

fridays 4 future

THÉO STADE AVEC NOUS!

1930  
ROSE MASH



Samkvæmt útgáfu samþykktar  
teikna eða lista myndirna  
Auglýsingar eða sé sem verður  
verður krafinn greiðsla fyrir  
mánuði  
Úr tilgreið  
Öllum þar að gæta þess að ganga vel um  
ásmíðingarnetta eða þryll. Þetta á aling  
ásmíðingarnetta. Á mánudögum og þri  
nema með leyfi  
Efni gagn samþykkt þessari varða seldum á  
nema þingi selding liggj við  
Myndavélinn

1

Mó... studöqum klukkan 12.

**Blōo Outlier Journal issue 4**  
*the senryu special*  
Winter 2022  
editors Alan Summers & Pippa Phillips

# Blōō Outlier Journal *senryu special* New Year's Eve (Winter) 2022 issue editors Alan Summers & Pippa Phillips

*If haiku has its 'aaaaah'  
then senryu has "oh" or "oh!"*

**Blōō Outlier Journal senryu special**

Winter 2022

**Editor-in-chief** Alan Summers

**Guest editor** Pippa Phillips

**Cover:** artwork/photograph©Alan Summers

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## About guest editor Pippa Phillips

Pippa bio:

*"Pippa Phillips writes short things and long things. She wishes she lived closer to the ocean."*

Pippa can be found at:

@pippaesque on Instagram, Twitter, TikTok

Pippa Phillips was also a guest editor

for *failed haiku A Journal of English Senryu*

vol. 7 issue 78 (May 2022)

<https://failedhaiku.com/2022/05/31/dishing-up-issue-78/>

<https://www.haikuhut.com/FailedHaikuIssue78.pdf>

## About Alan Summers

• <https://www.callofthepage.org/about-1/>

• <https://haikubasecamp.wordpress.com/2022/08/24/about-alan-summersfee/>

**Blōō Outlier Journal link:**

<https://haikubasecamp.wordpress.com/2022/10/23/the-blōō-outlier-journal-volumes/>

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- Pippa's *Thoughts About Senryu*

# The Process

An experiment was carried out by me, Alan Summers, that both editors would make selections entirely on their own.

The submission details were to submit 1-2 previously unpublished senryu (no theme was chosen) within the Submission dates of November 1st to November 20th 2022 (Tuesday 1st November to Sunday 20th November 2022).

As we might have different tastes as poets and editors the fun was that Blōō Outlier Journal would publish each editor's selection as a separate entity.

There would be times when there was an overlap and that would be fascinating, as well as when only one editor selects a senryu that the other editor did not select. There was no wrong decision, and it also gives the poet more than one shot at being accepted.

I created a word document once the deadline was passed, and then sent them to Pippa. We made independent choices in our selections. It was fascinating to receive Pippa's selection, and that we made both the same choices, and different ones, of course. The Joint Selection section is where we independently overlapped, and so this is an extra section.

Interestingly, in Pippa's deeply insightful article or 'thoughts' on senryu, each one of her chosen senryu to highlight appeared in the Joint Selection as well.

This process, and where the same senryu (and their authors by default) appear twice or even three times is unusual, hence 'outlier' in the journal's name. This isn't 'just' a single issue of the journal, but a hybrid combination of an investigation into some current approaches to senryu, and also an 'anthology' of a number of senryu.

You can also see the various choices through a colour code:

Alan's selection: **cayenne ink**  
Pippa's selection: **midnight ink**  
Joint selection: **plum ink**

It was a wonderful coincidence that the senryu Pippa selected for comments in her article were also joint selections!

# Alan's Selection

---

not how I remember it creeping sepia

Pippa Phillips

reproducing the unconditional love of my mother ash clone

Pippa Phillips

derelict playground  
ghost laughter echoes  
of the school bully

Marion Clarke

nothing magic about the trip mushrooms

Marion Clarke

burning sage  
for the shooting  
in Colorado

Shonin

lesion biopsy--  
she leaves her phone  
on silent

Lafcadio

gathering my thoughts  
on the terrace at dawn  
yours are here too

Henryk Czempiel

barbie doll  
the one and only playmate  
i never owned

Kala Ramesh

promising the world climate change

Robyn Cairns

her coat no longer on the hook

Margaret Walker

in this rough and tumble my blanketosis

Arvinder Kaur

magpie wallpaper  
the room comes alive  
with tittle-tattle

Bona M. Santos

even as yellow iris bloom those that suffer

Norma Bradley

Mom's silent outrage  
the nursing home widow slides  
her hands down dad's back

Shelli Jankowski-Smith

bulking up...  
the cotton bulge  
in my blue light specials

Peg Cherrin-Myers

my first impression...  
his red palomino  
riding baby's back

Peg Cherrin-Myers

toy doctor kit the girl sticks out her tongue mid-war

Marcie Wessels

theurgetodoeverythingnow

Chidambar Navalgund

on the chopping board  
a row of walnut halves  
resembling miniature brains

Sylvia Lees

election flyer  
paper and policies  
recycled

Nick T

low alcohol lager  
I worry about  
the sugar content

Nick T

in her room now empty threadbare sun

Susan King

moonbow  
at the kitchen window  
mom's shadow

Hifsa Ashraf

reaching home  
a snowman  
in the mirror

Joanna Ashwell

fragile content  
skipping the birthday again  
due to health issues

Deborah Karl-Brandt



dime store turtle  
life span  
in a box of flakes

Barrie Levine

cemetery jog  
deciding where  
to go

Laurie D. Morrissey

clerk checks her id  
she credits  
the botox

Kerry J Heckman

turncoat debate...  
my son  
takes his father's side

Baisali Chatterjee Dutt

when loneliness  
is greater than the miles  
clicking on 'buy'

Claire Vogel Camargo

the screech of brakes  
suddenly becoming  
bystanders

John Pappas

Christmas choir  
foundation cream hides  
her bruise

Ravi Kiran

plaiting hair  
grandma pulls in  
her curling giggles

Minal Sarosh

all of the raspberries  
with grandson  
on tiptoe

Neena Singh

first time singing  
with parents...  
the little girl slows down

Yasir Farooq

once more around the dance floor IV pole

Lorraine A Padden

dawn hearing my anxiety before birdsong

Engin Gülez

sleepless night tossing and turning my options

Ruchita Madhok

every few minutes a new vocabulary of breathing

Shloka Shankar

gaslighting notions a multiverse of

Tazeen Fatma

cold toilet seat  
this broken economy  
keeps biting

Robert Kingston

in this world  
even the hippo that wears a tutu  
sweats blood

Patrick Sweeney

museum visit –  
the small boy's trail  
of his missing father

Amoolya Kamalnath

tapping the edges  
of my mother's hourglass  
to pass the time

Mark Forrester

in memoriam  
using the adjectives  
I had failed to say

Geethanjali Rajan

scintillating  
pillow talk. . .  
Siri with me

Meera Rehm

shooting stars the right to bear arms

Elisa Theriana

he calls me a ho green giant

Susan Burch

#mondayblues I play the world's smallest violin for myself

Susan Burch

eulogy  
only we know  
our truth

Vandana Parashar

just when I think  
I understand her  
enigma machine

Bryan Rickert

holding the door ajar filled with thoughts

Eavonka Ettinger

dealing with  
a lot of tension  
bra strap snaps

Eavonka Ettinger

his great-grandson  
newly born  
no one tells him

Maureen Weldon

waiting to hear  
the name of my mother...  
annual bereavement mass

Maya Daneva

ostracised I change my will

Paul Beech

self-adhesive name label new every day

Marcie Wessels

a name change  
for potter's field  
we're all janes

Lorraine Pester

tequila shots  
the grizzled gringo hits on  
a gang member's girl

Lorraine Pester

doffing his cap  
coming into the silence  
among us

Mike Gallagher

Christmas Eve—  
vintage port and stilton  
with Marley in chains

Jo Balistreri

the dog park  
sniffing each other  
out

Jo Balistreri

pied piper...  
even the blind mice  
smell the coffee

Susan Beth Furst

Aunt Lula's apple butter  
I, too, use a cauldron  
creeping sepia

Susan Beth Furst

moon shadow  
the blue sound  
of our silence

Isabella Kramer

handle with care first snowflakes

Eva Limbach

lingering war  
in my timeline  
latest lifehacks

Eva Limbach

qualmageddon  
I leave my bedroom  
apocalypse-ready

David J. Kelly

black on white  
the summing up when  
pawn turns queen

Subir Ningthouja

family gathering  
room full of people  
and elephants

Tomislav Sjekloća

just married  
we name our cars  
Romeo and Juliet

Richa Sharma

children bearing children unbearable

Tracy Davidson

the club I don't belong to yet obituaries

Bruce H. Feingold

superman coffin yet another mass (shooting)

Debbie Strange

I'm not dead  
why so nosy  
autumn flies?

Christopher Jupp

painstakingly sketched  
for visitors, not to scale  
hospital floorplan

Sheila Barksdale

shifting tides  
the maternity ward  
over the mortuary

John Hawkhead

a relic from the war ...  
his steel-plated Bible  
the bullet hit

Joseph P. Wechselberger



vitamin jars  
planning my own  
surprise party

Mike Fainzilber

dried up river  
another padlock  
on the bridge

petro c. k.

shadows on the wall chasing sleep

Clive Bennett

morning window—  
the declawed cat watches  
a pigeon

Keiko Izawa

september skyscraper  
the stylist viewing  
an undressed fuji

Keiko Izawa

victim victimizer accordion people

Jerome Berglund

**-end of Alan's choices-**

# Pippa's Selection

---

Pippa placed an asterisk against some poems she also particularly liked, though not every senryu could be examples in her essay.

disenchanted  
my all put in  
a peach cobbler

Shonin

lesion biopsy–  
she leaves her phone  
on silent

Lafcadio

walking with one  
who pauses at every step  
i learn to slow breathe

Kala Ramesh

son's death  
her unexpected  
constellation

Ella Aboutboul

loud sirens  
the opinions  
I deem necessary

Vidhi Ashar

beach day...  
the hint of scrotum dangling  
from high shorts

Rob McKinnon

city graffiti—  
once a while a voice  
among gibberish

AJ Anwar \*

the all-too-familiar body language puppet show

Arvinder Kaur

even as yellow iris bloom those that suffer

Norma Bradley

Anesthesia room  
getting wheeled out I offer  
news from far away

Shelli Jankowski-Smith \*

vitamin jars  
planning my own  
surprise party

Mike Fainzilber

word flies in my google doc

Chidambar Navalgund \*

before Zoom meet—  
I pluck  
my chin hair

Stella Pierides \*

colours of the rainbow pills on her nightstand

Susan King \*

coins tossing  
in the busker's bowl  
afternoon wind

Hifsa Ashraf

beach-side stroll  
our footprints on sand  
as if we didn't

Hla Yin Mon\*

online obituary  
the finality  
of closed comments

Barrie Levine

book club  
we discuss  
mammograms

Kerry J Heckman

girl talk...  
I overhear my sons  
discuss their crushes

Baisali Chatterjee Dutt

the slower click  
of her worn castanets  
his no-show  
again

Claire Vogel Camargo

holiday party  
explaining again  
about our miscarriage

John Pappas

the scent  
of what is left of me  
petrichor

Ravi Kiran

elopement  
the family picture  
she takes along

Minal Sarosh

grandpa is a horse  
the old dog runs  
alongside

Neena Singh

tangled in highwires  
the frantic flutter  
of a kite

Meraki

reverberating in mayamalavagowla first home

Raghav Prashant Sundar \*

mayamalavagowla =

The first raagam (melodic scale) that is taught to students of Carnatic music.

—Raghav Prashant Sundar

genetically predisposed the death of a daughter

Raghav Prashant Sundar \*

eggsitstense

Engin Gülez

the weight of  
our fossil fuel habit  
lashing rain

Ruchita Madhok

the slow ripening of a poem selah

Shloka Shankar

delicate curves of a seed pod speculum

Lorraine A Padden \*

adjusting my line of sight world affairs

Tazeen Fatma

the cold breath  
on my neck  
jury duty

C.X.Turner

full moon tide  
she pulls the blanket  
over her head

Robert Kingston

wait until the leaves are done talking

Patrick Sweeney \*

drip drip drip  
the kitchen faucet  
and you

Bonnie J Scherer

final diagnosis –  
the doctor misspells  
my name

Geethanjali Rajan

Walden Pond . . .  
only two bars  
on my phone

Mark Forrester \*



nebula the birth of a new word permacrisis

Meera Rehm \*

second marriage  
he likes his eggs  
over easy

Elisa Theriana

as if another donut would help this solitude

Bryan Rickert \*

eulogy  
only we know  
our truth

Vandana Parashar

cocktail sun  
stringing along a birdsong  
her bikini

Lorelyn De la Cruz Arevalo

he recalls  
his first mescaline trip  
summer heat

John S Green

toy doctor kit the girl sticks out her tongue mid-war

Marcie Wessels

spring breeze . . .  
the jungle-green  
of a plastic bag

Hemapriya Chellappan \*

the dog park  
sniffing each other  
out

Jo Balistreri \*

all alone—  
the old watering can  
by mother's grave

Isabella Kramer \*

onyx moon rising his final last smoke

Helen Buckingham

beach sunset  
an orange lifebelt  
just in case

Keith Evetts \*

men o pause the red signal counts down

Lakshmi Iyer

another summer wishing i was born in a different era

Sankara Jayanth Sudanagunta

election...

what does the other side think  
of cherry blossoms?

Sankara Jayanth Sudanagunta

ontologically perched  
atop *The Language of God*  
a desiccated fly

Marianne Paul \*

the scent  
of my ancestral home  
in a new home

Ram Chandran

a brief kiss  
on the way  
shift changeover

Subir Ningthouja

grandparents' place  
this floor used to be  
lava

Tomislav Sjekloća \*

festival riots  
I hide God  
in the closet

Richa Sharma \*

third rock  
another marriage  
that won't last

Tracy Davidson

new moon the back of my head walking away

Cynthia Anderson \*

peeling the scars off the body politic

Debbie Strange

after birdwatching the roast chicken

Bruce H. Feingold

midges flying into a sentence

Christopher Jupp \*

online radio  
yet another ad  
for boner pills

Chris Langer

lonely night  
the mosquito knows  
everything about me

Bakhtiyar Amini\*

blood moon  
dad warns my sister  
about boys like me

John Hawkhead \*

that scratchy sound a record makes  
before the song starts ...  
burial day

Joseph P. Wechselberger

her coat no longer on the hook

Margaret Walker

mass extinction . . .  
a row of taillights  
to the megachurch

petro c. k.

senryu  
-ish \*

Roberta Beach Jacobson

scattered peas—  
I try to bring together  
parts of me

Mona Bedi

mirror store —  
everywhere I look  
me

Bill Waters

family movie night —  
everybody  
double-screening

Bill Waters

divorce papers  
both sign  
in the same blue

Daya Bhat \*

of daughters –  
raise birds, not bubbles  
says grandma

Bipasha Majumder (De)

**-end of Pippa's choices-**

# Independently Jointly selected Senryu

disenchanted  
my all put in  
a peach cobbler

Shonin

blood moon  
dad warns my sister  
about boys like me

John Hawkhead

unwanted fondles end-tunnel lights are fake news

Pris Campbell

that scratchy sound a record makes  
before the song starts ...  
burial day

Joseph P. Wechselberger

her coat no longer on the hook

Margaret Walker

assisted living anything but

Marilyn Ashbaugh

before roe after wade wire hanger

Marilyn Ashbaugh

mass extinction . . .  
a row of taillights  
to the megachurch

petro c. k.

senryu  
-ish

Roberta Beach Jacobson

scattered peas—  
I try to bring together  
parts of me

Mona Bedi

mirror store —  
everywhere I look  
me

Bill Waters



family movie night —  
everybody  
double-screening

Bill Waters

New Year's Day  
sky on the winter napkins  
is different

Michael Lindenhof

son's death  
her unexpected  
constellation

Ella Aboutboul

divorce papers  
both sign  
in the same blue

Daya Bhat  
six washing machines . . .  
his medical aprons  
are still dirty

Bipasha Majumder (De)

book club  
we discuss  
mammograms

Kerry J Heckman

second marriage  
he likes his eggs  
over easy

Elisa Theriana

as if another donut would help this solitude

Bryan Rickert

over you  
I choose myself  
over you

Vandana Parashar

cocktail sun  
stringing along a birdsong  
her bikini

Lorelyn De la Cruz Arevalo

he recalls  
his first mescaline trip  
summer heat

John S Green

the dog park  
sniffing each other  
out

Jo Balistreri

all alone—  
the old watering can  
by mother's grave

Isabella Kramer

onyx moon rising his final last smoke

Helen Buckingham

beach sunset  
an orange lifebelt  
just in case

Keith Evetts

*men o pause* the red signal counts down

Lakshmi Iyer

another summer wishing i was born in a different era

Sankara Jayanth Sudanagunta

election...  
what does the other side think  
of cherry blossoms?

Sankara Jayanth Sudanagunta

ontologically perched  
atop *The Language of God*  
a desiccated fly

Marianne Paul

a brief kiss  
on the way  
shift changeover

Subir Ningthouja

grandparents' place  
this floor used to be  
lava

Tomislav Sjekloća

old coast road  
turning  
to when there was no road

Lee Hudspeth

closing time  
the wishing well's wishes  
all let go

Lee Hudspeth

the last pastry  
left on the tray ...  
good manners

Daniela Misso

cold war  
father and I  
talk trivia

Christa Pandey

festival riots  
I hide God  
in the closet

Richa Sharma

toy doctor kit the girl sticks out her tongue mid-war

Marcie Wessels

spring breeze . . .  
the jungle-green  
of a plastic bag

Hemapriya Chellappan

girl talk...  
I overhear my sons  
discuss their crushes

Baisali Chatterjee Dutt

the slower click  
of her worn castanets  
his no-show  
again

Claire Vogel Camargo

holiday party  
explaining again  
about our miscarriage

John Pappas

loud sirens  
the opinions  
I deem necessary

Vidhi Ashar

city graffiti—  
once a while a voice  
among gibberish

AJ Anwar

the all-too-familiar body language puppet show

Arvinder Kaur

Anesthesia room  
getting wheeled out I offer  
news from far away

Shelli Jankowski-Smith

vitamin jars  
planning my own  
surprise party

Mike Fainzilber

before Zoom meet—  
I pluck  
my chin hair

Stella Pierides

colours of the rainbow pills on her nightstand

Susan King

beach-side stroll  
our footprints on sand  
as if we didn't

Hla Yin Mon

online obituary  
the finality  
of closed comments

Barrie Levine

genetically predisposed the death of a daughter

Raghav Prashant Sundar

final diagnosis –  
the doctor misspells  
my name

Geethanjali Rajan

delicate curves of a seed pod speculum

Lorraine A Padden

adjusting my line of sight world affairs

Tazeen Fatma

the cold breath  
on my neck  
jury duty

C.X.Turner

wait until the leaves are done talking

Patrick Sweeney

drip drip drip  
the kitchen faucet  
and you

Bonnie J Scherer

midges flying into a sentence

Christopher Jupp

into the fountain  
the last leaf falls -  
too soft to break the sun

Deborah A. Bennett

Planet Pizza...  
I am cleared  
for landing

Tony Williams

moorland rain  
the nuclear plant  
just miles away

Tony Williams

online radio  
yet another ad  
for boner pills

Chris Langer



a long night alone  
no moon or star twinkles  
no cat in my lap

Linda L Ludwig

lonely night  
the mosquito knows now  
everything about me

Bakhtiyar Amini

farmhouse party  
in every table  
a cucurbit flask

Mallika Chari

autistic son  
every jigsaw piece  
has a place

Marilyn Humbert

new moon the back of my head walking away

Cynthia Anderson

peeling the scars off the body politic

Debbie Strange

late strawberries  
suddenly too late  
to dance the cha cha

Anna Maria Domburg-Sancristoforo

pianissimo  
the grammar of my autumn days

Anna Maria Domburg-Sancristoforo

after birdwatching the roast chicken

Bruce H. Feingold

nocturnal emissions  
howls of canyon coyotes  
keep coming

Scott Wiggerman

Walden Pond . . .  
only two bars  
on my phone

Mark Forrester

nebula the birth of a new word permacrisis

Meera Rehm

elopement  
the family picture  
she takes along

Minal Sarosh

eggsitstense

Engin Gülez

the weight of  
our fossil fuel habit  
lashing rain

Ruchita Madhok

**END  
of  
the joint “overlapped”  
choices**

A child wearing a dark jacket and a patterned hat is sitting on a large, yellow, ring-shaped sculpture. The sculpture is mounted on a pedestal and has a textured surface. In the background, there is a street with a silver car, a building, and a sign that says "Geirsgata". The sky is clear and blue.

**The**

**O of Senryū**

# The O of senryū

---

*by Alan Summers*

*If haiku has ‘ah’ or ‘aaah’  
senryu has “oh” or “oh!”*

Senryū writers can break a lot of perceived rules. I'd say if a senryū writer wishes to include or exclude kire, ma—間, and seasonal references, then they are free to do so. Senryū is about pinning something down about human society, and sometimes to tweak the nose of haiku writers of course.

And of course senryū tackle politics and politicians as they impact the planet and not only human issues. Senryū can be another way about ‘talking’ about politics, which is ripe for satire.

*bobbing apples  
I imagine  
my political rival*

*Alan Summers*

*Joint 3rd, Private Ohio Zoom Kukai (December 2022)*

*Bobbing apples can be associated with the Celtic festival Samhain, or with Halloween.*  
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Apple\\_bobbing](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Apple_bobbing)

See how even the hokku & haiku use of seasonal references can actually be used for senryū as a parallel device to drive home a satirical image.

War is a topic that both haiku and senryu tackle, as the growing pains of haiku came about when protesting against Japan's decision to enter WWII (look up the New Rising Haiku movement in Japan). Now that we are into the hybrid era(s) of WWIII, both haiku and senryu continue to be obliged to show and even remind some of us:

*melting snow  
a child's only drink  
with invasion*

Women, children and other non-combatants are lucky, if they can emerge from bunkers and apartment blocks, to access any snow to melt into drinking water. Many die of dehydration. Is this haiku or senryū, as melting snow (雪解け yukidoke) is a mid-spring kigo? Here it's a vital act to melt snow, with fire as there'll likely be no electricity, to drink, and also cook, as water pipes have been destroyed by an act of war/attrition.

*do bullets  
go to heaven?  
snow angels*

How many humans, including children become permanent roadside snow angels for all the wrong reasons?

*the swear box  
becomes a cough box  
dwindling change*

We have built up resistance against Sars-Covid-19 virus yet we are still vulnerable to anyone who inconsiderately coughs close to us, or coughs or sneezes into any small to medium retail outlet or home. A cough now means it's more likely to be Sars/Covid, or equally deadly influenza, with coronavirus common cold in close second place.

Haiku and hokku poems have their own humour. Here there is an outdoor toilet, with its roof caved in, and cobwebs have criss-crossed its missing ceiling space and the sky.

*the old dunny's roof  
no longer holding out the sky–  
moonlit cobwebs*

Alan Summers

**3rd Prize**, Canadian Writer's Journal poetry competition (1995)

**Publication credits:**

Canadian Writer's Journal Vol 12 No.3 (1995)

haijinx - *haiku with humor* vol. I issue 1 (spring 2001)

A mention of the moon places this haiku firmly into Autumn. There is the suggestion of the human species with ‘dunny’ (Australian slang) but the rest of nature has taken over from the human occupation, or even complimented if a stray human uses the facilities, with a free panoramic view of the stars. Of course as haiku has its own humour, so senryu does too, and this might be a haiku but it’s close to being a senryū as we have the topic of a toilet. In this case an outdoor toilet (dunny) without a roof, and we might wonder how the walls will remain standing, and if an unlucky individual was caught out in more ways than one. I can see this haikai verse flipping between haiku and senryū so perhaps it’s a chūkan (中間/third/intermediate) type of using overt humour dangling between the two genres (hokku/haiku and senryū).

## I’ve included some senryu from Blōō Outlier Journal guest editor Pippa Phillips to highlight.

All of the interpretations are by me, alone, and how they impact me as I read them.

*missed call–  
the spaces between  
the tulips you sent*

Pippa Phillips

failed haiku A Journal of English Senryu

Volume 6, Issue 68 ed. bryan rickert

July 2021

<https://failedhaiku.com/2021/07/31/issue-68-is-up-and-we-have-another-co-editor/>

We have the addition of a Spring season reference, and that a specific flower is given, which has various symbology, often sad, as well as other meanings. We have a missed telephone call and apparently no voice or text message was sent as a follow up, except we have a delivery of flowers, namely tulips, which can be symbolic of passion/love or an allusion to Romeo and Juliet, or martyrdom/protest.

The sender might have a different version of what tulips symbolise to the receiver of the flowers. Sometimes we need to clearly communicate and not leave spaces that are not easily interpreted correctly. This is my own interpretation, and I do find “the spaces between’ haunting when we also have that ‘missed call’ and the past tense version ‘sent’ instead of a more possible present tense ‘send’ which could feel positive.

## *pulling the wings off my daddy issues*

Pippa Phillips

Prune Juice Journal for English Senryu & Related Forms

Issue 37 – Senryu & Kyoka (July 2022) ed. Tia Haynes

<https://prunejuicesenryu.com/2022/07/31/issue-37-senryu-amp-kyoka/>

It's almost impossible for some of us to be free of parental issues. The cliché sometimes is that daughters are close to fathers, and sons closer to their mothers. If any of those relationships are not healthy. Some of the internet research results were not really useful, and I felt this was more objective and non-judgemental: <https://www.healthline.com/health/what-are-daddy-issues>

The unexpectedness that follows the phrase “pulling the wings off” works exceptionally well. We see how important it is to get the order right, as this wouldn't work half as powerfully “my daddy issues” & “pulling the wings off” as the published poem.

## *the last lilacs— adjusting the purple of my prose*

Pippa Phillips

Prune Juice Issue 35 – Senryu & Kyoka ed. Tia Haynes November 2021

<https://prunejuicesenryu.com/2021/11/05/issue-35-senryu-kyoka/>

Purple prose is the over-the-top flowery prose text that can interfere with a narrative flow by drawing so much attention to the over-perfumed phrasing. Here is another senryū that uses flowers. If lilacs symbolize first love, then perhaps the opening line is the very last chance or experience of love. Lilacs may be a Spring flower, though they bloom April through to June. Selecting very carefully it's possible to have those two months of bloom in Spring though.

The last two lines suggest that perhaps this poem's protagonist, whether a writer in romance novels, or a poet, is looking back on their life, perhaps regret, or embellishing, or perhaps being more realistic and pragmatic. Perhaps the purple prose is no longer required and they have something substantial in their lives now. A fascinating senryū.



*a week  
and it still won't blossom—  
watercolor practice*

Pippa Phillips

Prune Juice Issue 34 – Senryu & Kyoka July 2021 ed. Tia Haynes

<https://prunejuicesenryu.com/2021/07/01/issue-34-senryu-kyoka/>

This senryū suggests the author or protagonist is hoping that a piece of self-created artwork will stand in place for failed green fingers perhaps? It may be that they are learning the art of watercolour painting and cannot conquer it in a matter of days, just like we cannot control a lot of things.

*through a window—  
the neighbor's window*

Pippa Phillips, USA

Prune Juice Issue 33 – Senryu & Kyoka

March 2021 ed. Tia Haynes

<https://prunejuicesenryu.com/2021/03/01/issue-33-senryu-kyoka/>

This senryū is a highly successful *duostich* where we might want at least one more line, but that's left up to us. There's an echo of Alfred Hitchcock's *Rear Window* based on "It Had to Be Murder" a story by Cornell Woolrich (as William Irish) published in *Magazine* (February 1942). It's an excellent "starter" or "ender" to a short story or even a novel too! Of course this could be social comment about overcrowded housing, and that despite other choices, often cheap housing packs people together unnecessarily closely.

*sudden rain—  
I open an umbrella  
inside me*

Pippa Phillips

failed haiku: A Journal of English Senryu

vol 7, Issue 82 guest editor: hemapriya chellappan

(September 2022)

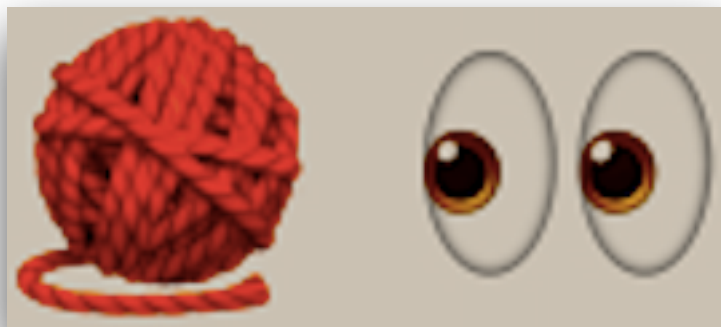
<https://failedhaiku.files.wordpress.com/2022/09/failedhaikuissue82.pdf>

Senryū (singular and plural spelling) cover a wide spectrum of human physical acts, but also of introspection, and both of these effects on the wider world, and how we sometimes

experience nature other than in certain determined manners. The use of what appears to be surrealism is to suggest a greater truth. Has the author been caught out by the rain and wishes they a better choice of clothing, so much so, that they “open an umbrella inside” of themselves. Or has the rain brought on melancholy.

Here, we have the natural phenomenon of rain, and it’s unexpected, so far this feels like a haiku, which continues to feel that way into the second line of the tercet. Senryū need not worry about a third line acting as a surprise, which some haiku writers like to create. The last line here feels like a René Magritte visual, making the unseeable into something visible in a constructive and poetical manner.

For instance, opening an umbrella indoors is considered bad luck as it’s disrespecting the Sun God but here the umbrella is not opened ‘indoors’ as per a building, but emotionally and connectively inside the internal workings of the poet. Magritte’s method was of severing perceived relationships from their expected nature, and revealing language as traps and uncertainties. Perhaps the author or protagonist requires protection from the elements, and is symbolism for the confusing bouquets and brickbats (praise, then taken away, replaced by barbs and slurs made in public or behind a person’s back).

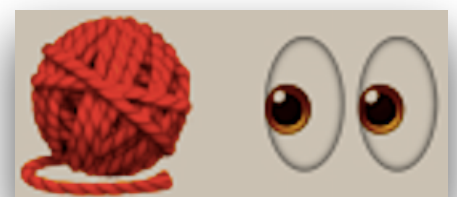


# Senryu

(singular and plural spelling) can be a tricky area as more research uncovers it’s not as simplistic as we assumed, but a loose description that might apply to Western (but not necessarily Japanese practice) might be that it unearths, unpeels, or observes human society activity at its most vulnerable. Sometimes showing or talking directly about the elephant in the room.

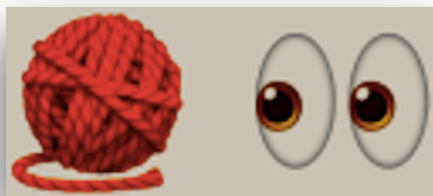
—Alan Summers

*“Senryu is about humanity, with all its warts, or despite them.”*  
Alan Summers



## Senryu characteristics:

Downright satirical; social commentary; latest human society topics, fads, trends, bloopers.  
Parody or visceral examination and even self-examination.  
Inappropriate humour/appropriate humour, irrepressible humour.  
Disparaging, poker face sardonicism, irony, sarcasm.  
Atrocities in war and politics.



Senryu often relies on:

社会思想

Shakai shisō

(thoughts on society)

社会への洞察

Shakai e no dōsatsu

(insight into society)

Makoto Ueda (1931–2020), author of fifteen books about Japanese poetry, former Professor Emeritus of Japanese literature at Stanford University, felt that this was one of the most famous senryu of all time:

役人の子和にぎにぎおよく覚え

anonymous

pub. Yanagidaru vol. 1 (1765)

Romanised (romaji) version:

yakunin no ko wa ni ginigi o yoku oboe

Alan Summers: Alternative version

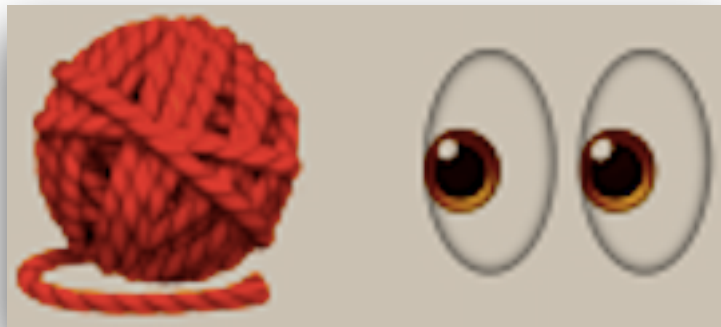
*the official's young son quickly quickly he grabs each bribe*

Makoto Ueda considered that the original mocked the government official for his over-enthusiasm to take bribes which his really young son also rapidly learns to copycat.

役人の子わ  
yakunin no ko wa  
son of an official

にぎにぎ およく覚え  
ni ginigi o yoku oboe  
grasp/grab & remember well

“niginigi” a derivative of “nigiru”: “to grab” “grasp” or “to grip,”



“Senryu are short aftertastes like *amuse-gueule*, or small arms visual gunfire, and potent as a longer satirical poem. But they can also be bittersweet, ironic, poignant, truthful, painfully revealing verses and I feel think honesty has an even higher register in senryu, if thoughtfully done. Senryu verse can act as vital checks and balances in our own lives: It feeds a need of a different place than haiku.”

Alan Summers from:  
*Pieces of Her Mind: Women Find Their Voice in Centuries-Old Forms*  
Omega Publications (2012) ed. Susan Galletti Campion *et al*

<https://poetrysociety.org.nz/affiliates/haiku-nz/haiku-poems-articles/archived-articles/womens-voice-senryu-has-its-place/>

<https://www.amazon.co.uk/Pieces-Her-Mind-Multiple-Contributors/dp/0985035064>



curious haijin  
pull the tails  
of old dragons  
and roar

Fuller

“...astounding volume...the most tangled of dilemmas is best unraveled  
by the women of this world” —Liam Wilkinson,  
Former Editor, *Prune Juice*.

“Like a woman, this book is an artful treasure that can truly be called a  
modern classic, aesthetically pleasing and emotionally rousing...”  
—Dianne Collins, Award-winning author of *Do You QuantumThink?*  
*New Thinking That Will Rock Your World*.

“This book’s bittersweet, ironic, poignant, truthful, and painfully  
revealing verses will delight the taste buds of readers...”  
—Alan Summers, *Japan Times* award-winning writer;  
Editor, *Notes From the Gean*.

“thought-provoking, creative, charming, and page-turning”  
—Jennifer Lawler, award-winning author of the Dojo Wisdom series.

ISBN 978-0-9850350-6-8  
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There are so many favourites it's impossible to list them all, but here are just a few:



self-adhesive name label new every day

Marcie Wessels

Identity has always been important, however we see it, or perhaps don't notice it in a safe or even privileged environment. I'd say even in what is still termed as 'normal' we tend to stick a label on ourselves in different situations (any kind of shared living, parents, students, tenant or friend's groups etc...), work, and of course social, and all the little in-between situations that arise daily or sporadically depending on whom we meet by accident or design. I'm also reminded of *revertigo* where you meet someone from the past and you revert to a personality trait and set of mannerisms from years ago: Even if we are middle-aged we might revert back to insecurities as a teenager etc... Or a pack mentality defence mechanism or just an immaturity or vulnerability we thought we had escaped from, and matured.

toy doctor kit the girl sticks out her tongue mid-war

Marcie Wessels

This is an incredibly vivid piece, with that remarkable "*sticks out her tongue mid-war*" if we approached it with no specific gender, or recognise the male-dominated creation of war, where often women of all ages will work in a manner to bring the conflict to an end: "the girl sticks out her tongue mid-war."

To be honest, the line "the girl sticks out her tongue mid-war" is enough to be a *senryū* of high quality in itself. Then we have the joyful, positive, and yet poignant "toy doctor kit" when we know many people when adults choose the non-combative version of civilian or military medical services. Here a girl chooses her game to be positive, whether she dreams of being a doctor (nurse, surgeon etc...) when she is older. And what is "mid-war"? Is it a time of no war (yet) or a temporary truce or other cessation, or simply bang in the middle of the war, missiles, bullets, bombs, tanks etc... and she has the determined desire to play a game and one of healing. Very powerful *senryū*.

the screech of brakes  
suddenly becoming  
bystanders

John Pappas

Things can happen very very quickly even in ‘normal’ civilian situations. A bus, coach, car, bicycle, or motorbike can be part of a terrible road traffic accident. We might be on foot, shopping, or sat down at a café, somewhere in peacetime, even, and from being a passive consumer we become an active participant, a witness, hopefully unharmed. Things can turn on a dime or sixpence, anywhere, anytime. Great word choices ‘screech’ ‘suddenly’ and ‘bystanders’ brought together by ‘becoming’.

all of the raspberries  
with grandson  
on tiptoe

Neena Singh

I can almost feel myself on tiptoe as well. I never knew any of my grandparents but have met thousands in action and know how special they can be. Here a grandparent is having fun with their grandson, both as an adult guardian but also to share a childhood both gone and one still happening. The approach to this poem is longest line first, and it’s almost as if the line lengths mimic a tree’s shape.

There’s more to this, as the information is given in a poetic order, involving us, rather than ‘telling’ us something as a passive bystander. If I reversed the poem into a short long short tercet (3-line verse):

*on tiptoe  
all of the raspberries  
with a grandson*

We’d need to add ‘a’ or ‘my’ or ‘the’ before grandson otherwise it’s a bit of a clunky line. In the original, poetically we do not need something before ‘grandson’:

If I stretch out the first two lines:

*all of the raspberries with grandson*

Reading those first two lines, but as two lines, it’s a rich and involving phrase already. All three lines over a single line:

*all of the raspberries with grandson on tiptoe*

A wonderful line, but Neena Singh has astutely used 'enjambment' where the breaking of the poem over different lines creates a stronger tension. Those first two glorious lines giving us a family image are shot up several notches by the third and last line of 'on tiptoe'.

There's a lot of craft in a simple image of two generations fruit-picking!

first time singing  
with parents...  
the little girl slows down

Yasir Farooq

The wonder and trepidation of a first time is simply but wonderfully captured here. Another example of an unusual order of line lengths, and an astute judgement with each line using enjambment. The longest line being the last line is vital. Always be wary of too much linear logic, as we are dealing with poetry first, enabling a flow of information in its pace and order. If logically written out, and being controlled by the perceived short long short line order:

*first time singing...*  
*the little girl slows down*  
*with parents*

This is an okay poem, but there is always room to push our poetry muscles. The choice of ellipsis in the original is far more than a simple pause, it allows the reader to engage in the first few shy and awkward moments of the really young girl before we reach that next and last line. Is she slowing down as she was singing too quickly, due to nerves, or that her parents are singing a little too slowly, in general, or that they too are a little shy and stumbling over the song lines? I feel there is an immense amount of teamwork being suggested between parents and their very young daughter, where both generations benefit.

her coat no longer on the hook

Margaret Walker

The words 'no longer' will often carry a deeply poignant tag of loss. As my family have suffered another loss this is all the more sad for me. How the belongings of a lost one, who has died, will often have their clothing and other belongings packed away, some given to surviving loved ones, and perhaps much will be passed onto charities. This is a good case for slowing reading the piece instead of a rush from start to end. A rush reading might just give us the idea of someone doesn't have their coat on a hook therefore they have temporarily gone out on a trip.



Pause reading can be a useful device to gain more from a poem:

her coat /pause/ no longer /pause/ on the hook

once more around the dance floor IV pole

Lorraine A Padden

A song of defiance and freedom perhaps for one who is gravely ill but will not let something medically limiting to deny them a dance, even around a hospital ward.

**NOTE:**

**IV poles, or intravenous poles,** are medical devices designed as a slender iron or aluminum portable pole with adjustable height, a 4-5 wheeled base for stability, and 2 to 4 hooks on the pole top that provides a secure place to hang bags of medicine or fluid for administration to a patient.

The phrase 'once more' is potentially poignant, and in conjunction with 'once more around the dance floor' might only mean the venue is about to close for the night. Yet the last two words change everything:

*once more around the dance floor // IV pole*

Here the device of leaving IV pole are necessary, rather than bring it to the front of the senryū.

cold toilet seat  
this broken economy  
keeps biting

Robert Kingston

Here the first three words are better at the front of the poem rather than:

*this broken economy  
keeps biting  
cold toilet seat*

or

*this broken economy keeps biting cold toilet seat*

Sometimes the vital sting in the poem are best served up front, sometimes as the very last words.

The genre of senryū will of course attract an aspect of the toilet, when we are most vulnerable and undignified. What better than to combine that topic with that of politics, and its boast of safeguarding a country's economy, allegedly. Using 'cold' and 'broken' with 'biting' really brings in texture that adds to the humour and reality of the situation.

museum visit –  
the small boy's trail  
of his missing father

Amoolya Kamalnath

This poem grabbed me very quickly. A child and a missing father, where both may be panicking on what would be an ordinary visit to somewhere. What's brilliantly achieved here is the avoiding of plain telling which leaves the reader little to do except be passive. Instead, the boy is leaving a trail, unintentionally perhaps, while frantically looking for his father. The trail maybe the sound of his close to hysterical voice, or a mixture of things, even sweet/candy wrappings as he sustains himself. There maybe an inference that the mother is following the trail of the boy, perhaps aided by someone from the museum. We hope they all catch up with each other fairly promptly at least. There is a hint that some museums create treasure hunts and explorer trails. Has the father invented one of his own challenges for the boy, that can also be considered. Study and devour the phrasing and structure of this senryū, and the craft and decision to go the extra mile in how the words follow each other.

in memoriam  
using the adjectives  
I had failed to say

Geethanjali Rajan

Sometimes when someone dies we realise that we have not said enough, in the right way, to them. I didn't use an adjective, as far as I can recall, but when I came to the hospital to see my dead father before they took him to the morgue, I did say for perhaps the first time ever "I love you" despite a long and difficult relationship. Whether the person in the poem wishes to have said positive things or were not able to be more direct, we cannot know for sure. It is enough to say that we need more honest dialogue with people who have played such a vast role in our lives perhaps.

#mondayblues I play the world's smallest violin for myself

Susan Burch

This senryū, which uses a hashtag, popular in many social media platforms, is followed by the world's smallest violin. That violin may be a metaphorical one of course, where we use images to suggest how we feel inside. As the phrase is not "I play the violin for myself" I can feel it's a not a literal violin, although that image would also be incredibly poignant. A person expressing great sadness as a musician, but in private, with absolutely no one else around. Here it is "I play the world's smallest violin for myself" and the size of the metaphorical violin is also an added layer of poignancy.

a name change  
for potter's field  
we're all janes

Lorraine Pester

**Note:**

A potter's field is a burial place for paupers and strangers.

*Is Potters Field a real place?*

Currently, the Department of Correction (DOC) maintains and operates the City Cemetery, commonly known as Potter's Field, located on Hart Island, in Long Island Sound. The cemetery on Hart Island is purportedly the largest tax-funded cemetery in the world. [Hart Island - Data Team - New York City Council](#)

The author has also used the term 'janes' which could mean Jane Doe, where such names are often used to refer to a corpse whose identity is unknown or unconfirmed. This has included the United Kingdom where the usage of "John Doe" originated during the Middle Ages.

A potter's field, paupers' grave or common grave is a place for the burial of unknown, unclaimed or indigent people. "Potter's field" and is of Biblical origin, referring to **Akeldama** (meaning *field of blood* in Aramaic), stated to have been purchased after Judas Iscariot's suicide, by the high priests of Jerusalem, with the coins that had been paid to Judas for his identification of Jesus.

The priests are stated to have acquired it for the burial of strangers, criminals, and the poor. Prior to Akeldama's use as a burial ground, it was a site where potters collected high-quality, deeply red clay for the production of ceramics, thus the name potters' field. SOURCE: **WIKIPEDIA**

This senryū could well mean that as so many girls and women are abducted, trafficked, and eventually end up being killed or die from induced drug addiction, that these anonymous fields of corpses might sometimes be better called something after 'Jane'.

From an author of female gender the last line is chilling in its context of Potter's Field, on various levels, even if the person's name has always been known:

"we're all janes"

Each line of a poem is as important after all, and that line makes the poem all the more powerful.

Christmas Eve—  
vintage port and stilton  
with Marley in chains

Jo Balistreri

I couldn't resist a Christmas haiku, and one that alludes to one of the strongest fictional short stories around this season.

The structure looks like a haiku with its season fixing reference, and a strong cut, but it's definitely a senryū! Marley was already in chains as per the story, so I immediately thought is there someone who might be termed a kind of Marley during Christmas, and not an expected Scrooge? Or is it that the author wishes no disruptions to her Christmas festivities and that includes Marley and the other instructional ghosts? A great example of flipping a haiku on its head so that it's a senryū instead!

v i c t i m   v i c t i m i z e r   a c c o r d i o n   p e o p l e

Jerome Berglund

The double-spacing of each word is disturbingly effective. It's the age of division and ultra-polarized opinions, or more often 'guided spite' with the aid of social media. Hate speech is legitimised and often backed up in deed with few and rare repercussions. Who can we trust nowadays, as respected public figures show more than an ankle of clay? The brutally blunt phrase, separated by extra spacing, is that too many people concertina between what is accepted, and what can be forced to accepted. A haunting phrase is "accordion people" with or without its spaces.

# For older articles on senryū:

## **“Being Human - the ordinary intensity”**

A look at senryu, the sibling of haiku, senryu contest results and commentary, and a very funny checklist!

<https://area17.blogspot.com/2018/06/being-human-ordinary-intensity-look-at.html>

## **The Golden Carousel of Life: Senryu**

An Application to be a) human

by Alan Summers

<https://tinyurl.com/senryuCarousel>

## **What is "senryu" again?**

Commentary and results of two senryu competitions - the sibling genre of haiku

<https://area17.blogspot.com/2018/07/what-is-senryu-again-commentary-and.html>

## **About kire, kigo, seasons, MA, negative space:**

**More than one fold in the paper: Kire, kigo, and the vertical axis of meaning in haiku by Alan Summers**

<https://area17.blogspot.com/2014/04/more-than-one-fold-in-paper-kire-kigo.html>

**MA (間) and Negative space in haiku:**

<https://area17.blogspot.com/2014/03/negative-space-in-haiku-writing-poetry.html>

The O of senryū©Alan Summers 2022  
photo/artwork©Alan Summers  
Reykjavík, Iceland

# Thoughts About Senryu

## by Pippa Phillips

I have often heard it said that senryu in Japan is a very different thing than it is in English-language micropoetry, a comparatively artless and superficial form of micropoetry. Others argue that even in Japan, the line between haiku and senryu is not always clear, the matter often only settled by the author's declaration. Meanwhile, it is a common sentiment among English-language micropoets that whether or not a poem is a senryu comes down to the presence of humanity, the absence of nature, and humor.

It is useful to pursue a notion of senryu as distinct from haiku in English-language micropoetry in order to understand how and why it works. I think of senryu as derivative of what haiku *isn't*—but what I reject is the notion that haiku is fundamentally about nature in such a way that senryu disincludes the use of natural elements. Instead, I believe the fundamental subject of haiku is the relationship between the eternal and the ephemeral. Senryu, in contrast, expresses the full spectrum of emotions and aesthetics beyond that liminal band. Haiku holds the objective as an ideal; senryu can follow the subjective to its depths. Its art is in the articulation of human emotion.

as if another donut would help this solitude

Bryan Rickert

Here, Rickert's monoku is a plaintive rumination undercut by self-deprecation. Senryu is often the ground for the artful practice of *karumi*, the aesthetic practice of lightness.

beach sunset  
an orange lifebelt  
just in case

Keith Evetts

Evetts' poem uses juxtapositions of natural and unnatural color, and the primal danger implicit in the sun's demise, to evoke parental anxiety. Like Rickert's poem, a sense of humor complicates the emotion.

Anesthesia room  
getting wheeled out I offer  
news from far away

Shelli Jankowski-Smith

In Jankowski-Smith's poem, *karumi* creates a sense of dreamlike transcendence.

midges flying into a sentence

Christopher Jupp

Jupp uses literalism to create a playful, self-reflective articulation of the act of creating a poem. Senryu can also be the province of more abstract ruminations.

new moon the back of my head walking away

Cynthia Anderson

For instance, Anderson juxtaposes her inability to perceive the back of her head with a moon-viewer's inability to perceive the new moon.

Walden Pond . . .  
only two bars  
on my phone

Mark Forrester

Forrester's perfect use of ironic location expresses the modern person's inability to disentangle themselves from technology.

wait until the leaves are done talking

Patrick Sweeney

While Sweeney's serves as a counterpoint.

beach-side stroll  
our footprints on sand  
as if we didn't

Hla Yin Mon

Mon's playful, manifold implications create the effect of a beachside memory, faded to pink. Perhaps *karumi* is a dominating aesthetic in senryu because it complicates emotion, thereby rendering it subtle. However, emotional restraint is not necessary in senryu; some of its strongest examples are full-throated expressions of emotion.

delicate curves of a seed pod speculum

Lorraine A Padden

Padden's monoku plants hope in the prospect of new life.

genetically predisposed the death of a daughter

Raghav Prashant Sundar

The combination of clinical language and the depersonalisation of the poem's subject in Sundar's monoku evokes the feeling of annihilation that death brings, creating a strong expression of grief.

festival riots  
I hide God  
in the closet

Richa Sharma

Sharma's poem makes the political personal: there is a feeling that the protagonist is forced to desecrate God in order to preserve his faith.



blood moon  
dad warns my sister  
about boys like me

John Hawkhead

In Hawkhead's poem, the feeling is primal but complicated. There is an allusion to Susan Burch's Touchstone winner:

blood moon  
he doesn't take no  
for an answer

Both poems examine a fundamental rot, a sin as old as society, from the side, alternately, of the victim and the accused. Hawkhead's poem suggests that violence against women implicates, or entangles, all men—whether this is fair, if the protagonist is guilty or not, is an ambiguity that the poem settles into.

While haiku transports, senryu dives into the human, as it lives and is negotiated by the self and other.

*Thoughts About Senryu by Pippa Phillips 2022*

# Regarding karumi:

karumi かるみ or 軽み

meaning lightness, from karui 軽い (light)

*“A lightness of touch”*

Matsuo Basho explained that he wanted this approach to haikai verse like *“a shallow river over a sandy bed”*.



Some Thoughts on Senryu by Susumu Takiguchi

<https://poetrysociety.org.nz/some-thoughts-on-senryu/>

Karumi: Matsuo Bashō's Ultimate Poetical Value, Or was it?

by Susumu Takiguchi

<https://thehaikufoundation.org/juxta/juxta-1-1/karumi-matsuo-bashos-ultimate-poetical-value-or-was-it/>



[photograph copyright Alan Summers](#)

A poster of Greta Thunberg outside the Icelandic Punk museum, Reykjavík, Iceland  
The tiny museum's collection is squeezed into a former underground public toilet.

**end**