ELEMENT



GEERT VERBEKE HAIKU & PHOTOS

© Haiku & photos worldwide: Geert Verbeke. Inspired by the CD 'Element' composed by Jovica Storer.

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Dedicated to:

My dear soulsister Jenny Ovaere.

My kids, friends & family.

My photo-teacher: Bing Maertens.

Tine Beeckmans & Susie Colman.

Visionar Panamarenko.

The Kuyu: Michael Baribeau, Adrie Beyens, Jan Bontje, Willy Cuvelier, Ferre Denis, Piet van Mulkom & Henk Werkhoven.

In memoriam:

My parents Walter Verbeke & Jo Hiltrop;

Pietro Bares:

Claire Buysschaert (thanks for our children Hans & Saskia), Winand Fadeux, Barbara Kluft, Luc Declerq, Erika Alleman & Nantes.

All the victims of blind fanaticism and terror: Basta ya!



Dear kuyu (haiku lover):

Do you follow your own haiku and photo path? Is a haiku only a useless knickknack? Do you mimic the style of others?

I wrote my first modest haiku in 1968. To my complete satisfaction haiku writing and photography are daily activities. Reading and writing in a close consideration with other kuyu learns that we all need the 'beginners' mind to develop modesty and the ability to put haiku rules in perspective...

Haiku are objective, image-centered and 'one-breath' poems, often brimming with childlike wonder. Originated in Japan, haiku is the briefest of all poetic forms. Traditionally, the haiku is a fixed poem of approximately seventeen 'onji' (sound-units) most often arranged in a 5-7-5 pattern, with an integrated seasonal-word called 'kigo'.

A haiku relies on brevity and simplicity to convey its poetical message, conveying a keenly perceived moment of heightened subjective awareness. Writing haiku can help to face the whole world. The haiku happens here and now.

A haiku poet masters the art of expressing much and suggesting more in the fewest possible words. Haiku focuses on nature, compressing maximum thought into minimum language. Less is beautiful. Haiku are made of mother-of-pearl and snow crystals. Haiku are dewdrops. Haiku, also called hokku, are the result of quiet

observations and loving care. A haiku is not just a small poem in three lines of 5-7-5 syllables each. Try to be a writer not an abacus! English syllables are not the same as Japanese onji, they vary in length. A typical haiku can be any length from a few to 17 syllables, and will carry a reference to nature, although some haiku focus almost exclusively on human behaviour, settings and sentiments.

Haiku are connected with music and the five elements...

In China, the first celebrated exponent of the five-element theory was Tsou Yen (350 - 270 BC).

- 1. WOOD
- 2. FIRE
- 3. EARTH
- 4. METAL
- 5. WATER.

The 5 energies are symbolized as wood, which as fuel gives rise to fire, which creates ash and gives rise to earth, which in its mines contains metal, which attracts dew and so gives rise to water, and this in turn nourishes wood.

When balanced these are the healthy relationships of the Five Elements: Water extinguishes Fire, Fire melts Metal, Metal cuts and shapes Wood, Wood can contain Earth, Earth absorbs Water.

Geert Verbeke, Lange Munte 2006.

WOOD





Name Ki Energy Dawn

Season Springtime

Direction East

Trigram Zhen & Xu Planet Jupiter Climatic Qi Wind

Yang Organ Gallbladder

Yin Organ Liver
Sense Organ Eyes
Body Tissue Sinews
Color Green
Emotion Anger
Taste Sour

Wood is the most human of the five elements. It is the element of spring; the creative urge to achieve. It is associated with the capacity to look forward, plan and make decisions. The energy of Wood is rising, expanding. Wood is the wonderful force of growth and flexibility. Wood represents all the activities of the body that are self regulating: digestion, respiration, heart beat and basic metabolism.



the begging monk hear his string of beads wooden pearls sing

on the grassland a wooden painter's easel landscape in landscape

gathering wood in a vicious winter playing music

a few wormholes in the drying wood our garden table



a bronze Buddha surrounded by oil lamps cool calm and collected

in the moonlight a bowed wooden bridge undulating motion

the wooden trunks contain the past until the move

towards the wind made from apricot wood a singing dukduk (*)

(*) dukduk: a traditional Armenian flute.



the hard winter tell's her everything about wood

stretch of woods a babbling brook is running free

sawmill in the sun perfume of beech trees and pine cones

on the beach (*) driftwood and flotsam not many footprints

(*): remember the Tsunami in 2004.



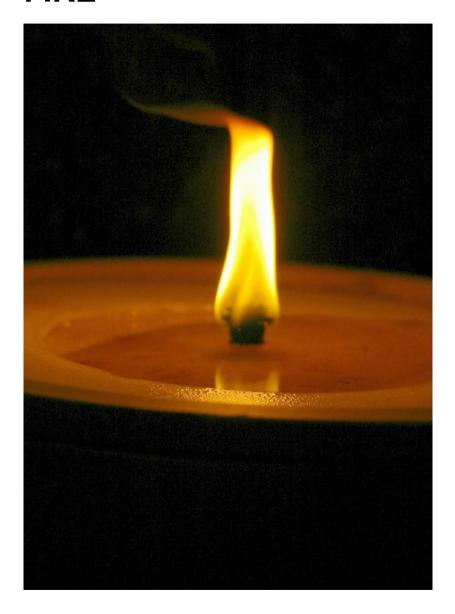
for the tea-party a wood-burning stove flirt with sleepiness

lacquer on wood mother-of-pearl inlay Bashō is roaring

wood blocks under a layer of snow mice survive

wooden carbon the smell of sweet rice cheering of children

FIRE





Name Hi Energy Noon

Season Mid summer

Colour Red
Direction South
Trigram Li
Planet Mars
Climatic Qi Heat

Yang Organ Sm.intestine

Yin Organ Heart Sense Organ Tongue

Boddy Tisue Blood Vessel Emotion Joy / Shock

Taste Bitter

Fire is the element of heat, summer and enthusiasm; nature at its peak of growth, and warmth in human relationships full of; love and compassion. Its motion is upward. Fire is the symbolic of combustion and this represents the functions of the body that have reached maximum activity; indicating that decline is then inevitable.



fire and brimstone rumbling thunderstorm one droplet twinkles

picture yourself finding compassion talking about fire

flowers and blossoms quick touch of brushes sketch in charcoal

midsummer madness from new moon to new moon dancing in the streets

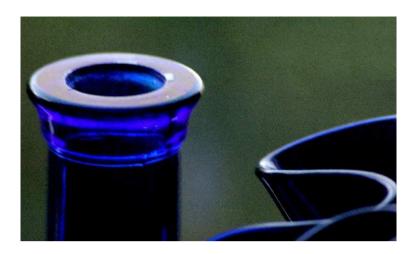


high above Bagdad a colourful display of fire the stench of death

the old stairwell prey to fire at night no admittance

counting the stars united around the campfire silent wanderers

on the pavement the click-clack of footsteps sultry summernight



forest fire a new sleepless night empty bottles

crater-shaped volcanic rocks on the fire cold stream of lava

brushfire a covey of partridges alarming

Twin Towers rumbling down no revenge



a campfire behind the black boulders the scent of broth

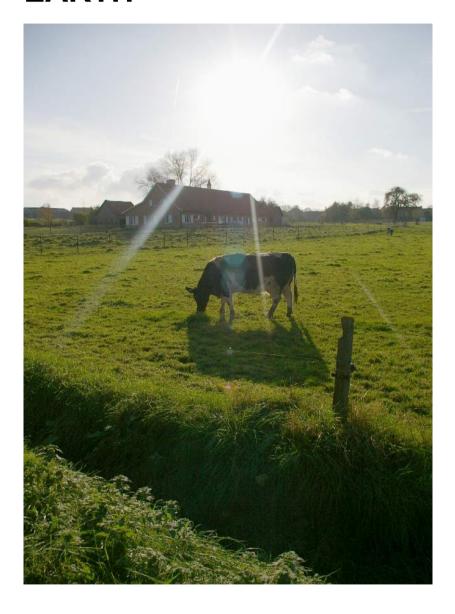
cremation place the faces in mourning now and then a nod

the open fire piled up very high for a nice cuddle

dazzling flash of light (*) burns a shadow on the wall mother where are you

(*) Received a honourable mention by Mr. Yasuhiko Shigemoto, in the haiku contest 'The 39th A-Bomb Memorial Day', Kyoto museum for world Peace, Japan July 2005.

EARTH





Name Tsuchi Energy Afternoon

Season Indian Summer

Colour Yellow Direction Centre Trigram Gen Olanet Saturn Climatic Qi Damp Yang Organ Stomach Yin Organ Spleen Sense Organ Mouth **Body Tissue** Muscles Emotion Worry Taste Sweet

Earth is the element of harvest time, abundance, nourishment, fertility, and the mother to child relationship. This element is also regarded as central to balance and the place where energy becomes downward in movement. Earth is a pure symbol of stability and being properly anchored.



mother earth hear the buzzing sound a berimbao (*)

wielding paint brushes as a tribute to the earth feel the Zen-spirit

light pink petals snowing on the earth a gusty wind

your sweat dreams in orbit round the earth feel the music

(*) A Brazilian capoeira-percussion instrument originally from Angola, with one metal string (corda) connected to a wooden bow (5 feet in length). The string is attached to the bow and a half open gourd (cabaca).



garden for walking to the inner temple step by step

ceremony powdered green tea earthly power

silver light a subterranean vault heavy bombardment

misty reefs cloaked with mystery until midmorning



the choppy wind in caverns and canyons - a shy lizzard

eroded rocks the river cuts his way day and night

limestone reefs silhouetted by streams the new world

young orchards transform canyons a big bouquet



autumn afternoon a Hohokam flute player (*) announces the rain

rumbling thunder reverberate between hills swallows shiver with cold

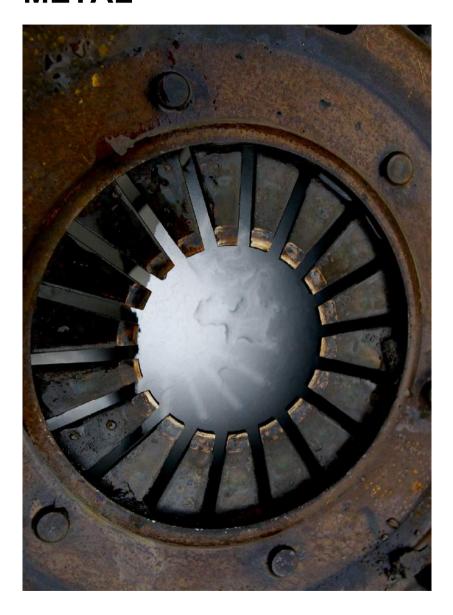
on a twisted branch clusters of pink flowers will you marry me

in his orchard and his playful mind a hurdy-gurdy (**)

(*) The Hohokam peoples occupied a wide area of south-central Arizona from roughly Flagstaff south to the Mexican border. They are thought to have originally migrated north out of Mexico around 300 BC.

(**) dedicated to Gilbert Isbin

METAL





Name Kane Energy Evening Season Autumn Colour White Direction West Trigram Dui Planet Venus Climatic Qi Dryness Yan Organ Lg.Intestine

Yin Organ Lung
Sense Organ Nose
Body Tissue Skin
Emotion Sadness
Taste Spicy

Metal includes the idea of the element air. It is the force of gravity, the minerals within the earth, the patterns of the heavenly bodies and the powers of electrical conductivity and magnetism. Metal has structure, but it can also accept a new and flexible form when molten. The symbol of metal is one of a cutting and reforming action.



bronze sculptures between light and shadow songs and sacrifices

peaceful meadow the cast-iron bathtub rusty as an ox

his heart bigger than a begging bowl Panamarenko

the blacksmith feels the landscape in primary colours



a simply richness paying attention to the bells peal

morning bloom smooth sledgehammer and a bristly beard

moonlight caress the singing steelworkers a street dog barks

in the morning fog the soft song of metal a naked sadhu



metallic singing above the singing bowls a butterfly

it sounds metallic in the soup kitchen a singing lid

made of steel the scorched summer beating the gong

the tolling of bells visiting Hiroshima metallic rain



a singing bowl ringing by a monk humble cottage

take a walk along the Seine the Eiffeltower

tinkling and jingling on her silk umbrella a brass chain

on the scrapheap the chirp of crickets summer haze

WATER





Name Mizu
Energy Night
Season Winter
Direction North

Direction North
Trigram Kan & Qian
Planet Mercury
Climatic Qi Cold
Yang Organ Bladder
Yin Organ Kidney
Sense Organ Ears
Body Tissue Bone

Emotion Fear Color Black Taste Salty

Water is the holy source of life and the fluids which nourish and maintain the health of every cell. Water corresponds to our vital fluids, i.e. blood, lymph, mucus, semen and fat. Water has the capacity to flow, infinitely yielding and powerful, ever changing and often dangerous with the capacity also to nourish and cleanse. Water is the ultimate yin. It has a waiting, silent, still quality.



tasting the taste of the seven oceans in one droplet

water winds his way in a circle of oaks and ferns gleeful being

children gazing in a bucket with water mirror images

strong energy of Thai-Chi in the park fish in a pond (*)

(*) dedicated to Tine Beeckmans, thanks for haiku workshops.



frogs in chorus for the empty sky water as mirror

plain of forests a murmuring water course of the river

sweltering summer his shadow plunges already in the water

close together villages and water thank-you banks



circles of sand a warm wind blows nude swimming

mirror image head in the clouds a water lily

waterfall roaring and seething a cool place

heating bathwater fragrance of lavender your charming mother



highly flavoured spice garden near the pond sneezing is the rule

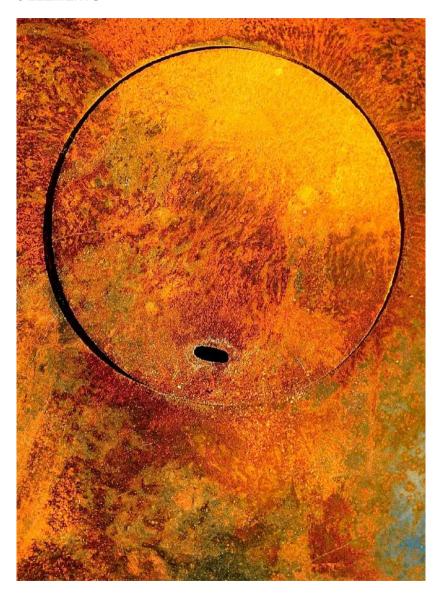
the sun bless the oceans always and in all ways a murmuring sea

in rippling lakes drifting across the moon a lilac water lily

clear watermirror twinkling in depth of silence hear the new born lamb

TANKA & HAIBUN

5 ELEMENTS



5 ELEMENTS:

1. WOOD - 2. FIRE - 3. EARTH - 4. METAL - 5. WATER.

HAIBUN: A haibun is a literary style, with a descriptive combination of prose and haiku. A mirror image of 'our' regular world, that focus on everyday experiences. Most often [but not necessarily] is is written in the present tense with a multiplicity of ideas: from snake pits and hot birds to fairground attractions, tattoos and youg bamboo shoots. A haibun is a meeting place, a melting pot and a treasure-house with many chambers! Love the glaring contrasts, without rigid rules and prescriptions. We're well rid of that. Haibun boundaries of style and format have changed a lot since master Bashō travelled the narrow road to Oku in 1689. Nowadays an author can arrange and intersperse the prose and haiku in whatever format suits the piece. There is no set length to a haibun and the haiku does not have to relate directly to the subject matter. The reader must only imagine...

TANKA: literally means Japanese poem. The term tanka itself has only a recent history. Japanese poet and critic Masaoka Shiki created this term for his statement that waka should be renewed and modernized. Until then, poems of this nature had been referred to as waka or simply uta ("song, poem"). Traditionally waka in general has had no concept of rhyme, or even of line. Instead of lines, waka has the unit and the phrase. (Units or phrases are often turned into lines when poetry is translated or transliterated into Western languages, however.) Tanka consists of five units (often treated as separate lines when Romanized or translated) usually with the following mora pattern:5-7-5 / 7-7

WOOD



the wooden chappies (*) are waiting on the work-bench the scent of sawdust in a foggy fall-like day with the first falling leaves

she sings a song for the wooden hummingtop my old mother a real master improviser when she tickles the ivories

(*) created by barrel-maker Noël Ovaere, 1980.

FIRE



a few fire fighters smoke stings their eyes – new blaring sirens and blue flashing lights at night please maintain distance

a catchy rhythm starts out full of energy – the wind blows sparks above the flared campfire a hum of voices in the night



A haibun is a literary style, with a descriptive combination of prose and haiku poetry. A mirror image of 'our' regular world, that focus on everyday experiences. Most often [but not necessarily] it is written in the present tense with a multiplicity of ideas: from snake pit and hot bird to fairground attraction, tattoo and young bamboo shoot. A haibun is a meeting place for passionated poetry lovers. The haibun is a melting pot, a treasure-house with many chambers. Love the glaring contrasts and a playful and modest mind with the ability to see things in their proper context, without rigid rules and prescriptions. We're well rid of that. Haibun boundaries of style a format have changed a lot since master Bashō travelled the narrow road to Oku in 1689. Nowadays an author can arrange and intersperse the prose and haiku in whatever format suits the piece. There is no set length to a haibun and the haiku does not have to relate directly to the subject matter. The reader must only imagine. For example, about one of the five elements; fire...

bombed out bleeding on the street the scent of fire

EARTH



when the sun breaks through the earth seems like copper like in her youth the light on the tombstones calls up many memories (*)

the news of mum's death straightaway rewrites the silence with pain and loss at the edge of the water question marks wash ashore

(*) dedicated to Jenny, my beloved soulsister.



Earth becomes spirit. Pietro Bares (*), an Italian sculptor, works in his sundrenched workplace, as a hermit between long-drawn-out sculptures, waxwork, marble figures and casted statues. He molds a smiling Bhudda in black clay. The elegant statue grows daily between pedestals, paintings and waxwork. The statue has the shape of a sitting king's son in meditation. In the evening, Pietro reduces to silence, besides a small stove. He roasts chestnuts and burns incense of sandalwood. Moon gazing is restful. After a few weeks, the statue breaks, it's cracking. Only the smile remains... 'Viens voir mon fils,' says Pietro. One white mushroom shoots up in the back of the statue. Pietro smiles: 'When I remove the mushroom I will save the statue, but if I let him grow... Bhudda will come!'

on his windowsill pottery with lavender a pleasant smell

(*) Buddha created by Pietro Bares



she walks so slowly in a moonless summer night on the iron bridge giving me a flow of thoughts as a sexy keepsake

on the footbridge standing in the smoke – a screaming train he sounds awful metallic almighty deafening loud



she walks on the beach confused and somewhat nervous clothes all mussed rememberings are gone mother talks with the water

she draws a tiger with a long tail on the wet window he grins to the passengers in the morning train



Guido Maertens, a soul mate and enthusiast jazz-poet drowned. I am standing in the cool of a funeral parlour for a fond farewell. The walls of the mortuary are olive green. One oil painting shows me a daub of white colour in a crisscross of grey lines: the sea! I breathe in the perfume of the sea air. I still remember our nocturnal walks on the beach at Ostend. The canvas on the wall is an oblique stroke between two acts: life and death. In my remembrance all the corpses have jaundice and freckled faces, but you my brother are smiling.

seaward storm a salty wind is changing the dune crossing

Writing haiku is learning how to move to and fro in the landscapes of my mind. My haiku for you will talk about colours of the starfishes. What is essential for my haiku? Three lines? A keyword? The haiku moment? Seventeen syllables? I hear your voice: 'a haiku must proceed from a concrete image, based on a deep emotion, in love with poetry.'I think I will miss you badly. I feel an irresistible desire to see the rise of the full moon riding on the waves. Moon gazing? Now!

(*) Published in Contemporary Haibun Online, Quarterly Journal of Contemporary English Language Haibun, USA. Fall Issue 2005.



photo: Jenny Ovaere

GEERT VERBEKE is a contemporary haikuist and a real kuyu (haiku friend), born in Kortrijk, Flanders (Belgium in old Europe for peace) on 31 May 1948. Father of four children: Hans. Saskia. Merliin & Jonas. Since 15 years the happy life partner of Jenny Ovaere (exteacher in special care education. Today a guide for Joker adventurous travelling). Geert began writing haiku in 1968 after his beloved mother, Jo Hiltrop, was offering him a small cahier: 'Zenbuddhism' with selected writings of D.T.Suzuki and references to: R.H., Blyth, H.G. Henderson and Alan Watts. The communication with the Italian sculptor Pietro Bares, casting bronze and sculpting marble buddha's was an other stimulation. The decisive factor to wrote and study haiku was the discovery of the wonderful Himalayan singing bowls and the travels with his exceptional wife and soulmate Jenny to: Kathmandu, the Sinaï-desert, Istanbul, Tunisia, Djerba, France, Tanzania, Zanzibar and the Grand Canyon in Arizona, USA. Geert is a member of: Haiku Centre Flanders, l'Association Française de Haïku, the Australian Haiku Society Haiku Oz, the World Haiku Association (Japan) & World Tempos Journal (Japan).



JOVICA STORER

is a Flemisch electronic music composer/producer who has been addicted to aural vibrations ever since his youth. He learned to play the piano as a child and started improvising his own creations as a teenager. After being a radio jockey for several years, he went DJing in several pubs and parties. In his early twenties he bought his first synthesizer and a computer and started sequencing. Since that day in the summer of 1989, he has never ceased to explore new territory on the planet of electronic sound. His style can vary from distorted breakcore ballads to lush ambient drone trance and beyond.

The album "Element" is an aural interpretation of the five Japanese Elements: Wood - Fire - Earth - Metal - Water.

The production includes haiku by Geert Verbeke.



ABOUT THE PHOTOS: thank you Bing for your hints...

Cameras:

Analogue Pentax-K1000 Digital Pentax-ist DS

Objectives:

SMC Pentax-DA 18-55 SMC Pentax-F 70-210 / 35-80 Takumara-A 2x tele-converter

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