

The Betty Drevniok Award Results 2011

First Prize

folding sheets
the weight of a flag
still in my arms
Earl Keener
Bethany, West Virginia

Second Prize

snowbound:
the rosebushes
up to their hips
Francine Banwarth
Dubuque, Iowa

Third Prize

once before you go
receding snowbank —
tell me your secrets
Barry George
Philadelphia, PA

Honourable Mention

snowstorm --
you've gained at least a pound
snowman!
Diane Descôteaux
Saint-Nicéphore, Quebec

tidy kitchen
knives all hidden
but handy
Paris Elizabeth Sea
Beaconsfield, Quebec

a bikini top
pinned to the park noticeboard
end of summer
Naomi Beth Wakan
Gabriola, British Columbia

side by side
in the hammock
two unread books
Lois Harvey
Ottawa, Ontario

a red maple leaf

that forgets to fall...
he fingers his shrapnel scar
Scott Mason
Chappaqua, New York

setting off beeps
in my smoke detector
a daddy longlegs
Ellen Cooper
Montreal, Quebec

to that scythe moon
looming over the hospice
his tranquil yielding
Guy Simser
Kanata, Ontario

stargazer lilies
my quantum
of time
Roland Packer
Hamilton, Ontario

Judge's Comments

In the first place poem the weight of the folded sheet is a physical reminder of a loved one's death. Eleven words hold the weight of sorrow, the weight of love. The sheets hold memory too, perhaps that of lovemaking which may have produced a child, or the intimacies of a beloved partner. Folding, such a neat word is almost military. Something might be made small and therefore manageable.

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I like the way the second place poem asks us, with its pun, to look for real intention. Only seven words to suggest that the rosebush is to us, so to speak: we too can get physically and metaphorically "up to our hips".

A rosebush could be in trouble if there is not enough, or too much snow. Too much or too little of anything can be dangerous for us too. Again, so few words to say something perfect.

The 3rd place haiku is very Issa-like; we talk to our plants, why not to a snowbank? It has spent all winter growing and witnessing. What sorrows has it been witness to, what joy? How did it manage to survive so long without being shovelled or melting, and how did we survive our winter, our existence? So silent the snow, but we are curious about what it would tell us if it could.

Some of the honourable mentions inspire wonder, others evoke playfulness and whimsy, and still others take on a more serious or ominous tone. All of these poems portray images and moments indicative of wonderful haiku.

Thank you for the honour of judging this contest. As a souvenir I have a packet of haiku to enjoy over and over that includes many more good haiku. Thank you poets. for allowing me to have these poems in hand.

Claudia Coutu Radmore

President of KaDo Ottawa, and editor of the Haiku Canada Anthology, Claudia Coutu Radmore's poems have been published internationally. Her most recent books of Lyric poems are *a minute or two/without remembering* and *Accidentals*.