

# *#FemkuMag*

*Issue 33*



# #FemkuMag

haikai poetry by womxn and non-binary folx

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Issue 33

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## Contributors

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Laurie Greer  
Jillian Calahan  
Vandana Parashar  
Seren Fargo  
Hifsa Ashraf  
Kristen Lindquist  
Mia Indigo  
Louise Hopewell  
Richa Sharma  
Roberta Beach Jacobson  
Mona Bedi  
Helen Ogden  
Allyson Whipple  
E. L. Blizzard  
Sarah E. Metzler  
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Marcie Wessels and Margaret Walker  
Amber Winter  
Eva Limbach  
Erin Castaldi  
Kristina Todorova  
Susan Burch  
Peggy Hale Bilbro  
Mary Stevens  
Cynthia Anderson  
Bernadette O'Reilly  
Arvinder Kaur

Hazel Hall

Debbie Strange

Jenn Ryan-Jauregui

Kathleen Trocmet

Daniela Misso

Muskaan Ahuja

Beki Reese Van Buren

Deborah P Kolodji

Cyndi Lloyd

## Marilyn Ashbaugh

buckled sidewalk the war hits home

wolf cut  
layers of protests  
fill the screens

expanding universe  
a new growth  
to biopsy

**Marilyn Ashbaugh** is a poet, nature photographer and organic gardener. Her poems are published in journals and anthologies featuring Japanese short-form poetry.

## Barrie Levine

dime store parakeets  
neither they nor I  
survived my childhood

guerilla warfare  
he walks into divorce court  
with his hot girlfriend

**Barrie Levine** practiced family law in Boston, dedicated to representing women, from 1973 to 2014. She began writing haiku in her seventies, an incredibly generative decade for her. She recently published a collection of 126 haiku and senryu entitled [COTTON MOON](#).

## Laurie Greer

the child she lost blaming herself

half moon  
another disappearance  
at the border

**Laurie Greer** lives, walks, and works in Washington DC—where there is still taxation.

## Jillian Calahan

failure to thrive  
under coat hanger laws  
*abort Texas*

good vibes only  
a collection  
in my night stand

**Jillian Calahan** is a poet and short story writer from the Pacific Northwest. She has 4 cats and 2 dogs. She loves reading, crafts, and nature. You can find her work on Instagram [@novamarie\\_poetry](https://www.instagram.com/novamarie_poetry)



## Vandana Parashar

devouring me from inside his best swimmer

unsubscribe God who's happy anyway

storm warning  
don't they know  
I'm a woman

**Vandana Parashar** is a postgraduate in Microbiology, an educator and Haiku poet. She started writing haiku in 2015 and since, her haikai poetry has been published in many international journals and has won prizes and accolades. Her haiku was shortlisted for the Touchstone Award in 2021. Vandana's debut e-chapbook [LAm](#) was published by Title IX Press (Moth Orchid Press), with her heart and soul put into the work.

## Seren Fargo

hippocratic oath  
another doctor tells me  
it's all in my head

**Seren Fargo** has been writing haiku and similar forms for over a decade. Her poems can be found online and in print journals in several countries. She currently lives in the Pacific Northwest, but at the moment, her future is up in the air.

## Hifsa Ashraf

cucumber flower  
he probes into  
my loyalty

kintsugi—  
fixing all flaws  
left by him

late autumn drizzle  
her childhood soliloquy  
without any pause

Residing in Rawalpindi, Pakistan, **Hifsa Ashraf** is an award-winning bilingual poet, author, editor, and social activist. Her work has been widely published. She received special mention for her book, [Her Fading Henna Tattoo](#), in the Touchstone Distinguished Books Award 2020 and in the Haiku Society of America Merit Book Award 2021.

## Kristen Lindquist

parts of me  
I hadn't put a name on  
tail of Spence

where the river  
enters the harbor  
your mouth on mine

ice storm . . .  
bathwater drips off  
my nipple

## **Kristen Lindquist** (cont.)

### **Declaration of Intent**

How to convey the satisfaction of a day well spent, of a day in which I awaken clear-headed and optimistic, in which I feel thin and attractive and like the way my hair falls loose down my back? Of a day in which much is accomplished and there's still time for a nap, for touching myself on the bed in broad daylight, for starting a long book as snow falls lightly and with beauty out the window? A dear friend calls, the radio plays songs I like all day, and another friend invites me to a dinner party: tonight there will be dancing and wine. Tonight, I will fully inhabit my life.

self-reflection  
the moon over the bay  
a big fat zero

**Kristen Lindquist** is a poet and writer living on the coast of Maine. She was featured in NEW RESONANCE 12.

## Mia Indigo

flood tide. . .  
a sudden crowd  
in the condom aisle

**Mia Indigo** writes haiku and engages in practices in the White Tigress tradition as part of her lifelong pursuit of a degree in Surrender Studies.

## Louise Hopewell

a long list  
of cancelled flights  
morning after pill

no one tells  
the rose how to blossom  
mansplaining

late bloomer  
our government finally abolishes  
the tampon tax

**Louise Hopewell** is an Australian poet, playwright and songwriter. When not writing, Louise can be found riding her bicycle or playing ukulele.

## Richa Sharma

40th year. . .  
still the mediator  
between parents

**Richa Sharma** loves to write Japanese short forms. Her work has appeared in numerous international haiku journals since 2019.



## Roberta Beach Jacobson

leaving the life keeping the stigma

catching snowflakes slut strands

**Roberta Beach Jacobson** is drawn to the magic of words—poetry, puzzles, song lyrics, flash fiction, stand-up comedy. She is the editor of [Cold Moon Journal](#).

## Mona Bedi

spring rain  
I drown in the existence  
of you

in a woman's body  
all the sins planted

ghoonghat\*  
her beautiful eyes  
always veiled

\*(head-covering or headscarf, worn primarily in the Indian subcontinent, by some married Hindu, Jain, and Sikh women to cover their heads, and often their faces.)

**Mona Bedi** is a medical doctor living in Delhi, India with her husband, two children and dog. She has been writing poetry since childhood but a few years back she started writing haiku. She has two poetry books: *they you and me* and [dancing moonlight](#). Her poems have been published in *Failed haiku*, *Haiku in Action*, *The Haiku Dialogue*, *cold moon journal*, *tsuri-doro* and many others

## Helen Ogden

after all these years  
his questionable  
taste in flowers

state of the world—  
no longer second guessing  
my childlessness

ripe plums the hickies on her neck

**Helen Ogden** maintains her sanity with a daily haiku/senryu practice in Pacific Grove, CA. When she recently discovered that it is not simply a 5-7-5 poem her world expanded, along with her mind.

## Allyson Whipple

heavy gray clouds  
move in the wrong direction—  
our wilting gardens

rinse cycle  
laundry forgotten  
in the rain

**Allyson Whipple** is the author of [\*Come into the World Like That\*](#) and [\*We're Smaller Than We Think We Are\*](#) and co-author of the interactive fiction *Choice: Texas* ([www.playchoicetexas.com](http://www.playchoicetexas.com)). Her poetry is informed by the landscape and political climate of Texas. Allyson teaches technical communication at Austin Community College.

## E. L. Blizzard

### (Un)growing up

Pushing a finger into the dry soil of the overwintered pot, I look up and catch sight of a school bus full of heads barely making it into their window view. One face in each window, each half covered in a sky-blue mask, head cuddled in hoodie, only a bit of eyes and forehead. I realize it's the first time in years I've seen a bus full of such young ones. It all comes into focus, how things are. The separateness, the changes. Is it easier or harder now for those children? Not talking to someone, no one scrunched in beside them, the laughter and words of others silenced. Just staring through their bit of glass out into the cold, watching the morning take root. I remember my own bus rides and how there were times I needed others around me, the sounds, the encapsulated chaos. And the times I prayed for separateness to feel safe. I guess either scenario could stunt a person, depending.

tender bulb  
trying to force it  
before its time

**E. L. Blizzard** lives in Kentucky. She values having haikai poetry in many journals and e-zines. Recently, she's had a haiga anthologized and a haibun nominated for a Pushcart. She spent many years in advocacy nonprofit work, allying with immigrants/refugees, cis/straight/LGBTQ+ survivors of intimate partner violence, and those experiencing homelessness.

## Sarah E. Metzler

the lone star state of her pregnancy

equinox

some push-back

in his fist-bump

**Sarah Metzler** is a kid's counselor and writer who lives in rural Pennsylvania with her husband, dog, and a few old chickens. Currently, Sarah is doggedly pursuing radical love of the month of March.

## Tracy Davidson

seismic                      shift  
a world                      a war  
within      and      without

hard labour  
made even harder  
a woman  
gives birth  
in the rubble

**Tracy Davidson** lives in Warwickshire, England, and writes poetry and flash fiction. Her work has appeared in various publications and anthologies, including: *Poet's Market*, *Mslexia*, *Atlas Poetica*, *Modern Haiku*, *The Binnacle*, *A Hundred Gourds*, *Shooter*, *Journey to Crone*, *The Great Gatsby Anthology*, *WAR*, *In Protest: 150 Poems for Human Rights*.

## Baisali Chatterjee Dutt

foraging for twigs --  
how crows build homes  
how we build fires

broken bridge  
navigating between  
their moods and mine

natural disaster me e v e r y d a m n d a y

**Baisali Chatterjee Dutt** is a domesticated nomad who writes, edits, dabbles in theater and teaches. Her poetry has been published in various anthologies and magazines, print as well as online.



## Marcie Wessels and *Margaret Walker*

### Dirty Dancing

moonbeam desire the length of the room

*hide and seek the private places*

curves and angles dark corner tango

*eyes lock two as one the rhythms change*

your breath my breath i lose my way

*come now slow retrace the steps*

**Marcie Wessels** lives in San Diego, CA. She is the author of two children's picture books. Her poems have appeared in tiny words, Heliosparrow and MahMight haiku journals.  
[www.marciewessels.com](http://www.marciewessels.com)

## Marcie Wessels and *Margaret Walker*

### POLITICALLY INCORRECT

congress members up for special erection

*hard porn on his desk*

without her consent forced resignation

*enjoy rape live on TV*

his blue ball blacklist

*a daughter calls for withdrawal*

her unplanned me too

*double standard the flag of his fly*

**Margaret Walker** is a former school principal. Now homebound with ME/CFS, her work has been published in *Failed Haiku*, *Human/Kind Journal*, *Drifting Sands*, *#FemkuMag*, *Stardust Haiku*, *Whiptail*, *Prune Juice*, and *Bloō Outlier Journal*. She is a Pushcart Prize (haibun), Red Moon Anthology (haibun) and Touchstone Award (haiku) nominated poet.

## Amber Winter

bath for two  
I'm wet before  
I get in

my pregnancy  
pomelos grow  
into honeydews

decidual casting  
the blueprint  
of my children

**Amber Winter** has birthed and nursed three children. She spends her days teaching her kids how life sucks from dealing with an autoimmune disease to food allergies. Her husband is helping her navigate this life to the best they can make it. She enjoys writing poetry and fiction.

## Eva Limbach

magnolia buds  
a mother sends her son  
to war

if it weren't for the rain bombed out home

**Eva Maria Limbach** lives in Saarbrücken, a German town near the French border, with her husband and her dog. She works as a pharmacist. Since 2012 she has been writing haiku, senryu, tanka and haibun.

## Erin Castaldi

fire ash  
all the days  
I almost quit

common robin faith is all we have

Ayahuasca  
I scratch the moon  
and sniff

**Erin Castaldi** has appeared in *Akitsu Quarterly*, *Heron's Nest*, and *Presence*, as well as a dozen anthologies and has received merit in several contests. She has had work translated into Japanese, Croatian, Romanian, Italian, German and Chinese. Her current positions include: Poet Laureate of the city of Somers Point, New Jersey.

## Kristina Todorova

green cherries  
I teach my daughter  
patience

**Kristina Todorova** lives in Sofia, Bulgaria. She started writing haiku as a challenge in the beginning of 2021, and since then her poems have been published in regional and international journals including *World Haiku Review*, *Cattails*, *Failed Haiku*, *Time Haiku*, *Cold Moon Journal* and others.

## **Susan Burch**

blanketflower the blood in my urine

deep depression no flesh left on the bone

**Susan Burch** is a good egg.

## Peggy Hale Bilbro

as if  
I still remembered  
mating season

**Peggy Bilbro** lives uncomfortably in the Deep South with her husband and green babies. She writes poetry of all kinds, and has had a few published. Aside from that, she loves her family, her friends and traveling, in no specific order.



## Mary Stevens

his ranging hands home my terrain

hairspraying it  
into place . . .  
messy bun

our politicians  
working hard  
to make it hard to vote

**Mary Stevens** lives and does things haiku in New York's Hudson Valley. Her other passion is dance, in particular meeting weekly with a community of women for an embodied expressive movement practice. Connecting intimately with the physical-spiritual self is another way she finds meaning and beauty and gets down to the essence of things.

# Cynthia Anderson

## Inheritance

Once, on a family visit, I noticed the soles of my mother's feet. She sat across from me and took off her socks in the too-warm living room. I was startled by the massive callouses bisecting the mounds below her toes, shaped like stigmata or rivers—treacherous estuaries clogged with sediment. I had the beginnings of those same marks. Seeing my future unless I chose differently, I began to poke, prod, anoint, trim, massage. Today, those signs on my feet are long gone. No one can say I'm irrevocably my mother's daughter. And yet...

swallowing the canary a lonesome smile

## Cynthia Anderson (cont.)

war crimes  
debating definitions  
from a safe distance

crying alone in a room filled with family my father

**Cynthia Anderson** has published eleven poetry books, most recently a collection of haiku and senryu titled [Full Circle](#) (Cholla Needles, 2022). She makes her home in the Mojave Desert near Joshua Tree National Park. [www.cynthiaandersonpoet.com](http://www.cynthiaandersonpoet.com)

## **Bernadette O'Reilly**

new year's eve i raise a glass to myself

**Bernadette O'Reilly** is published in various anthologies and journals on and off line. She has participated in open mics around Dublin city. Bernadette is a member of Inkslingers Writer's Group in Dublin and has also participated in many workshops.

## Arvinder Kaur

shredding a daisy  
petal by petal  
all the guesses  
I still make  
if you love me or not

puberty  
my daughter argues over  
the curves of Venus

crushed petals  
the baby has  
the rapist's eyes

**Arvinder Kaur** specializes in English literature and Media studies. She delves into Japanese short form poetry for the succor of the soul and the genre has rewarded her amply. She lives in Chandigarh, India with her family.

## Hazel Hall

empty hive—  
the sting remaining  
from their marriage

headlight moon  
    *the bruise-dark sky*  
her trolley bag packed  
    *adjusting her mask*  
for the last time  
    *in the shadows*

**Hazel Hall** is a widely published Australian poet and musicologist. Recent collections are Step by Step, tai chi haiku (Picaro Poets 2018), Moonlight Over the Siding (Interactive Press 2019), Severed Web (Picaro Poets 2020) and a verse drama Please Add Your Signature and Date it Here (Litoria Press 2021).

## Debbie Strange

litterbugs the propagation of human insects

lifeboat  
theory  
the  
disabled  
denied  
boarding

teen suicide  
the lichen-pocked faces  
of stone angels

**Debbie Strange** is a chronically ill short-form poet, haiga artist, and photographer. Her book, [The Language of Loss: Haiku & Tanka Conversations](#), received first place in the 2019 Sable Books International Women's Haiku Book Contest, and Honourable Mention in the 2021 Haiku Society of America Merit Book Awards.

## Jenn Ryan-Jauregui

the color  
of bruised fruit  
grief season

fifth year  
her body becoming  
a war zone

**Jenn Ryan-Jauregui** began writing haiku and senryu and posting them on social media as a means of processing and healing from childhood and adulthood trauma. Her work has been published/featured in *Haiku Journal*, *Cold Moon Journal*, *Haiku in Action*, and The Haiku Foundation's *Haiku Dialogue*.



## Kathleen Trocmet

first date. . .  
he wants to go  
all the way

waking past  
the morning bells. . .  
remembering  
the taste of kisses  
last night

**Kathleen Trocmet** and her husband of 49 years are happily retired. Her Japanese short-form poetry has appeared in many international online journals, blogs, and magazines.

## Daniela Misso

green apple bite  
my bitter moments  
left behind

**Daniela Misso** lives in a medieval village in Umbria Italy. Her haiku and senryu have been published all over the world and she was awarded 1st Place in the 2021 AHA Haiku/Senryu Contest Annual Hortensia Anderson Memorial Award and 2nd Place in The Fleeting Words Tanka Contest 2021 UHTS. She is author of the book "[Conessioni Sottili](#)", ed. FusibiliaLibri, 2022.

## Muskaan Ahuja

sending him  
my foam moustache  
cafe selfie

still waters —  
building my whole life  
around husband and children

**Muskaan Ahuja** is a haijin from Chandigarh, India who enjoys good food, art, poetry, and books. Whenever she feels an air of boredom, she immerses herself reading and writing haiku. Her poems have been published in reputed journals like *Failed Haiku*, *Wales Haiku*, *Bottlerockets*, *Frogpond*, *Asahi Haikuist Network*, *The Haiku Foundation*, *the cherita*, and more.

## **Beki Reese Van Buren**

Indian summer-  
even my silk kimono  
feels heavy

summer moonlight-  
sleeping with the cat  
between us

**Beki Reese Van Buren** is a poet and editor from southern California now living in Washington State. She teaches haiku at public schools and libraries. A retired librarian, her work has appeared in numerous anthologies and small journals. She teaches haiku at public schools and libraries.

## Deborah P Kolodji

emerging  
from tangled dreams  
first blackberries

new growth in an old tree flower child

both of us still shaking  
we blame all of it  
on the San Andreas

**Deborah P Kolodji** is the California Regional Coordinator for the Haiku Society of America. Her book, [highway of sleeping towns](#), won a Touchstone Distinguished Book Award from the Haiku Foundation. Her latest [e-chapbook of scifaiku](#), is available as a free download from Title IX Press (now Moth Orchid Press)

## Cyndi Lloyd

algae on branches  
reshaping  
democracy

wind through dry reeds  
a different sound  
to my old story

## Cyndi Lloyd (cont.)

### Red Blanket with Black Dots

Her eyes dazed. She's carried out on a stretcher from the maternity hospital in Mariupol—the one that's just been bombed. Her hip detached and pelvis crushed. The woman's bloody hand cradles her belly.

Hospitals begin blackout procedures at night. As the third week of war ends, the moon swells towards full. Will clouds bury the light?

blown-in walls—  
snowflakes swirl  
among ashes

**Cyndi Lloyd** is an award-winning writer, and her haikai poems appear in worldwide publications and anthologies. She enjoys volunteering as a moderator on Inkstone Poetry Forum. Life in Utah, with her husband and dog, allows her the pleasures of hiking and taking too many photographs.

## Announcements

- I'd like to *sincerely* thank everyone who submitted to this issue and for all of your patience with my response time as I cope with the passing of my father. Working with all of you has been a lovely distraction, though. I would like to kindly ask that everyone, whether you're new or have submitted to every issue since the beginning of time, please review the submission guidelines. There have been a few subs sent outside of submission periods, sent to wrong emails, etc. and I just want to make sure that everyone is on the same page.
- [Moth Orchid Press](#), the sibling press of #FemkuMag, released a new anthology titled [Burnt Diary: Memoir and Tanka Prose](#). You can learn more information about it [here](#).
- I am still going through submissions for the Moth Orchid Press erotic haiku anthology. If you have not received a response yet, you should receive one within the next few weeks.
- There are two more anthologies planned for the Moth Orchid Press 2022 year. The next on my list will be a "Youth and Young Adult" (under 40) anthology. This will be to showcase the younger folx in the community and their diverse voices. Since Youth and Young Adult haiku poets are harder to come by, I'd like your help in spreading the word as much as possible. An email with submission guidelines will be sent by the middle of May. The last anthology I have planned for 2022 is a "Then and Now" anthology which will focus on the individual's personal poetic journey. Haijin published in this anthology will have one (or two) of their very first published haiku paired with one (or two) new, original unpublished haiku. More details coming later. Sign up for Moth Orchid newsletters [here](#).



- A new contest is in the works! I have received permission from Marie Sutcliffe, Rachel Sutcliffe's mother, to run an e-Book contest in Rachel's name and memory. She was a dear friend of mine and made an incredible impact on the haiku community, as well as was a founding contributor to #FemkuMag. I'm honored to have the opportunity to continue her legacy. More details coming in May. Sign up for Moth Orchid newsletters [here](#).
- CONGRATULATIONS to Joan Torres and Debbie Strange for being recognized by The Haiku Foundation's Touchstone awards. Their poems are below:

Winner, 2021 Touchstone Award

**below the missing dog a missing woman**

*Joan Torres*

*#FemkuMag 31*

Long List, 2021 Touchstone Award

**Fata Morgana the (in)visibility of my (dis)ability**

*Debbie Strange*

*2021 Marlene Mountain Memorial Haiku Contest*