

#FemkuMag



Issue 34

#FemkuMag

haikai poetry by womxn and non-binary folx

November 2022

Issue 34

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A note from me to you—

Please let me start by apologizing for how incredibly late this issue is. I had planned to get it out on time, and certainly before today, but my health has not been good. I won't get into too much, but I will say that bone spurs, osteoarthritis, and nerve damage have completely overtaken my body and at 30, my body is the equivalent of a 65 year old, so I'm doing a lot of adjusting and experimenting with different treatments to find what works.

It is because of this that #FemkuMag will go down to two issues per year next year and I am seriously considering taking on an assistant editor to help things run more smoothly. To be fair, when I started this journal, the issues were less than 15 pages and now we're close to 80 sometimes. With my health deteriorating, this format is just too much by myself four times a year. I do hope y'all will understand.

As for this issue, there's a lot to unpack. First, the Marlene Mountain Contest results (poems only, commentary to come soon!!!) and on top of the normal submission period, I also asked for Roe vs Wade poems which are found all throughout this issue. I wanted to get the contest commentary into this issue, too, but with my current Bronchitis, I just can't. However, it's **ELECTION DAY** here in the USA and I **NEEDED** to get these poems out into the world to encourage as many people as possible to VOTE for the rights of anyone AFAB (assigned female at birth), and to VOTE queer. We have the right to exist in our bodies however we need to. I'm sorry I couldn't get this out sooner because it really means everything to me, but I do hope you can help share these poems in protest and encouragement today—even if you don't have a poem in here, find one that affects you, share their experience, and encourage people to go VOTE!

 Lithica Ann, editor

Marlene Mountain Contest Results

First Place

maidenhair ferns he hides the condom
Lorraine Padden

Second Place

Roe v Wade the right not to bear
Laurie Greer

Third Place

schrodinger's womxn knowing and unknowing our place
Tracy Davidson

Honorable Mentions

(r)aging
Barrie Levine

where polliwogs used to be the neighborhood
Cynthia Anderson

date rape a pocket full of posies
Susan Burch

Contributors

Susan Burch

Joan Torres

Aidan Castle

Ustat Sethi

Kristen Lindquist

Richa Sharma

Kimberly Dawn

Laurie Greer

Corine Timmer

Barrie Levine

Hifsa Ashraf

Sarah Metzler

Helen Ogden

Jillian Calahan

Debbie Strange

Antoinette Cheung

Wanda Amos

Christine Eales

Mona Bedi

Daniela Misso

Nancy Brady

Marilyn Ashbaugh

Debbie Olson

Cynthia Anderson

Hazel Hall

Allyson Whipple

Mariel Herbert

Ana Drobot

Arvinder Kaur

Lakshmi Iyer

Helen Buckingham
Billie Dee
Deborah P Kolodji
Mariko Kitakubo
Jackie Chou
Sharon Hawley
kris moon kondo
Pris Campbell
Margaret Walker
Vandana Parashar
Tracy Davidson
Sangita Kalarickal
Reid Hepworth
Kerry J Heckman
Mirela Brăilean
Maya Daneva
Anna Maria Domburg-Sancristoforo
Teji Sethi
Laurie Wilcox-Meyer
Mary McCormack
Neera Kashyap
Maeve O'Sullivan
Erin Castaldi
B. L. Bruce
Tina Mowrey
Baisali Chatterjee Dutt
Bernadette O'Reilly
Daya Bhat
Maria Concetta Conti
Muskaan Ahuja
Betsy Hearne

Susan Burch

self-absorbed raincloud

ex-boyfriend his dick pic a Pixar short

that jerk
might be
her baby-daddy
if not for
Plan B

Susan Burch is a good egg.

Joan Torres

noting my weight gain balding doctor

Joan Torres is a junior college student studying social work. She is from a small town and whose world through poetry has gotten a little bigger. She has been published in *#FemkuMag* and *Sonic Boom*.

Aidan Castle

the ledge where i was standing moonlit

wet with rain the sex worker's mascara

Aidan Castle is a nonbinary poet and visual artist whose work is informed by neurodivergence and a passion for nature. He lives in the Pacific Northwest with his husband and two cats. Aidan's poems have been published in various journals of haiku and senryu, and he was a 2021 Trailblazer finalist.

Ustat Sethi

fogged mirror
sharpening the contours
of my thoughts

scratching away her worth in gold :: caveat emptor

inter alia *fearless* is a trait of the living

Ustat Sethi is a student of grade 12, Cambridge Advanced Level. When she is not scribbling away in her journal, she enjoys dancing, collecting dog pictures and discussing everything from socio - politics to cryptography.

Kristen Lindquist

neighborhood tracks
just another way
a kid could die

learning to read
his facial expressions
moon map

new cribbage hand resisting the binary

female rain
the five beating hearts
of an earthworm

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

Richa Sharma

sea storm i risk honesty

dried mud the body eager to dissolve into a definition

in my world he assumes the worth of rain

after the storm so much forgotten

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

Kimberly Dawn

abandonment
the hollow familiarity
of home

Kimberly Dawn is a constant work in progress, continuously evolving in her personal and creative life. She is a poetess of many platforms including haiku, haibun, blackout, elfchen and more. You can find more of her work on Instagram [@rockport_press](#) ❤️

Laurie Greer

first crescent moon
they tell her the fetus
can make a fist

pomegranate seeds...
the names of the missing
on the tongues of their mothers

black-eyed Susans. . .
a blind spot
for too long

Laurie Greer lives, writes, and walks in Washington, DC, where there is still taxation without representation.

Corine Timmer

urban tiger she lap dances her way into his pocket

that smile
used to flutter my heart
frozen waterfall

extramarital affair again the flowers

new moon in Aquarius
following the beat
of my own drum

Corine Timmer is a visual artist, author, publisher, award-winning haiku poet, and street dog advocate. She has completed four anthologies of animal haiku keyed to the signs of the Chinese zodiac. She lives in rural Portugal between the sea and the Algarvean hills.

Barrie Levine

senior date
all our decades
a perfect match

taste of dawn
the salt on your lips
from an early swim

jeweledclutchmom'stightgriponme

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*.

Hifsa Ashraf

apart from
the part of me. . .
(still)born

day moon. . .
she takes the blame
for miscarriage

ivy vine—
the way he portrays
a woman

peacock flower—
I still am a mother
of the unborn child

Hifsa Ashraf is a widely published award-winning poet, author, editor, and social activist from Rawalpindi, Pakistan. She won the Touchstone Award (Individual Poems, 2021) and received special mention for her book, *Her Fading Henna Tattoo*, (Touchstone Distinguished Books Award, 2020 and Haiku Society of America Merit Book Award, 2021).

Sarah Metzler

first day of school
her backpack
safety orange

first day of spring
the still wet paint
on a graffiti penis

the white privilege of colorblindness

Sarah Metzler is a poet and kids' counselor living in rural Pennsylvania with her husband, dog, and a few old chickens. Besides short-form poetry, she is currently enjoying fragrant peonies, private swimming holes, and hazy IPAs. She is not enjoying grown-ass adults' use of violence instead of conflict resolution skills.

Helen Ogden

falling petals
he asks me the meaning
of *foreplay*

coming out—
the abortion
I kept to myself

draft opinion
sizing up
the dildo display

supreme court leak
I google *Lysistrata*
followed by *libido*

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.

Jillian Calahan

snowdrop
her secret hidden beneath
the Bible belt

laundry list
of household chores
bloody coat hanger

Jillian Calahan (she/her/they) is a poet and short story writer from Seattle, Washington. When she's not writing you can find her in a bookstore, chilling with her 4 cats and 2 dogs, crafting, or taking too many pictures of pretty sunsets. You can find her work on Instagram [@novamarie_poetry](#)

Debbie Strange



ghost birds
the haunting sound
of bereavement

Debbie Strange (cont.)

lunulae
a friend tells me
about her stillborn

Debbie Strange is a chronically ill poet and visual artist. Her book, *The Language of Loss: Haiku & Tanka Conversations*, won the 2019 Sable Books International Women's Contest. It also received an HM in the 2021 Haiku Society of America Merit Awards, and won the 2022 Marianne Bluger Chapbook Award.

Antoinette Cheung

mission impossible beauty standards

Mother's Day tea –
knowing I will never be
one of them

defiled snow
the lingering clang
of his belt buckle

wedding rings the pretty little nooses we tie

nightclub
the male gaze
on every dollar bill

Antoinette Cheung is a member of the Vancouver Haiku Group in Canada and coordinator of the Haiku Society of America's under 40's social club. She is drawn to the meditative quality of haiku as well as the potential for such a small poetry form to carry so much weight.

Wanda Amos

decluttering I ask him to leave

nanna's shawl
the scent
of lavender and cigarettes

the shame
at junior school. . .
recycled clothing

Wanda Amos lives by the beach on the east coast of Australia. She enjoys connecting her two hobbies of Haiku and Photography.

Christine Eales

sisyphus
inside my body
mood swings

breakdown
the scent of petrol
cuts through the rain

counting
the pills in her hand
morning glories

Christine Eales lives in Surrey UK with her husband, dog and sometimes one or two children. She loves writing haiku and children's poems. She has been published in journals including *Presence*, *The Heron's Nest* and *Modern Haiku*. Two of her favourite hobbies are making truffles and staying happy.

Mona Bedi

young waitress
the old widower talks
to her neckline

family dinner
her sexuality becomes
the topic of discussion

Dr. **Mona Bedi** lives in Delhi, India with her husband, two children and dog. She started writing haiku a few years back and 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.

Daniela Misso

first date -
in the shadows
wild violets

hay-scented wind
I never imagined
my hair being blonde

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 *Connessioni Sottili* (FusibiliaLibri, 2022).

Nancy Brady

(in)justice
of the peace--
spousal abuse

Nancy Brady is a pharmacist by vocation and a poet by avocation, focusing mainly on haiku or senryu (although she admits that she hasn't figured out which is which). She likes to escape the realities of life by reading spicy romances and spine-tingling thrillers.

Marilyn Ashbaugh

Inheritance

She never eats at the table. If she can't drink it or eat it while headed out the door, she leaves it alone.

morning
the long commute
from hand to mouth

The cherry farmhouse table is where all the fighting started. The one piece of furniture everyone else wanted after Mother died.

first AA meeting
she takes the seat
her mother left her

Marilyn Ashbaugh (cont.)

baby's breath a boy with a gun

dope sick she calls him sweetheart

porch light moon
the charred wings
of a broken promise

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

Debbie Olson

she measures her worth size zero

purpling
her left shoulder
butterfly tattoo

is she
or isn't she
Mona Lisa

Debbie Olson lives in Syracuse, New York. Her haiku and senryu has appeared in *Acorn*, *bottle rockets*, *Failed Haiku*, *Frogpond*, *Heron's Nest*, *Modern Haiku*, *Presence*, *Prune Juice*, and *Wales Haiku Journal*.

Cynthia Anderson

Forces of Nature

These days, every full moon has a name—Wolf Moon, Snow Moon, Worm Moon—and now, the Super Flower Blood Moon, complete with total eclipse. Social media fills with photos. As the light returns, my wakeful night is made more so by an immense bang. Living where I do, in the Mojave, this can mean one of two things: an earthquake with sound but no shaking; or, an explosion at the world's largest marine base, where live fire weapons training is a way of life. Come morning, I learn that this time, it's the former.

not yet a robot
I turn over
a new leaf

Cynthia Anderson (cont.)

fire-breathing dragon they got that part right

me myself wanting more than I can give

Cynthia Anderson's most recent book is a collection of haiku and senryu titled *Full Circle* (Cholla Needles, 2022). She lives in the Mojave Desert near Joshua Tree National Park. www.cynthiaandersonpoet.com

Hazel Hall

hospital food
every dinner
smells the same

board games—
the way a marriage
ends in stalemate

bright spring day—
my blues begin
to deepen

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).

Allyson Whipple

hazy moon
humid air holds
the smell of garbage

sweat bee proboscis
dips into my wrinkles
summer's end

first shovel of dirt
hits your casket—
break in the clouds

Allyson Whipple is the editor and host of the Culinary Saijiki blog and podcast (www.culinarysaijiki.com). Past projects include editing the Texas Poetry Calendar and co-creating the interactive fiction Choice: Texas (www.playchoicetexas.com). She now lives in St. Louis, Missouri, where she works in higher education and teaches Pilates.

Marcel Herbert



Maribel Herbert (cont.)

his soapbox in a funhouse set up

late-night browsing
startled by a pop-up
for red plums

Maribel Herbert writes haiku, senryu, and speculative poetry. Unfortunately, she also enjoys collective nouns for birds. She lives in Northern California with her family. Online: maribelherbert.wordpress.com.

Ana Drobot

after the rain
the smell of linden flowers
follows me
everywhere around I feel
your footsteps

acacias
blooming again -
street protest

the scent of musk
again in my bed -
another date

Born in 1983, in Bucharest, Romania, **Ana Drobot** was present in Haiku EuroTop, the top of the most creative haiku authors, during 2015-2021.

Arvinder Kaur

garden party
the bee stung lips
of a social butterfly

maudlin
he says he loves
my flaws

Arvinder Kaur specialises in English literature and media studies and has a passion for short forms of poetry. She loves jacarandas and sunsets. She lives in Chandigarh India with her family.

Lakshmi Iyer

a newborn
wrapped in the rubble
how long
the pain to last
beyond nine months

at fifty-six
I'm still sorting out
my past
in different voices
seasons after seasons

Lakshmi Iyer has started loving Haikai and is trying to capture every moment of her life in minimalist words. Haiku seems to be simple, but it is very deep and it resonates with our five senses and its actions. Her belief : 'The soul of haiku lies in the perspective that one sees through'.

Helen Buckingham

Year of the Tiger
she leaves with nothing
but the child on her back

holy shameman

no women no pause

weapon of ~~bad apple~~ rapist police

Helen Buckingham lives in Wells, England. Her work appears regularly in journals such as *Bones, is/let* and *Modern Haiku*. Anthologies include: *Haiku in English* (Norton, 2013). Among her collections are: *water on the moon* (Original Plus, 2010) and *sanguinella* (Red Moon, 2017), each of which was shortlisted for a Touchstone Award.

Billie Dee

that little spot routine mammogram

lunchbreak
her perfume
still in my hair

Girl Scout camp
the woodpecker feather
I've kept all these years

Billie Dee is a poet from San Miguel, New Mexico.

Deborah P Kolodji

the wrong name
from your lips
sudden dryness

prickly pear
outside the chapel
no fruit

not yet extinct
the rainbow sheen
of another oil spill

our baby blanket
my husband tries to stop
his girlfriend's abortion

right to life march
my husband insists
you're Catholic now

Deborah P Kolodji is the California Regional Coordinator for the Haiku Society of America and the Moderator of the Southern California Haiku Study Group. Her 2021 e-chapbook of scifaiku, *tug of a black hole*, by Title IX Press (now Moth Orchid Press) has won second place for an Elgin Award.

Deborah P Kolodji and *Mariko Kitakubo*

Coming of Age

angel hair pasta
her baby tooth
beneath a pillow

*first kiss
under the olive tree,
garden party
on this mellow
summer solstice*

Mariko Kitakubo lives in Tokyo and has published six books of tanka, including three bilingual ones, *On This Same Star*, *Cicada Forest*, and *Indigo*. She is an experienced performer who has performed her tanka with percussion in more than 51 cities across the world. Her website is at <https://en.kitakubo.com/>

Jackie Chou

lost chivalry...
buying daffodils
for myself

first date
he asks about the dirt
under my nails

Sharon Hawley, *Jackie Chou*, kris moon kondo

soulmates

*what we all say
we want in a lover*

half a world apart
a moonflower &
a morning glory

Sharon Hawley is a worker in civil engineering and adventurer in unheard of canyons. She dabbles in poetry.

Jackie Chou is a poet of short form poetry and free verses from Southern California.

kris moon kondo is an artist and poet who has made her home in Japan since 1972.

Pris Campbell

Time Tells

Surely he'll look me in the eyes soon when we make love, I tell myself. He was so kind during our courtship, though yes, inexperienced. I told myself he would start trying to please me, stop running when the deed is done (from his point of view^[OBJ]) to wash off some unspeakable proof of the act then move to the far side of the bed.

How many more years will it take?

But that^[OBJ]'s the back story, the reason karma brought me earlier to so many good men's beds. I was being prepared for these long years of deprivation.

north star
aiming the boat's bow
anywhere but here

Pris Campbell (cont.)

dumped
my sixties friend tells me
about the coat hanger

old now
for the first time
no longing for youth

the relief
hits me in waves. . .
abortion

Formerly a clinical psychologist, sailor, bicyclist and casual pianist before ME/CFS stalled her, **Pris Campbell** has been writing free verse and short forms for around 21 years. She has published in multiple anthologies and journals. In 2021 she was thrilled to win first place in the Marlene Mountain and Sanford Goldstein contests. She makes her home in SE Florida with her husband.

Margaret Walker & *Pris Campbell*

In dependence

She was 12 when I picked her up in the maternity ward at the hospital. A beautiful strawberry blonde who had just given birth to her father's child.

With no mother in the home her dad had made her his substitute wife. Keeping her out of school. Moving from place to place so no one would know. Finally, this child called Child Protective Services herself. By then close to 9 months.

Over the next year she attempted suicide several times at home. Then at school. We could no longer keep her safe.

It was a Friday afternoon. No hospital would take her for suicide watch. No bed for a 13 year old girl. It was evening when I reached a psychiatrist acquaintance in a city 50 miles away. He found a spot for her.

I drove her to the hospital that rainy night unable to tell her where we were going. Afraid she would open the car door and throw herself out. Nurses met us at the door of the ER to get her out of the car.

What happened to her father? Probation and supervised visitation.

*lights out
her heart still pounds
with each creak*

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.

Vandana Parashar

squeezing the last of lemons full-time mom

far away from home
a kite falls
in the red light area

music to my ears
the silence
after he leaves

can I
be happy just this once
white lilies

Vandana Parashar is a haiku poet in progress. Her love for brevity made her fall in love with haiku and related forms of Japanese poetry. Her work has been published in many national and international journals and has won several accolades. Her haiku was shortlisted for Touchstone Award (2021.) Her debut e-chapbook is "I Am" (Title IX Press [now Moth Orchid Press], 2019).

Tracy Davidson

little black dress
the stains
I can never get out

supreme (in)justice the screams of our grandmothers

no independence day
too many fireworks
aimed at women

bleeding us
one way or the other
trigger laws

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.

Sangita Kalarickal and Reid Hepworth

Bottomed Out

judges gavel

*rainbows end
those old fears
creep back in*

the hourglass sand

*another betrayal
her sparkle
slowly wears away*

reverses it's flow

*santoku edge
the choices
we are left with*

Trained a physicist, **Sangita Kalarickal's** passion lies In wordsmithing. Her poems and stories have been published in various magazines and anthologies.

Reid Hepworth lives in a tiny cabin in the woods in Jordan River, BC, where she plays tiny ukulele and writes tiny poetry.

Kerry J Heckman

overturned
tonight i question
the stars

rising sun
remembering
her dissent collar

Kerry J Heckman is a therapist and writer in Seattle. She was introduced to haiku in 2002 and has since picked it up and set it down. This time she hopes to hold onto it. Her poems have appeared in *Modern Haiku*, *failed haiku*, and *bottle rockets* among other publications.

Mirela Brăilean

cocoon mom's evasive response about abortion

beyond pain the pain

Mirela Brăilean began writing haiku in 2018 and since, her haiku poetry has been published in many international journals and has won prizes and accolades. She was selected to the European Top 100 most creative haiku authors in 2020 and 2021. She has been nominated for the long list in Touchstone Award 2021. She recently published a collection of 150 haiku entitled *Telling my desire/in a breath* She loves reading, writing, and nature.

Maya Daneva

taking turns
at his family vault
his wife and I

gathering thyme
loving her first husband
more

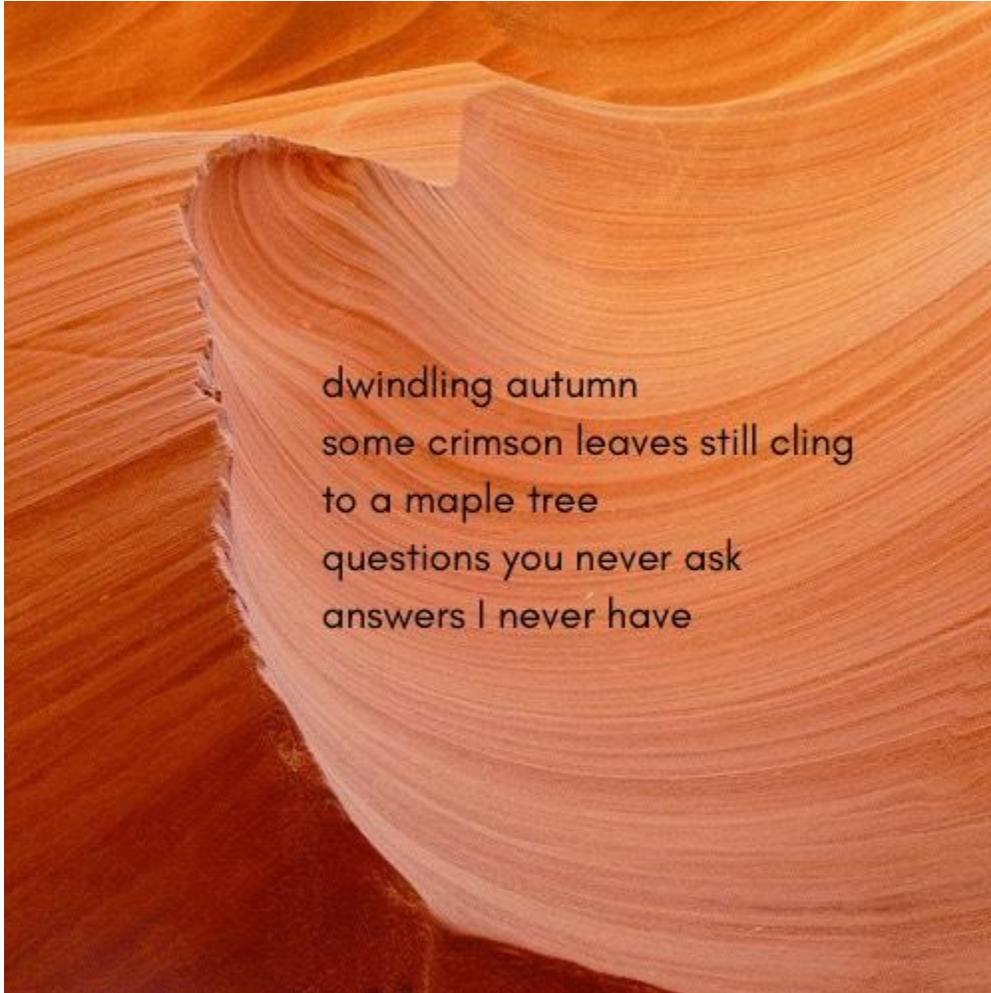
Maya Daneva is a Software Engineering scholar and a Board Member of the female faculty network in a Dutch university. She developed her passion for haiku as a way to cope with grief after the death of her mother. Her work appeared in #FemkuMag, Haiku Canada, Wales Haiku, Frogpond, and Kingfisher.

Anna Maria Domburg-Sancristoforo

yesterday...
when his eyes
made me pretty

Anna Maria Domburg-Sancristoforo currently lives in the Netherlands as a retired university lecturer and translator of literary works. Her poetry, written in Italian and English, has been internationally published. Most recently, she placed 3rd in the Kusamakura Haiku Contest (2020). Anna Maria has been included in The European Top 100 Haiku Authors for three years consecutively.

Teji Sethi



Teji Sethi is a nutritionist, researcher, poet and a visual artist. She believes that a rich tapestry of experiences lives within us as stories and these stories define us, connect us and outlive us when we are gone!

Laurie Wilcox-Meyer

more white houses,
fewer trees—
a caution of wind

sardines
in mass migration. . .
american fear

Laurie Wilcox-Meyer's poetry is shaped by her upbringing in Louisiana, where she played Chopin and dodged alligators while waterskiing. Her third poetry collection is *Conversation in the Key of Blue*, Main Street Rag Publishing, 2020.

Mary McCormack

windswept hair caught up in a kiss

parting petals the most delicate touch

gossip—
a venus flytrap
snaps shut

Mary McCormack is enchanted by the sun.

Neera Kashyap

thin ice -
an unease
I live with

home
I wage war
in hope of peace

Neera Kashyap has worked on social and health communications. Her poetry, short stories and book reviews have appeared in various international journals and anthologies. She started writing haikai three years ago and has been published in Poetry Pea, Haiku Dialogue, Failed Haiku, Bloo Outlier and Scarlet Dragonfly. She lives in Delhi, India.

Lorelyn De la Cruz Arevalo

gibbous moon
her skin crawling
under his grip

skirting around the subject objectification

Lorelyn De la Cruz Arevalo, a member of the Write Your Legacy community in the Philippines, is a self-published author. She works overseas and got "diagnosed" with ADHD in her 40s.

Maeve O'Sullivan

sitting outside
with no sunscreen on —
scent of tomato leaves

super blossom blood moon -
blowing in the wind
prayer flags, tee-shirts

soon to be a great-aunt seedless grapes

not a date the plastic red rose between us

Maeve O'Sullivan (cont.)

Her Perfect Life

Her perfect hair and perfect skin. Her perfect smile. Her perfect figure,
perfect clothes to hang on it. Her perfect house with its perfect décor.

Her perfect boyfriend turned fiancé turned husband.

Her perfect career and perfectly positive attitude.

the email states
that she's outgrown our friendship –
first butterfly

Dubliner **Maeve O'Sullivan's** poetry and haikai have been widely published, anthologized, awarded and translated. She is the author of five collections from Alba Publishing, the most recent being *Wasp on the Prayer Flag* (2021). Maeve leads workshops in haikai, and writes reviews and features for various journals. www.maeveosullivan.com Twitter @writefromwithin

Erin Castaldi

a sound in the thicket bent on stars

spring thaw
divining the future in
candle light

tiger child
a full grown moon's
misunderstanding

acclimating
to a new threshold
the ache of everything

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.

B. L. Bruce

pine tar
your name
in my mouth

B. L. Bruce is an award-winning poet and Pushcart Prize nominee living and writing along California's Central Coast. Her creative work has appeared in dozens publications, including Frogpond, La Merle Poetry Journal, Visitant, Blood Moon Poetry, and Feral, among others. Bruce is the author of four books, *The Weight of Snow*, *28 Days of Solitude*, *The Starling's Song*, and *Measures*, and is the editor-in-chief of the nature-centric literary magazine *Humana Obscura*.

Tina Mowrey

new school year
my daughter asks for
a bulletproof backpack

Tina Mowrey is a picture book author, poet, and 8th grade English Language Arts teacher. She has several published picture books and her haiku will appear in upcoming issues of the following journals: Cicada's Cry, Mayfly, and Poetry Pea.

Baisali Chatterjee Dutt

birdsong
outside my window,
not looking
I hit the snooze button
again

play-acting --
all my different roles
as a woman

dancing in the bedroom jazz sax

my period early fresh sheet day

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. Her latest novella in verse, "Three is a Lonely Number", is available on Amazon Kindle. She also eats chocolate by the bucketful, gazes at clouds and tries to mother two teen boys.

Bernadette O'Reilly

i delete our conversation summer clouds

Bernadette O'Reilly has been published in various anthologies on and off line including #FemkuMag and some blogs. She has taken part in various open mics in Dublin city and participated in various workshops. Bernadette has been writing since the eighties.

Daya Bhat

peonies before the bad touch

sealing her fault lines bridal henna

Daya Bhat has two books of poetry and enjoys writing both free verse and short forms. She lives in Bangalore, India.

Maria Concetta Conti

balcony full of stars
our conversation
about illness

clouds
are clearing away
the trip that i lost

Maria Concetta Conti is a poet from Italy.

Muskaan Ahuja

midnight rain —
this longing to be
yours again

Muskaan Ahuja is a haijin who immerses herself reading and writing Japanese forms, especially haiku. Out of more than 800 poems inspired by Japanese woodblock prints, her haiku was selected for the Bristol Museum & Art Gallery, UK in 2019. Her poems have been published in reputed online and print journals like Frogpond, Failed Haiku, FemkuMag, Nick Virgilio Haiku Association, The Haiku Foundation, the cherita, and more. She even holds an honourable mention in THF Monthly Kukai.

Betsy Hearne

bedside
left holding
your spirit's hand

Betsy Hearne's publications include *A Narrative Compass: Stories That Guide Women's Lives*, collections of poetry, and short stories. Her creative nonfiction "The Cobra's Son" was nominated for a Pushcart Prize, and her haiku have appeared in *The Heron's Nest*, *Frogpond*, and *Shamrock*.

Ingrid Baluchi

over the hill . . .
no longer noticed
by his friends

Temporarily resident in North Macedonia, **Ingrid Balduchi** has spent much of her life travel-writing. Her micro-poetry has been published in international journals, in print and online. A retired teacher and professional artist, she has a deep love and respect for the natural world, and enjoys the quirky side of human nature.

Announcements

- Marlene Mountain Contest commentary will be released in a PDF that also announces Touchstone and Red Moon Press nominations. Keep an eye out for that in the next few weeks!
- [Moth Orchid Press](#), the sibling press to #FemkuMag has released its third anthology, Shaping Water: Erotic Haiku and Tanka. [Click here for ordering information.](#)
- Submissions for Moth Orchid's Youth and Young Adult anthology (for haijin 45 and under) is open for submissions until November 10, 2022. This is the third and last extended call for submissions, so please make sure you get those in. [Click here for more information.](#)
- Guidelines for Moth Orchid's "then and now" anthology are now available and submissions will open in January 2023. [Click here for more information.](#)