

Write Your own Haiku

Background

As part of this exhibition there is a selection of haiku inspired by the art works on display. These were written by local writer Shane Strachan as part of the Shared Collective Heritage project. They reflect the quietness and stillness Shane perceives in these works, as well as the sense of the world standing still during the Coronavirus outbreak in 2020.

We would like to encourage visitors of the exhibition to submit their own haiku inspired by these works to us. They will then potentially form part of wider the Shared Collective Heritage project.

What is a haiku?

The haiku is a short Japanese poetic form which often depicts nature and the changing seasons. In 17th century Japan, they were often written by artist-poets (most famously Matsuo Bashō) who would incorporate them into *haiga* paintings. In their English variant, haikus tend to be composed of three lines with the following syllabic structure:

**Five syll-a-bles first,
then sev-en syll-a-bles next,
then a fin-al five.**

You'll often find English haikus with less syllables per line, but in most cases the middle will be the longest.

The haiku form is popular with those attempting to write poetry for the first time because:

- it is a short form so is quick to read, write and share
- rhyme clichés are easily avoided as no rhyming is required
- it encourages writers to focus on something visual and concrete (like an artwork!), which is always a good starting point for writing poetry, rather than getting caught up in abstract thought

Submit your haiku

Email your haiku along with your contact details, the art work you selected and the reason why, to: **fraser.macdonald@nhs.scot**