

HIDDEN HAIKU

Haiku in Scots excised from longer poems by Scottish Poets

Comparisons between *haiku* in English and Scots (which most English-speaking people understand) suggest that *haiku* provide universal poetic insights with a quality of awareness specific to the language in which they are expressed. Versions in literary Scots often have a vigor and *frisson* which indicates that this register does harmonise well with the distinctive spirit and tradition of *haiku*. Scots as a linguistic register for poetry does seem to harmonise well with the distinctive spirit of *haiku*.

It is of interest that *haiku* or short poems like *haiku* can sometimes be identified as integral parts of longer poems. The following *haiku* have been excised from poems

by Alastair Mackie (1925-1995).

From *Mongol Quine (Modern Scots Verse, Akros, 1978)*

*The mongol lassie:
bricht een set foraye
on an unkent airt*

*The mongol quine.....
her een are set for ever
on an unkent airt*

From *Deid Futtret (Akros, No.40, 1979)*

*A broun futtret
sleepin lyke on the road
crammasie twyne on tarmac*

*Ae nicht we met a futtret.....
seemed asleep on the tar road
crimson twine on tarmac*

From *A Hand-Oot (Lallans 11, 1978)*

*In Alexandria
a haep o clouts raxt out
it haed nae sex*

*In Alexandria.....
I cam upon a ferlie.....hunkert
.....I couldna tell the sex.*

From *In Absentia (Modern Scots Verse, Akros, 1978)*

*God said, "Nou Ah'm awa,
mak a kirk or a mill o't!"
an santit foraye.*

*God said, "Nou I'm awa,
mak a kirk or a mill o't!"
an God gaed awa.....*

From renderings in Scots of poems by Geoffrey Dutton, we have three powerful pieces:

From *Passage, (Lallans 30, 1988)*

*Alba santit awa
ablo ma weings: ten meinits
o bens, a kennin snaw.*

*it santit awa
unner the tips o ma weings.....
runkils.....A kennin snaw*

From *Tryst, (Lallans 36, 1991)*

*The hare's een pyk't oot
its paws reid wi tryin
ti birze awa the derk.*

*Its en pyk't oot...
its paws reid wi tryin
ti birze aw pitmirk*

From *Bed an Brekfest* (Lallans, 36, 1991)

<i>Oot whaur the tyde</i>	<i>whyle the the tyde</i>
<i>attends the wund, the swaws ettil</i>	<i>attends the wund, the waves ettil</i>
<i>but durstna breinge</i>	<i>but dinna breinge</i>

From a poem by Fred Cogswell entitled *Eau-Forte* (Lallans 30, 1991).

<i>Nae lyfe but the sun</i>	<i>.....the sun's waek ee</i>
<i>lichts up a tree skeleton,</i>	<i>.....lichtin a wae tree skeleton</i>
<i>deid, i the cauld air</i>	<i>sterk.....i the cauld air</i>

From a poem by David Glenday, entitled *Buchaille Etive Mor* by David Glenday (Lallans 41, 1993).

<i>We goave at ither</i>	<i>The lest bird has flewn hyne awa</i>
<i>an dinna wearie---juist Buchaille</i>	<i>a lane cloud sants frae the sky</i>
<i>Etive Mor an me</i>	<i>we gaze at ither an dinnae wearie</i>
	<i>juist Buchaille Etive Mor an I.</i>

And directly cut from the last three lines of a poem by Lilian Anderson entitled, *Ballantrae Kirkyaird* (Lallan 45, 1995), we have:

A burd i the sounless air
unkennin o men's dremes
kennin its ain sang

There seems no reason why it should not be possible to reverse the process of severe pruning of longer poems and develop new longer poems from a foundation of longer classical *haiku*. Many longer poems develop naturally by the germinations and flowering of the seeds of single ideas.

