

# The Marianne Bluger Book and Chapbook Awards

## Winners 2026

### Judges' Comments

We were looking for haiku and related forms that ring true; a book or chapbook that demonstrates coherence and flow; and a book design that enhances the poet's work. A tall order, as all of these features work together to engage a reader.

### **BOOKS:**

So many of the books shared excellence in all categories: haiku, arrangement, and design. This made our selection of the winners even more challenging, and therefore more books are recognized this year.

#### First Prize (shared):

Gary Hotham, *Our Backs to the Wind: Selected Haiku of Gary Hotham* (Brooks Books, 2025)

Debbie Strange, *Random Blue Sparks* (Snapshot Press, 2024)

#### Second Prize:

Chuck Brickley, *downhill home* (Snapshot Press, 2025)

#### Third Prize:

Marco Fraticelli, *Slowly Turning* (Yarrow Press, 2024)

#### Honourable Mentions:

Maxianne Berger, *you are here* (Yarrow Press, 2025)

benedict grant, *winterizing* (Red Moon Press, 2024)

Elliot Nicely, *sine qua non* (Red Moon Press, 2024)

Roland Packer, *no heroic measures* (Red Moon Press, 2024)

Sarah Paris, *for the birds* (Red Moon Press, 2024)

Crystal Simone Smith, *Runagate: Songs of the Freedom Bound* (Duke University Press, 2025)

### **CHAPBOOKS:**

The chapbooks were outstanding in design. Most were hand-made, and some included artwork and photography.

First Prize:

Marco Fraticelli, *Happy Birthday* (King's Road Press, 2025)

Second Prize:

Marianne Paul, *the drift from here to where* (paper heron press, 2025)

Third Prize:

Beth Skala, *Dear Sir or Madam: Poems From a 1970s Office* (2025)

Honourable Mentions:

Karin Hedetniemi, *Ethereal Winds* (2025)

Angela Leuck, *Faded Blue Iris* (Yarrow Press, 2025)

Jan Stretch, *Crepe Paper Sky* (2025)

It was an honour to judge this year's submissions for the Marianne Bluger Awards. Thank you to all who entered the contest—for your willingness to share your creativity in a world so in need of the restorative power of beauty.

Terry Ann Carter & Philomene Kocher (Judges)