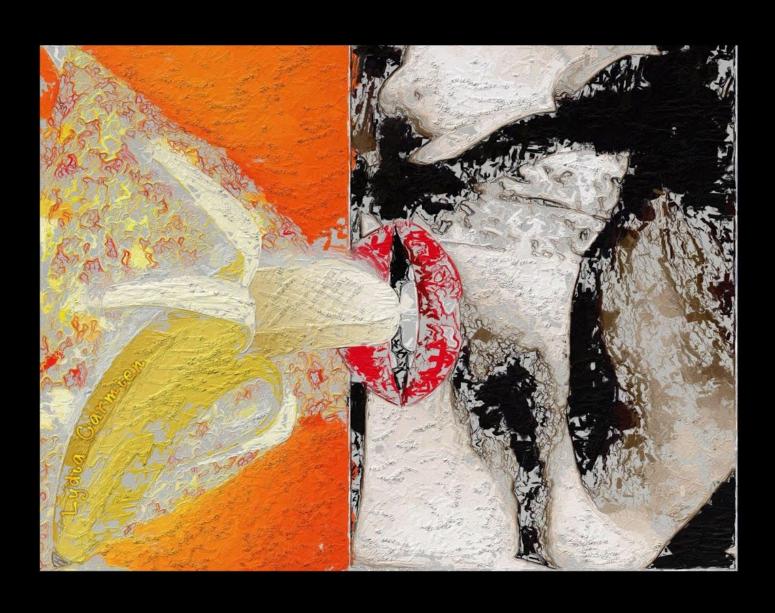
#FemkuMag



#FemkuMag

an ezine of haikai poetry by womxn and non-binary folx

January 2021 Issue 28

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Editor's Note

Welcome to the relaunch of #FemkuMag! As I have evolved over the last few years, so has my vision for this beautiful journal. The entire reason I created #FemkuMag in the first place was to celebrate different experiences from underrepresented voices. I also wanted to push boundaries and create a safe space to publish work that explores subjects seen as taboo, off limits, or dirty. This issue truly does just that. I hope you're ready for a good read!

Stay radical always, Lori A Minor

Contributors

Anna Cates

Pris Campbell

Barrie Levine

Marilyn Ashbaugh

Tia Haynes

Kristen Lindquist

Lydia Carmien

Roberta Beach Jabobson

Mirela Brăilean

Diana Teneva

Eva Joan

Nadejda Kostadinova

Helen Buckingham

Laurie Greer

Kelly Sauvage Angel

Anna Maria Domburg-Sancristoforo

Lisa Anne Johnson

Dorna Hainds

Kat Lehman

Lorraine A. Padden

Kath Abela Wilson

Christina Chin

Debbie Strange

Peggy Hale Bilbro

Marta Chocilowska

Pat Geyer

Richa Sharma

Jackie Chou

Mary White

Susan Burch

Yvette Nicole Kolodji

Marilyn Humbert

Tracy Davidson

Seren Fargo

E. L. Blizzard

Hannah Mahoney

Vandana Parashar

Réka Nyitrai

Julie Schwerin

Corine Timmer

Sarah Metzler

Eva Limbach

Jeaunice T. Burnette

Cherry A

Maeve O'Sullivan

Doris Lynch

Deborah P Kolodji

Anna Cates

The Cure

As a follow up to the mammogram, at my doctor's urging, I set a date for an ultrasound . . .

Maybe if I inject something, a disinfectant, some kind of household cleaner, maybe that would dissolve any nodules . . .

white noise . . .
pressing the off button
my daily accomplishment

<u>Long Drive Home</u>

Returning from a doctor's appointment, a sign along the road detains my attention: Foster parents needed . . .

death toll a hellish masquerade stringing us along

BIO: Dr. Anna Cates lives in Wilmington, Ohio and teaches writing, literature, and education online. Her most recent books include *The Golem & the Nazi* (Red Moon Press) and *The Journey* (Wipf & Stock). She earned her M.A. (English) and Ph.D. (Curriculum & Instruction/English) from Indiana State University and her M.F.A. (Creative Writing) from National University.

Pris Campbell



Pris Campbell (cont.)

The Way We Are

The bed is damp from our love making on this, our wedding night, in one of the two motels in my two stoplight hometown, out-of-town family bundled into my parents' home, sheep counted by now.

Come back to me, my first husband asked before I married the man lying next to me now, the man whose smile secretly sparkles with fool's gold, his eyes, those liars the Eagles sang about.

I leapt into the void, lust my downfall, but already I wonder if this is a marriage or a suicide pact, no net waiting below to save me, if the better choice was that road not taken, that card not played.

weeping willow the thunderstorm tears through its branches

BIO: The haiga, haiku haibun and tanka of Dr. Pris Campbell have appeared in numerous print and online journals and anthologies. She also has placed in a number of competitions. A number of her books have been published by the small press. She makes her home with her husband in Southeast Florida.

Barrie Levine

New York 1970s a mad crush at the women's bar

Venus de Milo the mother of all broken women

femanonymous feeling like no one she knows

BIO: Barrie Levine relocated from New Jersey to the Boston area and practiced family law, concentrating on representing women, from 1973 to 2014. She is 76 and began writing haiku after caregiving for and then losing her husband and mother in the same horrible year. Joining the haiku community has been a life-affirming experience for Barrie.

Marilyn Ashbaugh

Lichen

As fluid as water my race is a reflection of who is peering at me. My ancestors are trafficked as children to become servants in white households. On another shore, living in a Catholic ghetto, my Grandmother is hunted by the Ku Klux Klan for the school uniform she wears. She works in a shoe factory earning half the wages of male workers. Banks refuse her an account so she sews her money in a crazy quilt.

family photos colored leaves zig zag a dark stream

BIO: Marilyn Ashbaugh is a poet, nature photographer and organic gardener. She is widely published in journals and anthologies featuring Japanese short-form poetry including haibun, haiga, rengay, tanka, and haiku.

Tia Haynes

balance beam I put a toe out of line

In Plain Sight

A tulip sits in my daughter's vase, rain still sliding off the petals. What I want is to stay here, caressing it, observing the red, the shape, the smell, for I know that each day it will be passed by, and only noticed when it's dead.

still a shadow the rise of a bruise on my arm

BIO: Tia Haynes is the editor of *Prune Juice Journal*. Her works can be found in such venues as *The Heron's Nest, Frogpond, Modern Haiku*, and *Acorn*. Her chapbook, *leftover ribbon*, was shortlisted for the Touchstone Distinguished Book Awards and is available on Amazon. She lives in Lakewood, Ohio.

Kristen Lindquist

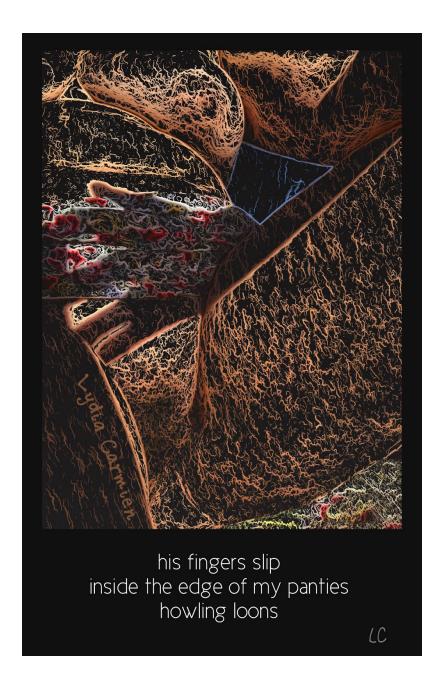
first snowflakes my inner child rushes out

owl moon not alone tonight with all my questions

self-isolation the old cat and I sit in the sun

BIO: Kristen Lindquist is a published poet and naturalist who lives on the coast of Maine.

Lydia Carmien



BIO: Lydia Carmien is not the artist's real name. It's a pseudonym. Lydia lives in the mind of her creator in an alternate universe, unconstrained by realism. In her other world she is an award-winning haiku poet, children's author, visual artist and designer. Lydia has been exploring erotic art for some years, focusing on liberating the innate sexual being that lives within all of us. This is her first published haiga.

Roberta Beach Jacobson

irregular pay periods

first date slowly I unfold origami

desert isle she thirsts for vocabulary

BIO: Roberta Beach Jacobson is an American writer who lived in Europe for four decades. Her poems, essays and fiction have appeared in 60 anthologies published on four continents.

Mirela Brăilean

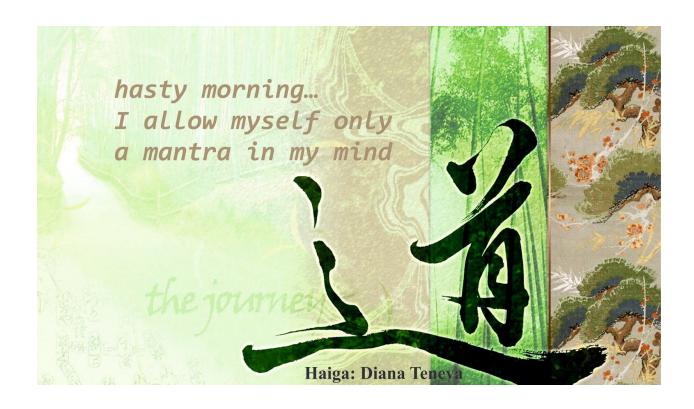
barbed wire with every passing bird a part of me

deprived by birth to be anything but a human being

BIO: Mirela Brăilean, author of *Loiter on Hills* (2019), is a biologist and a member of both the Romanian and French Haiku Society. She has won awards in competitions such as RO Foto Haiku, Senryu, Romanian Haiku and Kukai, Foto Haiga. She has haiku published in *The Mainichi, #FemkuMag, The Bamboo Hut, Haiku Dialogue*, and many others.

Diana Teneva

homecoming...
even without me
the crocuses bloom



BIO: Diana Teneva is a Bulgarian writer. Her poems have been published in many journals, including *Sketchbook, World Haiku Review, The Heron's Nest, The Mainichi, Asahi Haikuist Network, A Hundred Gourds, Shamrock* and *Chrysanthemum.* Some of her work has been translated into Russian, French, English, Italian, Spanish and Croatian.

Eva Joan

a lot to say and no words. . . winter-weary

falling leaves back again this sadness

BIO: Eva Joan was born in 1960 in Augsburg/Germany and now lives in Glücksburg at the coast of the Baltic Sea. Eva is a pharmaceutical commercial assistant and course instructor for autogenic training. During her free time she writes, reads a lot, listens to music, and likes to knit.

Nadejda Kostadinova

rosebush when will men stop asking my age

BIO: Nadejda Kostadinova is from Sofia, Bulgaria. She's been writing poetry and haiku since 2017. Her work has been published in various online and printed editions. She received honorable mention in the 6th National contest organized by the Bulgarian Haiku Association (2019) and 3rd prize in Maya Lyubenova International Haiku Contest (2020).

Helen Buckingham

ta da! to do

new year's fireworks dogs and boomers howl at the moon

taking my grief out on an empty beach I stamp my feet sore scream my heart raw for a soft ice cream fix

BIO: Helen Buckingham lives in Wells, England. Her work appears regularly in journals such as *Bones, is/let* and *Modern Haiku. A*nthologies 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.

Laurie Greer

customer service a mask over the mask

mechanical pencil his points about what girls can do

stage fright crossing over into midlife

BIO: Laurie Greer wrote long form poetry for many years before coming under the spell of haiku in 2018.

Kelly Sauvage Angel

eggs on toast the early years of menopause

used women's clothing

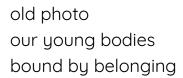
Bi Any Other Name

Emerging from the woods the other afternoon, I encountered a couple of younger women, perhaps in their mid-twenties, dallying at the trailhead. It appeared one might be a caregiver for the other. My presence seemed to catch the first one off-guard. Was it my shaved head? My trail-stench? Her charge, on the other hand, expressed delight in my arrival. She ran over to me, euphoric over the way I looked just like her doll, which, if you ask me, had seen better days.

spf lip tint accessorizing the butchest of barbies

BIO: Kelly Sauvage Angel spends her lucid moments seeking freedom. After clawing her way through yet another day of misogynistic, heteronormative bullshit, she finds respite in segment-hiking the Ice Age National Scenic Trail and immersing herself in identity-affirming smut.

Anna Maria Domburg-Sancristoforo



moon sunset none to capture my desire

winter night a dive in my void

BIO: 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.

Lisa Anne Johnson

shaking her upside down piggybank earth

sleeping alone — cradling the soft puddles of my used belly

BIO: Lisa Anne Johnson is a retired experimental biologist, practicing witch, feminist, and an occasional haiku poet. Her work has been published in *Frogpond*, *The Mainichi*, and *Modern Haiku*. This is Lisa's debut in *#FemkuMag*.

Dorna Hainds

moonrise a lump of darkness felt with my fingers

chilled champagne the stillness of evening stars

moon viewing—
i retrace the love bites
on your neck

BIO: Dorna Hainds hails from the wee town of Lapeer, Michigan, which has a population of less than 9,000. She is Indian by birth, but an American citizen through the process of adoption. Her interests are in reading and writing. Dorna finds her Haiku inspiration through daily experiences and in sleep.

Kat Lehman

lunar eclipse... his before hers on the census

beautiful despite the label skunk cabbage

forest light I s(l)eep through the darkness

Bikini at 51

A show of skin once drew predatory gazes. Now nerves awaken to the texture of sand. The sting of sea salt. Early autumn breezes brushing my midriff. Bare and unnoticed.

beach body a shade of hibiscus singes my skin

BIO: Dr. Kat Lehmann is a Connecticut scientist-poet captivated by the grandiose within the minute. A Best of the Net nominee, her poems have appeared in *Mayfly, Sonic Boom, The Heron's Nest*, and elsewhere. Her third book, *Stumbling Toward Happiness: Haibun and Hybrid Poems* (2019), shares meditative notes of self-exploration. Twitter/Instagram: @SongsOfKat

Lorraine A. Padden

half-moon scars of a self-made man

family bonfire mom tosses in faggots of insults

thrust of his rebuttal in the body of her email

BIO: Lorraine A. Padden is a former professional ballet dancer, arts consultant and contemporary haiku poet. Her haiku have been featured in various journals including *Frogpond, tinywords, Modern Haiku, bottle rockets, Presence, bones,* as well as three anthologies edited by Robert Epstein.

Kath Abela Wilson

lily of the nile. . . dad's older brother calls my mom "ethnic"

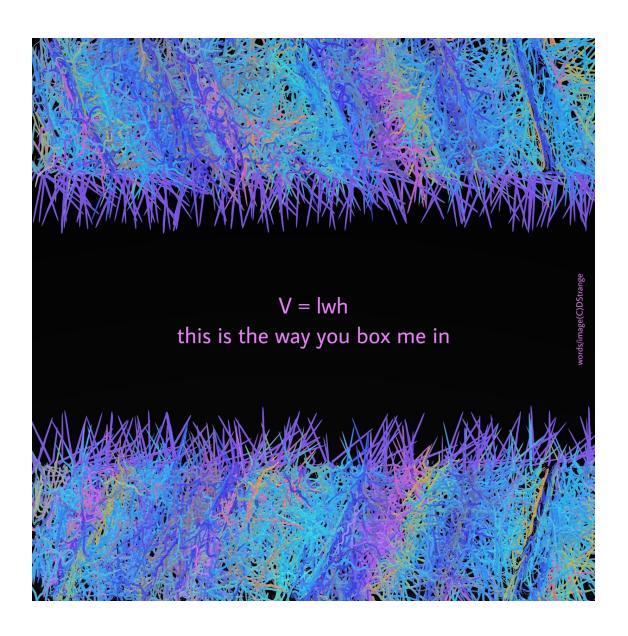
BIO: Kath Abela Wilson, creator and leader of Poets on Site, lives in California with her husband Rick. Although Kath Abela's Poets meetings usually take place in gardens and museums as inspiration to write and share, she currently hosts spontaneous, vibrant Zoom meetings that don't stay inside the box. Her name *Abela* honors her 95 year old mother who left us in 2015.

Christina Chin

winter night between silence roaring waves

BIO: Christina Chin paints and writes haiku. Won two City Soka Saitama's 2020 haiku prizes. She is 1st place winner in the 34th Annual Cherry Blossom Sakura Festival 2020 Contest. Her photo-haiku won 1st prize in the 8th Setouchi Matsuyama 2019 Contest. She is published in journals and anthologies.

Debbie Strange



Debbie Strange



final destination i didn't think we'd make it this far

BIO: Debbie Strange is an internationally published short-form poet, haiga artist, and photographer, whose creative passions connect her more closely to the world and to herself. Her most recent book is *The Language of Loss: Haiku & Tanka Conversations*, the winner of the 2019 Sable Books International Women's Haiku Contest. https://debbiemstrange.blogspot.com

Peggy Hale Bilbro

eavesdropping on the nearby table spiced tea

Space and Cyberspace

With lockdown to flatten the curve of covid-19 infection, our circle has drawn closer. Family hugs, dinners out, visits with friends, yoga classes are all now out of reach. Each day we circle around, coming back to the same reality of isolation, separation, enclosure. It is only through the miracle of technology that we manage to stretch our circle back around those we love. Facebook, FaceTime, Zoom, even the humble telephone all keep us connected in this seemingly unending cycle of uncertainty. But we are still alive and we can still smell the flowers, savor our food, and share our memories. Perhaps this isolation has been a timeout to remind us of the beauty of life itself.

the arc of time over the horizon another day curved around life

Peggy Hale Bilbro (cont.)

Old Dreams

He always goes to sleep before I do. When my mind finally unwinds enough that I can lie down and close my eyes, he rolls over and cups my body into his without ever waking. He lays his hand on my thigh, and I lay mine over his.

worn down soles the comfort of old shoes

BIO: Peggy Hale Bilbro lives in Alabama with her husband and 'green children'. She has come to love the brevity and condensed nature of haiku and tanka after many years of writing longer verse. Her poems reflect her global explorations as well as her western upbringing and current southern environment.

Marta Chocilowska

he asks her for age can you keep a secret? me too . . .

women's strike a post-mastectomy tattoo on the bare chest

the geisha house a red camellia flower turns heads

BIO: Marta Chocilowska resides in Warsaw, Poland. Her poems have been published in haibun, haiga, haiku and senryu journals worldwide. She has been a prizewinner or judge in international haiku contests. The president of the Polish Haiku Association since 2018 and the manager of The Haiku Foundation's Haiku Registry.

Pat Geyer

sun behind clouds my mood ring is paranoid

invisible to the naked eye like the planets, sometimes so far away. . . socially withdrawn

BIO: After a career in sales and marketing, Pat Geyer lives in East Brunswick, NJ, USA. Her home is surrounded by the parks and lakes where she finds her inspiration in Nature. Published in several journals, she is an amateur photographer and poet.

Richa Sharma

fading mist a name alongside mine

a pair of cranes that morning without him

BIO: Richa Sharma has been writing Japanese short form poetry for about two years, inspired by her love of nature and English literature. Her work has appeared in numerous journals.

Jackie Chou

love letter his promises paper-thin

autumn trees soon to become completely naked one by one I let go of attachments

first sight
of yellow leaves
dangling on trees
I dream of earrings
on my unpierced ears

BIO: Jackie Chou is a poet of free verse and Japanese short form poetry whose work has been published in journals such as #FemkuMag, Akitsu, Failed Haiku, Frameless Sky, Frogpond, Hedgerow, Red Lights, Ribbons, and others.

Mary White

at the bus stop his unseen rough hand, misted windows

she tells me she is now out from under him

BIO: Mary White is a painter and haiku poet living in Sandycove, Co Dublin, Ireland. She writes haiku, haibun, creates haiga and has participated in many renku. She has started teaching a 'Learn and Share Haiku' class since the winter lockdown. Her acapella group created a performance piece using her haiku.

Susan Burch

Monday morning quarterback my one-night stand tells me things I could do better

who will I go on Wheel of Fortune with now that you're dead? there are no vowels or consonants for this

BIO: Susan Burch is a good egg.

Yvette Nicole Kolodji

rare steak
his interrogation
of my boyfriend

BIO: Yvette Nicole Kolodji is a Haiku poet who has been publishing since 2014. She graduated from UCSC with a B.S. in Biochemistry but her passion is art and poetry.

Marilyn Humbert

caught
between right and left
blood moon

Psych Out

I always thought he would be there to pick me up when I fall...

all these years and still this man a puzzle

BIO: Marilyn Humbert lives in Sydney NSW Australia. Her tanka and haiku appear in international and Australian journals, anthologies and online. Her free verse poems have been awarded prizes in competitions, published online, in anthologies and journals most recently *Ethelzine Issue 6, Black Bough Deep Time 2,* and *Poetry d'Amour Love Anthology 2020.*

Tracy Davidson

bidding goodbye to bad rubbish my conservative Grandma

bones sticking out at awkward angles yet she sees a fat girl in the mirror despite what the doctors say

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

Seren Fargo

so much less than I used to be heron bones

the sting of fire ants border wall

the worm back into the depths of my illness

we argue over the meaning of Black Lives Matter, my face turns red his remains white

BIO: Seren Fargo began writing Japanese-form poetry in 2009. Shortly thereafter, she founded the Bellingham Haiku Group. Her work has won awards and has been widely published in several countries. Having once been a wildlife biologist, Seren particularly enjoys incorporating her past and present experiences from the natural world into her poetry.

E. L. Blizzard

A Season of Taking Issue With Matthew 22:39

From the window, between cars rowed up and down the street, I see neighbors partying with friends outside. Laughter and beats make it through cold glass. Their lights and mine twinkle in time together. The red, plastic cups and glass bottles remind me of past holidays with music and drinking games. Missing parties and people for almost a year, I busy myself studying. My eyes return to my locked-down linguistics reading, the latest learned idiom dirty pint. The active window draws me back. Two guys slap hands and pour liquors in a cup, the South's suicide.

fracturing notions waxing gibbous in the distance

BIO: E. L. Blizzard writes in the US South with work forthcoming or in journals here and there. Within her years of nonprofit work, she's allied with many people and advocated on issues faced by immigrants, refugees, survivors of intimate partner violence within cis and LGBTQ+ relationships, and those experiencing homelessness.

Hannah Mahoney

she decides against reconstructive surgery summer sky

BIO: Hannah Mahoney lives in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Her haiku have appeared in a variety of print and online journals, and she is a recipient of the Kaji Aso International Haiku Award and the Kaji Aso International Senryu Award.

Vandana Parashar

for once not shamed for my shapelessnes second trimester

clean sheets he wants me to talk dirty

sleeping pills nobody knows how deep the rabbit hole goes

BIO: Vandana Parashar is a microbiologist, a teacher, and a haiku enthusiast whose work has been published in many national and international journals of repute, and has won her prizes and accolades. Her debut e-chapbook *I Am* was published by Title IX Press.

Réka Nyitrai

the language my body speaks opening rose

final instar...
I ask my lover
about his ex-wife

lily of the valley my husband's other woman

BIO: Réka Nyitrai, currently living in Bucharest, Romania, was born in Transylvania and studied communications and political marketing. Her work has been published in *Under the Basho, Otata, Bones, Modern Haiku, Frogpond*, and *The Heron's Nest*. Her debut haiku collection *While dreaming your dreams* (MONO YA MONO BOOKS) was published during the pandemic of 2020.

Julie Schwerin

possessing a restraining order 9/10 of the law

after changing my default settings

empty nest a dried tea bag on her saucer

BIO: Julie Schwerin (*she/her* - Dover, Ohio) is an associate editor at *The Heron's Nest* (www.theheronsnest.com) and a member of the *Red Moon Anthology* Editorial team. She was instrumental in establishing several haiku installations in the Midwest. The most recent is *Words in Bloom: A Year of Haiku at the Chicago Botanic Garden,* which features the work of other poets on signs throughout the garden.

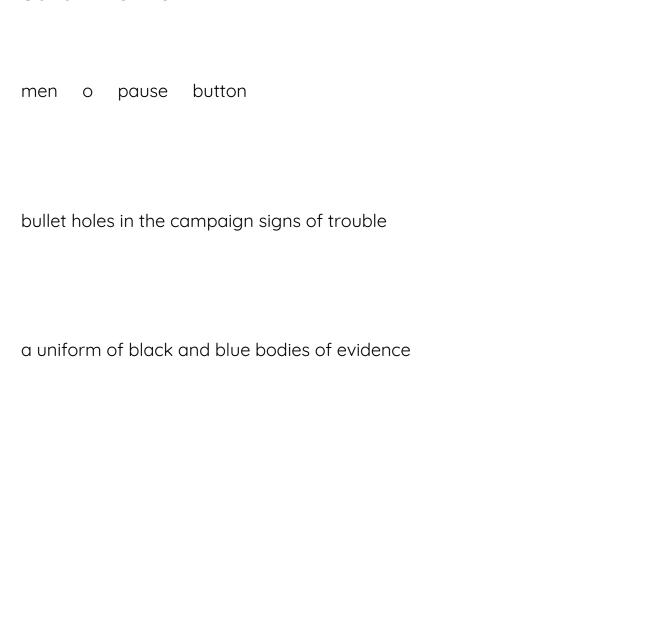
Corine Timmer

extremist—
the many shades of grey
on the tip of my tongue

dusk in the forest the vixen in me

BIO: Corine Timmer is a visual artist, author, publisher, award-winning haiku poet, animal lover and street dog advocate. She lives in rural Portugal. Corine is a member of the British and American haiku societies, ALLi (Alliance of Independent Authors), and the SCBWI (Society of Children's Book Writers and Illustrators).

Sarah Metzler



BIO: Sarah Metzler is a counselor and haiku poet who enjoys hiking, floating, boating, seeking, finding, and skiing badly. She lives in Pennsylvania with her husband, dog, cat, and chickens. Sarah is thrilled to have been published next to admired poets and mentors in leading haiku and senryu journals and anthologies.

Eva Limbach

working from home my faded shirt pressed to perfection

BIO: 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 and sometimes haibun.

Jeaunice T. Burnette

Saying Goodbye

Turning the pages of a photo album that my mother made for me, the keepsake the chronicles of my middle school years, I come upon an image of me after a band performance. My young face is beaming with pride while I hold my cherished flute.

A wave of regret washes over me as I consider what could have been.

crimson sunset. . . I sell my instrument for bipolar meds

BIO: Jeaunice T. Burnette is a visual artist and poet. Her work has been published in *Modern Haiku, Frogpond*, and *The Cicada's Cry.* She graduated from Georgia Southwestern State University with a Bachelor of Science in Psychology. She currently resides in Albany, Georgia.

Cherry A

wildlife safari. . . my daughter's question about freedom

BIO: Cherry A, an agriculture officer from India, fell in love with Japanese poetry in 2017. Along with the pen name Cherry A, she uses her official name Monalisha Gogoi. Her work has been published in #FemkuMag, Fresh Out Magazine, Haiku Dialogue, Under the Bāsho, Failed Haiku, The Bamboo Hut, Stardust Haiku, Frameless sky, Poetry Pea, and others.

Maeve O'Sullivan

Covid home test the paramedic refuses an offer of tea

BIO: Maeve O'Sullivan's poetry and haiku have been widely published, awarded, translated and anthologised. She is the author of four collections from Alba Publishing, with a fifth forthcoming in 2021. Maeve is a founder member of Haiku Ireland and the Hibernian Poetry Workshop, and performs with spoken word collective The Poetry Divas. (Twitter: @writefromwithin).

Doris Lynch

Planting During a Cold Season

An hour before the polls close in Indiana I bring out the dipper, a refrigerated box of bulbs. Kneeling on the cool ground as though praying, I grind holes, slip inside daffodil bulbs. Bury an undulating life of them, pointed side up, next to the brick walk bordering our Cape Cod. Press the last dozen hyacinths around the burning bush in the height of its glory.

during the counting waning gibbous moon just light enough

BIO: Doris Lynch has recent work in *Frogpond, Drifting Sands, Modern Haiku, CHO* and in several anthologies. Her "long" poems have appeared in *Tipton Poetry Review, Flying Island* and other lit mags. She reviews poetry for *Library Journal* and has lived in places as diverse as arctic Alaska, Yogyakarta, Indonesia, Berkeley, CA, and Bloomington, IN.

Deborah P Kolodji

hospital hair the ghost of who I am

BIO: Deborah P Kolodji is the California Regional Coordinator for the Haiku Society of America, on the board of directors for Haiku North America, and has published over 1000 haiku. Her first full-length book of haiku and senryu, *highway of sleeping towns*, won a Touchstone Distinguished Book Award from the Haiku Foundation.

Lori A Minor

cookie crumbles. . . my first christmas as an orphan

BIO: Lori A Minor, editor of #FemkuMag, is an internationally published poet and human rights activist from Raleigh, North Carolina. She was the finalist for the Sable Books Haiku Book Contest for Women and shortlisted for the Touchstone Award (2017, 2019). Lori's fifth collection, *Recycled Virgin*, is now available for purchase.

New from Title IX Press

The Fragrance of Fog by Praniti Gulyani

"The poems in *The Fragrance of Fog* present a remarkable start. With a great start come great expectations, and I invite readers to join me in dwelling in these distinctive poems and in awaiting Praniti Gulyani's future leaps with haiku."

- Michael Dylan Welch Founder, National Haiku Writing Month

Read and download your free copy here.