

**BUTTERFLY
DREAMS**

The Seasons through Haiku and Photographs

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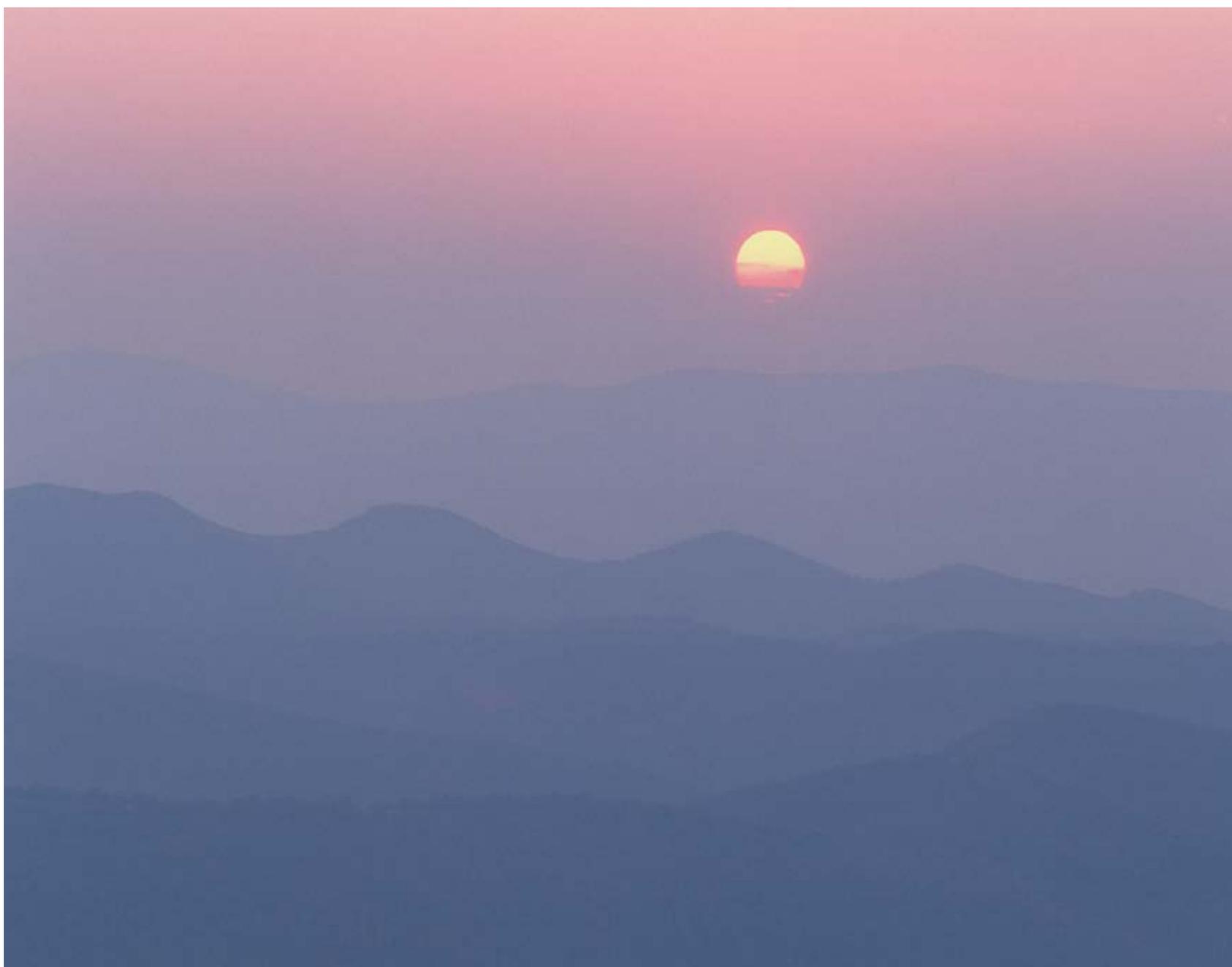


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春

英利





*they come out
mountain after mountain...
the first mists*

Chiyo-ni



*a spring breeze...
the egret is white
among the pines*

Raízan



*in the reservoir
some frogs are born—
this warming water*

Chigetsu-ni



*this way and that
this frog's cousins
and second cousins*

Issa



*you a butterfly?
and I Chuang-tzu?
my dreaming heart*

Bashô



*the spring night—
in a dawn of cherry blossoms
it ended*

Bashô

夏

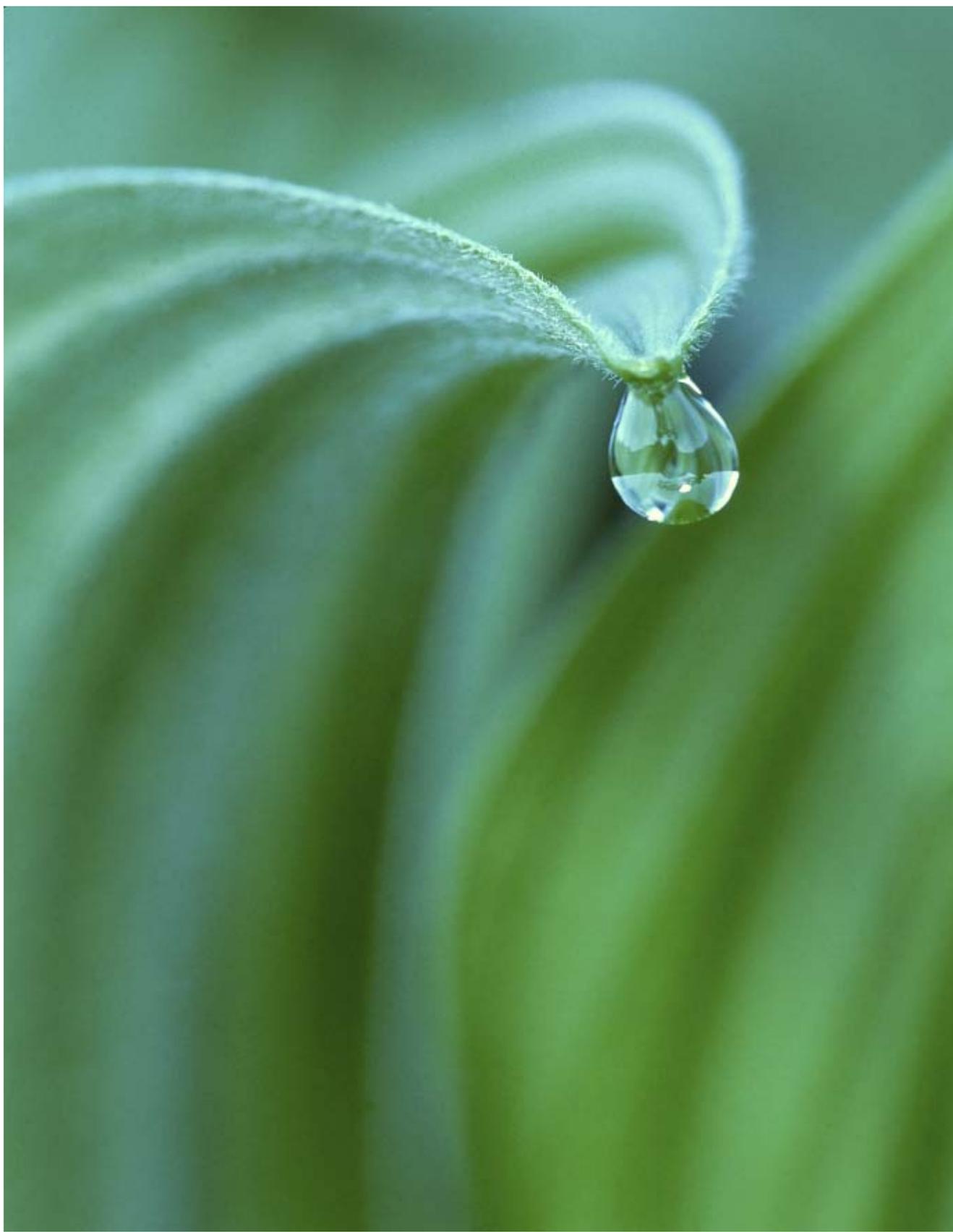
英利





*stillness...
in the lake water's depths
peaks of clouds*

Issa



*less than
a mouthful the clear water's
so precious*

Shiki



*a short night...
on the hairy caterpillars
beads of dew*

Buson



*the broad-winged...
it seems like a traveller
even when resting*

Teijo



*at the water's edge
from its web a spider drops
the edge of night*

Shihaku



*the great marsh...
only one thing blooming:
a lotus flower*

Issa

秋

英利





*harvest moon...
the dragonfly's wings
motionless*

Môen



*the white dew—
on the thorns of the bramble
one drop each*

Buson



*in that bushclover
feel like you're hidden?
a deer's face*

Issa



*a snake's hole
the foolish mouse has
gone right in*

Issa



*an eating-his-meal-
by-the-morning-glories fellow,
that's me*

Bashô



*nameless plants
each has its flower
and moves us*

Sanpû

界

英利





*winter moon
a river wind chips away
at the rocks*

Chora



*but for their cries
the herons would be lost...
this morning's snow*

Chiyo-ni



*not even a wolf
did I meet as I crossed
the winter mountain*

Shiki



*deep in the woods
the pond's ice
so thick*

Shiki



*if the white heron
didn't cry...just a large
snowball*

Tayojo



*deep in the water
on a rock a tree-leaf
falls and sticks*

Jôsô



*the pleasures of cranes
realized in the well of clouds
this first sunrise*

Chiyo-ni

春

英利





more izuru yama mata yama ya hatsugasumi

*they come out
mountain after mountain...
the first mists*

*Chiyo-ni
(1703-1775)*

Season word: first mists (New Year). This celebratory poem, written on viewing the first spring mists of the New Year, tells us that the more Chiyo looks, the more she sees “mountain after mountain”—and so it is for us, as we have looked at these images and sounded these poems, more and more. We hope it will be the same for you.

wjh

An example of aerial perspective, photographed at sunrise, along the Skyline Drive in Shenandoah National Park, Virginia. I tend to overexpose fog images just a bit, to preserve the feeling of lightness presented by the delicate colors and tonalities. During digital processing, I kept this as a 16-bit image for as long as I could to avoid banding in the color transitions of the sky.

ml



yabô

kusa kasumi mizu ni koe naki higure kana

Meadow Outlook:

*the grasses misty
and waters without a sound
this evening*

*Buson
(1716-1784)*

Season word: mist. There are several words in this poem that mean a bit more to a Japanese reader than a straight-forward English translation suggests. First, Buson titles this verse in a manner more like a Western title than the usual sort of prefatory note occasionally found with a haiku. The two words Buson uses suggest the view of a wild field, on the one hand, and a sense of the future of that field, on the other. The *kusa*—usually translated as “grasses”—are in fact both grasses and other non-woody plants that typically cover fallow fields and meadows. Mist rising from the warming landscape is one of the first signs of spring. And the word *koe*, which I have properly translated as “sound” here, usually refers to the sounds of animals, a context that would give it the meaning “voice”. Thus, Buson evokes the animal nature of the landscape and its potential, while at the same time presenting its peaceful silence in the lingering light of a spring evening.

wjh

There is no sound that more clearly paints a picture of the northwoods than the call of loons, in this case along the Gunflint Trail, on the edge of Minnesota’s Boundary Waters Canoe Area. With their plaintive cries in the background, this scene was photographed on Kodachrome in the magical light just after sunset. An area of cloudy sky was included in the original photograph, but Bill Atkinson and Charlie Cramer both pointed out that the reflection of those clouds in the water tells the story.

ml



haru no tsuki sawaraba shizuku-tarinubeshi

*the spring moon—
touching it would make
it drip*

Issa

Season word: spring moon. Generally, haiku contain one verb at most, usually a very stripped-down verb, in a plain present or past tense and not lasting more than two-to-four of the seventeen sounds that go into a Japanese haiku. Here, twelve of those seventeen sounds express verbs. The middle phrase means something like “if/when I touch it, a drip”; then Issa adds verbal inflections that make the noun seem more like a verb, much the way the word “drip” in English can change from noun to verb according to context. These verb endings shift the mood of the whole poem from declarative to conditional-subjunctive. The dripping moon would only happen if you could touch it. The concept may be childlike in its apparent simplicity, but bringing it to rhythmical form requires a poet’s instinct for language.

wjh

A purely fanciful image, since most egrets and herons roost and sleep at night; they are generally daytime hunters. This image flashed through my mind when I first read the haiku, and was assembled from parts of four different photographs. I originally tried to include a reflection of the moon, but was unable to make it look believable. I settled for a few splashes of light across the ripples, following the previously-mentioned dictum that “it doesn’t have to be there to be there”.

ml



harukaze ya shirasagi shiroshi matsu no naka

*a spring breeze...
the snowy egret is white
among the pines*

Raizin
(1654-1716)

Season word: spring breeze. Traditionally, the white heron or snowy egret is not a seasonal subject in Japanese haiku, though they often appear in poems. Here Raizan pairs the bird’s brightness with the spring breeze, and contrasts it with the dark space in a grove of pine trees, a shadowy space that moves with the ruffling white feathers. In the poem, as in the image here, the brightness of the bird in its black backdrop becomes a sign of spring.

wjh

Hérons and egrets were very popular subjects in Japanese woodblock prints. They were admired for their domestic qualities as well as their hunting prowess, as both male and female birds participate in nest building and care of the young. I was initially fascinated by the play of light and shadow beneath these branches behind a hotel on Sanibel Island, Florida. I had been photographing patterns with a Sima soft focus lens for an hour or so when this white egret graced the scene with its presence.

ml



tameike ni kawazu umaruru nurumi kana

*in the reservoir
some frogs are born—
this warming water*

*Chigetsu-ni
(d. 1708)*

Season word: frogs are born. Water warming up expresses the coming of spring for the land, and new tadpoles confirm it for the animals. This poem features an old way of speaking of tadpoles hatching.

wjh

A herd of tadpoles grazing on algae in Joe and Mary Ann McDonald's pond. When I was young, I marvelled at the way puddles and ditches became filled with tadpoles after a spring rain. I used to think it was magic. Now, as an adult, I am familiar with the bio-ecology of tadpoles, frogs, and puddles. I still think it's magic. This exposure was made with a polarizing filter to reduce surface reflection. I rarely use a polarizer at full strength, but rather to eliminate glare sufficiently to prevent highlights from burning out. To eliminate all reflection may give an unnatural appearance—some glare goes along with puddles.

ml



mukimuki ni kawazu no itoko hatoko kana

*this way and that
this frog's cousins
and second cousins*

Issa

Season word: frogs. When we see groups of frogs, do we realize that they are probably all related? As he often does, Issa sees the humor in the situation.

wjh

In the 1960's and 70's, the underside of every palmetto leaf in the Florida Everglades seemed to be home to a family of green tree frogs (*Hyla cinerea*). Sadly, this is no longer the case. If the frog is indeed our "canary in the coal mine", we are in deep trouble. The lighting here is a bit harsh (see the shadows under the leaf rib), as these little guys were photographed, long before the days of TTL fill-flash, with a manual Sunpack 444 on 1/8 power. In those days, I was using a 105mm Noflexar on the Novoflex auto-bellows. The manual flash caused the "hot spot" on the hind leg of the larger frog, a common problem when shooting wet subjects. If I were to reshoot this today, I would use fill-flash or a diffuser.

ml



Season word: butterfly. Most scholars feel this is not really a verse by Bashô, but it is said he sent it in a letter to his acquaintance Dosui, who loved the stories of the Chinese philosopher Chuang-tzu (or Zhuangzi). One of the stories involves a man dreaming he is a butterfly, and on waking not knowing whether he's a man who dreamt he was a butterfly or a butterfly dreaming he's a man. Whoever wrote this poem, it has been around for centuries, and seems a most apt conversation between the two creatures in this image.

wjh

Photography is a way of engaging in the conversations of nature. It is a form of connection, of being a participant as opposed to merely being present. Who knows the import of this chance meeting of butterfly with mosquito, of photographer with butterfly?

ml

kimi ya chô ware ya sôji ga yumegokoro

*you a butterfly?
and I Chuang-tzu?
my dreaming heart*

Bashô (?)



Season word: butterfly. It's almost impossible to hear of a butterfly in an East Asian context and not think of the Chuang-tzu story mentioned above. Apparently this relatively obscure poet finds the butterfly's voice even more insubstantial than a dream.

wjh

Even with the histogram which helps us nail our exposures, I still find a need to bracket occasionally. In this photograph of tiger swallowtail on cherry, I wanted the butterfly sharp, but did not particularly care for the distracting and jumbled background. My eyes are not good enough to evaluate depth-of-field on the LCD, so I bracketed between f5.6 and f22, finally choosing f11. Another option would have been to photograph two images, one at f5.6 for the background and the other at f22 for the butterfly, and combine them with a layer mask. Or make a selection of the butterfly and its blossoms, invert it, and use the gaussian blur filter on the background. My preference is to get it right in the camera.

ml

hana no yume kikitaki chô ni koe mo nashi

*I'd like to hear
the butterfly's blossom-dreams
but he has no voice*

*Reïkan
(fl. 1800)*



chiru hana ni ago wo naraberu kawazu kana

*in fallen blossoms
up to his chin
this frog*

Issa

Season word: [cherry] blossoms. The “blossoms” in the poem are cherry blossoms, which pile up grandly in some places, even on the waters of spring. Our frog has found some spring violets in lieu of cherry blossoms, and they’re hardly ready to fall.

wjh

A gold reflector was used to provide a feeling of warmth and throw some light under this leopard frog’s chin as he peers out warily from his refuge, a manufactured set. Haiku often are subtle, with several layers of meaning. Photographs also may be subtle, and the subject may not immediately jump (or hop) out at you.

ml



haru no yo wa sakura ni akete shimaikeri

*the spring night—
in a dawn of cherry blossoms
it ended*

Bashô

Season word: spring night ended. The season word of the poem could be taken several ways. We could think of it as just “spring night”, and simply enjoy the cherry blossoms of late spring as their color becomes apparent in dawn’s light. Or, we could recognize that this dawn is the end of spring, the beginning of summer. Generally speaking, when the leaves begin to come out on the cherry trees, even before the blossoms have all fallen on some species, we consider this early summer in haiku time. So, like Bashô’s poem, the image here shows things changing, spring shifting into summer. This rather pristine luna moth is also a sign of summer.

wjh

Actias luna is generally a night-flying moth, and will stop to rest at dawn from its search to pass its genes into the next generation. When you see photos of the large silk moths on flowers, they are just resting. They have no mouth-parts, and do not feed. This particular luna moth hatched in our basement and was photographed on a backyard cherry tree in early morning light prior to it flying off in search of sex. We hatch only species that are native to the part of the world where we live, to avoid introducing a ecologically disruptive exotic that could play havoc with endemic species. Both cherry blossoms and luna moths inhabit late spring. Their transience and ephemeral beauty compliment each other perfectly. Dawn and cherry blossoms are often associated in poetry and paintings as well.

ml

夏

英利
四六



yo no natsu ya kosui ni ukabu nami no ue

*summer in the world...
it floats on a lake
over the waves*

Bashō

Season word: summer. Bashō expresses the lazy abandon of a pleasant summer day, and more. The original includes both the notion of Bashō floating on the lake (presumably in a boat) and the idea that summer itself floats on the waves. The word “world” adds a Buddhist tinge, suggests the evanescence of both summer and Bashō’s mood, but he will enjoy them while they last.

wjh

This damselfly had perched on a water lily at least ten feet out from the concrete bridge upon which I stood, so a diffuser was out of the question. I made two exposures in-camera. The first was optimized for highlights, in this case, the more delicate tones of the flower. The second exposure was optimized for shadow detail. I then scanned the two slides, and digitally combined them using a layer mask to create a final image that contained a greater contrast range than I could have captured in camera with one exposure. The negative space below serves to anchor this water lily and the image as a whole. I darkened the water just a bit to reduce sub-surface detail and to provide more of a foil to the delicate colors of the flower and damselfly.

ml



shizukasa ya kosui no soko ni kumo no mine

*stillness...
in the lake-water’s depths
peaks of clouds*

Issa

Season word: peaks of clouds. This common sight still has the power to startle us. Issa’s poem also echoes one of Bashō’s most famous verses, “stillness.../ sinking into rock / cicada’s voice”; thus Issa emphasizes the synesthesia between the silence and the billowing image.

wjh

A reflection of sunrise on Big Moose Lake, in New York’s Adirondack Mountains. No manipulation other than using an 81A warming filter with Fujichrome Velvia. I was initially attracted by the contrast between the “real” stillness of the reeds and the drifting of the more insubstantial clouds.

ml



hitokuchi ni taranu shimizu no tôtosu yo

*less than
a mouthful the clear water's
so precious*

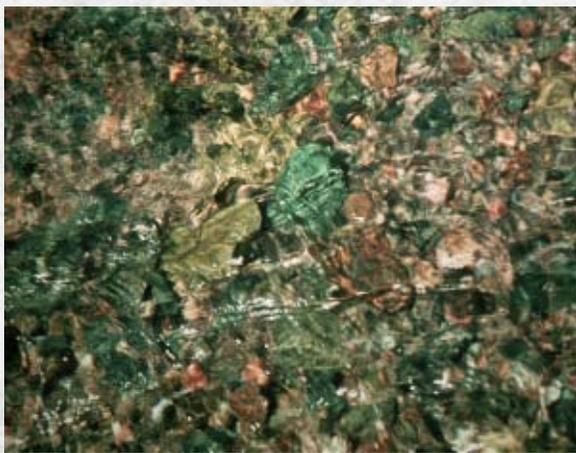
Shiki

Season word: clear water. This poem has both an immediate reference to Shiki's life and a rich background. By the time he wrote this, Shiki was 28 and ill. Despite his illness, he went to China as a newspaper reporter, and this poem may have been composed there, in the aftermath of the Sino-Japanese war of 1894-95, or during his hospitalization on returning to Japan. So he does not speak lightly of that precious clear water. Also, the topic "clear water" has a long history in the tradition, recalling particularly several poems written on their wanderings by the twelfth-century waka poet Saigyô and haiku by Bashô.

wjh

I spent the morning in the shadow of Mt. Rainier, watching dew drops fall from corn lilies. I was reminded of "Zen and the Art of Archery" where Eugen Herrigel describes the state of perfect tension where the arrow knows when to leave the bow. I became so engrossed in trying to anticipate the instant of fall that I often forgot to trip the shutter. This was an ambient light exposure for which I chose a shallow depth-of-field to allow a slightly faster shutter speed and minimal background detail. The rhythm of repeating lines contrasts with the stillness of the droplet. I did finally figure it out: It falls when it is ready.

ml



soko no ishi ugoite miyuru shimizu kana

*the stones on the bottom
look like they're moving
this clear water*

Sôseki Natsume

Season word: clear water. Indeed, the stones at the bottom probably are moving, for we know that the action of water moving over and through a stream bed often helps to clean that water. But Sôseki is not just noticing some fact of the environment. Rather, everything he sees is moving, and his mind with it all. The patterns we see in nature, in our lives, in everything we know are always in flux. This flux may enlighten a Western philosopher like Heraclitus, but for Sôseki, as for any clear-headed child, it is pure hypnotic enchantment.

wjh

A streambed in Shenandoah National Park, photographed during a backpacking trip on the Appalachian Trail years ago. Although a simple image with no dramatic subject, I find that I can become lost in it, and hear its music in my memory. When I first read the haiku, this image leapt into my consciousness immediately, although the photograph had been taken many years before.

ml



shakutori mo midori ni gisuru yama fukami

*the caterpillar too
compares himself to the green—
mountain depths*

Fûsei Tomiyasu

Season word: caterpillar. Most all Japanese haiku about caterpillars refer to either the hairy caterpillar (see the next image and poem) or some variety of inch-worm or measuring worm, as here. Caterpillars in the latter group always seem to be measuring something, whether a leaf or a fencepost. Fûsei moves beyond that commonplace (which is already encompassed in the Japanese word for caterpillar, *shakutori*, which means roughly “measure-taker”), seeing the caterpillar as intent on joining his environment. Some caterpillars, like the one in the image, change color in accord with their food and surroundings.

wjh

I like how the curve of this caterpillar’s body recapitulates the curve of the petal. A diffuser was used to soften the early morning light for a pastel rather than vibrant quality, seeming more appropriate for such a quiet moment. The only manipulation was cropping for balance.

ml



mijika yo ya kemushi no ue ni tsuyu no tama

*a short night...
on the hairy caterpillars
beads of dew*

Buson

Season word: both the “short night” and “hairy caterpillar” designate summer in haiku, but “dew” normally indicates autumn. In this poem, the combination suggests July. The photograph seems to recognize the fact that Japanese does not distinguish between singular and plural.

wjh

An ambient light exposure was used, slightly underexposed so the background would not compete for attention with the subject. Fill-flash then provided just a bit of “zip” to the caterpillar. Yes, caterpillar. Originally, there was only one dew-laden insect, and the image seemed a bit sparse even though it did match the haiku reasonably well. I duplicated the original caterpillar, and transformed its shape, size, and body position just enough so it didn’t look like a clone.

ml



ohaguro ya tabibito mekite yasuraeba

*the broad-winged...
it seems like a traveller
even when resting*

*Teijo Nakamura
(1900-1988)*

Season word: broad-winged (short for "broad-winged damselfly", though it literally means "black-toothed", like a Heian beauty). Teijo writes of a black broad-winged species of large damselfly found over Japanese ponds in high summer. Though our image is that of a large spread-winged blue that frequents rivers in the dryer climate of the American Southwest, we can still see here the ready-to-go look of its perching cousin in Japan. Many modern Japanese haiku, particularly those of the major women haiku masters, have the same directness of observation and aptness of language that charms us in the the old haiku of Bashô, Chiyo-ni, and Issa.

wjh

The end of summer in Zion National Park, Utah, brings a flurry of activity for these damselflies—a ballet of egg-laying and dying. I was struck by the opposing diagonals of insect and cattail reeds, as well as the electric blues and yellows.

ml



semi naku ya tsukuzuku akai kazaguruma

*a cicada cries...
how utterly red
the pinwheels*

Issa

Season word: cicada. In haiku, pinwheels represent spring, especially in connection with spring winds. But when a cicada starts its piercing cry, the intensity of the sound joins the intensity of summer colors. Under it all, cicadas also foreshadow the coming autumn.

wjh

The fallen petals rested on one lily, the cicada and bud on another, actually several inches away. The composite was made simpler by the fact that both were photographed under the same lighting conditions. Contrast, color temperature, and intensity of light were therefore all identical.

ml



inazuma ya kabe o nigeruru kumo no ashi

*lightning...
fleeing up the wall
a spider's legs*

*Kichô
(fl. 1750-1790)*

Season word: spider. When a spider stands still, our overall impression usually includes the heaviness of the body at center and the delicate laciness of its legs. When it runs, indeed, we often see only a blur of moving legs. Add to that the instantaneous flash of lightning that both sharpens and deceives our vision, and who knows what we saw so fleetingly? Kichô was a relatively minor haikai master of Buson's time, who made his living editing the work of amateur poets, poems we call "senryu" today.

wjh

A small wolf spider almost blends into the mossy stone of a Japanese lantern in a Georgia shrine. The large expanse of negative space lends an air of mystery to an otherwise fairly simple composition.

ml



mizu no be ni i no kumo kudaru yûbe kana

*at the water's edge
from its web a spider drops
the edge of night*

Shihaku

Season word: spider. The *be* (pronounced like English "bay", but very clipped) of *mizu no be* and *yûbe* are the same, "edge"; thus they tie the two ends of the poem together, and the middle is just a strand in the night, so lightly holding the water, the web, the spider, and the night all together as one. Similarly, the spider of this image lives in the midst of our own coming night, and will probably live beyond our time as much as his kind has lived before it. (We found this poem in a modern book, and know nothing more about the poet.)

wjh

When this photograph was first published in *Natural History* magazine, it was entitled "Six-Spotted Water Spider on Oil Slick". There was an immediate influx of letters to the editor (two, in fact), discussing the difference between an oil slick and the fracture lines of a chemical spill. The spider was photographed near Lake Okechobee in Northern Florida. Flash at full power was used to freeze the wave motion caused by my waders, and you can see the evidence of the flash in the shadows cast by the spider's legs. Let us hope that the haiku doesn't predict the edge of a long night during which the earth's waters are covered by our own chemical wastes.

ml



ônuma ya hitotsu saite mo hasu no hana

*the great marsh...
only one thing blooming:
a lotus flower*

Issa

Season word: lotus. Ahh! Finally, the lotus. And what a lotus, filling the air of an entire marsh, a treeless expanse unlike a tree-filled swamp (though the two are often enough confused by translators). This one bloom, this radiant color. Issa was no Zennist, but here we see his richly meditative response to a perfect reality, an Issa rarely found in today's books that concentrate so on his love of—and conversations with—small animals. In this poem, we see the depths of the poet.

wjh

I chose a very shallow depth-of-field to emphasize this solitary lotus. Most of the time I spent with this image was not in a contemplative mode, but rather waiting for the wind to stop. Flower photography in the field teaches you the meaning of patience. John Shaw used to say that the wind blows in cycles. I believe that the cycles begin when I unpack my tripod and end as soon as I put it away. The lotus is a flower much favored by artists and poets in Asia. With its root planted in mud and its petals opening to the heavens, it is often used to symbolize humanity's striving for enlightenment.

ml

秋

英利





meigetsu ya tonbô no hane ugokinaki

*harvest moon...
the dragonfly's wings
motionless*

*Môen
(1649-1729)*

Season word: harvest moon. Do insects sleep? This deceptively simple poem suggests it, as does the image of the gently moonlit dragonfly. Môen was a less prominent contemporary of Bashô, but this verse rivals some of the best haiku of the time for keen observation with a light touch.

wjh

This image was born after reading the accompanying haiku. The moon, clouds, dragonfly, and reeds all were found at Independence Marsh, a wetlands near our home in western Pennsylvania, but photographed at different times. In the evening when dragonflies roost, light takes on a more monochromatic character. I tried to depict this by desaturating the image and using the colorize control in Photoshop's Hue and Saturation menu. I did this after the composite was put together, so it had the additional benefit of equalizing color casts in the various components. I then used the history brush to partially remove the blue tint from the moon.

ml



shiratsuyu ya ibara no toge ni hitotsu-zutsu

*the white dew—
on the thorns of the bramble
one drop each*

Buson

Season word: white dew. The Japanese *ibara* refers to briars (*Rugosa* spp), but one can see this on many kinds of plants. In this image, a cactus collects the dew. In my back lot, a thistle does the same.

wjh

There is generally not a lot of rain in Arizona, but at the Desert Museum on the outskirts of Tucson, the automatic sprinklers go on early each morning. Bill mentions that the literal translation of this haiku refers to briars, not cactus thorns. Having hiked through and been stuck by both, I can attest that the sensation on the receiving end is quite similar. I added the second, smaller water drop digitally for symmetry and balance, and to bring the image more in line with the haiku. I used the free transform tool to change the size and symmetry of the second drop so it would not appear identical to the first. The lighting and color balance were left unchanged.

ml



murahagi ni kakureta ki ka yo shika no kao

*in that bushclover
feel like you're hidden?
a deer's face*

Issa

Season word: deer. Issa frequently talks directly to animals in his haiku, but in this one, we really don't know whether he's speaking to the deer, to another person, or perhaps to himself. In any case, it's clear that he sees the deer and the deer sees him.

wjh

Photographed at the foot of Mt. Rainier. Again, I chose to avoid the more normal tendency to present a portrait, with the deer as the largest part of the final image. Many haiku celebrate subtlety. We in the west, on the other hand, are brought up somewhat spoon-fed, accustomed to having things presented to us pre-digested. Someone complained once that it was distracting to have to look back and forth between the haiku and the image. I have to admit I don't mind. This project is all about making your own connections and bridges between the verse, the image, and your perceptions, feelings, and memories. Feel free to look back and forth as much as you please.

ml



mizu ni kage aru tabibito de aru

*a reflection on the water
there is a traveller*

*Santôka Taneda
(1882-1940)*

No season word. We place this pairing of image and poem here because the image goes so well with the sense of autumnal bird migrations, which may be hinted at in Santôka's poem. Santôka often wrote seasonless haiku in free-form, like this poem, which actually falls into two complete sentences in the Japanese, just as I have translated it. In the second line, "there" refers to the reflection, which may be a reflection of the poet himself, of someone else, or, as the image suggests, of a travelling bird.

wjh

I have never been a fan of artsy, blurry flying bird pictures, but the slow, almost prehistoric flight of this great blue heron off the beach at sunset, Padre Island, Texas, strangely appealed to me. I had a musical reaction to it, hearing the mellow tones of oboe or cello.

ml



hebi no ana ahô nezumi ga iri ni keri

*a snake's hole
the foolish mouse has
gone right in*

Issa

Season word: snake goes into its hole. Just as Issa plays with this standard seasonal topic—showing the mouse instead of the snake going into the hole—so we play with this pairing, which shows neither snake nor mouse, but only the latter's tracks. Who knows, perhaps the joke is on Issa and the snake has abandoned its hole, making a comfortable winter nesting site for the mouse? (Or, consider the other possibilities Michael mentions below.)

wjh

Although no snake or snake hole is visible, our imaginations can easily supply the details of the story presented by these scattered seeds and footprints in Escalante River mud. Perhaps the mouse did live another day after his hurried dinner. Or perhaps he in turn became dinner for our hypothetical snake (or fox, owl, hawk, or some other predator). Your imagination can supply the ending.

ml



hebi nigete ware o mishi me no kusa ni nokoru

*the snake gone
the eyes that looked at me
remain in the grass*

*Kyôshi Takahama
(1874-1959)*

Season word: snake (summer). Although Japanese haiku poets traditionally understand a snake entering its hole as an autumn topic, because of hibernation, the word “snake” by itself normally belongs to summer. We have moved the poem into autumn here, because it goes so well with this image's red leaves, and because we like bringing this snake image together with the previous image and poem. We don't think Kyoshi will mind this slight irregularity. Kyoshi put his own conservative stamp on Japanese haiku through most of the twentieth century, but this poem, perhaps his most famous, has a slightly irregular rhythm, in 5-7-6.

wjh

Generally, I prefer the soft subtlety of natural light or fill-flash for animal portraits. In this case, however, I needed the speed of full flash to “freeze” the flickering tongue of this eastern garter snake. My compromise, however, resulted in rather harsh lighting and dark shadows. I was able to decrease the contrast in certain areas with a curves adjustment layer in Photoshop. Credit to Nancy for this image—the snake cooperatively stuck out his tongue each time she stroked his tail. (Why did I assume the snake was male?)

ml



Season word: morning-glory. This poem by one of Bashô's minor disciples celebrates both the intensity of the flower's whiteness and the clarity of that dew. The datura of this image seems a good match for the theme.

wjh

The Datura resembles a morning glory on steroids. This moth found shelter in the large blossom during an early morning rain, thus creating synchronicity in both color and orientation. Both haiku and macrophotography frequently describe things that "cannot be seen".

ml

asagao no shiroki wa tsuyu mo mienu nari

*the morning-glory's
white—even the dew
cannot be seen*

*Kakei
(1648-1716)*



Season word: morning-glories. With this poem, Bashô replied to his disciple Kikaku, who had written a sort of wild verse that goes "in a grass-hut doorway / a nettles-eating firefly / that's me" (*kusa no to ni ware wa tade kuu hotaru kana*). Kikaku was relating himself to an old proverb, to the effect that some people (like him) have unusual tastes. He was properly chagrined when Bashô retorted that *his* tastes were quite ordinary, and that morning glories and the usual breakfast porridge would do him just fine. In other words, for a true poet, the simple things of everyday life are enough.

wjh

Many people envision the Florida Everglades as a place where roaring alligators devour unsuspecting beagles and golfers. It is also, however, home to many other, albeit less dramatic, species of flora and fauna. The original photograph of these morning glories, taken along the shore of Florida Bay, appeared somewhat sparse to me, so I filled it out by adding an additional pair of blossoms, larger and out-of-focus, in the background. An advantage of creating double exposures in the computer instead of in-camera is that you can infinitely adjust the opacity, saturation, and placement of either image.

ml

asagao ni ware wa meshi kuu otoko kana

*an eating-his-meal-
by-the-morning-glories fellow,
that's me*

Bashô



asagao wa saki narabete zo shibomikeru

*the morning-glories—
bloomed side-by-side just so
and wither away*

*Hokushi
(1665-1718)*

Season word: morning-glories. This small poem by one of Bashō's prominent disciples captures a whole dramatic action, from the identification of the flowers to the increasing joy of their blooming and on to the inevitable falling action of their fading away. The structure of typical Japanese sentences, like this one, places the verb tense (the time when the action takes place) only at the very end. Any intermediate verb form is tenseless, so in the original of this poem (which is in the same order as the translation, line by line), the middle line seems to be in present tense, but then gets pushed into the past-perfect tense by the final *-keru*. I have tried for a parallel effect by leaving the middle line in the past tense and bringing the final action into the present, thus telling a story that took place over time, but ends now.

wjh

Side by side morning glories, photographed with a Sima soft focus lens (early ancestor of the Lensbaby™) in the Florida Everglades. No excitement or drama here, just a soothing combination of familiar shapes and colors. Sometimes a visual reminds me of some other sensory stimulus. These morning glories are definitely baritone.

ml



na wa shirazu kusa-goto ni hana aware nari

*nameless plants
each has its flower
and moves us*

*Sanpū
(1647-1732)*

Season word: This poem is a famous exemplar of the important seasonal topic *kusa no hana*, "(autumn) wildflowers", "flowering plants", or "flowering weeds" (often [misleadingly] translated as "flowering grasses" or "the flowers of grasses"). Sanpū has expanded the usual simple phrase *kusa no hana* (literally, "flower(s) of plant(s)") to *kusa-goto ni hana* (literally, "to/on each plant its flower"). To the Japanese reader, Sanpū is not merely talking of some general proposition, but actively looks at the flowering plants of a fallow field, wildflowers, each with the small, almost insignificant flowers that render it nameless to most people. He looks close enough to note each flower's faultless symmetry, its delicate addition to the tapestry of mauve-pink and yellowish-white of the field's surface over the somewhat autumnally faded greens below. The pale-gold of the mature seed-heads is definitely autumnal. Red clover, too, will most likely be felt an autumnal image in Japan, though this kind is in flower from haiku midsummer (June) through haiku autumn (August-October).

wjh

Webster defines a weed as, "a valueless plant growing wild; a useless, troublesome, or noxious plant..." Should we allow our appreciation and enjoyment of things to be determined by definition? How many of us are forced to bloom where we would not have chosen to be planted? This is actually a portion of a 6X6 transparency, with no manipulation other than cropping. I overexposed slightly in-camera to give a lighter and somewhat more dream-like feeling.

ml

冬

英利





fuyu no tsuki kawakaze iwa o kezuru kana

*winter moon
a river wind chips away
at the rocks*

*Chora
(1729-81)*

Season word: winter moon. To me, this verse suggests a winter landscape at night, all the near earth-edges emphasized by shadows cast in the crisp moonlight. Michael's image shifts my mind to thoughts of Buson's famous spring verse "mustard blossoms... / the moon there in the east / the sun in the west" (*na no hana ya tsuki wa higashi ni hi wa nishi ni*), but here the brilliant yellow of the mustard field is replaced by the bright red of a Southwestern landscape, its edges shadowed by the sun instead of the moon. The edges and the air, in monochrome or in color, cut like an obsidian blade.

wjh

Valley of Fire State Park, outside of Las Vegas, Nevada. This hoodoo was photographed in late afternoon light and really was that color. When superimposing a moon on another image, make sure that there is a believable difference in sharpness. Either foreground or moon should be somewhat less sharp than the other.

ml



kangetsu ya koishi no sawaru kutsu no soko

*a cold moon
I touch small stones
with the soles of my shoes*

Buson

Season word: cold moon. The second and third phrases of this verse could be translated "the soles of my shoes that touch small stones"—for the focus is very much on the soles of the shoes. They become an extension of the poet's own sense of touch, almost the way a telescope magnifies an image for the eye.

wjh

Photographed in a temple courtyard in Tokyo, the fallen leaf seemed to be the perfect foil for the unrelenting darkness of the black river stones. The round splash of light in the center may suggest the moon, although in reality it is a reflection from one of the temple lanterns. In Photoshop, I manipulated the contrast and desaturated the leaf a bit, so its color would not be distracting.

ml



koe nakuba sagi ushinawan kesa no yuki

*but for their cries
the herons would be lost...
this morning's snow*

Chiyo-ni

Season word: snow. The white-out conditions practically make the birds invisible. But Chiyo says more than that. The herons, she says, would be lost to the world, and the world lost to them. Their cries, then, make the world persist, and thus they persist with it.

wjh

These are sandhill cranes. The herons were apparently smart enough to have already headed further south. Photographed just after sunrise, as the mist danced with snowflakes at Bosque del Apache. Periodically, the curtain of white was pierced by the shrill calls of the cranes. To add to the feeling of whiteness, I added a layer of white at 40% opacity. If I had just lightened the image with levels or curves, I would have risked losing highlight detail. I discovered later that the technique of adding a base layer of white was also a technique used by early inkblock printers in Japan.

ml



kogarashi ya umi ni y-hi o fukiotosu

*a tree-withering storm...
it blew the setting sun
down into the sea*

Sôseki Natsume

Season word: tree-withering storm. In winter, when the sun is actually closer to earth than in the summer (in the northern hemisphere), and its rays are not gentled by the foliage of deciduous trees and smaller plants and grasses, the sun sometimes takes on an even more fiery aspect than in the heat of summer. In Sôseki's poem, the sun and storm seem to have conspired together to make the landscape more harsh, more bare, and the sun has gone down leaving behind the stark calm of winter desolation.

wjh

The simple image reflects the stark, graphic quality of this winter morning. I used a wide aperture to avoid the multifaceted reflections and "ghosts" (flare) often seen when photographing directly into a bright light source. I then desaturated the image to make it more monochromatic. I'm afraid the cardinal perched in those bare branches received very little shelter from that particular storm.

ml



kami ni mo awa de koekeri fuyu no yama

*not even a wolf
did I meet as I crossed
the winter mountain*

Shiki Masaoka

Season word: winter mountain. Perhaps Shiki's snow-covered mountain revealed no secrets, allowing for this rather abstract poem of emptiness. Of course, emptiness itself is the ultimate illusion.

wjh

Perhaps this deer met the wolf that the narrator did not. Or perhaps the deer is the narrator, speaking a bit prematurely. A good haiku and a good photograph may open many lines of inquiry. Metering this sort of image might have been a challenge using film. With digital capture, however, it was a simple matter to confirm with the histogram that both snowy highlights and dark tones of the eye socket are preserved in the final image. Generally speaking, if the blacks and highlights are correctly exposed, the midtones will be also.

ml



mori no naka ni ike ari kôri atsuki kana

*deep in the woods
the pond's ice
so thick*

Shiki Masaoka

Season word: ice. Shiki undoubtedly spent some time in his youth hiking in the abundant woodlands around his home city of Matsuyama. But this poem was written when he was 29, already bed-ridden. His famous haiku "countless times / I asked the depth / of the snow" (*ikutabi mo yuki no fukasa o tazunekeri*), written about the same time, shows his incapacity. But the pond's ice verse comes sharply into focus, taking our imaginations with his right to the center of these woods, the solidity of this ice.

wjh

A journey interrupted and frozen in time. The motionless leaf provides a counterpoint to the swirls and circles of delicate ice patterns. Unfortunately, they originally existed approximately three feet from each other along the shore of Lake Erie. In pre-digital days, I could have made a multiple exposure and hoped that not too much detail showed through the leaf. With digital capture, however, I made two separate exposures and combined them with a layer mask, having an infinite ability to control the opacity of each exposure.

ml



shirasagi no nakazuba yuki no hitomaroge

*if the white heron
didn't cry...just a large
snowball*

*Tayome
(1776-1865)*

Season word: snowball. Tayome (sometimes called Tayojo) was a student of Otsuni (1755-1823), a prominent haikai master of Issa's time. In this verse, she skillfully includes as a season word something not in fact present in the scene, the "snowball" being a metaphor for what is also not present in the scene, a silent heron. The egret of our image here seems doubly cooperative, both silent and curved into a near-snowball shape, with the help of the water.

wjh

The initial exposure showed this egret huddled against the riverbank and was very much in tune with the haiku. Visually, however, it was neither dramatic nor very interesting. As the blizzard eased, the bird became more active, first preening and then going about the business of wading birds. The background, however, became more distinct and lost the mystery imparted by the swirling snow. The final image is a marriage of two exposures; the egret in an interesting pose, superimposed against the riverbank and clothed in the soft mysterious light of snow and wind.

ml



*umibe ni hi kurashite
umi kurete kamo no koe honoka ni shiroshi*

Living a day at the seashore:

*the sea darkening
the cry of a duck
is faintly white*

Bashō

Season word: duck. This is one of Bashō's most famous poems, usually given without its prefatory note. But Bashō is a consummate poet, very aware of the sounds his words, as well as the way they are written. The translation does not duplicate the pun in the original, which is both visual and aural, tying the word "living" (*kurashite*) in the preface to the word "darkening" (*kurete*) in the opening phrase of the poem; the two words share the same root and kanji (Sino-Japanese character).

wjh

Would this image work as well with the haiku if the birds were not present? In my mind, I saw the last of the water birds fly off to roost for the night as the sun sank behind sea stacks off the Oregon coast. So I digitally transplanted the ducks from the Everglades to Bandon.

ml



mizusoko no iwa ni ochitsuku konoha kana

*deep in the water
on a rock some tree-leaves
fall and stick*

*Jôsô
(1662-1704)*

Season word: falling/fallen leaves. One would think that the red leaf belonged to autumn, but in our pairing Jôsô's poem carries us into winter. (The seasons of traditional Japanese poetry falling earlier than our common notion of the seasons today.) The sticking leaf here is not merely one just fallen from its tree, but a leaf that has soaked into the water, and now falls through the water to land and stick to a rock on the bottom. This second falling is deeper than the first, more chill. Jôsô was one of Bashô's leading disciples.

wjh

The Big Moose River, near Old Forge in the Adirondacks, is one of my favorite autumn (winter, according to the Japanese *saijiki*) spots. A slow shutter speed enhances the feeling of movement in the rushing water and allows the tenacious stillness of the leaf to provide a counterpoint. This tension draws us into the image, as we wait for (and envision) the inevitable loosening of the leaf as it continues on its final journey. An 81A warming filter was used for the original transparency, and the white point (highlight) eyedropper in Photoshop was used to remove a slight magenta cast from the foamy water.

ml



nishi fukeba higashi ni tamaru ochiba kana

*it blows from the west
they pile up in the east
these fallen leaves*

Buson

Season word: fallen leaves. Each leaf, each drop of water, goes in whatever direction the forces of nature—a blowing wind, gravity—take it. Sometimes we can only see this as a nuisance, but here, perhaps, we can take a rest with Buson and simply see the everchanging patterns of nature's movement.

wjh

An example of shoot once, scan twice. The original exposure was taken with the intent of preserving highlights in the water and bright yellow leaves, but the resulting image had no discernable texture in the darker rocks. On the light table, however, under high intensity light, the detail was clearly visible. The slide was then scanned twice, once for highlights, and the next time, for shadow detail. The two scans were then merged in Photoshop using a layer mask. Spot burning and dodging was still required to tone down some of the hot spots in the yellow leaves. The final image is an accurate representation of how the scene originally appeared.

ml



tsuru no asobi kumoi ni kanau hatsu hi kana

*the pleasure of cranes
realized in the well of clouds
this first sunrise*

Chiyo-ni

Season word: first sunrise (the new year). This celebratory verse and striking image of cranes lifting off on their way into spring seem a fitting place to end our journey through the seasons. This richly figured poem, unusually complex for Chiyo-ni, employs punning and a classical figure of speech to bring across feelings of pleasure and wonder. The sun rises to reveal cranes already high in the sky, “the well of clouds,” where they enjoy the sunrise of New Year’s Day, seemingly at play as they challenge the peerless sun. The senses of “play” and “peerless” are included in the words I have translated as “pleasure” and “realized”—the latter word applying to the cranes in one meaning and to the sun in the other. In Chiyo’s day, this would have been in early February by our calendar, and considered the beginning of spring. The flying cranes were no doubt readying themselves for the flight to their northern breeding grounds, if not already on the way. With such a poem, the poet praises not only the natural world, but also Japan itself, whose Sino-Japanese name literally means “origin of the sun,” and its emperor, the descendant of the Sun Goddess.

wjh

The flying cranes and the mountains were photographed from the same position, albeit several minutes apart, at sunrise in Bosque del Apache. The challenge in this composite lay in the direction and intensity of light. Should the backs of the cranes be in shadow or sunlight? The ambient light was already too bright for them to be silhouetted. This image is a good example of how important it is to match the qualities of light when constructing a composite.

ml

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Michael Lustbader has spent over thirty years documenting the natural world through photography. His images have been published by National Geographic Publications, Audubon, Sierra Club, Eastman Kodak, Oxford Scientific Films, and hundreds of other book, calendar, and paper product companies, world-wide. His stock photography is represented by Photo Researchers in New York City and The Image Finders in Cleveland, Ohio.

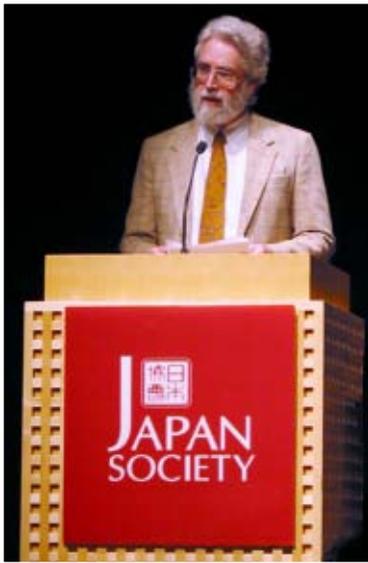


Michael has co-authored *Close-Up Photography: Capturing Nature's Intimate Landscapes* and *How to Photograph Close-Ups in Nature*.

A Cibachrome/Ilfochrome printer for over 25 years, he is currently exploring the world of digital imaging and printing, studying at the Rochester Institute of Technology and Pittsburgh Filmmakers. He is a member of the BioCommunications Association (formerly the Biological Photography Association), the American Physicians Art Association, and a charter member of the North American Nature Photography Association,

Michael was first exposed to haiku in the 1960s, while teaching fourth and sixth grades, and even at that time was struck by similarities between this traditional poetic form and photography. Much like the haiku poets of old, he seeks to capture that “special moment” in his photographs.

William J. Higginson has been translating Japanese haiku since encountering the genre in Japanese language classes at Yale University. His first small book of translations, *Twenty-Five Pieces of Now*, published in 1968, established him as a leader of the haiku movement in North America. From 1971 to 1976 he edited *Haiku Magazine*, and in 1975 he established *From Here Press*, publishing works by such poets as Allen Ginsberg, Ruth Stone, Japanese haiku masters, and others.



The Haiku Handbook: How to Write, Share, and Teach Haiku, by Bill with his wife Penny Harter, became “the standard work in the field” (Booklist) on its publication in 1985, and continues to be the most popular introduction to haiku available in English. Bill’s international collection of haiku for children, *Wind in the Long Grass*, followed in 1991, and was adopted as part of a classroom set of books for young readers. In 1996, his books *The Haiku Seasons: Poetry of the Natural World* and *Haiku World: An International Poetry*

Almanac confirmed the intimate connections between haiku and the Earth’s seasons.

Bill is currently working on a number of translation projects and readying a collection of his own haiku for publication.