
HAIKU EXPO

Arizona inspired Japanese Poetry



ARIZONA MATSURI - A FESTIVAL OF JAPAN

Selection of 2023 Haiku

OVERVIEW

HAIKU EXPO



In the spirit of raising awareness of the arts and culture of Japan to the people of Arizona, we challenged residents of Arizona to write their own Arizona-inspired haiku poem for the 39th annual Arizona Matsuri virtual festival held on February 25th and 26th, 2023.

Haiku is an ancient unrhymed Japanese verse form. Generally written in three short lines containing a total of 10 to 17 syllables to convey a vivid message, Haiku typically contain a reference to nature.

Haiku uses simple concrete images of things we can see, smell, taste, touch, or feel. The best haiku poems reveal the essence of a thing so clearly that the reader can experience the

momentary scene or insight that inspired the author.

One of the greatest Haiku poets was the Samurai, Basho (1644-94). Basho's father was also a Samurai from the Iga province. To become a Samurai, Basho served a local lord who was fond of writing. Basho learned the style of writing Haiku and wrote under the name Sobo.

During those years, Basho traveled throughout Japan writing and further developing the Haiku style. A few samples of Basho's haiku style are listed in the example section below.

Haiku poems contain a sentence fragment (one line) and a phrase (two lines that complete a thought). The fragment can be either the first line or the third line. Often, haiku are written in past tense and do not make use of capitalization, punctuation, or titles.

Each traditional Haiku should contain a reference to a season, which indicates what season of the year the Haiku is set. For example, blossoms would indicate spring, snow would give the idea of winter and mosquitos would imply summertime. The seasonal word is not always that obvious, you might need to consider the theme of the poem to find it.

English-language haiku have generally followed the form of five syllables used in the first line, followed by seven syllables for the middle line and five syllables for the third. However, English-language haiku no longer adhere to this syllable count, and are therefore as brief as the poem needs to be while keeping to the fragment-phrase structure. In English language haiku, the middle line is typically longer than the first or third lines.

The Arizona Matsuri and its Haiku Expo committee initiated this event in late 2014 by inviting participants from the general public, statewide universities, community colleges, high schools, culture and language clubs and public libraries. The theme for this event was for participants to submit up to three of their own original Arizona inspired haiku. This booklet is the collection of selected haiku poems which we feel deserve Honorable mention and Outstanding recognition which we would like to share with the general public. Thank you to all participants, organizations and individuals who helped support this event. Thank you very much and we hope you enjoy this wonderful collection.

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2023 OUTSTANDING & HONORABLE MENTION

Grades K-3 Haiku



Five, little petals

That are soft as a cat's pelt

And smell like nectar

Outstanding Haiku

Emma P. of Phoenix

Shining in the night

With tinges of pink and gray

It's a lump of quartz

Outstanding Haiku

Freddy B. of Phoenix

Sturdy, rough, tree trunk,

Branches; cities for the birds,

It's extravagant

Outstanding Haiku

Ella E. of Phoenix

冬休み
あっという間に
終わったよ

*Sleeping lizard
Steady on a stone
Basking in the sun*

Outstanding Haiku

Isabella T. of Chandler

Flowers like tigers

Broad Stripes, Fierce Reaction,

Red Bold in the cold wind

Honorable Mention

Alexandra U. of Phoenix

Croaking Happily

Lily pads little green blob

Swimming happy frog

Honorable Mention

Che A. of Phoenix

Spring awakens my tree

Under my tree's sombrero

My tree is precious

Honorable Mention

Calder I. of Phoenix

2023 OUTSTANDING & HONORABLE MENTION

Grades 4-6 Haiku



Lone spiky cactus

In the hot dry desert

Providing good homes

Outstanding Haiku

Norah W. of Phoenix



Waxy Petals Wilt

Lying in the smoldering

Sun; slowly dying.

Outstanding Haiku

Alex M. of Phoenix

Scurrying geko

Scavenging for food to eat

In the calm desert

Outstanding Haiku

Norah W. of Phoenix

2023 OUTSTANDING & HONORABLE MENTION

Grades 7-8 Haiku



Reach for the flower

*The thorns will catch your hand
first*

Silk on your scathed hand

Outstanding Haiku

Zac M. of Cave Creek



The desert is bare

But if you look one more time

It is filled with life

Outstanding Haiku

Zac M. of Cave Creek

Wandering alone

Approaching in the shadows

Leaping to its prey

Outstanding Haiku

Zac M. of Cave Creek

2023 OUTSTANDING & HONORABLE MENTION

Grades 9-12 Haiku



Rattler in its maw

The coyote stands victorious,

Yet limps to its cubs.

Outstanding Haiku

Katarina L. of Phoenix



The black beetle calls

From beneath the palo verde,

One month nearly gone.

Outstanding Haiku

Katarina L. of Phoenix

Orange sediments

Rocky rushing clear blue

Little to no sound

Outstanding Haiku

Alejandro R. of Phoenix



Gray clouds are gone

Petrichor fills the air

Puddles everywhere you step

Outstanding Haiku

Destiny M. of Phoenix

Rain falls from heaven

The saguaro's roots all reach

Growth. Ditat deus.

Outstanding Haiku

Ivy B. of Phoenix

Beautiful mountains

Sky is blue and not one cloud

Silence all around

Honorable Mention

Fadumo B. of Phoenix

Eyes watch anxiously

A Diamondback is watching

One bite and you're out

Honorable Mention

Jeremias R. of Phoenix

Waves above tan soil

The coyote's ballad haunts

Chilling the hot air

Honorable Mention

Kaarina G. of Buckeye

2023 OUTSTANDING & HONORABLE MENTION

Adult Haiku



Fierce conversation

Looms between light and water

Monsoon argument

Outstanding Haiku

Alene S. Gilbert



Deep pastel blanket

Covers the cool dry desert

A sunset goodnight

Outstanding Haiku

Kenneth P. of Vail

Micro-bursts; distant

A wren chirps in echoed sound

Heat waves slowly rise

Outstanding Haiku

Rebecca S. of Surprise



Calligraphy deer

Moon floating in the river

Hoofprints wash away

Outstanding Haiku

Steven D. of Phoenix

Camelback Mountain

Sleeping on the horizon

Each cloud, a vague dream.

Outstanding Haiku

Michael M. of Mesa



Nisei Soldier...draft,

Relocated...Manzanar.

Snared, betrayed...HERO!

Honorable Mention

Holly P. of Buckeye

Desert sun placates

We shiver at night despite

Tourists' assumptions

Honorable Mention

Albrecht C. of Tucson



Weathered sentinel

Guardians of this vast plain

You will out live us

Honorable Mention

Rebecca S. of Surprise

Cumulus gather

An aerial pillow fight

Then the mood turns dark

Honorable Mention

Candy C. of Glendale

2023 OUTSTANDING & HONORABLE MENTION

Japanese Language Haiku



不変の黄
風雨通った
緑なる

*Unchanging yellow
A rainstorm passes by
Changing into green*

Outstanding Haiku

Terrence Li of Scottsdale

白い花
こんばんにさく
おともなく

*White flower
Blooms at night
Silence*

Outstanding Haiku

Kerina Carlo of Scottsdale

満月の
夜に吠えわたる (よに ほえ
わたる)
コヨーテの唱 (うた)

*The night of the full moon
Coyote's song
Howls and extends*

Outstanding Haiku

Hitomi McKnight of Tucson

ねるトカゲ
小百にすわる
ひなたぼっこ

*Sleeping lizard
Steady on a stone
Basking in the sun*

Honorable Mention

Joseph Esse of Fountain Hills

しろうさぎ
いっぱいたべたい
つきみだんご

*The white rabbit
Wants to eat its fill
Moon-viewing dumplings*

Honorable Mention

Ayumi Uchida of Tucson



ちらちらと
雪舞うサワロ
綿帽子

*Flickering
Snow dances on saguaro
Clumps of snow*

Honorable Mention

Miki Pimienta of Tucson