

Judge's Report

night birth struck home on first reading – I was immediately there, feeling the cold, feeling the precariousness, yet persistence, of the life force. The lack of comment in the poem leaves us to feel how blindly this force asserts itself. It's completely astonishing that a new life, straight from the warmth and security of the womb can be thrust into such a hostile environment and survive. The word *shakes* in this poem animates so much more than the poem itself. I get the impression that the poet is completely at one with the experience, allowing great breadth and depth to emerge.

cumulonimbus was another first time hit that stayed the course. Although that first word should set a heavy scene, the rhythm and alliteration of the second half of the poem are so effective that the first impression is one of lightness and joy. It's on re-reading that a sense of urgency is felt through that first image. The overall effect is that of a poem that operates on several layers.

winter solitude tickled me at first; then kept growing and growing. This seems to be a result of the tension between the two images: the solemnity of the first and the apparent flippancy of the second. The second image brings a lightness to first and the first image grounds the second. The barrenness encountered in the *winter solitude* image allows the reader's mind to become empty enough to somehow accept the surreal freeing up of the material world which follows. Ultimately, the poem is about leaving the door to creative possibilities open – the “trellis leaning on a cloud” keeps coming back and playing with my imagination. Of course, another way to read this poem is with *the garden trellis/leans on a cloud* illuminating *winter solitude* (which is a stock phrase) – the trellis being bare in winter, enabling us to see it in relation to the cloud and thus feel the solitude of winter through this particular aspect.

What stands out for me about these 1st and 2nd prize poems is their openness, presenting strong images while also involving the reader's feelings and imagination in a big way.

354 entries were received: our congratulations to the authors of all selected haiku, and our thanks to all participants.

Fred Schofield

Fred Schofield founded the Yorkshire/Lancashire haiku group in 1995, and co-ordinated the Haiku Presence touring exhibition. He recently spent a year working on a haiku-and-music project in Leeds schools. He is haibun editor for *Presence*.

<http://haiku-presence.50webs.com>

HAIKU PRESENCE AWARD 2010

£100 1st prize

£25 each for up to 4 runners-up

Publication of winning and commended poems in **Presence #43**

Judge: Martin Lucas

Entry fee: £5 for up to 5 haiku. Additional haiku at £1 per haiku.

Paid by: £ cheque to **Haiku Presence**. For recommended overseas payment options see <http://haiku-presence.50webs.com>

Fees may also be paid in \$ or € cash at the entrant's own risk at the rates of \$8 / €5 up to 5 haiku and \$2 / €2 per additional haiku.

The prize may be paid by £ cheque: bank negotiation or currency exchange charges to be paid by the prize winner not *Presence* magazine.

Format: any format you like. Two copies of each haiku, with your name and address included on one copy. It is OK to print several haiku on one sheet of paper.

All entries to be original, unpublished, not under consideration elsewhere.

Deadline (in hand): 31 October 2010

Send to:

Chris Boulwood, 6 King Street, Chester CH1 2AH, England, UK

Non-subscribers may order a copy of the results issue of *Presence* for £5 (cheques to “Haiku Presence”) or \$12. Alternatively, for results, enclose an s.a.e. (+IRC from outside the UK) with your contest entry.

HAIKU PRESENCE AWARD 2009

1st Prize (£100)

night birth a lamb shakes fluids into the sleet

Pamela Brown (Wales, UK)

2nd Prizes (£25)

winter solitude
the garden trellis leans
on a cloud

Scott Mason (USA)

cumulonimbus
barn swallows
skitter through the sailboats

Marshall Hryciuk (Canada)

Commended

Adari pool –
a noon gecko tracks
the mosque shade

Malcolm Williams (England, UK)

summer storm
galahs swivel on wires
to wash under their wings

Helen Davison (Australia)

white spots
on a brown butterfly's wing –
the baby's toes wave

Diana Webb (England, UK)

high above the clouds
checking out each passenger
a stowaway fly

Phillip Murrell (England, UK)

in the plastic cover
of a missing person notice
two snails feast

Kate Hall (England, UK)