

short timers  
in the prison yard  
mayflies

The red rose haiku subjects are: Nature and Mary, lovers, music and insightful moments in life. A red rose haiku by David H. Rosen:

holding hands  
our age spots  
kiss

Perhaps to make their point even more poignant, Baranski and Rosen don't just speak of what is good, they also take the haiku themes to the antithesis of good: conflict, guns, and racism. When white roses and red roses are displayed together, they symbolize unity (ibid.). When one reaches the end of this haiku dialogue, it is clear Johnny Baranski and David H. Rosen are united in many ways on their views of the world. This collection of haiku makes it easier to believe they are right.

*The Collected Haiku Of Raymond Roseliep* edited by Randy and Shirley Brooks (2018, Brooks Books, Taylorville, IL) 223 Pages, 6¼ by 9¼, Clothbound ISBN 978-1-929820-15-3, \$40.00 or order directly from the Brooks Books website for \$33.00 shipping included, [brookbookshaiku.com](http://brookbookshaiku.com)

reviewed by Michael Ketchek

This massive collection of haiku poems, both traditional and some experimental covers the career of one of the true giants in American Haiku. Presented in chronological order from his first poems in 1962 to his last published poem in 2015, found in one of his notebooks 32 years after his death in 1983. This book lets the reader follow not only the development of this fine poet, but in some ways the development of all of English language haiku. An example from 1964 has a title and the 5/7/5 syllable count:

WAKE

The roses I left  
in your teacup, mother, grow  
purple as my mouth.

By the 1970s, while not completely abandoning the traditional syllable count, most of Roseliep's haiku are no longer of this variety. A haiku from this period, now without a title or punctuation also shows off his humor:

after Beethoven  
he gets the furnace  
roaring

Raymond Roseliep, a priest, ordained in 1943, found inspiration in all of God's creation and felt that as an American that inspiration should come, not from what inspired the Japanese poets, but from those things found here in America. In an excerpt from "This Haiku of Ours," which is printed in this book Roseliep says, "Practically everything under the sun is valid subject matter for haiku..." Roseliep lists some truly American subjects that he thinks are could be used in a haiku, "outer space discoveries, hairy youth, mini skirts, bell bottoms, roller skates, pizza, saucer sleds, circuses, our enormous bird fish animal & insect kingdom..."

An example of incorporating popular culture in haiku can be found in this 1980 haiku:

the bat  
upstaging  
my disco cape

That is not to say that Roseliep shied away from more traditional subjects. Here is a haiku that is classical in theme and presentation:

a dime  
into the beggar's cup  
holding the moon

I will end with several more haiku from this collection of thousands:

hairline of sun  
underscores a word  
in Genesis

naked boys  
plunge—  
a frog too

trumpeting  
the dawn—  
day lilies

*Poetry That Heals by Naomi Beth Wakan* (2018, Shanti Arts Publishing) 104 pages, 5½ X 8½, perfectbound. ISBN 978-947067-28-8. \$18.95 from amazon.com

Reviewed by Carolyn Coit Dancy

Naomi Beth Wakan is a poet and personal essayist. She has produced over fifty books, including *The Way of Tanka* (2017). Wakan “came to haiku” while living in Japan, where she translated a Japanese friend’s book of haiku into English and became “hooked on haiku.”

In *Poetry That Heals*, Wakan seamlessly weaves her 30-year journey as a haibun into a narrative of personal growth that she attributes to the “power of both reading and writing haiku, the opening to oneself that tanka offers, and the opening to others that response tanka allows.” The book ends with brief sections on writing renku and haibun.

At first glance, this book appears as a haiku primer but, don’t be fooled, it offers far more for seasoned poets. In this memoir, Wakan shows how she found poetry writing enabled her to develop awareness, dispassionate interest, personal healing, and compassion. Furthermore, she indirectly encourages all haibun to hone their skills of observation and to read haiku to become better writers. The writing of other Japanese genres is also recommended, because Wakan found each genre revealed “new ways of living that fed my innermost yearnings.”

Not-to-be-missed are the book’s last five pages (end of haibun section) in which Wakan summarizes the wisdom acquired during her healing haiku/tanka/renku journey. Although not identified as such, this summary serves the purpose of an “afterword.”