

SNOWY OWL

Bilingual Haiku for Older Children

With a stunning gallery of international art
including eye-popping street art
spooky US government posters
and stirring photographs of US child labour



Gabriel Rosenstock

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<https://artvee.com/dl/sneeuwuil>

Preface

Artwork used in this book of haiku and senryū for older children falls under Public Domain or Fair Use, i.e. artwork that is widely available on the internet, on such platforms as Artvee and Wikiart.

~

Senryū look like haiku but are intended as playful squibs. Indeed, haiku were essentially playful compositions until great depth was added to them by such Japanese grandmasters as Bashō, Chiyo-ni, Issa, Buson, Shiki and Santōka. Later, in the 20th century, haiku masters and haiku organisations came to the fore in dozens of countries throughout the world.

~

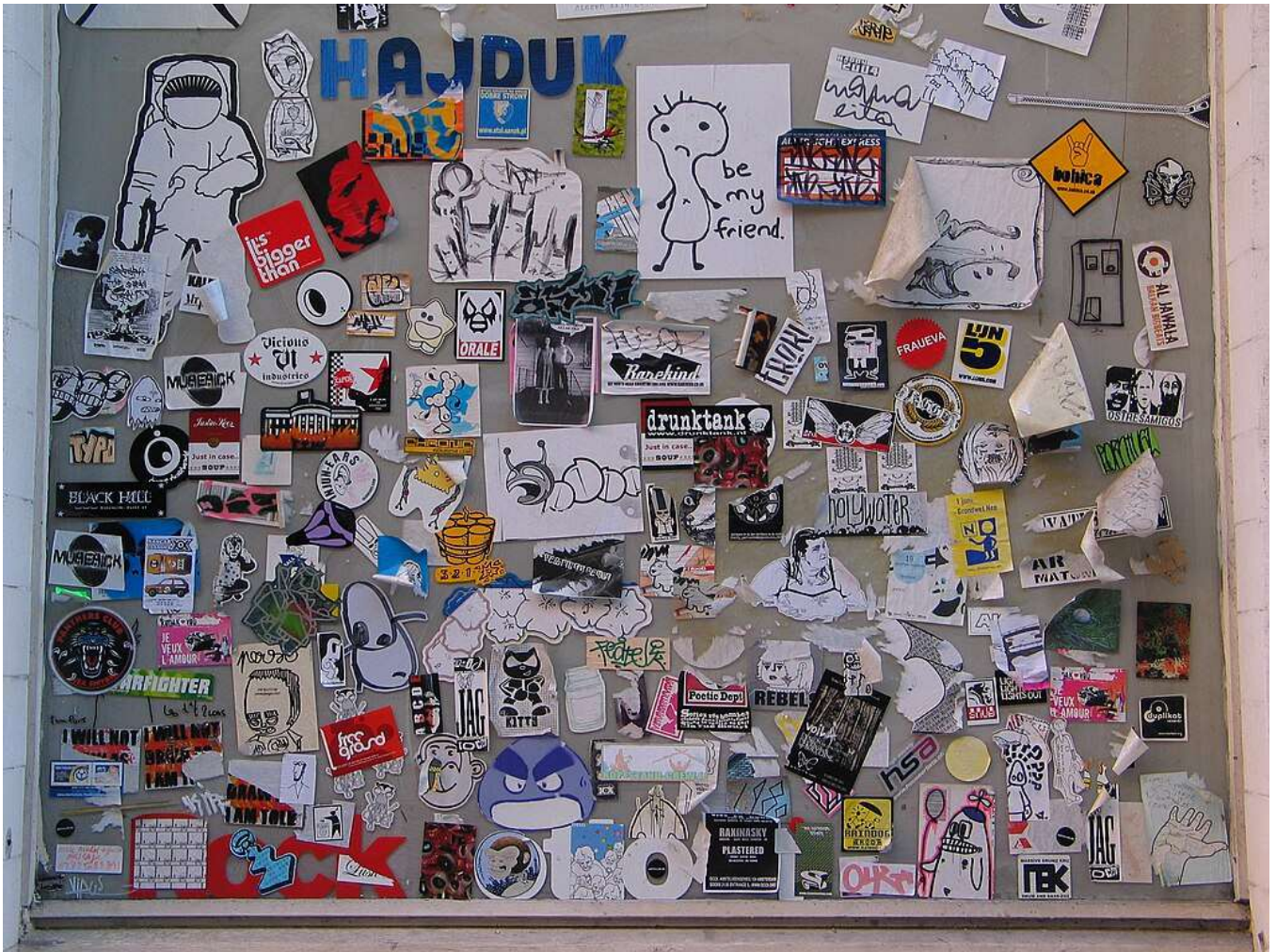
It's best to **dip** into haiku books, such as this one, rather than read them from cover to cover. In fact, haiku is an awakening experience so if you stop reading and then read the same haiku a week later, you might experience something else entirely! So, were you asleep a week ago, or are you asleep now?!

~

Texts in *Snowy Owl* range from the lyrical to the contemplative, the questioning to the absurd, and are suitable for readers 10 -13+.

Cover: Sneeuwuil (1927)

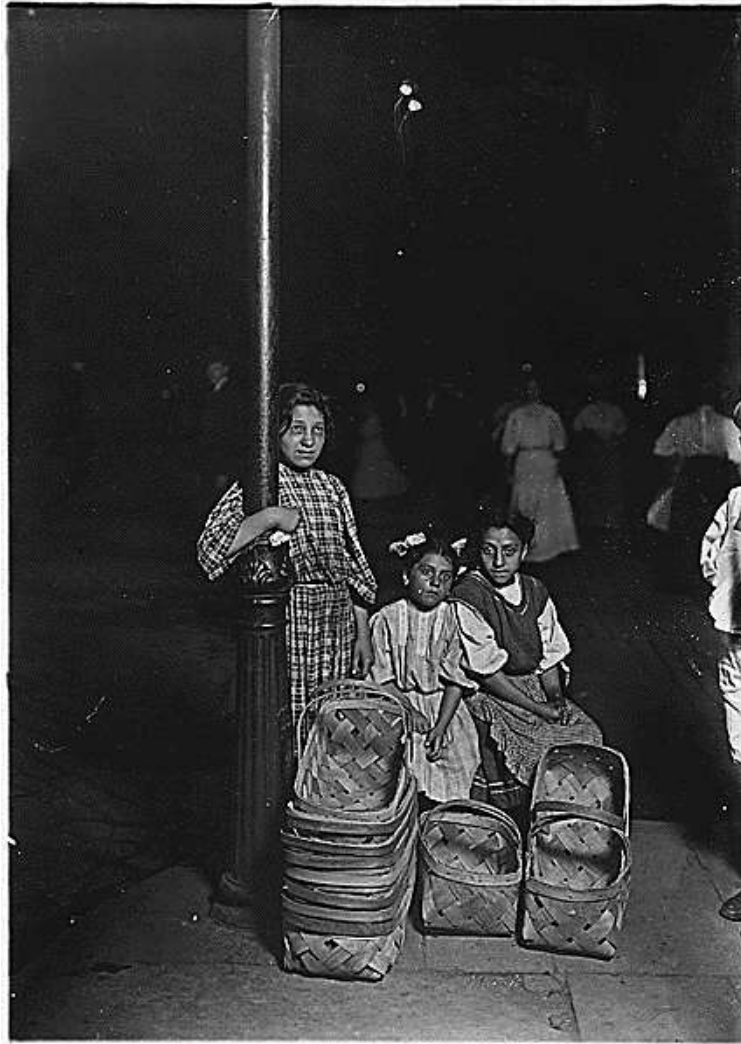
Samuel Jessurun de Mesquita (1868 -1944)



https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/f/f7/Sticker_window_amsterdam01.jpg/1024px-Sticker_window_amsterdam01.jpg

Amstardam
cara á lorg
ag neach éigin

*Amsterdam
a creature is looking
for a friend*



<https://www.archives.gov/files/education/lessons/hine-photos/images/basket-sellers.gif>

ciseáin! ciseáin!
cé a cheannóidh
ár gcuid ciseán?

baskets! baskets!
who will buy
our baskets?

Lewis Hine (SAM /USA)



<https://artvee.com/dl/the-girl-with-the-lizard#00>

hmm . . . cé thusa? arsa an cailín
cé thusa?
a d'fhreagair an laghairt

hmm . . . and you are? asked the girl
and you are?
answered the lizard

Ernst Stückelberg (*An Eilvéis / Switzerland*)



<https://mdl.artvee.com/ft/700522an.jpg>

an chiaróg bheannaithe
cá mbeimis
dá huireasa?

*the sacred beetle
where would we be
without it?*

Edward Julius Detmold (An Bhreatain/ *Britain*)



<https://artvee.com/dl/shepherd-with-two-sheep#00>

aoire dhá chaora . . .
ní raibh sé in ann
idirdealú eatarthu

*there once was a shepherd
with only two sheep . . .
he forgot which was which*

Ernst Schiess (An Eilvéis / Switzerland)



<https://www.archives.gov/files/education/lessons/hine-photos/images/cigar-factory.gif>

brostaígí!
tá na milliúnaithe ag feitheamh . . .
monarcha todóg

hurry up lads!
the millionaires are waiting . . .
cigar factory

Lewis Hine

FORUM

Volume 32 Number 2 April 1994



<https://artvee.com/dl/forum-2#00>

ná fan leis an haiku
tá an haiku
ag fanacht leatsa

*don't wait for a haiku
the haiku is waiting
for you*

U.S. Information Agency



<https://artvee.com/dl/tasse-et-fruits#00>

ag éisteacht
le tae á dhoirteadh
cluas cupáin

*listening
to tea being poured
ear of a cup*

Pierre-Auguste Renoir (An Fhrainc / France)



<https://artvee.com/dl/der-landstreicher-am-wegweiser/#00>

bóthar
do leasa?
ní fios

*the road
to success?
nobody knows!*

Adolf Heinrich Lier (An Ghearmáin / Germany)



[Norma Lawrence is 10 years old and picks from 100 to 150 pounds of cotton a day. Drags the sack which often hold 50 pounds or more before emptied. Lewis W. Hine. See 4569. Location: Comanche County, Oklahoma. | Library of Congress](#)

haigh, mise Norma
aois: a deich
piocaimse 100 punt cadáis sa lá

*hi, I'm Norma, aged 10
my target? a hundred pounds of cotton
a day*

Lewis Hine

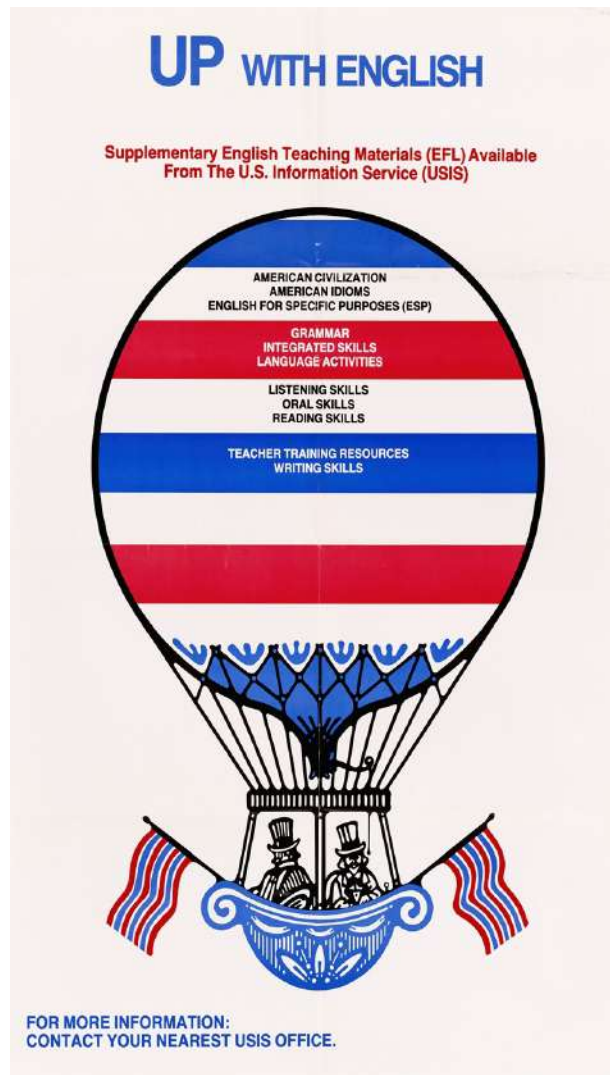


<https://mdl.artvee.com/ft/602576sl.jpg>

ar a shlí abhaile a bhí sé
nuair a lámhachadh é
creabhar

shot
on his way home
woodcock

Cornelis Biltius (An Ísiltír / *Netherlands*)



<https://artvee.com/dl/up-with-english#00>

an Nachuáitlis go deo
an Haváis go deo
an Navachóis go deo

up with Nahuatl
up with Hawaiian
up with Navajo

US Information Agency



<https://www.archives.gov/files/education/lessons/hine-photos/images/shucking-oysters.gif>

scileadh oisrí
sea, a chara . . .
obair mhaslach

shucking oysters
yes, my friend . . .
it sucks

Lewis Hine



https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Brisbane_StreetArt_20210928_085.jpg

scíth á glacadh acu
cangarúnna
an lae amárach

*taking a rest
kangaroos
of the future*

Owen Allen (An Astráil / Australia)



<https://mdl.artvee.com/ft/220448fg.jpg>

stánadh folamh
a chuid línte dearmadta
ag aisteoir

*blank stare
an actor forgets
his lines*

Leopold Kupelwieser (An Ostair / Austria)



<https://mdl.artvee.com/ft/235201fg.jpg>

gabha stáin
ag casúireacht . . .
glór an phiasúin

*hammering
of a tinsmith . . .
cackling pheasant*

Hermann Kern (An Ostair / *Austria*)



<https://www.archives.gov/files/education/lessons/hine-photos/images/picking-berries.gif>

féachann sé níos sine
ná mar atá sé
piocadóir caor

*looking older
than his years
berry picker*

Lewis Hine



https://the-public-domain-review.imgix.net/collections/john-gould-mammals-of-australia/36147506603_f48028c89d_k.jpg?w=600

pé slí
a bhféachann tú air
is domhan bunoscionn é

*whichever way
you look at it
it's an upside down world*

John Gould (An Bhreatain / Britain)



[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Edwards
%27_Dodo.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Edwards%27_Dodo.jpg)

slán
slán leis an saol aoibhinn seo!
an dódó deireanach ar domhan

*goodbye
sweet world, goodbye!
last dodo on earth*

Roelant Savery (Flóndras / *Flanders*)

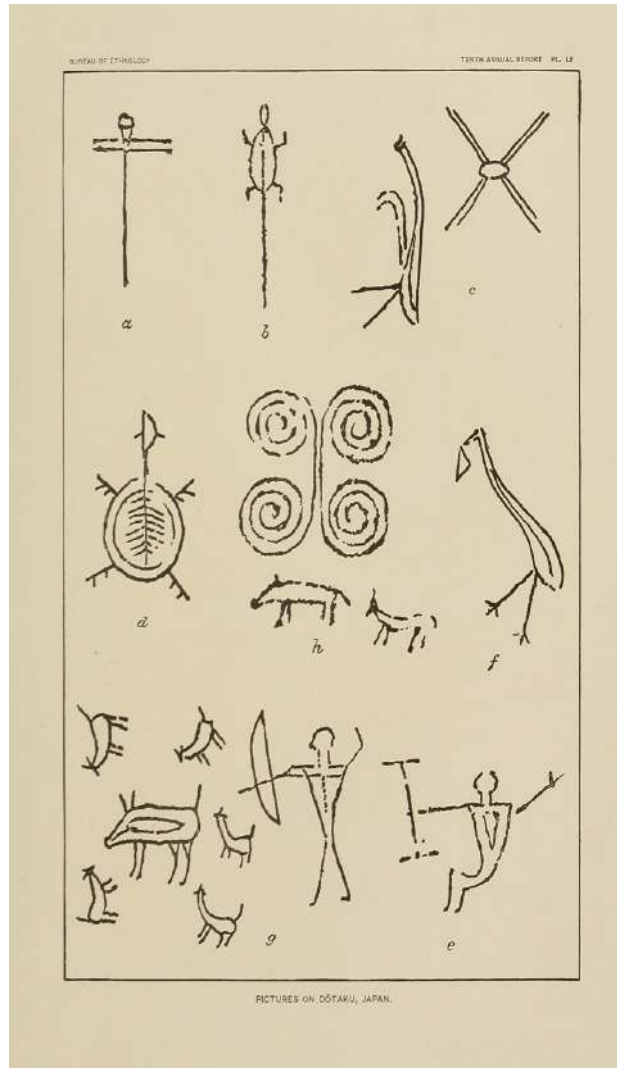


<https://mdl.artvee.com/ft/207005fg.jpg>

obair mhall
obair dhian
diúilicíní a bhailiú

slow work
hard work
gathering mussels

Alfred Guillou (An Fhrainc / France)



<https://mdl.artvee.com/sftb/911730il.jpg>

scriobláil
an bhfuil ciall ar bith
le scriobláil an tsaoil seo?

*squiggles
of this world
what do they mean?*

Garrick Mallery (SAM /USA)



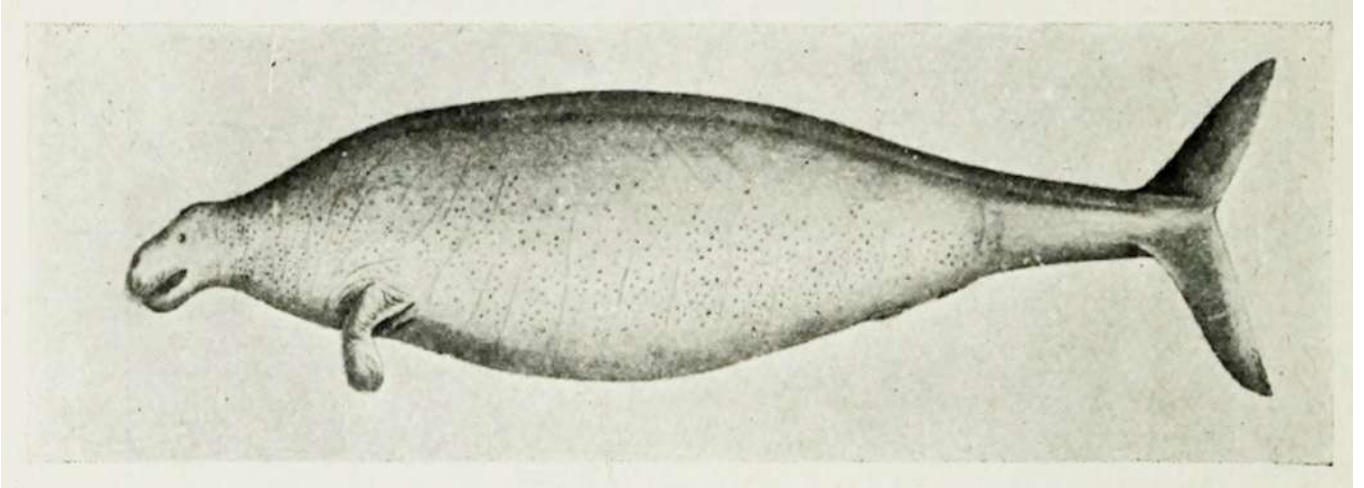
<https://i0.wp.com/unwritten-record.blogs.archives.gov/wp-content/uploads/sites/6/2014/05/142-lh-2546.jpg?ssl=1>

Merilda
is ainm dom
iompróir mónóg

*my name is Merilda **
I carry
cranberries

Lewis Hine

* Merilda is a variant of Muriel, from the Irish 'muir gheal', meaning 'bright sea'.



<https://the-public-domain-review.imgix.net/collections/extinct-animals/stellers-sea-cow.jpeg?fit=max&w=1200&h=850>

imithe
ní thiochfaidh sí ar ais go deo
bó mhara

gone! gone
she's not coming back
sea-cow

Georg Wilhelm Steller (An Ghearmáin / Germany)



https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Black-fronted_Parakeet.jpg

cait a stoll í
an phearaicít uchtdubh
dheireanach

*she met her doom
savaged by cats
black-fronted parakeet*

Georg Forster (An Ghearmáin / Germany)



https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Fran%C3%A7ois-Nicolas_Martinet_-_Histoire_des_oiseaux_-_Huppe_du_Cap_de_bonne_esp%C3%A9rance.jpg

ba bhlasta é
agus é ramhar deirtear
druid húpú

*fat ones were tasty
or so they say
hoopoe starling*

François-Nicolas Martinet (An Fhrainc / France)



<https://the-public-domain-review.imgix.net/collections/extinct-animals/falkland-islands-wolf.jpg?fit=max&w=1200&h=850>

ní raibh aon ghrá
idir é agus na Briotanaigh
faolchú na Malvinas

*no love lost
between them: the British
and Falkland Islands wolves*

Beagle Voyage



https://the-public-domain-review.imgix.net/collections/the-bestiarium-of-alloys-zotl-1831-1887/766px-Das_Steppenzebra.jpg?w=600

bhíodh leathchéad acu
i dtréad: bailithe leo anois atáid –
quagga

*they'd roam
in herds of fifty
now they've vanished – quagga*

Aloys Zötl (An Ostair / *Austria*)

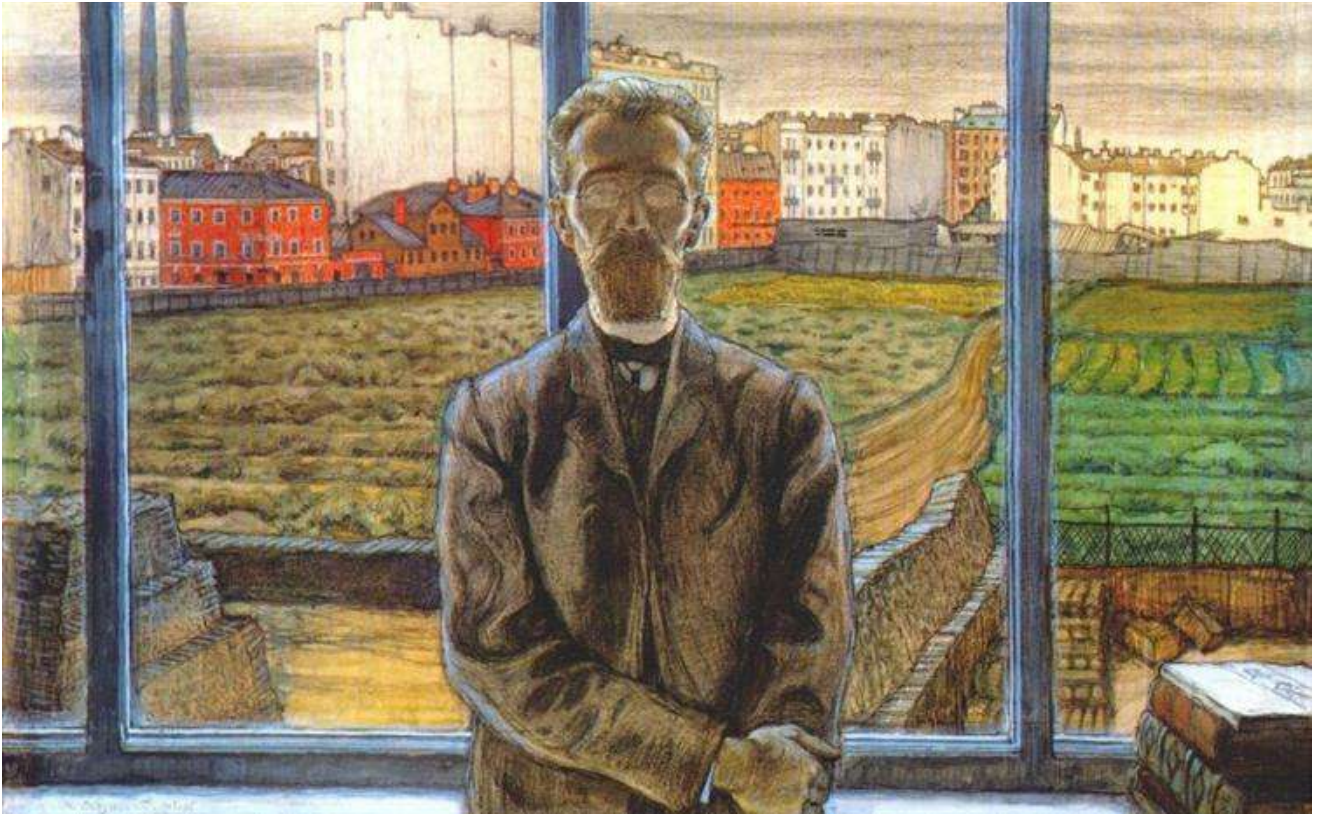


<https://www.archives.gov/files/education/lessons/hine-photos/images/stringing-beans.gif>

pónairí a scileadh?
sea, go deimhin
is mór an spórt é!

*stringing beans?
oh, yeah – honestly
it's great fun!*

Lewis Hine



<https://uploads2.wikiart.org/images/mstislav-dobuzhinsky/man-with-spectacles-portrait-of-the-art-critic-and-poet-constantin-sunnerberg-1906.jpg!Large.jpg>

AR IARRAIDH
dán de chuid
Constantin Sunnerberg

MISSING
a poem by
Constantin Sunnerberg

Mstislav Dobuzhinsky (An Rúis- An Liotuáin /
Russia – Lithuania)



<https://mdl.artvee.com/sftb/206074fg.jpg>

'bhfuil eolas acu ar réaltaí
is ar réaltbhuíonta?
camail

*can they read the stars
and constellations?
camels*

Jean-Baptiste Paul Lazerges (An Fhrainc / France)



[\[Eleven-year-old bakery worker Glenn Dungey. Ellis Report, L.W. Hine.\] Location: \[Oklahoma City, Oklahoma\]. - color digital file from b&w original print | Library of Congress](#)

haigh, mise Glenn
aois? a haon déag
(braithim go bhfuilim céad bliain d'aois)

*hi there, I'm Glenn
age? eleven
(I feel like I'm a hundred)*

Lewis Hine



<https://mdl.artvee.com/sftb/221212fg.jpg>

níl sé éasca
bheith díomhaoin . . .
feirmeoir ar scor

not easy
doing nothing . . .
retired farmer

Gustav Wentzel (An Iorua / Norway)



https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:2022-06-21_%D0%B2%D1%83%D0%BB%D1%96%D1%86%D0%B0_%D0%9A%D1%83%D0%B7%D1%8C%D0%BC%D1%8B_%D0%A7%D0%BE%D1%80%D0%BD%D0%B0%D0%B3%D0%B0_%D0%9C%D0%B5%D0%BD%D1%81%D0%BA.jpg

“cé? Kuzma Chorny?
níor chuala trácht air!”
arsa an leabharlannaí

*“who? Kuzma Chorny?
nope! never heard of him!”
says the librarian*

(An Bhealarúis / *Belarus*)



<https://artvee.com/dl/the-girl-i-left-behind-me#00>

pub i mBostún
seanfhear ag canadh faoin gcailín
a fágadh in Éirinn

*Boston pub
an old man sings
The Girl I Left Behind Me*

Eastman Johnson (SAM / USA)



[\[Eight-year old Jack milking the cows. See Hine Report, Rural Child Labor, August 1915.\] Location: \[Western Massachusetts, Massachusetts\] - color digital file from b&w original print | Library of Congress](#)

8 mbliana d'aois atáim
Jaic is ainm dom
bliteoir

*I'm 8
Jack's the name
milking's my game*

Lewis Hine



<https://artvee.com/dl/cotton-pickers-2#00>

saothrú do dhaoine eile?
cén fáth nach saothróimis
le chéile – dá chéile!

*why work for others?
can't we all work together –
for each other?*

William Aiken Walker (SAM / USA)



<https://mdl.artvee.com/ft/404287mt.jpg>

scáthanna an tráthnóna . . .
cuimhne ar ní
atá ar tí tarlú

*shades of evening . . .
a memory of something
that's about to happen*

Elihu Vedder (SAM /USA)



<https://the-public-domain-review.imgix.net/collections/extinct-animals/black-mamo.jpeg?fit=max&w=1200&h=850>

hoa . . .
ní raibh seans faoin spéir aige
in aghaidh na bhfrancach

**hoa . . .*
not a snowball's chance in hell
against the rats

Johannes Gerardus Keulemans (An Ísiltír /
Netherlands)

*(The name on the Hawaiian island of Molokai for the extinct black mamo)



<https://www.archives.gov/files/education/lessons/hine-photos/images/garment-workers.gif>

tá's agat cad deirtear
an té nach gcuirfidh greim
cuirfidh sé dhá ghreim

*you know what they say
a stitch in time
saves nine*

Lewis Hine



https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Category:Diogenes_in_paintings#/media/File:Bastein-Lepage_Diogenes.jpg

Díoginéal is a lampa
duine cóir fós
á lorg aige

*Diogenes with his lamp
still searching
for an honest man*

Jules Bastien-Lepage (An Fhrainc / France)



<https://mdl.artvee.com/ft/106222ab.jpg>

oscail do chlab –
scaoil amach é! faic!
taibhse an ghairdín

*open your mouth –
spit it out! nothing!
garden ghost*

Paul Klee (An Eilvéis & An Ghearmáin /
Switzerland & Germany)



<https://www.archives.gov/files/education/lessons/hine-photos/images/selling-radishes.gif>

raidisí
raidisí
úra!

*radishes
fresh
radishes!*

Lewis Hine



[https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/b/be/Wolf_Lane - street art - Stormie Mills.jpg/599px-Wolf Lane - street art - Stormie Mills.jpg?20140629025536](https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/b/be/Wolf_Lane_-_street_art_-_Stormie_Mills.jpg/599px-Wolf_Lane_-_street_art_-_Stormie_Mills.jpg?20140629025536)

níl sé in ann
cur suas leis an ngrian . . .
súmaire

*can't stand
the sight of the sun . . .
vampire*

Stormie Mills (An Astráil / Australia)

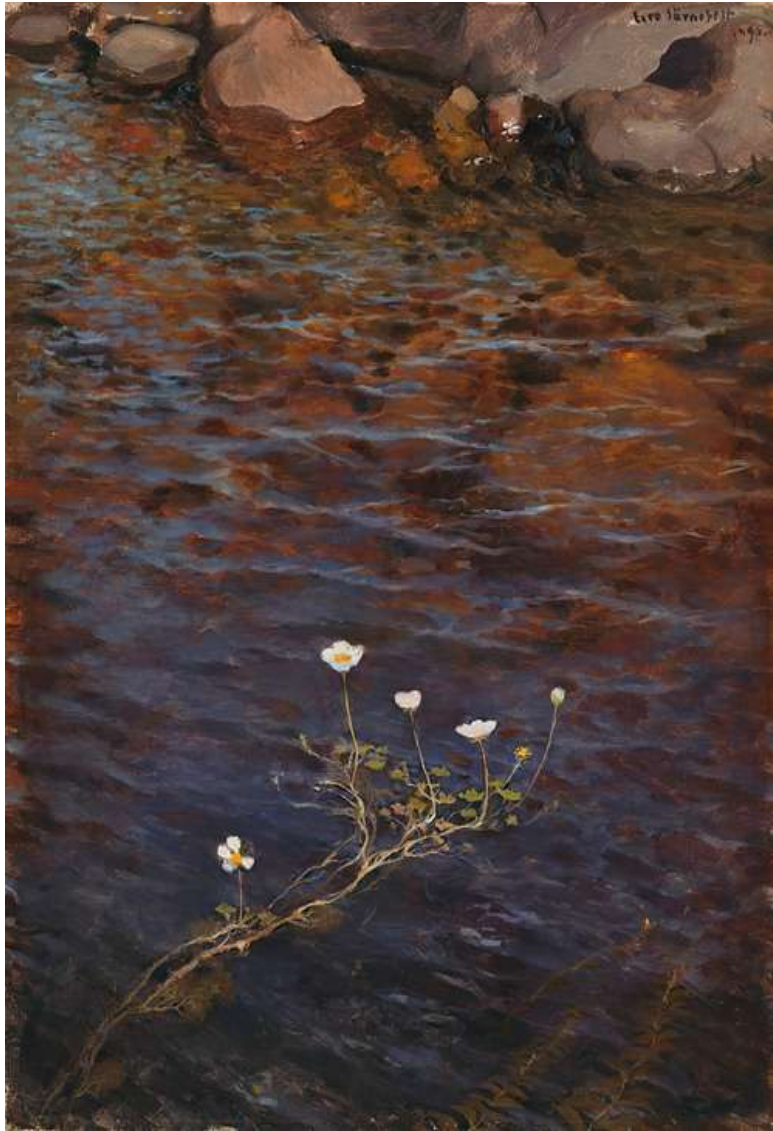


<https://www.archives.gov/files/education/lessons/hine-photos/images/shoe-shine-parlor.gif>

lá
i ndiaidh lae
boladh snasa

*day in
day out
smell of polish*

Lewis Hine



<https://mdl.artvee.com/ft/515971ld.jpg>

cuma an-uaigneach orthu
cosa préacháin
i linn

*so terribly
alone
crowfeet in a pond*

Eero Järnefelt (An Fhionlainn / Finland)



https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/d/dc/People%27s_Republic_of_Cork_Street_Art_-_Margaret_Barry.jpg/1280px-People%27s_Republic_of_Cork_Street_Art_-_Margaret_Barry.jpg

can arís é, a Mhaggie
le do thoil!
The Wild Colonial Boy!

ah, Maggie
sing it again, will you?
The Wild Colonial Boy!

(Corcaigh / Cork)



<https://mdl.artvee.com/sftb/207173fg.jpg>

Cos Eilce
ainm breá!
yabhsa! a leithéid d'ainm!

Elk Foot
great name!
yowza! what a name!

Eanger Irving Couse (SAM / USA)

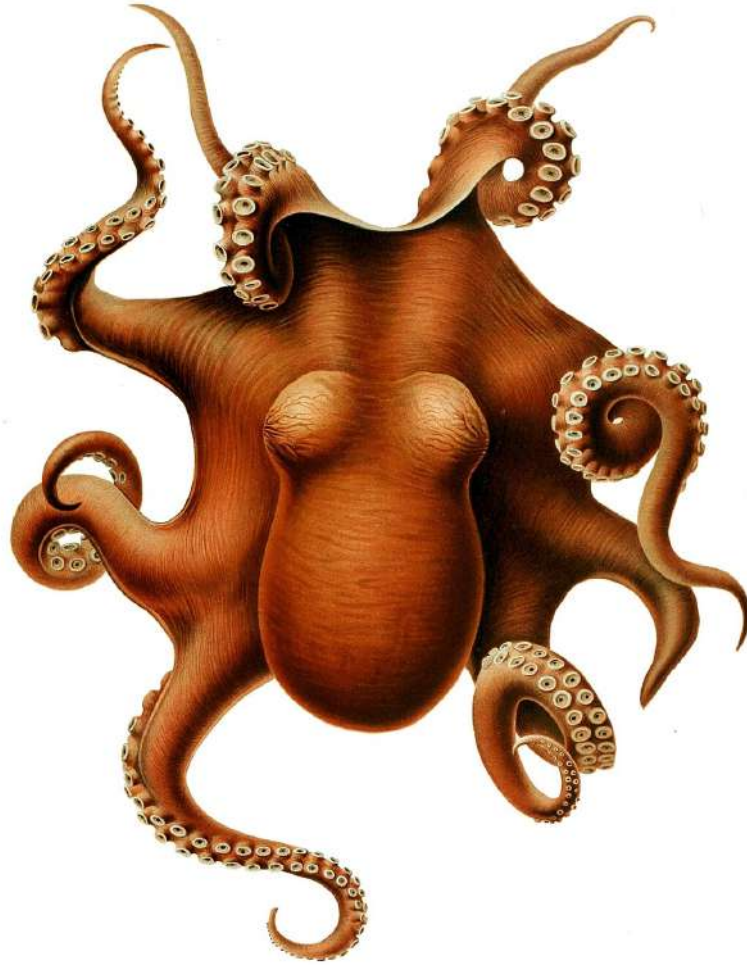


<https://i0.wp.com/unwritten-record.blogs.archives.gov/wp-content/uploads/sites/6/2014/05/102-lh-136.jpg?resize=640%2C891&ssl=1>

síos tollán dorcha leo
aislingí uile
an mhianadóra óig

*down a dark tunnel
all the dreams
of a young miner*

Lewis Hine



https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Category:Drawings_by_Ewald_R%C3%BCbsamen#/media/File:Benthoctopus_levis.jpg

AR IARRAIDH
ochtapas: má fheiceann tú é
glaigh ar an Uisceadán!

ESCAPED
octopus: if spotted
ring Aquarium!

Ewald Rübsamen (An Ghearmáin / Germany)



<https://artvee.com/dl/portrait-of-a-rabbi-with-tallit>

tá sé ag teacht go deas
leis an hata fionnaidh
clúmh aghaidhe an raibí

*it matches
his fur hat nicely
the rabbi's facial hair*

Isidor Kaufmann (An Ungáir / Hungary)



<https://mdl.artvee.com/ft/220888fg.jpg>

Étienne Haro
bhí cáil air tráth as
hmm . . . rud éigin

*Étienne Haro
once famous for
hmm . . . something or other*

Carolus-Duran (An Fhrainc / France)



<https://mdl.artvee.com/sftb/911588il.jpg>

ar fhág tú
babhla bainne amach dó?
an gruagach

*have you left
his milk out for him?
the broonie*

John Bauer (An tSualainn / Sweden)



[Six-year old Henry and three-year old Hilda, beet workers on a Wisconsin farm. See Hine Report, Wisconsin Sugar Beet, July 1915. Location: Wisconsin. | Library of Congress](#)

Henry & Hilda
6 & 3
sách sean chun biatas a phiocadh

*Henry & Hilda
6 & 3 years of age
old enough to pick beet*

Lewis Hine



<https://mdl.artvee.com/ft/107083ab.jpg>

glanann sé an ceo
den aigne
haiku

*it scatters
mental fog
haiku*

Tadeusz Makowski (An Pholainn / *Poland*)



<https://artvee.com/dl/funf-blatter-fallend-dekorative-fullung>

an mbraitheann siad é
nuair a bhuaileann siad an talamh?
duilleoga

*do they feel it
when they hit the ground?
falling leaves*

Klemens Brosch (An Ostair / *Austria*)



https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Category:Storks_in_art_of_Ukraine#/media/File:S_Svetoslavskiy_Landscape_with_Storks.jpg

cúpla storc
froganna aimsithe acu
de réir dealraimh

*a couple of storks
looks like they've found
some frogs*

Serhi Svetoslavsky (An Úcráin / *Ukraine*)



<https://mdl.artvee.com/ft/14973po.jpg>

pocán ar díol
iontaofa stuama
fiosraigh istigh

*billy goat for sale
reliable and sober
inquire within*

Henry Jerome Schile (An Ghearmáin-SAM /
Germany-USA)



https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/7/71/Anne_Frank_Kobra.jpg/800px-Anne_Frank_Kobra.jpg

aoibh uirthi
Anne Frank
aoibh

smiling
Anne Frank
smiling

Eduardo Kobra (An Bhrasaíl / *Brazil*)



<https://mdl.artvee.com/sftb/901383il.jpg>

an choir admhaithe ag an ngadaí
ualach trom bainte
dá chroí

*the thief confesses
a great burden is lifted
from his heart*

Maurice & Edmund Detmold (RA /UK)



<https://mdl.artvee.com/ft/700520an.jpg>

a croí ag dul amach
go dtí an domhan go léir
maintis chrábhaidh

*its heart goes out
to the whole world
praying mantis*

Edward Julius Detmold (An Bhreatain / Britain)



<https://cdn.loc.gov/service/pnp/cph/3b30000/3b39000/3b39300/3b39340r.jpg>

léigh ina thaobh!
cosc ar dhúshaothrú
leanaí!

*read all about it!
child labour
banned!*

Lewis Hine



<https://mdl.artvee.com/ft/210945fg.jpg>

'dul chun cinn mall'
a scríobhann sé ina dhialann
traenálaí toirtísí

'progress is slow'
he writes in his diary
tortoise trainer

Osman Hamdi Bey (An Tuirc / Turkey)



[A Kentucky school. Name and data to be added later if possible. Lewis W. Hine. \[in another handwriting:\] Bush School, Clark Co., Ky. Location: Clark County--Winchester, Kentucky. - color digital file from b&w original print | Library of Congress](#)

scoil in Kentucky
fonn ar na cearca féin
rud éigin a phiocadh suas

*school in Kentucky
even hens
want to pick up something*

Lewis Hine



<https://artvee.com/dl/himalayas-sikkim#00>

ag lorg rianta mo chos
sa sneachta atá sé
yeití

*out there
searching for my footprints
in the snow . . . yeti*

Nicholas Roerich (An Rúis / *Russia*)



<https://mdl.artvee.com/sftb/704260an.jpg>

ookpik! ulchabhán sneachtúil!
cad atá ionat?
labhair!

ookpik! snowy owl!
what are you?
speak!

Archibald Thorburn (Albain/ Scotland)

Iarfhocal / Afterword

Why is this book called *Snowy Owl*? For no other reason than that I very much like the work of Dutch artist Samuel Jessurun de Mesquita.

His wonderful *Orang-Utan* features in another book of haiku for older children on this free platform.

FREE BOOK

Orang-Utan is a free book, as are all books on this platform. Is an orang-utan dependent on money? Does it think about money? Of course not! Has the orang-utan got a bank account? No, he's not mad! D. H. Lawrence called money 'our great collective madness'. Was he right?

There once lived a man called Shūsui Kōtoku. Guess what he said! 'Abolish money!' That's exactly what he said. What happened to him? They executed him, of course. The orang-utans wouldn't have executed him, nor the snowy owls . . . No, siree Bob!

But, you say, 'Hey, Mr Rosenstock! Your head must be in the clouds. I need money to buy myself a new pair of jeans.' Money is important! Is it?

The Sermon on the Mount has a "found haiku":

consider the lilies of the field
they neither toil
nor spin

Must everything be a financial transaction? Maybe you haven't thought much about money? You see, we don't think a lot about things which we all take for granted. One could say that haiku is a way of waking up from this trance and becoming more aware. What's going on? Benjamin Franklin said:

Money has never made man happy, nor will it; there is nothing in its nature to produce happiness. The more of it one has the more one wants.

Was he right? An American journalist, Sydney J. Harris said:

Men make counterfeit money; in many more cases, money makes counterfeit men.

I wanted the book *Orang-Utan* to be free. I wanted it to be completely free of the whole business of money. That is why I decided to publish *Orang-Utan* under the Creative Commons license.

WHAT IS A TÖGRÖG?

In other words, I no longer “own” the haiku in *Orang-Utan*. Nor do I “own” the haiku in this book, *Snowy Owl*. You can do what you like with them. Translate them into Mongolian? Go ahead! I won’t charge you a tögrög. That’s what Mongolian currency is called. The word means ‘a circle’ and *tögrög sar* means ‘a full moon!’

The haiku in *Orang-Utan* came to me spontaneously, from out of the blue. How can I call them “mine”? How can I charge people for something that was gifted to me and which I now, in return, give back? If I charged people for that, I’d be a mug!

<https://www.rawpixel.com/image/7515353/png-sticker-elements>



How many *tögrög* would a consumer need to buy the *tögrög sar*? People have become consumers and their buying patterns are tracked by algorithms. It's a plot!

There's an American TV station and its mantra is CAPITALISE ON IT! I'm going for a walk. Capitalise on it! I'm going to write an ode to a nightingale. Capitalise on it! Excuse me, I'm going to sneeze. Capitalise on it! What a mantra!

Have you heard of Creative Commons? It's been around for 20 years or so and it has licensed over two and a half billion items in that period – freeing writings, artwork and other creations so that people can share them and enjoy them on platforms such as YouTube, Flickr and Wikipedia! (My page on Wikipedia lists a number of haiku and tanka books that are completely free).

Do you think Creative Commons is a good idea? Should I have held on to *Orang-Utan* and *Snowy Owl* as a personal possessions? I looked at de Mesquita's orang-utan, I looked

at his snowy owl, and they said: 'You don't own me, buddy! Don't capitalise on me, please! I want to be free!'

Not all of my books are free. But I might liberate a few more of them!

I think the person who takes a job in order to live – that is to say, for the money – has turned himself into a slave.

Joseph Campbell

How to free oneself from slavery? Firstly, you must ask yourself are you completely free. Really? Are you free from what George Woodcock called *The Tyranny of the Clock*?

Are you free of harmful habits, of gadgets such as smartphones, video games and so on? Do you live in a society where some people's freedom is restricted? You could take the Gandhian path, civil disobedience, and protest against laws or conditions which curtail freedom. This platform has a book about Gandhi for older children. If you feel you are ready for it, download it today:

<https://freekidsbooks.org/walk-with-gandhi/>

Only *you* can say what freedom means to you. Is what Campbell says true? He's implying that we all grow up to become wage slaves! There's more to life than that, surely?

CHILDREN HAVE RIGHTS!

Freedom! Political freedom, cultural freedom, religious freedom – freedom of speech. Why are we talking about such matters here? Are these not adult concerns? No, incorrect. Children have rights as well! Many young people are unaware of their rights. An Indian platform, StoryWeaver which makes available hundreds of free books for children in many

languages, outlines all of your rights as a child: it's called *I Know My Rights* and you can download it free.

Those rights were established and explained by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. One of your rights is that you are entitled to access knowledge; it is not a privilege for the few – you are entitled to the enjoyment and illumination which the arts provide, including haiku! Got it?

If you think a haiku is a harmless description of butterflies, snails, rain, orang-utans, snow or whatever, don't forget that haiku poets in the 1940s, in Japan, were persecuted for their anti-war views.

I have made countless StoryWeaver free books available in Irish, a threatened language, on the Léigh Leat platform:

https://www.leighleat.com/st%C3%B3r_sc%C3%A9alta

Whether I charge for books or give them away for nothing, I'm not writing for money. I'm writing for you! Good idea? Yes. A great philosopher, Arthur Schopenhauer (1788 -1860), explains why:

Writing for money and preservation of copyright are, at bottom, the ruin of literature. It is only the man who writes absolutely for the sake of the subject that writes anything worth writing . . . The best works of great men all come from the time when they had to write either for nothing or for very little pay . . .

In a world which has deified money and commerce, Schopenhauer sounds like he should be locked up!

Giving away a free book asks us all to think of the way the world works. Is there a better way? What do *you* think?

A nation that continues year after year to spend more money on military defence than on programs of social uplift is approaching spiritual doom.

So said Martin Luther King, Jr.

I hope you thoroughly enjoy most of the artwork in *Snowy Owl* (and the artwork in the links given here to free books, such as *Orang-Utan* and *Walk with Gandhi*) as well as the incredible photographs taken by Lewis Hine which help us to see how so many children lived and toiled just over a century ago!



<https://uploads6.wikiart.org/00216/images/lewis-hine/child-laborer-1908.jpg!Large.jpg>

sléacht roimhe, a ghearrchaile
is dia é an meaisín!
sléacht roimhe

*bow down, young girl
the machine is god!
bow down*

A final thought about money. Isn't it a crying shame that the great chronicler of child labour in America, Lewis Hine, died in poverty? What kind of a world was it which sent children out to work, instead of receiving an education and enjoying their hobbies and games? Lewis Hine received death threats for exposing the evil of child labour! What kind of world would allow the person who recorded child labour to die penniless?

Well, all that is history, you say. It doesn't happen anymore! Would you believe me if I said that in this decade, the 2020s, there are at least 160 million child labourers in the world, in the 5-17 age-group?

~

Let's look again at de Mesquita's orang-utan:



The animal is quietly minding his own business, grooming himself, and looks friendlier than a lot of people that I know. Orang-utan is a Malay word: *orang* means 'a person' and *hutan* means 'a forest'.

<https://supportmariusmason.org/portfolio/old-man-of-the-forest/>

Another striking image of 'the old man of the forest' was painted by transgender Marius (Marie) Mason who is serving a 22-year prison sentence for extreme environmental activism. 22 years?! Judicial extremism, perhaps!

ACTIVISM

I know in my heart that you do not wish to see the orang-utan become extinct, or the snowy owl. Do you? Sadly, many of the creatures featured in this book have already become extinct: the dodo, sea cow, black mammoth, black-fronted parakeet, Falkland Islands wolf, hoopoe starling, the quagga. All gone!

cuil chadáin na hAithne
nár chualaís fúithi . . .?
ní hann di níos mó

*the Athens caddisfly
have you not heard . . .?
extinct!*

I wouldn't like to see the snowy owl becoming extinct, or the Inuit word for it, *ookpik*. Would you? Words, languages everywhere, can become extinct, just like animals. As far as I know, *mispoon* is the word for a male snowy owl in Cree and *newish* is the female. Great words! But they could disappear. Easily! We, humans, are guardians of language and guardians of biodiversity (and these important matters are linked.)

We managed to destroy or neglect our environment in the past; so, too, the treasure houses of languages were

neglected or deliberately destroyed. We're doing something, at last, for the environment but the future of endangered languages is very uncertain.

What happens when you read and write haiku? Over time, you become more sensitive, more compassionate, more aware of all life forms on Earth. The world needs activists, to protect endangered species, endangered languages – peaceful, loving, intelligent, responsible activists. Why not become a haiku activist! Or a language activist!

Including Irish-language haiku in *Snowy Owl, Orang-Utan, Walk with Gandhi* and other haiku books for young readers on this platform, might seem to be an unusual thing to do. It's a language unfamiliar to most people on the planet. But I wouldn't be much of a language activist if I excluded the medium of my choice from this book: Irish is the oldest literary language in Europe, after Greek and Latin. One first step in language activism is simply helping to make people aware of the rich tapestry of languages in this world. Good idea?

Why not make a decision, now, to learn another language? It will open up another world to you. Honestly! Which language to pick? Any language! Maybe a micro-language with fewer than a million speakers; or if your ancestors spoke a language other than the language you are speaking today, that would be an obvious choice. A very interesting choice. It might connect you to your ancestors in a very special way!

In 2023, the University of West Virginia decided to stop teaching foreign languages and spend more time on subjects such as forensics. Bad move! Fewer languages? That means fewer windows to the world. Some American universities offer courses in Native American languages. Stanford offers courses in Hawaiian, Cherokee, Navajo, Yup'ik, Lakota, and Nahuatl.

When the Hawaiian language became smothered by English, the ecological wisdom contained in the language began to wither. 2023 saw cataclysmic fires in Hawaii: non-native grasses dried out too quickly, the secret – and sacred – connection to the land was weakened as English, a non-native language, rose to dominance, bringing all of its cultural baggage with it.

Why go back and learn an ancestral language? Why does a long jumper go back? She can't spring forward from where she is. She is not a frog! That's why. She must go back and take a running jump. Going back is the way to the future. To relearn the language of your ancestors could bring you closer to them, closer to your history, your roots.

Language activism has been described as 'noble work' by Ben Okon, an activist for a Nigerian language known as Efik. A world language, such as English, facilitates communication but we should not drift, mindlessly, towards a monocultural, monolingual world. Such a trend would make soulless robots of us all, depriving us of the sounds and rhythms our ancestors shaped to sing a lullaby, whisper a prayer or love poem, utter a proverb, narrate a fable or myth, or explain the meaning and uses of a plant, or the story behind the name of a mountain or lake.

Jacey-Firth Hagen is an activist for a language which most of us probably never heard of: Gwich'in. She says,

Language activism is giving back to my family, peoples, and ancestors. For so long, our indigenous languages were silenced, due to assimilation policies used in attempts such as Indian (Indigenous) Residential Schools to destroy our identities as indigenous peoples. Our languages are a direct example of our identity, who we are, and where we come from—representing our ancestral relationship with the landscape and the abundance of plants and animals that have nurtured us since time immemorial.

It makes sense, doesn't it? A haiku poet should explore our ancestral relationship with the landscape and the indigenous understanding of plants and animals. Indeed, I would love to see a flowering of haiku in the endangered languages of the world.

William Fanene is another language activist:

I am trying to facilitate social change through daily marketing campaigns aimed at preserving the Samoan language, particularly to those of Samoan heritage living outside of Samoa.

OOKPIK

Our cover artist for *Orang-Utan* and *Snowy Owl*, Samuel Jessurun de Mesquita, was a Holocaust victim. Was de Mesquita aware of the significance of the *ookpik* – the snowy owl – in Inuit culture? One of the duties of the *ookpik* is to gather the souls of the dead and bring them safely to the spirit world before the break of day.



(Wikimedia Commons)

A photo of Samuel Jessurun de Mesquita, in happier times. Samuel's pet name was Sampie. This photo of a smiling Sampie was taken by his brother, Joseph.

Samuel's wife was also murdered by the Nazis, as was his son, Jaap. This is a portrait which his father made of Jaap in 1915:

<https://mdl.artvee.com/ft/902431il.jpg>



Guide us, ookpik, guide us!

END

Gabriel Rosenstock is one of the most original, untypical and inventive writers/thinkers/poets in the world.

World Haiku Review

Ducks in Search of the Moon:

<https://thehaikufoundation.org/omeka/items/show/1395>

Stillness of Crows:

https://www.amazon.co.uk/Stillness-Crows-Gabriel-Rosenstock/dp/1724919261/ref=sr_1_1?crid=1WMCY7L1L5AQ5&keywords=Gabriel+Rosenstock&qid=1680708881&srefix=gabriel+rosenstock%2Caps%2C193&sr=8-1

Fluttering their way into my head: an exploration of haiku for young people

https://www.amazon.co.uk/Fluttering-their-way-into-head/dp/1782010882/ref=sr_1_4?keywords=Gabriel+Rosenstock&qid=1680708949&sr=8-4

Tea wi the Abbot

Bilingual selection of haiku by John McDonald,
in Scots and Irish

<https://www.litriocht.com/t%C3%A1irge/tea-wi-the-abbot/>

Snow/ Sneachta: the snow haiku of Issa

<https://www.ebay.com/itm/385188734879?chn=ps&mkevt=1&mkcid=28>

A Sweater for the Tayfel:

Bilingual haiku in response to artwork
by Issacher Ber Rybek (Ukraine)
(Buttonhook Press, 2022)

<https://ojarart.com/wp-content/uploads/Rosenstock.6-x-9-inch-15.24-x-22.86-cm.pdf>

Eye of the Fish:

Bilingual haiku in response to photographs
by Debiprasad Mukherjee

<https://ojalart.com/buttonhook-press2023-chapbook-seriesmixed-forms-haigagabriel-rosenstock-english-irish-haikudebiprasad-mukherjee-photographyeye-of-the-fisha-collaboration/>



(Photo: Jim Berkeley)

Gabriel Rosenstock in Smock Alley Theatre, Dublin, on Thursday, 17 November, 2022 where he adjudicated **Duais Bashō** and presented awards to prize winners. **Duais Bashō** (The Bashō Prize) is a joint venture between IMRAM, the Irish-language literature festival, and Poetry Ireland / Éigse Éireann, the national poetry organisation. This annual competition is open to haiku in Irish or English from schoolchildren on the island of Ireland.