The strictest and purest of poetic forms, the Japanese haiku contains in its seventeen sound characters a reference to a season as well as a distinct pause or interruption. Cherry blossoms and swallows might refer to spring; red maple leaves and deer usually imply autumn. These seasonal allusions emphasize the essence of haiku: nature and its ephemeral beauty. The graceful, evocative haiku featured here were composed by the renowned Japanese haiku masters of the past four hundred years, including Matsuo Basho, Taniguchi Buson, and Kobayashi Issa. The deceptively simple poems—rendered in English with Japanese calligraphies and transliterations—are paired with exquisite eighteenth- or nineteenth-century paintings and ukiyo-e prints and twentieth-century shin hanga woodcuts from the Art Gallery of Greater Victoria, Canada. With their depth and delicacy, wide range of subtle hues, and time-honored focus on landscapes, birds, and flowers, these artworks—like their haiku counterparts—quietly capture a moment in time.

Haiku: Japanese Art and Poetry presents thirty-five pairs of poems and images, organized seasonally. The Introduction details the origin and development of haiku, the lives of the most famous poets, and the obstacles faced when translating the concise yet complex lines.

**Book Information**

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**Customer Reviews**

I loved the way this book was presented. Each Haiku is written in Japanese (Kanji and Hiragana) with the Romaji translation (the Japanese vocalization put to English letters) and the translation. Including the Romaji was a nice touch, because one really cannot grasp the true nature of a Japanese Haiku without hearing it in the native language. The art is comprised of various wood
block prints and silk screen paintings. They are a lovely addition, especially for someone like me who enjoys Hiroshige and Hokusai (wood block artists). This would be a great gift for someone with an interest in Haiku. It's just a wonderful, beautiful collection.

This book seems truly to have been a work of love. I was amazed as to how well the pictures and the poems went together, and I really enjoyed both the pictures and the poems that were selected for this work. I lent this book to a friend who liked it so well that she read it in one sitting. We both consider it an excellent choice for anyone who enjoys Japanese art or poetry.

This is a beautiful book. I am a reader and writer of haiku, and this is my favourite haiku book. Whenever I am having a cup of tea or something and have a few minutes to spare, this is the book I go to. It isn't jam-packed full of haiku, but has a light, airy feel to it. The haiku are categorised under different seasons, and in winter I tend to turn to the warmth of a summer haiku, and in summer the coolness of an autumn or winter one. Each haiku is accompanied by a traditional painting that complements the haiku. Also, each haiku appears in three forms: in Japanese calligraphy, in romanji, and in the translated English version. If you know a little Japanese, then studying the words and kanji in the original Japanese makes for an even richer haiku experience. This is a book that I will keep forever, and I highly recommend it. One of my favourite poems from the book: Nothing is moving, not even a single leaf - awesome summer woods. - Buson (1715 - 1783)

This is a very pretty little book. It is one you can keep coming back to. I will read each season as that season approaches. I was a little disappointed in some of the illustrations that were chosen, though.

For most of my adult life I have loved all kinds of poetry; however, my favorite poem form is Japanese Haiku. I am also a lifetime student of the Japanese martial arts and this is why I have also grown to love Japanese (actually all Asian) poetry. For me, the short poem form of haiku captures a moment in time in which the poet attempts to share with the reader. Even though the basic principle of the haiku form is three lines with the first and third lines being 5 syllables and the middle line being 17 syllables, this is not considered a strict rule. My large selection of books on Asian poetry includes this wonderful book. This book includes an introduction to the Japanese haiku masters followed by some of the best Japanese haiku poems ever written. Each page also has some of the classics in Japanese art. The combination of haiku and art makes this fantastic book a great value.
If you love haiku you will want this wonderful book to be part of your personal collection. In conclusion, this is a beautiful book that lovers of haiku will enjoy. Rating: 5 Stars. Joseph J. Truncale (Author: Haiku Moments: How to read, write and enjoy haiku)

It's a nicely executed book, but if you're looking for Zen clarity as in 'the frog leaps into the splash', this is not it. Honestly, I bought it because of the high praise here, and I'm experiencing a little buyer's remorse because it seems another case of friends giving disproportionate feedback on.


husband is a Buddhist Priest and I work at an art Museum. We both love this little book. Presentation is outstanding, poetry is simple and beautiful. So beautifully Japanese!!!! What I say is totally understated

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