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The cover was designed by Sahana Shrikaanth

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**The closing date for the February Blithe Spirit is 1
January 2018**

The season for Blithe Spirit 28.1, Feb 2018 is **Winter**.

Autumn

bruised apples—
a tethered horse
bites the bit

Martha Magenta

fallen branch
I stumble
into autumn

Andy McLellan

all hallow's eve
the sudden rustle
of candy wrapper

Rachel Sutcliffe

wrenching seeds
from a sugar pumpkin
mom's fibromyalgia

Jan Benson

deep autumn taking a vow of lightness

Beverly Acuff Momoi

autumn leaf
how else to describe
one fallen

Jonathan Woods

Museum of Haiku Literature Award

Selections by Kohjin Sakamoto

Suppose I am a traveler who is straying in the wood where each of the trees is a highly attractive one. Totally worn out from straying for several nights, this traveler has found the one whom he has fallen into company with in his journey.

The runners up first:

| | |
|--|--|
| mercury rising – the bees sink into a dandelion Joanne Miller | nightfall crows settle into silence Rachel Sutcliffe |
| mountain village the endless solitude of a lark's song Iliyana Stoyanova | crossings in the mind the train's distant whistles Robert Smith |
| smuggler's coracle I poach a smile from your lips Tim Gardiner | fading clouds— a farewell frozen in your mouth Maria Laura Valente |
| change of weather shaping clouds into thoughts Mary Hind | |

And the winner is children's voices
 over the water
 once my own

Tecla Schotanus

This fine piece seems to imply three elements of life: present, past, and eternity expressed in a picture composed within the limited frame of haiku. The first line of this haiku is the distant view, past, that is childhood where we can never come back. The third line is the foreground, present, where the elderly become introspective, hearing children's voices and recollecting Wordsworth and/or Rilke etc. The second line, between past and present, presents water. The water seems stable but actually ever changing, fluid like time that is eternity. Readers would be moved to find that present, past and eternity are composed not philosophically but poetically only in one breath.

With all the respect to every haiku poets of Blithe Spirit, and gratitude to David J Kelly, former judge

Tanka

look of water
reeling in a hook
emptiness
all the times
I took the bait

Marilyn Fleming

in the glum sky
of bundled rain
backing up
endless memories
onto the cloud

snowflakes
on the window screen
not melted, not frozen
the heart you won
and left behind

Gunita Zaube

Linda Jeannette Ward

that look
so innocent and wild
in the cat's eyes too
there is
love and hunger

half moon
as bright as it can be
and rose scented pillows
to shape my dreams –
if only you were as kind

Alison Williams

Doreen King

(encased)
in an owl's pellet
what remains
of the smallest lives
that get left behind

Debbie Strange

Saplings

(Work by poets aged under 18 years)

wingbeats
a piece of paper
fluttering on the breeze

Daisy Madelin (9)

starlings
across borders
feathers tumble

Pruthvi Shrikaanth, 11

a cold day
even the drizzle
without a peep

Amshuman Shrikaanth, 7

radiant colours
rainbow belts, blue icing—
rainbow cakes

Abigail Dennis, 11

summer afternoon
my brother and I chase
lost memories

Nivedan Vishwanath, 16

smooth fairway
father and son swing clubs—
son always wins

Ethan Dennis, 10

World on a Plate

58 ans - fifty-eight years old –
l'âge de raison the age of reason
c'est toujours l'an prochain always next year
(French)

Alain Henry

at your leaving
the pomegranate is ripe . . .
but what about us

al tuo partire
matura il melograno
ma di noi cosa
(Italian)

Lucia Fontana

Haibun

the hunt

the bobcat could have done without us spotting it would have preferred
the rabbit that hightailed from the brush in that moment our
distracting gasps said as much with its great grey eyes as it stalked
across our path tail twitching

our hunger
for a wild glimpse sated
still it growls
the empty belly
of the beast

Autumn N. Hall

Bashō-an

He didn't want to see them. Donshu and I, under Shikō, not he, change
his shit-stained clothes and dress his body like a bare tree in thicker
blankets. He is not our master. Flies tap on the paper screens.

The disciples, Shikō my master, Izen, Jōsō, Kyōrai, Masahide,
Bakusetsu the medicine-maker, Otokuni, keep vigil, write verses, stir
the porridge. Shikō is called, and when he returns with dots of ink on
his fingers, I see his writing is smudged. The branches outside gleam
with morning.

Their master wakes at noon to see them catching flies with lime sticks.
The flies seem delighted, he says. Kyōrai, who has caught none, turns
red. It is a hot day. At four they cover him, and sail away from the city,
leaving me behind.

Indian summer
flies still fighting
to get out

Jack Richardson

Haiku

lamb's breath -
a small fog
around the truck

Alan Peat

cracking a walnut...
the sound of
a single life

Kohjin Sakamoto

fog entering one way conversation

Brendon Kent

crowning—
the full moon pushes
through fog

Mary Kendall

old photos
young faces
dust to dust

Ruth E. Parker

flash
between plane trees
paparazzi sun

Michael Fessler

trolley queue
squeezing into
my thinner self

Marietta McGregor

Santa Fe
where I learned
to wear pink

Kath Abela Wilson

bus stop roadkill follows me home

Helen Buckingham

on the move
life fitting into
cardboard boxes

Gary Hotham

rustling the dark
within reach
some small thing's heart

Clare McCotter

leaf drifts...
a pregnancy test
in the bus shelter

Paul Chambers

wind-chimes
whispering
sweet somethings

Leo Lavery

sea fog
the ship's horn
launches seagulls

Ron Woollard

beach sunset
a woman kisses the light
on her baby's face

Lynne Rees

lukewarm rain
our wall height marks
before you left

Paul Hickey

butterflies -
the first time
I felt you move

Naomi Madelin

strong breeze
a blackbird flurries
over windfalls

Patricia Prime

pigeons rising together
a child
returns to its mother

John Gonzalez

on the move again
the dead spider
in the ant column

Phillip Murrell

bend in the track
the scent of a woman
I will never know

Lynne Rees

beneath her ribs
the pain we can't quite
love away

Joanne E. Miller

feathered imprint of pain -
the window
bears mine too

Chris Luck

lost in translation
what the cat knows
of sunlight

Wyntirson

Beneath the Pine of the Law (a Haiku Sequence)

fog- shrouded temple pond-carp ghosting beneath the reeds
down a line of
 sacred calligraphy thread-
 dangling spider

 ivy stem
over a shoulder down the belly
 laughing Buddha

temple tree branching
 across the sky a zigzag
 of winter lightning

Keith J. Coleman

Reviews

Title: **On the Edge**

Author: **Tim Gardiner**

Format: paperback, 19.5x13cm, 62pp

Publisher: Brambleby Books, May 2017

ISBN: 978-1908241-535

Price: £6.99/ Ordering: www.bramblebybooks.co.uk

Tim has brought out his second poetry collection. This is his first haiku collection which he calls “short poems”, perhaps tactfully to attract a wider audience. This slim but strong volume is inspired by the Peak District. Divided into four sections based on geography, many poems come with notes on landmarks and geography of this national park. The book opens with a brief but useful introduction to haiku.

The poems are mostly three-liners and one-liners, in equal numbers, with a couple of concrete haiku/poems, and one with 4 lines. Some of the haiku that work really well for me

lighting strike
in a faraway field
we wait five seconds

boys climb
the risk assessment
suspended

What a fine capture of the innocence of childhood and the recklessness of youth!

reaching the edge no escape from this loneliness

Lovers' Leap
hawthorn bushes
break the fall

starling murmuration love comes and goes

These are strong haiku that show love and despondence. Ominous perhaps, but stronger from it. There are others that may well have arisen from these feelings, but rise above and beyond it to take the reader further.

June breeze
a dark sky spits out
the same old lies

A different take on the clouds in the sky, open enough to allow us to see more than one thing. And I found Issa's snail lurking within these pages

Rushup Edge
the black beetle
ascends slowly

There are some poems here which are either too bland as haiku or simply do not work as haiku.

redundant viaduct
the river beneath
working hard

blossom explosion
futile confetti
bear no fruit

Perhaps these work as short poems and justify the collection's remit. Quite a few of the poem have been published in edited journals. These are indicated by superscript numbers at the end of the poems. I found this as distraction. Others may not. Full of black and white pictures from the Peak District, some of the poems are paired with these. While some work as shahai (photo haiga), others are descriptive poems/haiku. The cover features a colour photograph of the Eagle Stone near the village of Baslow.

Overall a very good collection with a creative sadness, strong sense of place, and lots of love for and information about the Peak District.

waking
the robin's spirit
within me