

## 2020/21 Haiku/Senryu Poetry Competition Results

### **Congratulations to the winners of the 2020/21 Haiku/Senryu Poetry Competition!**

All students and staff of the University of Glasgow were invited to submit contemporary Haiku/Senryu on the theme of COVID-19 and remote study/teaching/working (see the original call [here](#)). This was a hard competition to judge as we received many great Haiku/Senryu which were reviewed rigorously and anonymously by the judges.

The competition was fierce, and the quality of entries was very high. In the end, the judges decided to award a joint first prize and share second prize between three entries. In addition, the General Consulate of Japan in Edinburgh would like to recognise the achievement of those who were, while not awarded a prize, shortlisted (top 25%) with a letter of commendation.

Thanks to the generous donation from the Japan Alumni Association of the University of Glasgow, the two students awarded the first prize shared £175, and the three students awarded the second prize were given £25 each. The judges decided to award one prize for the best staff entry. This was not a cash award, but think of the honour!

Thank you once again for the Japan Alumni Association of the University of Glasgow for their kind support, and all the judges and Gaelic consultant for their time, commitment and passion. (The list of judges appears at the bottom of this page.) We would also like to thank the staff of the School of Critical Studies for their administrative support.

## 2020/21 Haiku/Senryu Poetry Competition Winners

### **Student Competition**

#### ***Joint First Prize:***

#### **Sam Gates**

'Wheesht', Ah tell masel',  
Trauchles come an' trauchles go,  
Covid wull an'aw!

*Translation:*

*'Hush', I tell myself,  
Struggles come and struggles go,  
Covid will too!*

#### **Comments from the judges:**

The Scots language really gets the pithy essence of the thing so well! Not only in the choice vocabulary and balanced phrasing but in the precise punctuation and careful organisation of tone in so few words. This is admirably exact. How much more expressive of world-weariness mixed with reassurance is 'an' aw!' compared to the insipid English word 'too!' and how rich (and in its repetition even richer), is that word 'trauchles'. All of these things add up and work together, making a tiny kernel of a poem packed with goodness.

**Sara Robertson**

Tha craobh air a bhith beò  
bliadhna air fad  
bha na aon latha dhomhsa

*Translation:*

*A tree has lived a full year  
but I have seen  
but one same day*

**Comments from the judges:**

A fine poem on relativity and time. This is a tightly controlled statement of sorrow and hope, balancing the relativity of time as it is experienced and as it is observed out there, in the natural world. Human perception yields understanding but also understated and implicit feeling, beautifully poised.

***Joint Second Prize:*****Nuray Baigabulova**

9 am lesson  
8.59 alarm

**Comments from the judges:**

Pared right down and very funny! This is an even more minimalist than usual poem, nicely set on the edge of panic. Almost every single Zoom meeting I've ever experienced in the last year and a half has been preceded by a short period of extreme anxiety, usually before a sense of control and equanimity is restored. This catches that feeling in the unemphatic pun in the word 'alarm': it could be an alarm clock, or it could be simply a feeling of alarm just before the meeting – or both!

**Bella Baillie**

Title: Unexpected Participant  
Suddenly, a snout!  
A hungry greyhound crashes  
My tutor's zoom screen

**Comments from the judges:**

It catches a lovely (and welcome) intrusion of the animal kingdom into the world of zoom. Good to feel this sense of surprise coming through! Who would have expected or predicted the eruption of a greyhound into the restrained, seemingly controlled environment of a Zoom meeting online tutorial! The poem reminds us that in such times as these even the teacher can't be in complete control.

**Kaiyue He**

Title: Freedom  
A squirrel ran across my courtyard,  
Making me envious  
Of its freedom.

### Comments from the judges:

Inside looking out – a sense of distance.

Loved the squirrel! A simple statement based on an immediate observation and an honest expression of feeling – but how much is contained within that observation and that expression! The courtyard becomes an arena of liberty and the human observer envies the small racing animal, reversing positions of power and authority. The poem itself is agile, quick and vividly visual.

### **Staff Competition**

#### ***First Prize:***

**Helen Oakes**

Title: Wise words

words pouring wisdom

eager class listens enthralled

I am still on mute

### Comments from the judges:

There is a humbling record here of a sense that the students in the class may be wiser than the tutor, allowing him or her to ramble on, while they are perhaps unwilling to interrupt the full flow of knowledge exchange, or perhaps slyly enjoying the deflation of pontification through the self-inflicted failure to remember to give the right thing the tiniest click. So much is going on or is implied by or lying behind and through so few words.

### **Consul General of Japan Awards**

#### **Student Competition:**

- Mojisola T. Bakare
- Sophie Gorman
- Madeleine Heideman
- Annie McCoid
- Lucy McCormick
- Freya Muir
- Viola Nassi
- Martha Nye
- Aimee Punshon
- Lorna Rideout
- Erin Rizzato

#### **Staff Competition:**

- Luke Daly
- Kazuko Dow
- Geraldine Perriam
- Philip Schlesinger

Congratulations to all of our winners! Thank you to everyone who participated. We hope you enjoyed the competition.

## Judges

- Dr Stephen Baker, President, Japan Scotland Association
- Professor Alan Riach, poet; Scottish Literature, University of Glasgow
- Dr Taeko Seki, President Emeritus, Japan Scotland Association
- Mr Kenneth Shimizu, Representative of Japanese Alumni Association of the University of Glasgow
- Professor Alan Spence, poet; Creative Writing, University of Aberdeen
- Mr Nozomu Takaoka, Consul General of Japan in Edinburgh
- Dr Saeko Yazaki, Theology and Religious Studies, University of Glasgow

*Gaelic consultant: Mr Gillebride/Gilbert MacMillan, Celtic and Gaelic, University of Glasgow*



From the online winners selection meeting