



THE BEST HAIKU...

2021 Anthology

The Best Haiku... 2021 Anthology

Edited by Stephen W. FitzGerald
Founder of Haiku Crush
[@HaikuCrush](https://twitter.com/HaikuCrush) on Twitter

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*Excepting top two winners, in alphabetical
order by author last names*

Selections by...

Erika Durham	Judge
Reid FitzGerald	Judge
Stephen W. FitzGerald	Editor
Tatiana Roberts	Judge

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Haiku Crush judges' comments...

“I love how vividly the writer creates the image of the dandelion without explicitly stating it. I also enjoyed the comparison of punctuation to nature.”
— Erika Durham

“I chose this haiku for its thoughtful glimpse on the familiar, often unexamined. In my reading, the cheery and familiar scene gave way to a reflection on life's cycles — that a moment of profound importance to an individual, plant or otherwise, can only be incompletely appreciated by an outsider of such a microcosm. I found it a beautiful and metaphorical lens into nature. Might I say, it inspired a sense of *sonder* with the greater world around me.” — Reid FitzGerald

“I experienced a wondrous moment witnessing something I could not hear, causing me to look again and again, until I finally heard. Thank you, James!” — Steve FitzGerald

“I love the idea that nature is communicating with us all the time... this haiku clearly provides that imagery.” — Tatiana Roberts

James Presley Grand Prize Winner

The four Haiku Crush judges chose James Presley as the 2020 Best Haiku Grand Prize \$200 cash winner. James hails from Sedan, Kansas, USA and is a recently retired high school language arts teacher of 39 years!

James' winning haiku...

dandelion stands
an exclamation point—
a shout glimpsed but never heard

Judges' comments...

“Watching a sunset is always finished by that one second where the sun is there, then suddenly gone. It's an incredibly special moment to witness and I felt the writer did an excellent job of putting me in that exact place.” — Erika Durham

“A standout to me for its poignant and sensual potency. It is bursting with color and flavor as a relatable epitafe for a sunny day. It captured the fleeting and bittersweet delight of life's ephemeral beauties as well as the romanticism of time's gentle march forward.” — Reid FitzGerald

“With Hege, seeing now is *more* than believing, it is also tasting!” — Steve FitzGerald

“This one is a personal favorite! I absolutely love the imagery... I can literally taste the colors/emotions/smells of that sunset.” — Tatiana Roberts

Hege A. J. Lepri Judges' Grand Mention

The Haiku Crush team chose Hege A. J. Lepri [@hegelincanada](#) the winner of the 2nd place Judges' Grand Mention. Hege is from Toronto, Ontario in Canada.

“I returned to writing poetry after proclaiming that was something I'd never do. But it crept up on me and suddenly, I could no longer resist.”

Hege's winning haiku...

last lick of the sun
sliding across horizon
a taste of honey

“I'm an old lady but a new poet. Haiku is perfect for sharing with others moments both simple and sublime.” – Helen Almaraz, Los Angeles, California, USA.

Helen Almaraz

is on Twitter [@HelenCAImaraz1](https://twitter.com/HelenCAImaraz1)

Her winning haiku...

Mule deer snow dusted
Threading through the aspen trees
The woof and the warp

In 2011, An'ya Bartolovic was recognized
as one of the top 10 living haiku poets.

She resides in Florence, Oregon USA.

An'ya Bartolovic
can be visited on her website at
tankaanya.com

Her winning haiku...

sleepy day
the kitten shows me
its tonsils

Benjamin Bellis resides in England's
County Durham.

"I worked abroad teaching English for a
few years and rediscovered my love of
poetry then, incorporating it into my
lessons."

Benjamin Bellis

is on Twitter [@HaikuNocturnal](https://twitter.com/HaikuNocturnal)

His winning haiku...

The Sun or the Moon;
Whichever is overhead,
The darkness remains

Asmara Beraki hails from San Francisco,
California USA.

“One day, I asked myself (to play a
game): Is there any concept truly
important to humanity that can *not* be
expressed in a haiku?”

Asmara Beraki

can be found at [@asmaraberaki](https://twitter.com/asmaraberaki) on
Twitter.

Her winning haiku...

if i drifted in
from the sea--would you hold me
in place like the sand?

Mary Bray hails from East Anglia,
England.

“I'm in awe of the emotion and imagery
that can be packed into the tiny Haiku
form. I love their layers and *dreaming
space*.”

Mary Bray
is on Twitter [@HaikuPure](https://twitter.com/HaikuPure)

Her winning haiku...

winter spreading –
on a wire between two buildings
sheets stiffen

Judy Brenneman resides in Fort Collins,
Colorado USA.

“I share my Small Signs of Hope photos
with haiku on social media and my
website — to remind me how amazing the
world is.”

Judy Brenneman

is on Twitter [@BrennemanFort](https://twitter.com/BrennemanFort)

Her winning haiku...

I dreamt a desert
where howling winds sang my shape
soothing bones of whales

“Let me paint pictures in words we can share. Bonding together in our common humanity and world.” -- Cynthia Anne Cashman of Los Angeles, California USA.

Cynthia Anne Cashman

can be found [@cia_writes](#) on Twitter.

Her winning haiku...

nightfall draws its shades
on a cloudless sky—lighting
lamps along the way

“I’m a data scientist. By day, I hunt Covid misinformation. In the early morning or evening, whilst I’m running, I like to play with Haiku in my mind.” -- Anda Chisster of London, England.

Anda Chisster

Her winning haiku...

Naked words on a
white sheet, laid open, longing
to seduce the mind

“Haiku forces me to distill my sentiments. I find freedom in its relative restrictions.” – Grace Haewon Choi, a California native, currently in Virginia, USA.

Grace Haewon Choi
is on Twitter [@badyearhaiku](https://twitter.com/badyearhaiku)

Her winning haiku...

When his granddaughter
Held his hand, his shuffle took
On a young man's gait

“Delighted one of my haiku was chosen. I love haiku because it allows you to say so much in so few words.” -- Tracy Davidson of Warwickshire, England.

Tracy Davidson

can be followed [@tracydavidson27](https://twitter.com/tracydavidson27) on
Twitter.

Her winning haiku...

baby's breath
how the soft scent still lingers
in his empty crib

“I am a wife and mother... and a self
confessed haiku-a-holic.” -- Katryn
Dougherty of Texas, USA, currently living
on the island of Guam.

Katryn Dougherty
can be found on Twitter
[@DoughertyKatryn](https://twitter.com/DoughertyKatryn)

Her winning monoku...

Bristle Cone pines gnarl, twist and bow --
old age

“Haiku has been my poetry of choice for over four decades.” -- Michael Dudley, Toronto-born, he now lives in Perth County, Canada. He is the father of three and the author of numerous poetry collections, including *pilgrimage*, Red Moon Press, 2017.

Michael Dudley

can be visited on his website at
MichaelJDudley.com

His winning haiku...

conversational,
pause, I pick up driftwood
shaped like a comma

“Most of my work is poetry and short fiction.” – Lee Dunn of Toronto, Ontario in Canada.

Lee Dunn

is at [@66human](https://twitter.com/66human) on Twitter.

He blogs at <http://secret-lifeof.com>

His winning haiku...

Stop chewing on stones,
for they will soon turn to teeth
and heighten your pain.

“I realized I was far too verbose, and haiku became my way to sharpen and shorten how I express myself.” --
Eavonka Ettinger, Long Beach, California
USA.

Eavonka Ettinger
is [@StormofCuteness](#) on Twitter.

Her winning haiku...

One red raspberry
rolled on the floor, spreading its
juices everywhere.

“I love haiku’s vivid, sparse language. Broken is one of about 35 haiku in my novel Fourth Sister.” -- M. L. Farb of Utah, USA.

M. L. Farb

is [@FarbML](https://twitter.com/FarbML) on Twitter; book at

<https://amazon.com/dp/B087Z1MP4Q>

Her winning haiku...

Broken, scarred by life.

Brush gold in each crack—embrace
flaw's glowing beauty.

“Much of my time is on traditional lands of the Lheidli T'enneh. Haiku has become a daily practice, where I find gratitude and solace in the smallest things.” -- Art Fredeen of Prince George, British Columbia in Canada.

Art Fredeen

can be found on Twitter [@ArtFredeen](https://twitter.com/ArtFredeen)

His winning haiku...

Traces
of sidewalk chalk –
winter dusk

“Nature, emotion, sensuality, connection.
Haiku condenses them all together and
paints a picture that speaks and feels.” --
Jim Grey of Martinez, California USA.

Jim Grey

can be found [@JWGrey](#) on Twitter.

His winning haiku...

Dusk begins again
—the smell of sun on nightfall
feels like lavender

“I'm inspired by Dadaist movements,
Butoh and anarchism. I have a strange
love for all things poetical and sci-fi.” --
Elancharan Gunasekaran of Singapore.

Elancharan Gunasekaran
is on Twitter [@elancharang](https://twitter.com/elancharang)

His winning haiku...

empty side
of bed
your warmth

“I recently got into haiku and other short poetry (nothing longer than a tweet) as a new hobby during the pandemic.” --
Hannah Hymes of Philadelphia,
Pennsylvania, USA.

Hannah Hymes can be followed
[@LittleTinyPoem](#) on Twitter.

Her winning haiku...

Both feel deserving
so in the end
neither gets that which they deserve

“I'm retired, widowed and enjoy writing.
A haiku is a concrete picture and the
concrete is real.” -- Bill Johnston of
Hutchinson, Kansas USA.

Bill Johnston

is [@BillieJ66916114](https://twitter.com/BillieJ66916114) on Twitter.

His winning haiku...

wolf pack	well built
territory	beaver dam
border skirmish	castle moat

“I’ve explored ancient v. Western haiku,
as the writing is as precious as the
moment of observation.” -- Bénédicte
Kusendila of Belgium.

Bénédicte Kusendila
is on Twitter [@art_beat16](https://twitter.com/art_beat16)

Her winning haiku...

Snow, their companion,
The silence between them fell
like a dead sentence

“I write every day and have over 2,000 haiku. I’m also a Shakespeare nerd!” – Diane Lowman, Poet Laureate of Westport, Connecticut, USA.

Diane Lowman
is on Twitter [@DiLo922](https://twitter.com/DiLo922)

Her winning haiku...

And the sun rises
And the fog begins to lift
And it sets again

“I’ve always loved saying as much as possible with as few words as possible. Haiku is the epitome of this for me and I love playing with it.” -- Elaine Mead of Tasmania, Australia.

Elaine Mead

is [@_elainemead](#) on Twitter.

Her winning haiku...

just a moth
fluttering between
dimming hearts.

“Nature, photography, poetry ~
especially the potent brevity of haiku ~
are at the top of my list (of passionate
curiosities).” -- Marcia Nelson Pedde of
British Columbia, Canada.

Marcia Nelson Pedde
is on Twitter [@tomarciamae](https://twitter.com/tomarciamae)

Her winning haiku...

life's imperfection...
one syllable shy of
a perfect haiku

“I began writing haiku during the pandemic; it’s become an indispensable method of expression and way of approaching life.” -- Pippa Phillips of Cape Cod in Massachusetts, USA.

Pippa Phillips

tweets [@IpsaHerself](#) on Twitter.

Her winning haiku...

Almost asleep—
someone cuts the kite string,
and I float away.

“I began writing haiku during the long winter months of the pandemic as a creative outlet.” -- Shelley Piasecki of planet earth.

Dr. Shelley Piasecki

Her winning haiku...

Bother me, my son
You, my love, are no trouble
Your unrest is mine

“I get my inspiration for haiku by hiking in the woods, walking on the beach or just sitting outside.” -- Rebecca of New England, USA.

Rebecca

was our youngest entrant!

Her winning haiku...

Quiet winter nights
Moonlight glinting off the snow
A lonely owl hoots

“Writing a full experience in 17 syllables needs insight and perseverance, so the reader is just as excited.” -- Peggy Rew of Sparks, Nevada USA.

Peggy Rew

Her winning haiku...

Blue gray eyes focus
arch of bone aligns arrow
my true love in sight.

“I’ve studied micropoetry and Haiku for years. I attempt to capture the beauty of Nature’s transitional moments in 17 syllables.” -- Ian Richardson on the East Coast of Scotland.

Ian Richardson

is on Twitter [@IanRich10562022](https://twitter.com/IanRich10562022)

His winning haiku...

bees buzz gracefully,
kittens catch quick swirling leaves.
I stumble on stairs.

“From cave paintings to haiku, we’ve had a long journey, but our basic desire to capture and preserve the fleeting moments remains unchanged.” -- Barun Saha of Bangalore, India.

Barun Saha
is [@1barun](#) on Twitter.

His winning haiku...

supper hour
a homeless man with
a stick stirs the stars

“I started writing haiku as a calming,
coping strategy, to get back to writing...
and to connect with other writers.” -- Mo
Schoenfeld of Oxfordshire, South East
England, UK.

Mo Schoenfeld

is on Twitter [@MoSchoenfeld](https://twitter.com/MoSchoenfeld)

Her winning haiku...

ripples of green wheat
crowd surf sunlight side to side
soon it will be brown

“To read a gem of a haiku... It’s as if the universe paused to blow me a kiss. Pure delight.” -- Michelle Simon of Arizona, USA.

Michelle Simon
is [@pRoSetrySheIs](#) on Twitter.

Her winning haiku...

Lapcat
in the next life
we'll switch places

“Back in the early 1970s, I picked up
Haiku in English by Harold G.
Henderson and a past life opened up for
me. ‘Nuff said.” -- Kevin Taylor of
Vancouver, Canada.

Kevin Taylor

can be found [@poetkevinjtayl1](https://twitter.com/poetkevinjtayl1)
on Twitter.

His winning haiku...

It's snowing
Crows racing, caw-calling
Old hemlocks waiting

“I want to convey moments of calm and connection with nature. Haiku are for me the ideal medium to do this.” -- Adrian Tissier of London, England.

Adrian Tissier

is on Twitter [@AdeytAdrian](https://twitter.com/AdeytAdrian)

His winning haiku...

Thin rain lightly falls
In this strange half-light, birdsong
Muted, like my heart.

“I started writing haiku mid-Pandemic.
What's resulted is a Magnificent
Obsession I am so very pleased to live
with and share its blessings.” -- David
Watts of San Francisco, California USA.

David Watts
is [@DavidWattsPoet](#) on Twitter.

His winning haiku...

the beauty of her face
ignites goes out ignites
passing firefly

“I took up haiku writing in 2020, and I love it. There’s room for us all.” -- Tony Williams of Scotland.

Tony Williams

is on Twitter [@tony the veg](https://twitter.com/tony_the_veg)

His winning haiku...

winter rain halts
the robin's solitary song
this morning

“I have loved poetry since childhood;
became haiku obsessed during the
pandemic. I find the syllable pattern
comforting and challenging.” -- Sara
Young of Kentucky, USA.

Sara Young

is on Twitter [@NorthstarPoet23](https://twitter.com/NorthstarPoet23)

Her winning haiku...

We pay it forward
Smiles, kindness, small random acts
Love, our currency

“Haiku for me are like pith instructions,
sweet and chewy for a long, long time.” --
Eva Zimet of Vermont, USA.

Eva Zimet
is [@evazimet](#) on Twitter.

Her winning haiku...

More likely than not,
a rock will stay where it's put,
a person might choose.



Haiku from the judges
@HaikuCrush

Always close my eyes
Until I'm on the upswing
Living in the sky -- Erika Durham
(prompt: swing set)

Dappled light falls through
dusty voids between the blinds
cosmic guest from high -- Reid
FitzGerald

Sunny afternoon,
Dad, you never said goodbye.
Ever think of me? -- Steve FitzGerald

Lost alien waits
Hoping others come looking
Done with being here -- Tatiana Roberts

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