THE TEACHERS & WRITERS

HANDBOOK

of

POETIC FORMS

Edited by Ron Padgett

The Teachers & Writers Handbook of Poetic Forms

Edited by Ron Padgett

Teachers & Writers Collaborative
New York

The Teachers & Writers Handbook of Poetic Forms

Copyright © 1987 by Teachers & Writers Collaborative. All rights reserved. Printed in the United States of America. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or otherwise, without prior written permission of the publisher.

Teachers & Writers Collaborative
5 Union Square West
New York, N.Y. 10003

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data
The Teachers & writers handbook of poetic forms.

Summary: A reference guide to various forms of poetry with entries arranged in alphabetical order. Each entry defines the form and gives its history, examples, and suggestions for usage.

1. Poetics. 2. Versification. 3. Literary form.
[1. Poetics 2. Versification 3. Literary form.]
I. Padgett, Ron. II. Teachers & Writers Collaborative.
III. Title: Teachers and writers handbook of poetic forms.
PN1042.T43 1987 808.1 87-6455
ISBN 0-915924-24-2
ISBN 0-915924-23-4 (pbk.)

Printed by Philmark Lithographics, New York, N.Y.
Eleventh printing

The Teachers & Writers Handbook of Poetic Forms

Acknowledgments

Teachers & Writers Collaborative receives funds from the New York State Council on the Arts and the National Endowment for the Arts.

T&W programs and publications are also made possible by funding from American Broadcasting Companies, Inc., American Stock Exchange, Columbia Committee for Community Service, Consolidated Edison Company, Fund for Poetry, General Electric Foundation, Herman Goldman Foundation, KIDS Fund, Long Island Community Foundation, Mobil Foundation, Inc., Morgan Guaranty Trust Company, Morgan Stanley, New York Telephone, The New York Times Company Foundation, Henry Nias Foundation, Pisces Foundation, Primerica Foundation, Helena Rubinstein Foundation, and The Scherman Foundation.

T&W extends special gratitude to Mr. Bingham's Trust for Charity for its extraordinary commitment to fostering writing and creative thinking skills in children.

The editor wishes to thank Gary Lenhart, Bernadette Mayer, Chris Edgar, and Nancy Shapiro for their editorial help.

Gratitude is also due to the following publishers and writers who permitted T&W to use selections from their work:

Event poem from *Assemblages, Environments, Happenings* by Allan Kaprow, published by Harry N. Abrams, Inc. All rights reserved.

"Tooting My Horn on Duty" excerpted from *So Going Around Cities: New and Selected Poems 1958-1979*, copyright © 1980, 1987 by Ted Berrigan and The Estate of Ted Berrigan, reprinted here by permission of Blue Wind Press, P.O. Box 7175, Berkeley, CA 94707.

"Ode to the Watermelon" reprinted from *Neruda and Vallejo: Selected Poems*, Beacon Press, 1971. Copyright © 1970 by Robert Bly, reprinted by his permission.

"The Painter" from *Some Trees* and "To a Waterfowl" from *Locus Solus 2* (1961) reprinted by permission of Georges Borchardt, Inc. and John Ashbery. Copyright © 1956 by John Ashbery (*Some Trees*); copyright © 1961 by John Ashbery ("To a Waterfowl").

此为试读,需要完整PDF请访问: www.ertongbook.com

"Ounce code orange" and "of about" by Clark Coolidge in *Space* reprinted by permission of the author.

"Silencio" by Eugen Gomringer reprinted from *An Anthology of Concrete Poetry*, Something Else Press, by permission of the author.

"Who are you, little i" by E.E. Cummings, copyright © 1963 by Marion Morehouse Cummings. Reprinted from *Complete Poems 1913-1962* by E.E. Cummings by permission of Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc.

Excerpt from "Jumping the Gun on the Sun" in *White Shroud* by Allen Ginsberg, copyright © 1986 by Allen Ginsberg. Reprinted by permission of Harper & Row, Publishers, Inc.

"Astronaut Jim Lovell..." by John Giorno used by permission of the author.

"The 1913 Massacre" by Woody Guthrie copyright © 1961 by Sanga Music Inc. Used by permission of Sanga Music Inc. All rights reserved.

"The Story of White Man Leading Viet Cong Patrol" by Eric Torgersen reprinted from *Quickly Aging Here: Some Poets of the 1970s* (Doubleday Anchor Books, 1969) edited by Geof Hewitt. Reprinted by permission of Geof Hewitt.

"Feu rouge" by André Duhaime and translation by Dorothy Howard, from *Haiku: anthologie canadienne / Canadian Anthology* edited by Dorothy Howard and André Duhaime, copyright © 1985 Les éditions Asticou enrg. Used by permission of the author and translator.

Excerpt from a renga by Susanne Hobson, Amy Ginnett, Karen Watson, and Barbara Watson, copyright © 1987 by the authors. Used by permission of the authors.

"Asatsuyu ni" by Chusaburo Ito and translation by David Aylward from *Paper Doors: An Anthology of Japanese-Canadian Poetry* published by Coach House Press, copyright © 1981. Used by permission of the author and the translator.

"In the inlaid box" by Carolyn Kizer, from *Midnight Was My Cry: New and Selected Poems*, published by Doubleday, copyright © 1971 by Carolyn Kizer. Used by permission of the author.

Excerpt from "Cherry-Strewn Street" by Tadashi Kondo, Kristine Young, Sherry Reniker, Robert Reed, Sachiko Karasawa, and Kazuyoshi Hirao, copyright © 1987 by the authors. Used by permission of the authors.

"Her name forgotten..." by Ross Kremer, from *Modern Haiku*, XV, 2, copyright © 1984 by Modern Haiku. Used by permission of the author.

Excerpt from "Ripe Cherry" by Elizabeth Searle Lamb, William J. Higginson, Penny Harter, and Richard Bodner from *Renga from the Santa Fe Renga Roundup*, copyright © 1987 by the authors. Used by permission of the authors.

"Squinting" by Alan Pizzarelli, from *Hike*, copyright © 1984 by Alan Pizzarelli. Used by permission of the author.

"Before giving me" by Sydell Rosenberg, from *Wind Chimes*, no. 12, copyright © 1984 by Wind Chimes. Used by permission of the author.

"The sun goes down – " by Cor van den Heuvel, from *dark*, copyright © 1982 by Cor van den Heuvel. Used by permission of the author.

"Bass" by Nicholas A. Virgilio, from *American Haiku*, copyright © 1963 by James Bull. Used by permission of the author.

"What was I thinking" by Rod Willmot, from *The Ribs of Dragonfly*, Black Moss Press, copyright © 1984 by Rod Willmot. Used by permission of the author.

"Light" by Ruth Yarrow, from *Frogpond*, IX, 4, copyright © 1986 by Haiku Society of America. Used by permission of the author.

Bob Holman's "Rock 'n' Roll Mythology," with music by Vito Ricci, was released as a single by *Words on 45* in 1981. The text appears in *PANIC *DJ: A Performance Text* by Bob Holman published by VRI Theatre Library. Reprinted by permission of the author.

"The Span of Life" by Robert Frost reprinted from *Collected Poems* by permission of Henry Holt & Co.

Two poems from *Lunes* by Robert Kelly. Reprinted by permission of the author.

"Marriage" from *The Happy Birthday of Death* by Gregory Corso copyright © 1960 by New Directions Publishing Corporation. Reprinted by permission of New Directions Publishing Corporation.

"In a Station of the Metro" from *Personae* by Ezra Pound copyright 1926 by Ezra Pound. Reprinted by permission of New Directions Publishing Corporation and Faber & Faber Ltd.

"Do not go gentle into that good night" by Dylan Thomas in *The Poems of Dylan Thomas*. Copyright © 1952 by Dylan Thomas. Reprinted by permission of New Directions Publishing Corporation.

"The Artist" in *Pictures from Brueghel* by William Carlos Williams copyright © 1962 by William Carlos Williams. First published in the *New Yorker*. Reprinted by permission of New Directions Publishing Corporation.

"Burning the small dead" from *The Back Country* by Gary Snyder copyright © 1968 by Gary Snyder. Reprinted by permission of New Directions Publishing Corporation.

"Letter" from *Montage of a Dream Deferred* by Langston Hughes. Copyright © 1951 by Langston Hughes. Copyright renewed 1979 by George Houston Bass. Reprinted by permission of Harold Ober Associates Incorporated.

"40-Love" in *After the Merrymaking* by Roger McGough reprinted by permission of A D Peters & Co. Ltd.

"Sonnet XVII" from *The Sonnets* by Ted Berrigan reprinted by permission of United Artists Books.

"War Gods' Horse Song" by Frank Mitchell reprinted from *Technicians of the Sacred*, edited by Jerome Rothenberg. Copyright © 1968, 1985 by Jerome Rothenberg. Reprinted by permission of the University of California Press.

"Like attracts like" by Emmett Williams from *An Anthology of Concrete Poetry* edited by Emmett Williams reprinted by permission of the author.

"Dear Joanne" from *Ring of Bone* by Lew Welch reprinted by permission of Donald Allen.

"Rondel" by Frank O'Hara in *The Collected Poems of Frank O'Hara* reprinted by permission of Alfred A. Knopf, Inc. Copyright © 1971 by Maureen Granville-Smith, Administratrix of the Estate of Frank O'Hara.

"Evil," "Morning After," and "As Befits a Man" in *Selected Poems of Langston Hughes* by Langston Hughes. Copyright © 1959 by Langston Hughes, reprinted by permission of Alfred A. Knopf, Inc.

The editor regrets that he was unable to locate Mr. Firman Houghton to request permission to use his poem "Mr. Frost Goes South to Boston."

Preface

We began to compile *The Handbook of Poetic Forms* for secondary school students and their teachers, but as we went along we realized it could be useful for anyone interested in learning about poetic forms.

The *Handbook* entries were prepared by creative writers who have taught poetry writing to young people, mostly in the Teachers & Writers Collaborative program. These writers know how important it is to present their material in a clear, friendly, and straightforward manner, without getting mired in the technicalities that interest specialists more than young people. Part of the very reason for this book – essentially a poetics reference book for young people and novice writers – is that nothing like it exists.

The *Handbook* contains seventy-four entries by nineteen writers. There was much discussion as to which forms to include and which not. We don't claim to have made the perfect selection; we doubt that there is such a thing. Our ultimate criterion was whether or not a young person might enjoy learning about a form by using it. And so, we include some forms rarely (if ever) listed in poetics handbooks, such as the lune, and we omit some traditional forms, such as the aubade. We've thrown in a couple of old forms that have fallen into disuse, with the hope that they might be re-explored. Our intention was not to compile an encyclopedia, but rather a handbook that people would enjoy using both as a reference book and as a guide for writing.

We have also been flexible in our notion of what "form" is. In fact, we include entries that are not forms at all. In some cases they are *genres* (types) of writing, such as satire; in others they are *methods* of writing, such as collaboration (two or more people writing together). We include these other entries because we feel they help create a better sense of what it is like to use the various forms. And, as you will see, some of the forms don't have strict rules.

We're reminded of the poet who once received a letter congratulating him on his mastery of particular form, as described in a poetics handbook. The poet had neither heard of the form nor could he find other examples of poems in that form. He concluded that the handbook editor had read his poem, "seen" a form in it, given the form a name, and then used the poem as an *example* of that form! It's nice to learn that not only do you fit into a literary tradition, you *are* the tradition.

The entries in this handbook are arranged in alphabetical order. Each entry defines the form, summarizes its origins and history, provides examples (where practical), and gives advice on how to write in that form.

Directly below each entry heading is a phonetic spelling of the heading. For instance,

Pantoum
("pan-TOOM")

The syllable in capital letters is the one that gets accented. Keep in mind that although the phonetic spelling is fairly accurate, it is highly simplified and in some cases not so precise as it would be in a good dictionary.

●

Many entries are cross-referenced whenever they have enough in common to make it worthwhile to think about them in relation to each other. And so, for instance, at the end of the entry for Couplet, it says, "See also: FOOT, LINE, EPIGRAM, and SONNET."

Some forms and techniques are discussed under other headings. For a list of these, see Appendix A. For further reading on the various forms, consult the Bibliography.

Also included (Appendix B) is a list of authors mentioned in the *Handbook*, giving their dates and a brief identification.

There are several good reference books on poetics (see Bibliography). The best is the *Princeton Encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics,* edited by Alex Preminger. It is an outstanding piece of work, but its detail and high level of scholarship make it unsuitable for the average young person or novice writer.

The editor would like to thank the writers who helped prepare the *Handbook*: Reed Bye (ballad, Skeltonic verse, tercet), Jack Collom (lune, parody), Harry Greenberg (abstract poem, alphabet poem), Penny Harter (renga), Geof Hewitt (alliteration, assonance, found poem, limerick, rhyme, rhythm, spoonerism, syllabic verse, word play), William J. Higginson (cinquain, haiku, tanka, renga, senryu), Roland Legiardi-Laura (rap, satire), Gary Lenhart (epistle, line, lyric poem, stanza), Geri Lipschultz (ode), Mary Logue (elegy, ghazal, villanelle), Bernadette Mayer (allegory, canzone, collaboration, epic, epigram, macaronic verse, pastoral poem, quatrain, sonnet, terza rima), Suzie Mee (event poem, ritual poem), Susan Mernit (chant, insult poem), Richard Perry (blues poem), Mark Statman (ballade, canto, concrete poem, eclogue, madrigal, projective verse), Anne Waldman (rondeau, sestina, performance poem, triolet, villanelle), Jeff Wright (couplet, list poem), Bill Zavatsky (blank verse, foot, free verse, metaphor), and Alan Ziegler (prose poem, occasional poem). The editor prepared the entries for the acrostic, bouts-rimés, cento, calligram, epitaph, epithalamium, imitation, light verse, nonsense verse, ottava rima, and pantoum. All poems quoted without an author's or translator's name under them are by the entry's author.

If you have any suggestions for future editions of the *Handbook*, please feel free to send them to Teachers & Writers Collaborative.

此为试读,需要完整PDF请访问: www.ertongbook.com

Hail Muse! et cetera.
—*Byron*

Contents

Acknowledgments ..... *v*
Table of Figures ..... *x*
Preface ..... *xi*

Poetic Forms
Abstract Poem 1 • Acrostic 5 • Allegory 7 • Alliteration 9 • Alphabet Poem 12 • Assonance 15 • Ballad 17 • Ballade 21 • Blank Verse 24 • Blues Poem 28 • Bouts Rimés 31 • Calligram 33 • Canto 37 • Canzone 39 • Cento 41 • Chant 44 • Cinquain 48 • Collaboration 50 • Concrete Poem 52 • Couplet 57 • Eclogue 60 • Elegy 62 • Epic 65 • Epigram 67 • Epistle 70 • Epitaph 72 • Epithalamium 74 • Event Poem 76 • Foot 79 • Found Poem 82 • Free Verse 85 • Ghazal 87 • Haiku 89 • Imitation 92 • Insult Poem 95 • Light Verse 97 • Limerick 98 • Line 100 • List Poem 104 • Lune 107 • Lyric 110 • Macaronic Verse 113 • Madrigal 116 • Metaphor 118 • Nonsense Verse 122 • Occasional Poem 124 • Ode 125 • Ottava Rima 131 • Pantoum 133 • Parody 136 • Pastoral Poem 140 • Performance Poem 142 • Projective Verse 148 • Prose Poem 151 • Quatrain 153 • Rap 155 • Renga 159 • Rhyme 163 • Rhythm 165 • Ritual Poem 167 • Rondeau 171 • Satire 174 • Senryu 179 • Sestina 181 • Skeltonic Verse 186 • Sonnet 189 • Spoonerism 192 • Stanza 194 • Syllabic Verse 186 • Tanka 198 • Tercet 200 • Terza Rima 203 • Triolet 205 • Villanelle 208 • Word Play 212

Appendix A: Other Forms 213
Appendix B: Authors Cited 214
Bibliography 219

Table of Figures

Figure 1: "It's Raining," calligram by Guillaume Apollinaire . . . 34
Figure 2: Futurist poem by Francesco Cangiullo 35
Figure 3: Concrete poem by Emmett Williams 54
Figure 4: "Silencio," concrete poem by Eugen Gomringer 55

Some of Gertrude Stein's writings have the feel of abstract prose poems:

> A little lunch is a break in skate a little lunch so slimy, a west end of a board line is that which shows a little beneath so that necessity is a silk under wear. That is best wet. It is so natural, and why is there flake, there is flake to explain exhaust.
>
> —*From* Tender Buttons

So does the prose of James Joyce's *Finnegans Wake.*

The hailstorm of imagery common to much surrealist poetry tends to make that poetry abstract, as in these lines from Bill Knott's *Nights of Naomi:*

> Prefrontal lightning bolt too lazy to chew the sphinx's
> loudest eyelash
> Not even if it shushes you with a mast of sneers
> Down which grateful bankvault-doors scamper
> Because of a doublejointedness that glows in the dark
> Like a soliloquy of walnuts
> Numbed by beaks of headless measuringtape
> So the lubriciousness can tower in peace
> Like a buzzsaw trapped in a perfumery of shrugs
> Lemon
> Or lime
> Only a maze can remember your hair of buttered blowguns

These lines are abstract because of their dense and bizarre images, not because of their sound.

Here are other examples of abstract poems.

> Clothing, sing-worms, and fail! my joyous gasoline
> And caney stars, O spillwort!" Ape. Ate. Ben-
> Seeds was late, oop! he went to high school
> In a, ork! yes a blimp, oh married to the knees
> Of not having, Indian as sharks, the reefed money
> To order O doughtnut coconuts there, weird
> As mated, alcohol, the "ginger," a synco-
> Pation, "Anagrams! fish! pools! babe! hospital
> Of the careful linguist-itch-hand-fields-youthful-
> Kentucky!" Evenings, places, a, it is a. . . .
>
> —*From* When the Sun Tries to Go On *by Kenneth Koch*

Notice in the following two poems by Clark Coolidge that the further that words are removed from sentences and meaning, the more we focus on their sound:

ounce code orange
a
the
ohm
trilobite trilobite

*

of about

since dot

There are any number of ways to learn about writing abstract poems. One is to pick a word and say it aloud over and over until it loses its meaning. That'll get your mind focused on sound. Then just write, as quickly as you can, whatever words come to you because of their sounds.

Another method involves taking a poem by you or someone else and changing most of the words. Count the number of nouns in the poem, the number of adjectives, and the number of verbs. Then make a list of an equal number of new nouns, adjectives, and verbs—all of which you choose just because you like their sounds (not their meanings. Also, don't worry about their not making sense as a group.) Then use your lists to replace the corresponding words in the poem. You'll find that some will work better than others, and you'll probably want to adjust the verbs a little.

A third way to make abstract poems is to take a poem and remove (perhaps with white-out) enough of its words so that the remaining words make no sense, but sound good together.

"Sound poetry" is abstract poetry written specifically to be read aloud. It uses language closer to Clark Coolidge's than Edith Sitwell's; that is, the language is "broken up." Sound poetry, which came in part from the Dada poetry created around 1920, has enjoyed a certain popularity in Europe since the 1940s.

See also: NONSENSE VERSE.

此为试读,需要完整PDF请访问: www.ertongbook.com