

February 2012 Critique Meeting Held in Chicago Metro Area

A small and highly productive group of haikuists met at the Winnetka Public Library in Winnetka, IL for a three-hour critique and discussion, Saturday, Feb. 11. Among others, there was one guest poet, Mary Jane Gabrielsen, and Indiana Member Mac Green made the long drive from Indianapolis.

Each participant shared poems that were categorized by Charlotte Digregorio, Midwest Regional Coordinator, as “award-winning.” Charlotte said she was pleased that participants, Tom Chockley, Mac Greene, Joanne Crofton, and Tomoko Hata who have been writing haiku for a relatively short time, are excelling in their work and getting it published in major haiku journals. Further, Carolyn Jevelian and Mary Jane Gabrielsen, who haven’t been writing haiku as long, contributed valuable critiques of others’ work and shared their very thoughtful haiku.

Charlotte reiterated that haiku poets excel when they are regularly reading haiku journals to become familiar with the style and flow of it. The poetry presented at the meeting was of such high quality that participants wanted to save their work for publication in contests and journals, rather than have poems previewed in “Ripples.”

To begin the meeting, Charlotte reviewed the basic style and form of haiku/senryu. She shared six beautiful samples of haiku from “in pine shade,” the HSA 2011 Members’ Anthology.

Among others, she selected:

spring picnic—
 under the slippery elm
 he makes his move
 --Marsh Muirhead

summer stars
my children ask me
to name a favorite
--Tom Painting

Charlotte said that for her, Painting's haiku illustrates the idea behind Ralph Waldo Emerson's quote:

"To speak truly, few adult persons can see nature. Most persons do not see the sun. At least they have a very superficial seeing. The sun illuminates only the eye of the man, but shines into the eye and the heart of the child."

As for meeting announcements, Tom Chockley said that he has had some responses from HSA members in the Midwest region and beyond about joining his haiku networking email group. He still seeks more members to share and discuss haiku. Those interested, may reach Tom at thomassem2@hotmail.com.

Charlotte announced that Haikufest will be held in the Chicago Metro area, Saturday, April 28 from 2 to 3:30 p.m. at the Skokie Public Library in Skokie, IL. Skokie was selected because there is a significant Japanese population in the area.

In a subsequent "Ripples" newsletter, details about Haikufest's success will be included. She said any dues-paying member of the HSA with three or more haiku published in a haiku journal or "Ripples" will be eligible to read. She said readers will have the opportunity to briefly introduce themselves and their work, telling what they enjoy about writing haiku and how they began writing it.

Also scheduled for Haikufest are a brief talk about haiku by Charlotte and a brief presentation on haiga with black ink paintings by Lidia Rozmus. There will also be an audience haiku contest.

Charlotte also urged members to attend The Cradle Festival in Mineral Point, WI, Friday through Sunday, July 20-22. She said the haiku workshops and presentations will make it a very rewarding experience for beginning and experienced haikuists alike. Charlotte looks forward to sharing specifics in the coming months by the program's organizers, HSA Members Gayle Bull, Francine Banwarth and Jerry Cushman. The Cradle will be heavily publicized and haikuists from many states will attend.

Submitted by Charlotte Digregorio