

SUBMISSION GUIDELINES AND POLICIES FOR *MODERN HAIKU*

Prospective submitters are strongly urged to familiarize themselves beforehand with *Modern Haiku*, especially with regard to what constitutes a haiku. The MH Web site—<http://www.modernhaiku.org>—prints a selection of haiku and other materials from each issue and sample copies of the journal may be ordered from the Web site.

Material submitted to *Modern Haiku* is to be the author's original work, previously unpublished and not under consideration by any other publication, including Web-based journals, personal Web sites, blogs, social networking sites, etc. Editorial cut-off dates for the reading and selection of submissions are March 15, July 15, and November 15 (postmark), but material may be sent at any time and upon acceptance will be published in the next available issue. Editors read submissions year-round—but not continuously. Please do not be alarmed if 6–8 weeks pass before an editor makes a decision on your work. Please send 5–15 haiku/senryu and/or up to 3 haibun per submission by e-mail or post. No more than one submission per issue, please. So send your best work. Additionally, please do not submit haibun that include previously published haiku.

Submitting by e-mail. Send e-mail submissions of haiku, senryu, and haibun to the Internet address modernhaiku@gmail.com. Work may either be pasted in the message text or included as an attachment in MS Word or PDF. Your message must be identified as “MH SUBMISSION” (this text only) in the Subject line. Be sure to include your full postal address and indicate how you wish your materials to be signed. Our response will be by email.

Submitting by postal mail. Send your work to this postal address:

Paul Miller, Editor
Modern Haiku
PO Box 930
Portsmouth, RI 02871-0930

Please use as few sheets of paper as possible and send your submission in a regular-sized business envelope. Express mail is unnecessary, as we look at postmarks to determine compliance with cut-off dates. In order to receive consideration a postal submission must include an addressed envelope with U.S. postage for reply. No submissions will be returned. Postal submissions from outside the U.S. should contain U.S. stamps, US\$1.00 in cash, or an International Reply Coupon to cover return postage.

Prose and art submissions. Most essays, book reviews, haiga, and cover artwork are specifically commissioned by the editors; please contact the editors before submitting such materials on spec. Standard rate of payment for prose is \$5 per printed page, paid upon acceptance.

Payments. As of issue 45.1 *Modern Haiku* will regrettably no longer pay author's fees, with the exception of \$5.00 per printed page or part thereof for essays and longer reviews, and \$10 for each haiga. Free author copies are not provided.

Books for review. *Modern Haiku* endeavors to apprise readers of all substantial new publications in English of or about haiku. Normally this will mean a short mention in the Briefly Noted section of the journal. A few

especially noteworthy publications are selected for longer reviews in each issue. Books or other materials for review should be sent to the editor at the address below. Be sure to include full information on price and whom to contact to obtain a copy.

Reviews are commissioned by the Book Review Editor—please inquire before submitting reviews on spec.

Juxtapositions is the section of the journal devoted to reader feedback and discussion of important issues in modern haiku. Postal or e-mail letters are avidly sought and will be printed (and edited for fit) at the editors' discretion. Author payment is at the usual prose rate.

Rights. Acceptance of material submitted to *Modern Haiku* gives the journal international serial rights to publish in the print journal and electronically on the *Modern Haiku* Web site. Upon publication, rights revert to the author except that *Modern Haiku* reserves the right to reuse work that has appeared in the journal, with proper citation, in any future print or electronic collections, compendiums, anthologies, etc. Also, if the author wishes to republish the work, *Modern Haiku* requests the courtesy of acknowledging first publication in our journal.

DEFINITIONS—WHAT WE’RE LOOKING FOR

Haiku is a brief verse that epitomizes a single moment. It uses the juxtaposition of two concrete images, often a universal condition of nature and a particular aspect of human experience, in a way that prompts the reader to make an insightful connection between the two. The best haiku allude to the appropriate season of the year. Good haiku avoid subjectivity; intrusions of the poet’s ego, views, or values; and displays of intellect, wit, and facility with words.

The above is a *normative* definition, and haiku of various kinds not squaring with this definition can be easily found, even in the pages of our journal.

Senryu is a verse in the haiku form that focuses on human nature. Although *Modern Haiku* has a best-senryu-of-issue award, separate sections for haiku and senryu have been discontinued because we find it is impossible to draw a sharp line between the two in English-language verse.

The editors of *Modern Haiku* use the term “haiku” inclusively (and loosely) for both haiku and senryu and consider both for publication on an equal footing.

Haikai is a Japanese term for the popular light verse that flourished in the 16th century in reaction to the elevated Japanese court poetry. The term was especially associated with *haikai no renga*, a composition of linked verses in *haikai* style. In English, *haikai* has now come to signify the whole genre of composition that includes haiku, senryu, haibun, and haiga. In Latin America and Europe *haikai* (or *haicai*, etc.) often means “haiku,” the verse as well as the genre.

Hokku is the original name for the Japanese verse form now almost universally called haiku, both in Japan and abroad. Except in specific literary or historical contexts, the term is not used in English.

Haibun is a prose poem that uses embedded haiku to enhance the composition’s overall resonance and effect. *Modern Haiku* publishes several haibun in each issue. The following principles guide the editors in choosing among haibun submissions: (1) Each verse should be able to stand on its own as a haiku, without reference to the prose; (2) The prose should be composed in *haikai* style—that is, with an eye to brevity, objectivity, and non-intellectualization; (3) The haiku and the prose should stand in the same relationship to one another as do the two parts of the haiku—that is, one part should not repeat, explain, or continue the other, rather the juxtaposition of the two should lead the reader to experience added insight or resonance. Haibun are generally, but not necessarily, titled.

Haiga is a work combining a graphic image (originally *sumi-e*, brush painting with black ink) with a haiku in the same relationship as the two parts of a haibun (see above); in particular, the graphic should not merely be an illustration of the haiku, nor the haiku a caption for the image. The best haiga use the same medium for the haiku and the graphic. Photo haiga are very popular these days, but not with our editors. Haiga generally do not need a title. *Modern Haiku* typically publishes four haiga in each issue in the Poetry Gallery section.

Renku is the modern name for *renga* (or *haikai no renga*), a chain of interlocked verses produced by several poets, usually as a sort of literary party game. *Modern Haiku* does not generally publish renku or other linked-verse forms.

Tanka is the modern name for *waka*, the traditional courtly poetry of Japan, written in 5–7–5–7–7–syllable groups and often dealing with themes of love, etc. *Modern Haiku* does not publish tanka.

MODERN HAIKU PUBLICATION POLICIES AND CONSIDERATIONS—HAIKU & SENRYU

Syllable and line count are not vital in contemporary English-language haiku—in particular in our journal. We find, in fact, that few poets are able to write effective haiku in the “traditional” 5–7–5–syllable format.

Titles, notes. English-language haiku generally do not need titles or head notes. If you wish to label your haiku, you should be sure there is a very good reason for doing so and that the title is more than merely a cheat, an extra “fourth line.” The same is true of explanatory notes or footnotes: if your verse contains material that needs explanation, it is safe to assume that it is inadequately communicating to its intended audience—i.e., it is a failed haiku.

Dedications. *Modern Haiku* tries to avoid including a dedication with a haiku on the grounds that it tends to divert attention and sap energy from the haiku.

Locations & dates. Similarly, we try to avoid including a location or date (e.g., a line reading “Aunt Jenny’s backyard, May 1978”) with haiku for the same reasons we are suspicious of titles, notes, and dedications.

Foreign languages. *Modern Haiku* is keen to publish haiku in languages other than English provided that the work was originally composed in the foreign language and that it is accompanied by an English translation. Back translations (that is, an author’s original English-language work translated into another language) and translations into third languages are generally not of interest.

Sequences. *Modern Haiku* welcomes haiku sequences, but we do not generally publish renku, rengay, or other multi-authored linked verse.

In memoriams. Our journal no longer publishes sections of haiku submitted in memory of a recently deceased poet.

And finally, a note on *pluralization*: in English, “haiku” and related terms taken from Japanese are both singular and plural.

MODERN HAIKU PROSE STYLE

We try to present the prose sections of *Modern Haiku* in standard American English suitable for a well-educated reader. For spelling and usage, we follow *Merriam-Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary*, 11th edition. We basically follow Modern Language Association (MLA) bibliographic style and refer to *The Chicago Manual of Style*, 15th edition.

SUBMISSION TURN-ONS

Things that incline the editors to smile beneficently upon your work

- ✓ Clear e-mail submissions with haiku arrayed either within the e-mail text or as an attachment; “MH submission” in the Subject line, and full postal address on the page with the haiku; or
- ✓ 8” x 11” (or A4) paper and submissions in regular No. 10 business envelopes with neat, legible typing or handwriting
- ✓ 5–15 haiku per page/submission, with the author’s name and address at the top of each page
- ✓ A maximum of 15 haiku per submission
- ✓ No more than 1 submission packet per issue (i.e., within a 4-month period), whether by postal mail or e-mail
- ✓ The impression that the author has edited (and proofread) his/her own work before submitting it and is sending us only the very best
- ✓ Cover letters are welcome but in no way necessary

SUBMISSION TURN-OFFS

Things that are not always fatal but invite dyspepsia in the editors

- ✓ E-mail submissions that lack a complete postal address or are unsigned
- ✓ Oversize submission packages, especially 8” x 11” envelopes; large or odd-sized return envelopes
- ✓ Submissions of a single haiku
- ✓ Thick sheaves with one haiku per page
- ✓ Sloppily presented work, either poorly typed or illegibly handwritten
- ✓ Eyesight-challenging work—e.g., writing in hard pencil on soft paper, or text so tiny as to be illegible
- ✓ Multiple versions of a verse, with the implication that the editor should choose among them
- ✓ Breaches of grammar and typological errors
- ✓ Author’s copyright notices on submissions
- ✓ Detailed record of a poet’s previous publication credits
- ✓ Omitted SASE; insufficient return postage

Paul Miller, Editor

Modern Haiku

PO Box 930

Portsmouth, RI 02871-0390

e-mail: <modernhaiku@gmail.com>

Web: <www.modernhaiku.org>

