku on the surface level, but it also contains many hidden meanings and nuances that add depth.	June 6, 2019 Comment: It would be better not to use the word “leaves” twice in the same poem.

old boat still setting nets spider
Oct. 3, 2019 Comment: The use of the word “nets” rather than “webs” in combination with “old boat” and “still” is wonderful!

David Milovanovic (Lapovo, Serbia)

an old birch tree —
pondering over
the churning river

March 30, 2019

Comment: The long dash used as a “kireji” to separate the two parts of the poem makes the subject of “pondering” the poet, rather than the birch tree, though the lack of a grammatical subject still allows us to imagine that the tree is also pondering.

Bruce Ross (Maine, USA)

darkness
in the old growth pine
end of winter

April 2, 2019

Comment: The “pine” in this haiku could be interpreted either as a single tree or as a stand of trees — even a forest. Although a hole or hollow in the trunk, as often occurs in older trees, would also produce darkness, I imagine a forest with snow covering all the branches and shutting out the light. A sense of foreboding is suggested at with “end of winter.”

Francesco Palladino (Salerno/Salentina, Italy)

bitter cold ... the dog's path in the nettle	open window on the flower garden her last breath
April 5, 2019 Comment: The narrowness of the dog's path, encroached by stinging nettle, is enhanced by "bitter cold."	June 13, 2019 Comment: Since her last breath was "on" and not "into," the flower garden could be a long, hanging pot directly below the windowsill.

Jose del Valle (Rhode Island, USA)

snow moon the cow carrying on in the killing chute
April 9, 2019 Comment: The cold crispness of the "snow moon" works well juxtaposed with the remainder of the poem. The cycle of life is at its end.

Nikolay Grankin (Krasnodar, Russia)

difficult conversation snowflakes on the green grass	autumn rain the blue eyes of an old lady
April 13, 2019 Comment: The snow is not heavy enough to bend the grass and cover it. Instead, each snowflake can be seen colliding with a blade of grass. Zooming in, we can imagine the rebound of each blade, the melting of some of the flakes, and the covering of some blades. With a difficult conversation each word is important, and so zeroing in on the "snowflakes" rather than just the "snow" works very well here.	Nov. 28, 2019 Comment: The reds, yellows and browns of autumn contrast with the blue eyes of the old lady.

Benedetta Cardone (Massa, Italy)

spring solstice — people coming and going	mother's day — the pressure cooker whistle goes off
April 16, 2019 Comment: There is no solstice in spring, only in summer and winter. I selected this haiku substituting "equinox" for "solstice." As the spring equinox is the day when the days start to become longer than the nights, it marks a pivot or changeover in the seasons, resonating well with the rest of the poem.	June 3, 2019 Comment: "Goes off" and "pressure" makes one imagine losing one's temper, which even mothers do from time to time. On this Mother's Day, the mother is cooking some special dish to appeal about how motherly she is.

Waxing moon Finding again a forgotten path
June 18, 2019 Comment: As the moon grows bigger, it becomes brighter and lights up the night landscape more. This resonates well with finding a lost path.

Lucia Cardillo (Foggia, Italy)

new leaves where there was the sky ... spring
April 17, 2019 Comment: The haiku starts on a positive and hopeful note with "new leaves" but then the author realizes that the gaining of the leaves also means the loss of the sky — yin and yang. I first considered the thought that "spring" was already implied and therefore not needed, but a word such as this, to imply this is part of a natural cycle, is indeed needed.

Christiane Ranieri (Wittenheim, France)

grandfather's snoring on his hand flutters a butterfly	digging the garden in front of the earthworm a child squirms
April 23, 2019 Comment: The youth and fragility of a butterfly contrasts with grandfather and his snoring. The two verbs give movement and bring the poem to life.	May 9, 2019 Comment: Both the child and the earthworm squirm.
air flow in the underpass an accordionist	after climbing on the old man's cane lands a butterfly
May 18, 2019 Comment: The flow of air through the underpass and through the accordionist's instrument is interesting. Stating what kind of airflow it was could deepen the haiku.	June 11, 2019 Comment: The old man, after climbing the stairs, has laid his cane down as he sits and rests. The butterfly is resting too.
Hot summer evening finer than my slice of watermelon the crescent moon	autumn squall a leaf takes a breath on the windshield
Aug. 5, 2019 Comment: The metaphor enhances rather than detracts from the image in the poem.	Oct. 19, 2019 Comment: The short moment a fallen leaf stays still when pressed against the windshield before being swept away again by the wind is conveyed well here. "Breath" helps us to imagine that the dead leaf is alive.

left turn ban breaking the law autumn leaves	Puddle a hen irritates the clouds
Nov. 29, 2019 Comment: The law is just for us humans.	Dec. 25, 2019 Comment: "Irritates" is a good way to convey the hen's beak breaking up the surface reflection when it bends down for a drink.

Mihovila Ceperic-Biljan (Rijeka, Croatia)

the same mountain every morning a completely different view
April 24, 2019 Comment: The season is not clear in this haiku. Since "the" is included, I would suggest replacing "same" with "spring" so that we can more concretely visualize the patterns of colors on the mountain changing as snow melts, different leaves sprout forth, and different flowers bloom.

Kat Lehmann (Connecticut, USA)

beneath the weeping cherry the children's laughter ... pink upon pink
April 29, 2019 Comment: What part of a child is pinkest? Perhaps they are catching petals on their tongues? Perhaps they are jumping up to touch the blossom-laden branches?

Marie-Louise Montignot (Saulxures, France)

pollen season
kicked
out of my own garden

May 2, 2019

Comment: Having a pollen allergy but still tending a garden shows the poet's love of life.

Steliana Cristina Voicu (Prahova, Romania)

cherry blossoms —
my sister's
second pregnancy

lotus pond —
the woman's boat fills
with dawn light

May 3, 2019

Comment: The combination of "pregnancy," rather than child, and the cherry blossoms, which symbolize the ephemerality of life, makes us realize that the first pregnancy did not go to full term.

Aug. 12, 2019

Comment: The boat is as if it were a lotus leaf.

Stephen Toft (Lancaster, U.K.)

magnolia scent
her heels rise from
the pavement

May 4, 2019

Comment: The woman stands on tip-toes to smell the magnolia blossom. Beautifully done!

Zoran Doderovic (Novi Sad, Serbia)

military cemetery leaf buds lined up on the branches	elm tree chirping of sparrows pale green
May 6, 2019 Comment: The image of soldiers in line both when alive and now in their graves, contrasted with the new buds lined up, is exemplary.	Aug. 28, 2019 Comment: The chirps of the sparrows have color, just like Basho's famous haiku on the cry of a wild duck being slightly white. Why should this be an elm tree rather than any other kind of tree? In this case there doesn't seem to be a hidden meaning or allusion, it is just where the sparrows were — feeding on the buds or seeds.

Richa Sharma (Uttar Pradesh, India)

Plum blossoms — I notice my child's Milk tooth
May 8, 2019 Comment: Perhaps the white of the tooth caught the poet's eye more easily after looking at the white of the plum blossoms?

Lyudmila Hristova (Sofia, Bulgaria)

May morning the scarecrow's hat is squeaking	spring collection a butterfly on the hat of the scarecrow
May 10, 2019 Comment: A mouse hidden in the scarecrow's hat!	June 4, 2019 Comment: Capitalizing the first line as "Spring Collection" would let us know it is a proper noun.

distant thunder
the drummer closes
the window

July 25, 2019

Comment: Although the drummer is undoubtedly making noise that others would want to close their windows to, he does not close his own window until he is disturbed by the thunder.

Elia Di Tuccio (Carapelle, Italy)

garden in bloom —
the butterfly
does not stop at the gate

May 15, 2019

Comment: Nature does as it likes.

Summer night —
The last slow note
of the music box

Sept. 5, 2019

Comment: The oppressive heat and humidity of the summer night is conveyed well by the slowness of the last note.

Joanne van Helvoort (Beerta, Netherlands)

monastery ruins a mountain stream turns the prayer wheel	D-day on a moonlit beach turtle eggs hatch
May 16, 2019 Comment: Even though no monks man the wheel, it continues to turn, just as time continues to flow.	July 10, 2019 Comment: “D-day” conjures up the image of many deaths on a beach. This contrasts well with the many new lives emerging from the beach as the turtle eggs hatch. However, we then once again have countless deaths as the birds, crabs, rodents, sharks, etc. all congregate to prey on the turtle hatchlings. I would suggest adding a dash after “D-day” to separate it from the rest of the poem and allow readers to first place themselves in the anniversary of that day. Otherwise they might consider “D-day” to be describing the scene of turtle carnage first, before imagining the eggs starting to hatch in silence in the moonlight, and the haiku would suffer as a result.

Mark Meyer (Washington, USA)

emergency room — in the corridor a crushed rose
May 17, 2019 Comment: The accident seems to have happened on Valentine’s Day, perhaps? The crushed rose makes us think of the state of the accident victim — also damaged.

David Michael Martinez (Texas, USA)

spring wind —
the horse's tail
painting the air

May 21, 2019

Comment: The horse's tail dancing in the wind is very spring-like and horse hair is traditionally used to make paint brushes.

William Keckler (Pennsylvania, USA)

windshield shadows
tiny rivers
cross her face

May 22, 2019

Comment: The face of the woman sitting in the car is only indistinctly seen, like a shadow. Raindrops have combined into little rivulets that flow across and down the windshield, crossing over the passenger's face as well. We can imagine she might be crying.

J.D. Heskin (Minnesota, USA)

dead flies lying
on my windowsill
free at last

May 24, 2019

Comment: The souls of the flies can pass through the window though their bodies could not.

Jeffrey Ferrara (Massachusetts, USA)

between
cat and bird
a clean window

May 27, 2019

Comment: The cat extends its paw to get the bird, not realizing the pane of glass is there, and is stymied by it.

Deborah P Kolodji (California, USA)

lingering clouds
the row of finger bruises
on her arm

May 29, 2019

Comment: "Lingering clouds" suggests there were many more clouds but only a few now remain. The color of the bruises suggests the clouds are probably storm clouds. What "storm" in her life could have caused her to have been handled so roughly as to leave bruises?

Lavana Kray (Iasi, Romania)

wild mint
on mom's grave —
her favourite tea

May 30, 2019

Comment: Though no one planted it there on purpose, wild mint has grown on her grave. Describing concretely how the wild mint is growing might add more depth.

Giovanna Restuccia (Modena, Italy)

white butterflies
above the alfalfa field
light clouds

June 10, 2019

Comment: Nice metaphor.

Origa (Michigan, USA)

village gossips —
a bunch of Columbines
bobbing in the breeze

June 12, 2019

Comment: Although the flowers are beautiful, the seeds and roots of columbines are toxic. A good match for the effects gossip can have on relationships.

Raj K. Bose (Hawai'i, USA)

barred window,
silently entering the room ...
moonbeams!

June 14, 2019

Comment: Multiple moonbeams, rather than one large one, because of the bars, which are supposed to keep things out!

sultry afternoon
carrying my sweat to the rain clouds
summer breeze

Oct. 17, 2019

Comment: The evaporating sweat is carried as moisture into the air to finally become clouds.

Zelyko Funda (Pintarica, Croatia)

volcanic eruption a lava stream does not obey THIS WAY road sign	sea — equally embracing all the swimmers
June 22, 2019 Comment: Another example of nature not following the rules of humans.	Aug. 20, 2019 Comment: The sea must be warm, due to the use of the word “embracing.” Mother Sea.

Tempo Salvatore (Bron, France)

concerto in A minor swallows on electrical wires
June 28, 2019 Comment: The arrangement of the swallows is like musical notes on sheet music. We also imagine them to be singing a concerto from the wires.

Alegria Imperial (Vancouver, Canada)

summer dusk a dog sniffs an empty chair
July 2, 2019 Comment: A very relaxed atmosphere and quite detached due to the use of “a” and “an” rather than “the.”

Rosa Maria Di Salvatore (Catania, Italy)

children's laughter ... soap bubbles	the last poppy less and less red ... summer sunset
July 8, 2019 Comment: Lots of enjoyment and fun blowing bubbles, with the laughs seeming to rise like the bubbles. We are reminded though of fragility and the short time we have as children.	July 18, 2019 Comment: The red glow of the sunset lights up the poppy, but as the sun sets it loses its color, gradually turning the same gray as everything else.

cornflowers ... the blue of his eyes in my memories	hailstorm ... going on shelling peas
Sept. 7, 2019 Comment: The blue cornflower blooms are a reminder of a love long ago.	Sept. 17, 2019 Comment: Peas and hail are a good match and the image is concrete and clear.

autumn equinox — a friend of mine changes boyfriend	almond blossoms ... grandma's hair whiter and whiter
Nov. 4, 2019 Comment: The autumn equinox is when nights start becoming longer than days and marks a changing of season, so it matches well with the rest of the poem.	Dec. 13, 2019 Comment: The white almond blossoms are usually the first flowers to bloom in spring. Grandma's hair must now be almost as white as those blossoms.

grandma's creaking bones... green apples
Dec. 27, 2019 Comment: Granny Smith apples, perhaps? The sourness of the apples matches well.

Robert Kingston (Chelmsford, U.K.)

blue irises mother replants half a worm	savis warbler — buzz from barber's razor fully charged
July 15, 2019 Comment: Mother's gentility is apparent as she returns the half worm she cut with her garden trowel back to the soil, hoping it will regenerate. Only the head of regular earthworms will grow a new half, of course.	Sept. 21, 2019 Comment: Savi's warbler, a migratory warbler species, inhabits reed beds, which are not usually cut down, and neither does the bird's song particularly resemble the buzz of a razor. Warbling happens in the throat, where the barber's razor is now poised.

Andy McLellan (Kent, U.K.)

the sky stretches just a little cry of a seagull
July 16, 2019 Comment: The plaintive, drawn-out cry that fades away seems like it might stretch the sky.

Taofeek Ayeyemi (Lagos, Nigeria)

starry night — grandpa in the circle of kids	shooting stars — picking the beads of my rosary
July 19, 2019 Comment: Telling stories under the stars like the elders of old.	July 26, 2019 Comment: Shooting stars and rosary beads resonate well. Are they wishing on a falling star as if saying a prayer, and counting a rosary bead every time?

fishing
where I am fishing ...
white herons

July 31, 2019

Comment: Both the birds and people know where the fish are!

Michael Henry Lee (Florida, USA)

downdraft
the chill from a
falcon's wing

July 30, 2019

Comment: The air in downdrafts is slightly colder than the surrounding air but it seems even colder when coming from a bird of prey.

as i
was about to say
firefly

Aug. 7, 2019

Comment: The firefly has stolen the attention with its light.

pitcher plant
a fly at the bottom
of my glass

Aug. 19, 2019

Comment: and insects in the bottom of the pitcher plant too, probably, though they cannot be seen.

interdependence day
freeing the last of
the soap bubbles

Sept. 12, 2019

Comment: Sept. 12 was decreed Interdependence Day in 2003, two years and one day after the Sept. 11, 2001 terrorist attacks in the United States, to recognize that engagement and interdependence represent the true road to peace. How free but how fragile those soap bubbles are ...

autumn wind a leaf comes in the post	night train whistling past the bone yard
Nov. 5, 2019 Comment: The lonely feel of autumn comes across well when there are no letters in the mailbox — only a leaf that was blown in there by the wind.	Dec. 31, 2019 Comment: “Bone yard” refers to a cemetery or graveyard and the night train’s whistling is eerie, while its speed reminds us how short our lives are.

Lee Nash (Barbezieux-Saint-Hilaire, France)

our last hotel meal ... goat’s cheese weeping in the heat
Aug. 3, 2019 Comment: Where are they headed after they check out of the hotel? “Weeping” suggests they are not heading home together.

Beate Conrad (Hildesheim, Germany)

between two clouds a ray of late summer sun enters our talk
Aug. 6, 2019 Comment: We imagine both a physical ray of sunlight and a psychological one.

Monica Federico (Warrenstown / Dunshaughlin, Ireland)

A summer day — the body of a migrant in fishing nets	Blackberry flowers — a jealous girlfriend's pungent tone
Aug. 8, 2019 Comment: "A summer day" has the ring to it of just another regular summer's day, so the reference to the death of the migrant seems offhand and, therefore, all the more shocking.	Aug. 29, 2019 Comment: I bet the girlfriend has thorns just like the blackberry!

Anniversary — on your empty seat swallow feathers	First fog — the ears of donkeys behind the hedge
Oct. 11, 2019 Comment: The migratory nature of swallows matches well with the emptiness of the seat on their anniversary.	Nov. 26, 2019 Comment: The donkeys cannot be seen due both to the tall hedge and to the fog. Their braying can be heard, though, so we know they are indeed donkeys.

David Jacobs (London, U.K.)

breezy day all the graves at different angles
Aug. 27, 2019 Comment: It is as if the wind blew the gravestones over.

Krzysztof Kokot (Witosa, Poland)

soap bubbles —
between the first and the second
a heartbeat

Aug. 30, 2019

Comment: The fragility of life is conveyed well
in this concretely introduced moment.

Carmela Marino (Rome, Italy)

the wheat smells
right into my father's
sweat

Aug. 31, 2019

Comment: At harvest time, everything smells like
wheat — even the sweat of the farmer.

Angele Lux (Quebec, Canada)

half buried driftwood
I too am such a long way
from home

Sept. 2, 2019

Comment: Does the author perhaps also feel they
are half-buried and not likely to drift again?

Martin Gottlieb Cohen (Egg Harbor, NJ, USA)

Cassiopeia
a ripple
through the marsh

Sept. 4, 2019

Comment: The vain mother of Andromeda, Cassiopeia was chained to a chair and placed in the sky by the sea god Poseidon. It is not clear whether the stars are reflected on the surface of the marsh or are seen in the sky, but the ripple brings a sense of foreboding — as if the sea monster Cetus were moving through the marsh.

Kari Davidson (Granville, Ohio, USA)

husking sweet corn
I cut my finger
hum of locusts

Sept. 9, 2019

Comment: The matter-of-factness of commenting on the finger cut and the ongoing and incessant hum of the locusts (cicadas) resonate well together. The husks of corn also remind one of the shells of cicada nymphs, left behind when the adult flies away.

Kanchan Chatterjee (Jharkhand, India)

sickle moon ... crossing the rice field a group of lanterns	deep autumn ... on my lips, my dad's mantras
Sept. 14, 2019 Comment: The "sickle" in "sickle moon" makes me imagine this scene is near harvest time. Where are those people headed this night? Being busy with preparing for the harvest during the day, perhaps they are running their errands at night. Or perhaps they are out to lynch someone.	Nov. 16, 2019 Comment: The melancholy of deep autumn matches well with the author realizing they are not so different from their own father — saying all the same things.

Antonio Mangiameli (Lentini, Italy)

falling star — inside the sleeping bag me and the moths
Sept. 16, 2019 Comment: The free but slightly dangerous feel to "falling star" is juxtaposed well with the safety, warmth, but also stuffiness, of the sleeping bag and its inhabitants.

Pravat Kumar Padhy (Odisha, India)

saucer magnolia — the safe landing of a flying fox
Sept. 18, 2019 Comment: The large flowers of the saucer magnolia, scattered all over the tree's branches, are reminiscent of the way a flying fox colony looks, with multiple bats hanging from each branch. Here the flying fox may have landed to look for nectar.

Margaret Hsieh (California, USA)

<p>meditation bridge an earthworm drowning</p>	<p>regretting my spiteful words — snails among the cactus spines</p>
<p>Sept. 24, 2019 Comment: A few more words would probably make this haiku more accessible. Since a drowning earthworm is at the scene, we can imagine that it is a real bridge over water in the first line, not the yoga practice of forming a bridge with one's body when meditating. And because capital letters were not used, we can assume it is not a single, famous bridge that everyone knows is the place to go to meditate. Furthermore, since it is "meditation bridge" rather than "meditating on a bridge" we suppose the author has used this bridge for meditation previously and refers to it as their own meditation bridge. The earthworm must reflect the author's state of mind ...</p>	<p>Nov. 19, 2019 Comment: This metaphor was interesting since either the spines or the snails could be a good match for "spiteful words." The author is perhaps out tending the garden after an argument.</p>

Sin Nade Tesla (Vrsac, Serbia)

<p>crickricrickricricket all day-night long — cryptic crickets.</p>
<p>Sept. 26, 2019 Comment: "Cryptic" means hidden, so we have not actually seen the crickets, only heard their incessant chirping.</p>

Helga Stania (Ettiswil, Switzerland)

wind chime the beetle deep in the blossom
Sept. 27, 2019 Comment: A verb after “wind chime” would give more movement and depth, while concretely stating the type of beetle and/or blossom could add more depth. The metaphor for the beetle being like the tongue and the chime, possibly a bell, being the blossom is easily visualized and done well.

Tomislav Maretić (Zagreb, Croatia)

summer house ... the closet cricket sings to those outside	when the eyes adjust after fireworks — the same stars
Sept. 28, 2019 Comment: In summer it seems as if the insects are everywhere!	Oct. 5, 2019 Comment: Variations of haiku similar to this (“ruiso” or “ruiku” in Japanese) are not uncommon. Stating what the fireworks are for would add depth, such as with the following haiku by George Swede: Dominion Day: after all the fireworks, the stars still there

house for sale a spiderweb empty in autumn sun	raindrops evaporate from the cemetery lanterns ... silence
Nov. 6, 2019 Comment: The empty web and empty house are both bathed equally in the autumn sun.	Dec. 11, 2019 Comment: We imagine the raindrops are souls headed for heaven.

Ana Drobot (Bucharest, Romania)

Heatwave ...
the sky mixes with the ocean
in my painting

Oct. 2, 2019

Comment: The paint turns soft in the heat and the sky runs into the ocean.

Ingrid Baluch (Islamabad, Pakistan)

turn of the tide —
each pebble
a trailing meteor

Oct. 7, 2019

Comment: We imagine comets or shooting stars in the immensity of space, the immensity of the oceans and the uncountable numbers of sand grains on the beach.

Jianqing Zheng (Mississippi, USA)

harvest moon
a message bottle
washed ashore

Oct. 18, 2019

Comment: What kind of a “harvest” did the poet find in the message? The bottle on the beach, shining in the moonlight, is an easy scene to picture.

Ece Cehreli (Ankara, Turkey)

autumn leaves
taking advice
from grandma

Oct. 24, 2019

Comment: The last two lines of this haiku make me imagine that the autumn leaves are on the brink of falling off their branches.

Jennifer Hambrick (Ohio, USA)

traffic jam
stretching between guard rails
a spider web

Oct. 25, 2019

Comment: Without being stuck in traffic, this spider's web would be unnoticed. Its presence in the poem causes one to imagine the cause of the traffic jam — what was the “web” that caught all the cars?

Janina Kolodziejczyk (Pavullo, Italy)

hollow pumpkin
her eyes
full of light

Nov. 1, 2019

Comment: Both the jack-o-lantern's eyes and the eyes of the enchanted child are full of light.

Rosemarie Schuldes (Gross-Gerau, Germany)

november walk
the toddler makes a grab for
a handful of fog

Nov. 9, 2019

Comment: We have all probably made a grab for a wisp of fog, mist or whitened winter breath at some stage. As adults, we know it is pointless and no longer do so, but the toddler is still learning.

Cezar Florescu (Botosani, Romania)

autumn leaves
the grave-digger takes a look
at the day moon

Nov. 12, 2019

Comment: The autumn leaves fall to the ground, people fall to the ground, what about the day moon?

I adopt a stray cat
with my mom's eyes ...
All Souls' day

Dec. 2, 2019

Comment: Reincarnation?

autumn sunset
on an empty wine glass
her lipstick traces

Dec. 18, 2019

Comment: A little erotic with the red of the sunset making her lipstick traces shine more visibly.

Anna Maria Domburg-Sancristoforo (The Hague, Netherlands)

moonlight
even underground rivers
run to the sea

Nov. 21, 2019

Comment: Here the rivers are imagined as they run underground due to the flowing nature of the moonlight. A wonderful haiku!

Arvinder Kaur (Chandigarh, India)

cold morning —
a leash leads me
into fog

Nov. 22, 2019

Comment: The unseen dog, no longer visible because of the fog, makes the morning seem so much colder.

Simonetta Sarchi (Milan, Italy)

Rows of grapes
the hill shines in the sun
Then the harvest

Nov. 23, 2019

Comment: The first two lines of this haiku really set a beautiful scene. Perhaps a different last line that does not explain and is set at the same moment in time might make the haiku even better.

Serhiy Shpychenko (Kyiv, Ukraine)

history textbook yellow maple leaf between two eras	wet sidewalk maple covers with leaves its reflection
Nov. 25, 2019 Comment: I am a little lost as to why this leaf needs to be a “yellow maple” within the poem. As the haiku Master Shuson said “It may be a fact, but is it a truth?” Perhaps the yellow maple contains some significance I have missed but I would imagine a chestnut leaf would mean more to the people of Ukraine in terms of history than a maple would.	Dec. 5, 2019 Comment: It is as if the maple is embarrassed and tries to cover itself.

Volker Friebe (Tuebingen, Germany)

“I love to live!” My sweetheart kisses me between falling leaves
Nov. 30, 2019 Comment: The transience of this love comes across well.

Nazarena Rampini (Pogliano Milanese, Italy)

loneliness the chestnuts are talking on my stove
Dec. 10, 2019 Comment: The sounds the chestnuts make as they pop are the only sounds in the room.

Stephanie Visaya Bose (Hawai'i, USA)

chilly autumn evening
the warmth in our tea cups
lingering

Dec. 20, 2019

Comment: Though the cups are now empty of tea, the warmth in the ceramic can still be felt, as can the warmth of companionship.

Kaiser V Kahn (Darmstadt, Germany)

mackerel sky
father's tale
about a whale

Dec. 21, 2019

Comment: The mackerel sky has a very otherworldly look about it, where things of legend could exist. "Whale" is perhaps too good a match and the haiku might be improved by having the father talk about something less obviously related to "mackerel."

Philip Noble (Inverness, UK)

brilliant blue morning
a blank canvas ready
for geese formations

Dec. 28, 2019

Comment: Nice alliteration.