



Creative Wordshops

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Writing Newsletter

May 2020

re-story, re-
create and re-
imagine your life
and work

this letter in dorianhaarhoffblog.co.za courtesy Dominic Haarhoff

In these days of online, see ongoing opportunities and 'what's on'
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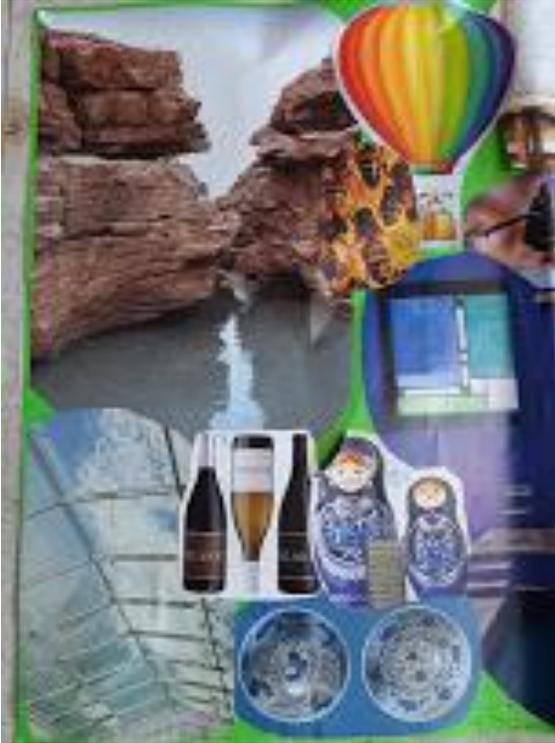
Dear seeker of word and images

How shall I Live? 16 Tanka responses to a 16 picture collage

Like the sonnet, the tanka employs a turn, known as a pivotal image,. This turn is located within the third line, connecting the kami-no-ku, or upper poem, with the shimo-no-ku, or lower poem.

I often create collages as a way of opening to other voices within. This month I'm sharing one with 16 images constructed during Lockdown time. In response to the question, 'How shall I live?' during these days and beyond, I've written a Tanka for each picture. A Tanka ('short song') is a classical Japanese 31-syllable lyric poem divided into five lines - 5 7 5 7 7. Originally chanted aloud to musical accompaniment, these forms have existed for over 1300 years. They are intended to flow so often have no punctuation.

Some early poets such as the Sufi mystic Hafiz (1300's) include their names at the end of a poem as a signature. I adopt this convention in these Tanka. I've photographed the original inspiration, in triptych form - left, centre and right. (with inevitable overlap.) Try this idea to generate text? Dorian



Three Blank Wines

blanc de blanc two reds
remind me to see the world
one third upside down
dori take care lest you fall
into a labelling trap

Babushka Travellers

whither bound dear dolls
travelling into the unknown
within are the selves
wombs within wombs in stories
dori keep reaching inside

Twin Rock Pool

silent rock strata
kiss each other at low tide
where the light glimmers
dori be water sky rock
open to sea surge and ebb

Skylight Frames

in this map of sky
clouds show ephemeral drift
through the panes of glass
dori remember weather
cycles in seasons of change

Chinese Plates in Tandem

fish and guinea fowl
inhabit the ancient plates
they hold history
swirling round these images
dori live in such blue worlds



Bee Energy

the bees are stirred up
their honeyed lives are abuzz
on the wings of faith
for nectar hides in the bud
dori seek the bee intent

Up and Away

the blast of fire
lifts three into the clear sky
a chakra balloon
rainbow above a basket
dori who are the other two?

Art Window

here symbols abound
vertical horizontal
open to the worlds
this window geometry
dori is that a lighthouse?

Ritual Pool

in blue seclusion
the mythical god is here
with the ancestors
plunge into this shaded space
dori seek living water

Illustrated Words

let the words enter
the imaginary door
keep the child alive
the soul force of the divine
seek this dori every day



Tree Might

grand ancestor tree
in the scandinavian myth
you bind earth and heaven
work in me a miracle
give dori leaves roots rings sap

Ceramic Blue White Blossom

fit for emperors
jars hold exotic spices
a mandala plate
porcelain fired in a kiln
dori seek the blaze blossom

Double Dancing Dung Beetles

here is our earth work
with dung underground creatures
we seek to transform
together we roll a load
dori seek the golden ball

Mosaic block in Blue
bird leaf windmill octopus
implements of earth
woven in design
the sky a flutter of larks
here be dori as sea turtle

Wooden Bench Design

blue print on the wall
and a naked wooden bench
in simple design
emerges from the drawing
dori embrace ideal form

Bloom Profusion

in your flower flit
surging flood of butterflies
pollinate my heart
caterpillar ascending wings
let dori embrace them both