

**Week 2:**

**Beauty & Form**

## The Tea Shop, by Ezra Pound

### THE TEA SHOP

**T**HE girl in the tea shop  
Is not so beautiful as she was,  
The August has worn against her.  
She does not get up the stairs so eagerly;  
Yes, she also will turn middle-aged,  
And the glow of youth that she spread about us  
As she brought us our muffins  
Will be spread about us no longer.  
She also will turn middle-aged.

## Sonnets by William Shakespeare

### XVIII

Shall I compare thee to a summer's day?  
Thou art more lovely and more temperate:  
Rough winds do shake the darling buds of May,  
And summer's lease hath all too short a date:  
Sometime too hot the eye of heaven shines,  
And often is his gold complexion dimm'd  
And every fair from fair sometime declines,  
By chance, or nature's changing course untrimm'd:  
But thy eternal summer shall not fade,  
Nor lose possession of that fair thou ow'st,  
Nor shall death brag thou wander'st in his shade,  
When in eternal lines to time thou grow'st,  
So long as men can breathe, or eyes can see,  
So long lives this, and this gives life to thee.

### CXXX

My mistress' eyes are nothing like the sun;  
Coral is far more red, than her lips red:  
If snow be white, why then her breasts are dun;  
If hairs be wires, black wires grow on her head.  
I have seen roses damask'd, red and white,  
But no such roses see I in her cheeks;  
And in some perfumes is there more delight  
Than in the breath that from my mistress reeks.  
I love to hear her speak, yet well I know  
That music hath a far more pleasing sound:  
I grant I never saw a goddess go,—  
My mistress, when she walks, treads on the ground  
And yet by heaven, I think my love as rare,  
As any she belied with false compare.

## Happiness

by Louise Glück

A man and a woman lie on a white bed.  
It is morning. I think  
Soon they will waken.  
On the bedside table is a vase  
of lilies; sunlight  
pools in their throats.  
I watch him turn to her  
as though to speak her name  
but silently, deep in her mouth--  
At the window ledge,  
once, twice,  
a bird calls.  
And then she stirs; her body  
fills with his breath.

I open my eyes; you are watching me.  
Almost over this room  
the sun is gliding.  
Look at your face, you say,  
holding your own close to me  
to make a mirror.  
How calm you are. And the burning wheel  
passes gently over us.

## Two Poems by Langston Hughes

### Young Negro Girl

You are like a warm dark dusk  
In the middle of June-time  
When the first violets  
Have almost forgotten their names  
And the deep red roses bloom.

You are like a warm dark dusk  
In the middle of June-time  
Before the hot nights of summer  
Burn white with stars.

### Morning After

I was so sick last night I  
Didn't hardly know my mind.  
So sick last night I  
Didn't know my mind.  
I drunk some bad licker that  
Almost made me blind.

Had a dream last night I  
Thought I was in hell.  
I drempt last night I  
Thought I was in hell.  
Woke up and looked around me—  
Babe, your mouth was open like a well.

I said, Baby! Baby!  
Please don't snore so loud.  
Baby! Please!  
Please don't snore so loud.  
You jest a little bit o' woman but you  
Sound like a great big crowd.

## City Lights

by Roo Borson

### CITY LIGHTS

To board the train for Toronto and glance over at the other  
track as that train starts rolling and the woman there,  
opposite, dozing, opens her eyes.  
To look into eyes and know there are many directions.  
To have it all at once: cinnamon buns  
from the Harbord Bakery and the late poems of Wang Wei.  
To step out, bringing traffic to a halt.  
To bemoan with total strangers the state of the lettuce,  
to be queried concerning the uses of star fruit,  
and expostulate thereon.  
To guide an unsteady gentleman across the street  
and refuse payment in eternity.  
To happen on the long light down certain streets as the sun is  
setting,  
to pass by all that tempts others without a thought.  
For cigar smoke and Sony Walkmans and random belligerence,  
the overall sense of delighted industry  
which is composed of idle hatred, inane self-interest,  
compassion, and helplessness, when looked at closely.  
To wait in queues, anonymous as the price code in a  
supermarket.  
To board a bus where everyone is talking at once,  
and count eight distinct languages, and not know any.  
For the Chinese proprietress of the Bagel Paradise Restaurant,  
who is known to her customers as the joyful  
otter is known to the clear salt water of Monterey Bay.  
To know that everyone who isn't reading, daydreaming,  
or on a first date is either full of plans or  
playing Sherlock Holmes on the subway.  
For eerie cloudlit nights, and skyscrapers,  
and raccoons, jolly as bees.  
For the joy of walking out the front door and becoming  
instantly, and resolutely, lost.

To fall, when one is falling,  
into a safety net, and find one's friends.  
To be one among many.  
To be many.

# Haiku

# by Bashō

153

Old pond,  
leap-splash –  
a frog.

152

Girl cat, so  
thin on love  
and barley.

154

Waterjar cracks –  
I lie awake  
this icy night.

155

Awaiting snow,  
poets in their cups  
see lightning flash.

175

Insect song – over  
winter's garden  
moon's hair-thin.

179

Dipping moon,  
sea-pungent  
rice wine.

178

Spider, are you  
crying – or  
the autumn wind?

182

Pommelling hail –  
like the old oak,  
I never change.

190

Autumn eve – please  
turn to me. I,  
too, am stranger.

194

How sad – under  
the battered helmet,  
cricket song.

192

Taro leaves – beyond  
the village a poor  
farmer waits the moon.

196

Husking rice,  
a child squints up  
to view the moon.

198

Walk boldly on,  
through fly-swarms  
into Kiso.

## Western Poets Using *Haiku*

While many Japanese *haiku* have been translated into English, with varying degrees of success, there are Western poets now attempting the genre. Far too many of the resulting poems are quite bad, or miss the point of the genre, or actually clever *senryū* rather than *haiku*. However, we have had some successes. Here are some Western poets who have either captured the essence of the original *haiku*, or who have adapted the tradition in unusual but effective ways.

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### James Kirkup: (contemporary)

This one is particularly Zen and traditional.

In the amber dusk  
Each island dreams its own night--  
The sea swarms with gold.

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### Michael R. Collins (contemporary)

What's happened to nature in this haiku?

Freeway overpass--  
Blossoms in graffiti on  
Fog-wrapped June mornings.

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### Scott Alexander (early twentieth century)

By an ancient pond  
A bullfrog sits on a rock:  
Waiting for Bashō.

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### Joy Shieman (contemporary)

Two leaning tombstones  
Took seventy years to touch--  
Mist and peace dwell there.

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### James W. Hackett (contemporary)

In my opinion, Hackett is probably the best non-Japanese *haiku* poet the west has produced. Here are four of his most frequently anthologized *haiku*.

#### Half of the minnows

Within this sunlit shallow  
Are not really there.

#### Deep within the stream

The huge fish lie motionless  
Facing the current.

#### Two flies, so small

It's a wonder they ever met,  
Are mating on this rose.

#### This garter snake

Goes in and out of the grass  
All at the same time!

from a sampler online  
at:  
[http://web.cn.edu/kwheeler/documents/Haiku\\_Samples.pdf](http://web.cn.edu/kwheeler/documents/Haiku_Samples.pdf)

## She Ain't Pretty

by the Northern Pikes

I had two jobs, I had dishwater hands  
And on the weekend in a rock & roll band  
One Friday night in my hometown bar  
In walked a girl who looked like a movie star  
She stared at me and it was turning me on  
She said she worked in a beauty salon  
I heard a voice inside me say  
She ain't pretty she just looks that way

We made a date to go for a drink  
I wore my jeans and she wore a mink  
There was this misconception all over town  
That she ate lonely guy heart by the pound  
She said "Take me home, there won't be no fuss"  
I said "Sure you got some change for the bus"  
Watching her leave I heard the bartender say  
"She ain't pretty she just looks that way"

So, uh, I called her up, her father was home  
Said "She's busy she can't come to the phone"  
I held my breath, decided to wait  
A guy like me doesn't get many dates  
I fell in love with a model from hell  
It took some time for my hormones to tell  
That chasing her has been a grave mistake  
She ain't pretty she just looks that way

Her ego wrote cheques incredibly fast  
But her personality didn't have the cash  
I laughed out loud to my total dismay  
She ain't pretty she just looks that way

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