

A Temple Bell Sounds; 108 tanka from the first twenty-one issues of *Eucalypt: a tanka journal*. Selected by the journal's founding editor, Beverley George. Pearl Beach (NSW), Australia: Eucalypt, 2017. Soft cover, 5 ¾ x 8 ¼; 52 pp; ISBN 9780994367020; \$28 AUD incl. postage to USA, UK and worldwide. Info.: www.eucalypt.info/templebell/

reviewed by Maxianne Berger

To produce *A Temple Bell Sounds*, Beverley George has mined the 21 issues of *Eucalypt* from the period when she was its editor. Readers familiar with my reviews know that I tend to regard very highly such thrice-vetted collections: a poet chooses tanka to submit to the journal; the editor selects those to publish; and for the anthology, from the 2576 poems in the first 21 issues, George has chosen one tanka each by 108 poets.

One of George's editorial decisions adds further to reading pleasure: she has taken pains to sequence the tanka into an organic whole wherein neighbours on a page from different parts of the globe show in their resonances our common concerns and humanity. Consider the poems by these three page-mates—the American in Japan, the Australian, and the Canadian.

during
the hearing test
for names,
I come out with Desdemona,
with Iphigenia
Sanford Goldstein

my father
pauses on the outskirts
of memory—
no roadmap ever folds
the same way twice
David Terelinck

at breakfast, suddenly
he remembers all the names
of four railroads that ran
through his childhood home —
first wintry rains falling.
Sonja Arntzen

One expects to find Australian poets in an Australian journal, and for this Canadian reader comes the joy of meeting new words. After researching Belinda Broughton's "akubra" to learn it is a hat, I could truly

appreciate "my father's" old-fashioned gentlemanliness.

smelling
of sweat and cattle dust
my father
akubra in one hand
wild orchids in the other

Other tanka that especially appeal to me include Saeko Ogi's.

war time
at the factory
two school girls
search for 'adolescence'
in a dictionary

Such power can result from well-chosen, well-ordered details. The same can be said for Margaret Beverland's tanka.

they pass
at the airport
father son
both looking
for someone younger

Beverley George did not publish her own poems in *Eucalypt*, however *A Temple Bell* includes eight of her tanka that have been published elsewhere. The first leads me to ponder the makings of a great poem.

after he mends
the five bar gate
the old man
rides it once
across the puddle

A simple event occurs. A poet, witness to the event, recognizes that it is remarkable, and records it in its simplicity. Readers then experience in the poet's simple words all that is remarkable. It is a privilege to share in this experience—and in all the other experiences that Beverley George has chosen for *A Temple Bell Sounds*.