

"Savour these chocolates one by one, each a skilfully crafted miniature."
- Ken Jones, Co-editor
Contemporary Haibun

"*Double Rainbow* is exactly as you would imagine—a wonder to behold. Two simple reasons for this: the haiku/senryu spirit is brimming and neither poet is a slave to form. Each versified experience is so vividly conveyed as to become our own: their light on our rain."
- Stephen Henry Gill (^Tito^),
Heel Stone of the Hailstone
Haiku Circle, Kansai

Alba Publishing
£6.00 / €10.00 / US\$12.00

ISBN Bar code
to go in here

Double Rainbow

Maeve O'Sullivan • Kim Richardson

Double Rainbow

haiku poetry
by

Maeve O'Sullivan
Kim Richardson

Alba

Double
Rainbow

This book is dedicated to Iris,
Greek goddess of the rainbow,
and to *An Chailleach Bhéara*,
the Most Ancient One.

Double Rainbow

haiku poetry
by

Maeve O'Sullivan
Kim Richardson

Alba Publishing

Published by Alba Publishing,
P O Box 266, Uxbridge
UB9 5NX, United Kingdom
www.albapublishing.com

© 2005 Maeve O'Sullivan, Kim Richardson
All rights reserved
No part of this publication may be reproduced,
stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted by any
form or by any means electronic, mechanical,
photocopying, recording or otherwise without the
prior written permission of the copyright owners.

A catalogue record for this book is available from
the British Library

ISBN-10: 0-9551254-0-5
ISBN-13: 978-0-9551254-0-9

Designed and typeset by Kim Richardson
Printed in the UK

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

Acknowledgements

Grateful acknowledgment is due to the editors of
Blithe Spirit: Journal of the British Haiku Society,
Haiku Spirit, *Riposte* and *Stinging Fly* magazines,
and *Electric Acorn*, *Haiku Ireland* and *World Haiku*
Review websites, in which several of these pieces
first appeared.

The authors would also like to thank Jim Norton
for his valuable suggestions on the manuscript, and
Sue Booth-Forbes of Anam Cara Writers' Retreat,
Eyeries, Béara, where this collaboration was born.

Contents

PREFACE	6
INTRODUCTION	7
ON BÉARA	10
EARTH	12
TO MUSIC	14
WOOD	16
AIR	18
TURNING THE YEAR	20
FATHERS	22
SPIRIT FIRE	26
ON THE WEIR	28
ON THE EDGE	31
IN THE DARK	34
STONE	36
WATER	37
INDEX OF FIRST LINES & PUBLICATION CREDITS	42
AUTHORS	47
WEBSITES	48

Preface

In the autumn of 2000, two poets, one a published writer of haiku, the other a novice to the form, met by chance at a writers' retreat on the Béra Peninsula in West Cork, Ireland. They took a walk to nearby Pallas Strand beach in the rain and both of them tried to photograph a spectacular double rainbow. One of the poets cursed the very wind that had brought that rainbow into being, and this elicited a haiku from the other. That moment started a process that evolved, after many conversations in cyberspace and 'real' space across the Irish Sea, into this book.

The collection presents 92 haiku and senryu, many of them written over the past five years, shaped into thirteen themed sections in which the work of both poets appears together. An index of first lines offers the reader the opportunity to see whose work is whose.

Haiku emerge from the chance encounter of two—often commonplace—elements. Through the poem, these two elements combine to create a third: an element that transcends its component parts and, at its best, allows the reader to glimpse a little something of what is behind appearances.

We hope that *Double Rainbow*, as the collection has been entitled, creates some element that is beyond its component parts, mingling the voices of the two poets to give voice to something that has not so much come from them as through them.

Maeve O'Sullivan & Kim Richardson

Introduction

I am delighted to have this opportunity to welcome the publication of *Double Rainbow*, and to commend Maeve O'Sullivan and Kim Richardson for the considerable achievement which their joint collection of haiku represents.

Here, in this slightest of poetic forms, one finds humour, keen observation, pathos and refreshment of spirit in abundance.

If all poetry lives the tension between the lyrical and commonplace, haiku is most at home in the latter. Quite ordinary things, seen anew, have about them something mysteriously moving. Great scientists and mystics alike concur: that there is anything at all is cause for wonder. For Master Basho, wondrous enough mud on a melon, the coolness of a wall to nap against. O'Sullivan gives us *mortgage down-payment / outside / snails on the wet stone steps*, Richardson *fuschia bushes / drenched / in bees*. Quintessential haiku both, along this spectrum.

Readers familiar only with the dictionary definition of haiku may be disappointed that few poems in this collection conform to the supposed 5-7-5 syllable requirement. Suffice to say that sparseness of expression, if the image resonates, is a better measure of haiku spirit. Incompleteness leaves space for the reader to enter these fine haiku and make of them our own. Happy task.

Jim Norton

double rainbow
trying to photograph it
he curses the wind

by the stone circle
chuffed at the sound
of raven's wings

water bottle opened
sings in the wind
I drink deeper

stopping the whistle
with my fingers
let the North wind
play *An Ghaoth Aneas**
(*The South Wind)

opening
in this stone circle
gorse flowers

two crows flying
close to the water
four crows

beside the path
bruised rowanberries
a raven's crop

EARTH

fuchsia bushes
drenched
in bees

rose garden
in the rain, scent
of wet earth

watching the sunset
the pub landlord
pulls down the blinds

EARTH

rose garden
with no blooms
now the closing bell

circle of stones
I arrive in haste
leave slowly

at the Chalice Well
emptying water bottles
filling them again

To Music

perched on the block
of fiddler's resin
cherry tomato

drumming to a slip jig
the cigarette ash
moving closer to his lip

at a music festival
in the old hop pickers' field
girls stiltwalking

To Music

strumming bouzouki
with his right hand
—how blue the veins

the fiddler's wife
watching his fingers
knits him a scarf

suddenly a flute
next door
longing

WOOD

in a house full of women
my cat hunts
I chop wood

felling the willow
branches drive into the ground
new shoots

horse chestnut tree
my friend translates it slowly
'crann chnó chapail'

WOOD

picking a leaf
off the inscription
he reads
'the autumnal earth'

on my lap, the cat
in the tree's branches
full moon

just over the border
forest clearing
full of loosestrife

sunshine
filtering through
the heart-shaped bower

swifts flying
above the vineyard
fireworks

moonless night
beside the path, glow-worms
the Milky Way

at night, the garden
blossoms on the pear tree
—I look at the stars

I am surprised
to see, through a telescope
that Venus has horns

pointing out the Pole Star
to friends at night
with a small torch

December night
stacked inside the gift shop
boxes labelled 'Peace'

Christmas tablecloth
shaken out in the doorway
snow on the threshold

flakes of snow tumbling
out of a grey sky
—one magpie

vapour trails
in the winter sky
lines in my palm

three children on skis
climbing the hill
behind them, herring bones

in the garden
under an old climbing frame
—forget-me-nots

FATHERS (MO'S)

father gardening
seen from an upstairs window
—bald patch

his box of tricks
brought in from the garage
to fix my case

my new dress swirling
across the ballroom dance floor
waltzing with father

FATHERS (MO'S)

late night taxi rank
a row developing
—I grip father's arm

below the cardiograph
on the bedside locker
a completed crossword

cracking a *crème brûlée*
he calmly discusses
will and trust

outdoors
shrouding my father's lemon tree
against the winter

through a closed window
that small chandelier
still lit

in front of his portrait
incense smoke
dried leaves

day of the funeral
waning crescent
just before sunrise

Christmas present
from my late father
next year's diary

pruning our father's vines
without thinking
just the way he taught us

leaping up
to open the window
—not finding it

she carries it from room to room
—the candle, lit
for her sick niece

moon full
house empty
you, me and Rumi

our teacher speaks
of illumination
the candle flickers

'TATTOOS. PIERCINGS.'
seeing this sign I remember
Easter starts tomorrow

discussing empowerment—
outside the window
a seagull soars

ON THE WEIR (MO'S)

September night
I shake out the damp sheet
a swan drifting

autumn leaves falling
slowly onto the river
frost on the island

winter fog
over the river
moving

ON THE WEIR (MO'S)

full moon's reflection
dispersed in the flow
stillness

through the raindrops
through the rainbow
the other side

icy wind
geese moving slowly
spring tide

ON THE WEIR (MO'S)

summer hailstorm
on the window-ledge
an earwig escapes

swallows
glancing the river surface
midsummer

torrential downpour
startling me and the ducks
—slow thunderclap

ON THE EDGE

beggar in morning sunlight
bricked-up doorway

three-wheeled motorbike—
lashed behind the single seat
a pair of crutches

beggar-woman in the market
crying out,
her gold teeth

on the pavement
a man with no hands
begging

pink bracelet
left behind—
the sparkle of her laughter

through a plate glass window
the child looks up to see
a shark swimming

I start to cry
he reaches for the tissue box
—empty

airport security
a woman frisks me
undoing your hug

TV at the dentist's
Saddam wrenched from his plinth
tooth finally out

sweeping with his white stick
the man checks his stride
at the museum gate

he climbs off the stage
walks blindly among us—
missionary touch

a congregation
of lapsed Irish Catholics
singing for Jesus

approaching Limerick
baby's bibs on a washing line
gravestones...

Kilcatherine church
a woman pushing a pram
past the graveyard

after the funeral
the soap actress tells me
her character's dead

STONE

on my knees
in the stone hearth, making fire
with my breath

two geologists
trying to identify
café tabletop

mortgage down-payment
outside
snails on the wet stone steps

WATER

sandbags by the back door
milk in the jug
overflowing...

two Moroccans
on the Spanish coast
gazing out to sea

a single sailboat
disappearing
into Dalkey Sound

WATER (MO'S)

neon fish swimming
oblivious
as I cast my vote

fitting me
better than I expected—
my mother's swimsuit

tap water falling
a sinkful of ice
melting into itself

WATER (MO'S)

spring shower
in the back yard
a trio of snails
neighbours arguing

he tilts the umbrella back
now I can see
the waterfall

estuary walk
ebbing tide
our footprints deeper

eyes down
on O'Connell Street—
double rainbow

a congregation (MO'S) – *Riposte* March 2000
a single sailboat (MO'S)
after the funeral (MO'S) – *World Haiku Review*
website www.worldhaikureview.org; Selected for
inclusion in *Top 10 Senryu for 2004*
airport security (MO'S) – *Blithe Spirit* Issue 12/2,
June 2002
approaching Limerick (MO'S) – *Electric Acorn* Issue 13,
February 2003
at a music festival (KR) – *Blithe Spirit* Issue 11/4,
December 2001
at night, the garden (KR) – *Blithe Spirit* Issue 11/2,
June 2001
at the Chalice Well (KR)
autumn leaves falling (MO'S) – *Haiku Spirit* Issue 18,
December 1999
beggar in morning sunlight (KR)
beggar-woman in the market (KR) – *Blithe Spirit*
Issue 11/3, September 2001
below the cardiograph (MO'S)
beside the path (KR)
by the stone circle (KR)
Christmas present (KR) – *Blithe Spirit* Issue 12/2,
June 2002
Christmas tablecloth (KR) – *Blithe Spirit* Issue 11/1,
March 2001
circle of stones (KR) – *Blithe Spirit* Issue 10/4,
December 2000
cracking a *crème brûlée* (MO'S)
day of the funeral (KR) – *Blithe Spirit* Issue 12/2,
June 2002

December night (KR)
discussing empowerment (MO'S) – *Blithe Spirit*
Issue 15/1, March 2005
double rainbow (MO'S)
drumming to a slip jig (MO'S) – *Blithe Spirit*
Issue 13/3, September 2003
estuary walk (MO'S)
eyes down (MO'S)
father gardening (MO'S)
felling the willow (KR)
fitting me (MO'S) – *Haiku Spirit* Issue 15, October
1998; Anthologised in *Jumping the Bus Queue*
(Older Women's Network, 2000) and *The New*
Haiku (Snapshot Press, 2002)
flakes of snow tumbling (KR) – *Blithe Spirit* Issue 11/2,
June 2001
fuchsia bushes (KR)
full moon's reflection (MO'S) – *Electric Acorn* Issue 8,
July 2000
he climbs off the stage (MO'S) – *Riposte* March 2000
he tilts the umbrella back (MO'S)
his box of tricks (MO'S) – *Stinging Fly* Issue 4,
Autumn/Winter 1998
horse chestnut tree (MO'S)
I am surprised (KR)
I start to cry (MO'S) – *Blithe Spirit* Issue 12/2,
June 2002
icy wind (MO'S)
in a house full of women (KR) – *Blithe Spirit*
Issue 10/4, December 2000; *The Event Guide*,
Dublin, December 2000

in front of his portrait (KR) – *Blithe Spirit* Issue 12/2,
 June 2002
 in the garden (KR) – *Blithe Spirit* Issue 11/3,
 September 2001
 just over the border (MO'S)
 Kilcatherine church (KR)
 late night taxi rank (MO'S)
 leaping up (MO'S) – *Blithe Spirit* Issue 13/1,
 March 2003
 moon full (MO'S) – *Blithe Spirit* Issue 12/3,
 September 2002
 moonless night (KR)
 mortgage down-payment (MO'S)
 my new dress swirling (MO'S)
 neon fish swimming (MO'S) – *Haiku Spirit* Issue 14,
 June 1998
 on my knees (KR) – *Blithe Spirit* Issue 11/2, June 2001
 on my lap, the cat (KR) – *Blithe Spirit* Issue 11/1,
 March 2001
 on the pavement (KR)
 opening (KR)
 our teacher speaks (KR)
 outdoors (KR) – *Blithe Spirit* Issue 12/2, June 2002
 perched on the block (MO'S)
 picking a leaf (KR) – Haiku Ireland website
www.haikuireland.org
 pink bracelet (MO'S) – *Blithe Spirit* Issue 12/2,
 June 2002
 pointing out the Pole Star (KR) – *Blithe Spirit*
 Issue 11/3, September 2001
 pruning our father's vines (KR) – *Blithe Spirit*

Issue 12/2, June 2002
 rose garden / with no blooms (MO'S) – *Blithe Spirit*
 Issue 15/1, March 2005
 rose garden / in the rain, scent (KR)
 sandbags by the back door (MO'S)
 September night (MO'S) – *Electric Acorn** Issue 8,
 July 2000; *Blithe Spirit* Issue 12/4, December 2002
 she carries it from room to room (MO'S)
 spring shower (MO'S) – *Stinging Fly* Issue 4,
 Autumn/Winter 1998.
 stopping the whistle (KR)
 strumming bouzouki (MO'S)
 suddenly a flute (KR)
 summer hailstorm (MO'S) – *Electric Acorn* Issue 8,
 July 2000
 sunshine (MO'S)
 swallows (MO'S) – *Electric Acorn* Issue 8, July 2000
 sweeping with his white stick (KR) – *Blithe Spirit*
 Issue 11/2, June 2001
 swifts flying (KR)
 tap water falling (MO'S) – *Electric Acorn* Issue 2,
 October 1998
 'TATTOOS. PIERCINGS' (KR)
 the fiddler's wife (KR) – *Blithe Spirit* Issue 10/4,
 December 2000; Museum of Haiku Literature
 Award in *Blithe Spirit* Issue 11/1, March 2001
 three children on skis (KR)
 three-wheeled motorbike (KR) – *Blithe Spirit*
 Issue 11/1, March 2001
 through a closed window (KR) – *Blithe Spirit*
 Issue 12/2, June 2002

through a plate glass window (KR) – *Blithe Spirit*
 Issue 11/3, September 2001
 through the raindrops (MO'S) – *Haiku Spirit* Issue 17,
 August 1999; *Electric Acorn* Issue 8, July 2000
 torrential downpour (MO'S) – *Electric Acorn* Issue 8,
 July 2000
 TV at the dentist's (KR)
 two crows flying (KR)
 two geologists (MO'S) – *Blithe Spirit* Issue 12/2,
 June 2002
 two Moroccans (KR)
 vapour trails (KR)
 watching the sunset (KR) – *Blithe Spirit* Issue 12/2,
 June 2002
 water bottle opened (KR)
 winter fog (MO'S) - *Haiku Spirit* Issue 16, March
 1999; *Electric Acorn* Issue 8, July 2000

**Electric Acorn* is the quarterly online journal of the
 Dublin Writers' Workshop.

Note: Some of the previously published haiku have
 been edited since first publication.

MAEVE O'SULLIVAN

Dubliner Maeve O'Sullivan was born in 1963 and lives
 between the river Liffey and the train line to the south-
 west. Maeve has been writing seriously since 1995 and
 enjoys penning both haiku and 'regular' poetry. Several
 of her poems, and over one hundred haiku, have been
 published in various journals and e-zines including
Blithe Spirit, *Haiku Spirit*, the *World Haiku Review*,
Stinging Fly, *Women's Work* and *Electric Acorn*, the online
 journal of the Dublin Writers' Workshop. Maeve is a
 former winner of the Listowel Writers' Week poetry
 competition for a single poem. She conducts haiku
 workshops with adults and children and has given a
 number of public readings. *Double Rainbow* is Maeve's
 first publication.

KIM RICHARDSON

Born in Surrey, England, in 1951, Kim has been
 writing for years. However, apart from the appearance of
 some poems in *Icarus* at Trinity College, Dublin, in the
 70s, he submitted nothing until the late 90s when a lone
 poem was published by *Poetry Review* in London.

Introduced to haiku by 'Tito' on a long walk in 1980,
 Kim read Basho's *Narrow Road to the Deep North* with
 pleasure, but never considered writing haiku till a chance
 visit to Anam Cara Writers' Retreat in 2000. Since then
 many haiku, and some haibun, have found publication.

A member of the Redthread Haiku Sangha, Kim
 believes that the state of perception necessary for haiku
 to emerge is also part of the meditative practice at the
 heart of the spiritual path.

WEBSITES

Anam Cara Writers' Retreat:

<http://www.anamcararetreat.com/>

The British Haiku Society:

<http://www.britishhaikusociety.org/>

Contemporary Haibun Online:

<http://haibun.net/>

Electric Acorn:

<http://acorn.dublinwriters.org/>

Haiku Ireland:

<http://haikuireland.org/>

Haiku Spirit:

<http://haikuspirt.org/>

Red Thread Haiku Sangha:

<http://www.redthreadhaiku.org/>

Snapshot Press*:

<http://www.snapshotpress.co.uk/>

World Haiku Review:

<http://www.worldhaikureview.org.>

*This collection, in an earlier edited form, was
Commended in the Snapshot Press Haiku
Collection Competition, 2004.