

First Place (\$100)

far from home
the darkness
between fireflies

*John Ward Hocter
Columbus, Ohio*



Second Place (\$50)

premature unit -
beyond the window
peach blossoms

*Glauco Saba
Soul Beach, the Netherlands*

Third Place (\$25)

evening silence
how lightly snow settles
on the war graves

*Mark Miller
Shoalhaven Heads, Australia*

Honourable Mentions

(in random order)

March wind
the gate off its hook
all night

*C.X. Turner
Birmingham, United Kingdom*



moving mom
a boxful of memories
too heavy to lift

*Helen Ogden
Pacific Grove, CA*

autumn bridge
all those encounters
on the other side

*Sebastian Chrobak
Bielsko-Biała, Poland*

poppy in bloom
the buzz of the bee
turns red

*Anna Sany
Botosani, Romania*

crows in snow..
more black spots
on dad's lungs

*Cezar Ciobica
Botosani, Romania*



almost dusk –
a heron's wings slice
through the silence

*Cristian Matei
Bucharest, Romania*



Judges Notes:



First Place: far from home

The haiku conveys a quiet homesickness, emphasizing emotional and perceptual distance over physical separation. Its imagery moves from inner feeling to the natural world, where fireflies provide fleeting sparks of hope amid darkness. Yet the poem highlights the spaces between them, underscoring absence, separation, and emptiness, contrasting brief light with surrounding stillness.

Second Place: premature unit

The haiku expresses hope and resilience amid transition, with the window as a threshold between fragile new life and reassuring nature, where blooming peach blossoms evoke growth and quiet hope. It reflects a delicate and subtle optimism where transformation unfolds patiently toward maturity.

Third Place: evening silence

The haiku opens with lush summer-forest imagery, evoking peace, vitality, and the soothing melodies of birdsong, but this tranquility is shattered by warplanes, highlighting how violence disrupts nature's harmony and contrasts enduring beauty with human conflict.

HMs:

Intertwined with nature, these haiku explore the complexities of human experience, conveying honesty, bravery, and powerful expressions that flow fluidly from reflections on the past to the uncertainties of the future.

Our 2026 Judge:

Hifsa Ashraf is an award-winning poet based in Pakistan, author of 6 individual and 4 collaborative books. She received the Touchstone Award for Individual Poems (2021) and was shortlisted in 2022. Her poetry collection *Her Fading Henna Tattoo* earned a HM in the Touchstone (2020) and the Haiku Society of America Merit Book Award (2021). Her latest collaborative collection, *Beyond Emptiness*, is co-authored with Jacob D. Salzer and Nicholas Klacsanzky.

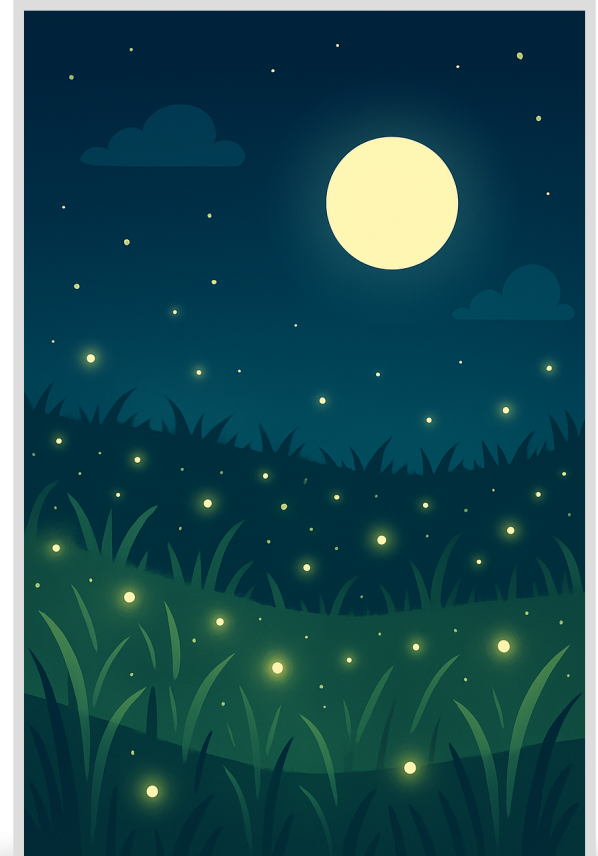
The Betty Drevniok Award

The award was established in 2002 by Haiku Canada in memory of Betty Drevniok, a past President.

Contest coordination, & layout by Pearl Pirie. Cover image by Fafa Bakhtyari. Interior images by Mostafa El Turkey.

Submission Guidelines: Details at www.haikucanada.org

The Betty Drevniok Awards 2026



"between fireflies"

