

**frogments from the frag pool**  
haiku after bashō



**gary barwin &  
derek beaulieu**

**frogments  
from the frag pool**

haiku after bashō

**selected titles by gary barwin**

*Doctor Weep and other strange teeth* (The Mercury Press, 2004)  
*a periodic table of the alphabet* (serif of nottingham, 2004)  
*Raising Eyebrows* (Coach House Books, 2001)  
*Seeing Stars* (Stoddart Kids, 2001)  
*Big Red Baby* (The Mercury Press, 1998)  
*Outside the Hat* (Coach House Books, 1998)  
*Cruelty to Fabulous Animals* (Moonstone Press, 1995)  
*The Mud Game* (with Stuart Ross; The Mercury Press, 1995)

**selected titles by derek beaulieu**

*fractal economies* (Talonbooks, 2006)  
*the orange manifesto* (MODL Press, 2005)  
*fractals* (No Press, 2005)  
*Calcite Gours* (Writers Forum, 2005)  
*With Wax* (Cuneiform Press, 2004)  
*[Dear Fred]* (above/ground, 2004)  
*with wax* (Coach House Books, 2003)  
*Velvet Touch Lettering* (yardpress, 2003)

**frogments  
from the frag pool**

haiku after bashō

**gary barwin & derek beaulieu**

THE MERCURY PRESS

Copyright © 2005 by Gary Barwin and derek beaulieu

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED. No part of this book may be reproduced by any means without the prior written permission of the publisher, with the exception of brief passages in reviews. Any request for photocopying or other reprographic copying of any part of this book must be directed in writing to the Canadian Reprography Collective.

The publisher gratefully acknowledges the financial assistance of the Canada Council for the Arts, the Ontario Arts Council, the Ontario Media Development Corporation, and the Ontario Book Publishing Tax Credit Program. The publisher further acknowledges the financial support of the Government of Canada through the Department of Canadian Heritage's Book Publishing Industry Development Program (BPIDP) for our publishing activities.

Editor: Angela Rawlings  
Composition and page design: Angela Rawlings  
Cover design: Angela Rawlings  
Cover image: Gary Barwin

Printed and bound in Canada  
Printed on acid-free paper

1 2 3 4 5 09 08 07 06 05

Library and Archives Canada Cataloguing in Publication

Barwin, Gary

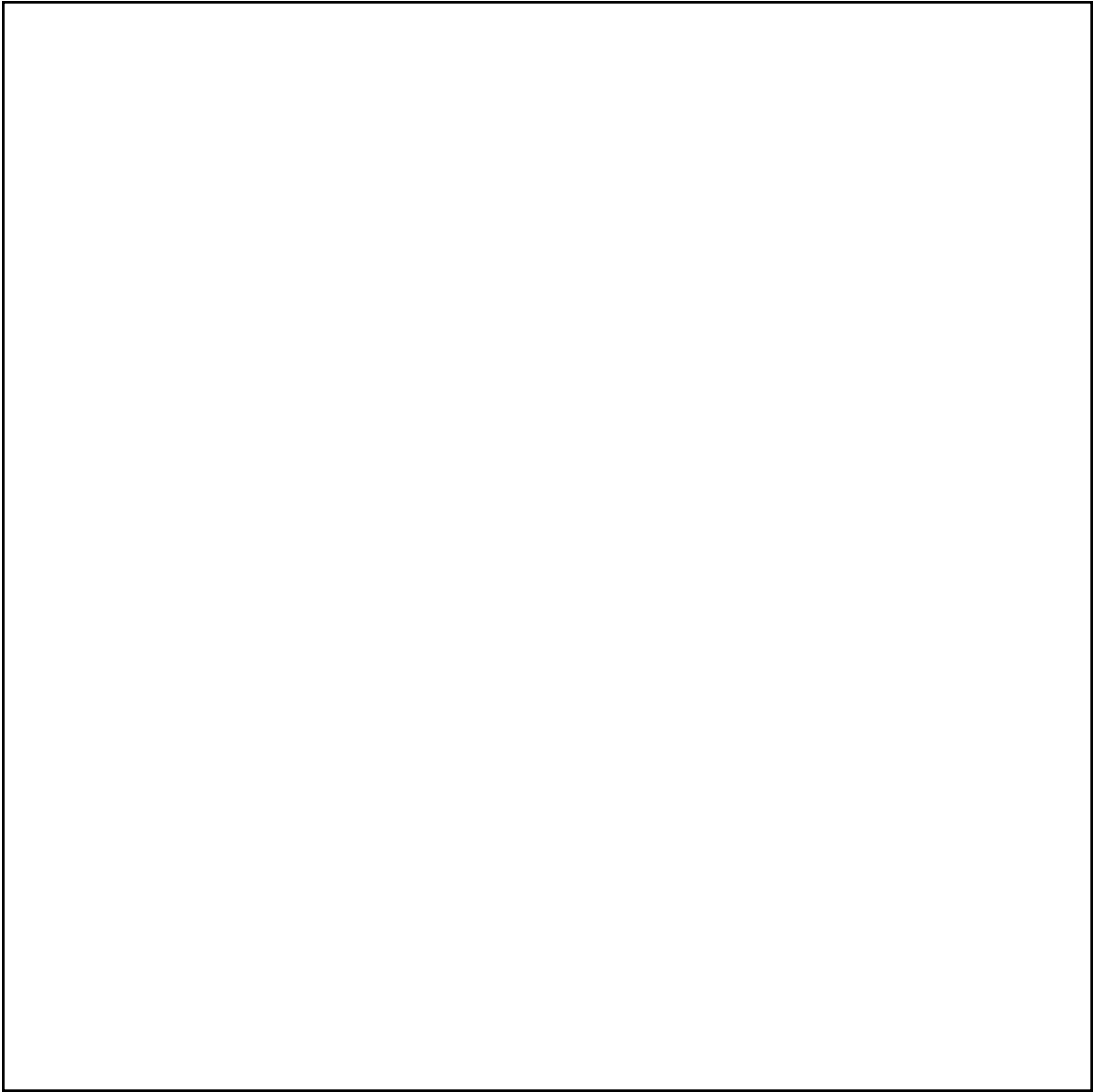
Fragments from the frag pool : haiku after Basho / Gary Barwin, Derek Beaulieu.

ISBN 1-55128-112-0

1. Haiku, Canadian (English). 2. Canadian poetry (English)--21st century. I. Beaulieu, D. A. (Derek Alexander), 1973- II. Title.  
PS8553.A783F76 2005 C811'.0410806 C2005-905292-9

The Mercury Press  
Box 672, Station P, Toronto, Ontario Canada M5S 2Y4  
[www.themercurypress.ca](http://www.themercurypress.ca)

This water-sound is intended for the haiku-master or entity to which it is addressed, and may contain confidential and/or privileged material. If you are not the intended recipient of this water-sound, you are hereby notified that any use, review, retransmission, dissemination, distribution, reproduction, or any action taken on reliance upon this water-sound is prohibited. If you received this water-sound in error, please contact the leaper and delete the material from any poem. Any views expressed in this water-sound are those of the individual frog and may not necessarily reflect the views of the pond.



(every(all at(toge(frog)ther) once)thing)



furu ike ya  
kawazu tobikomu  
mizu no oto

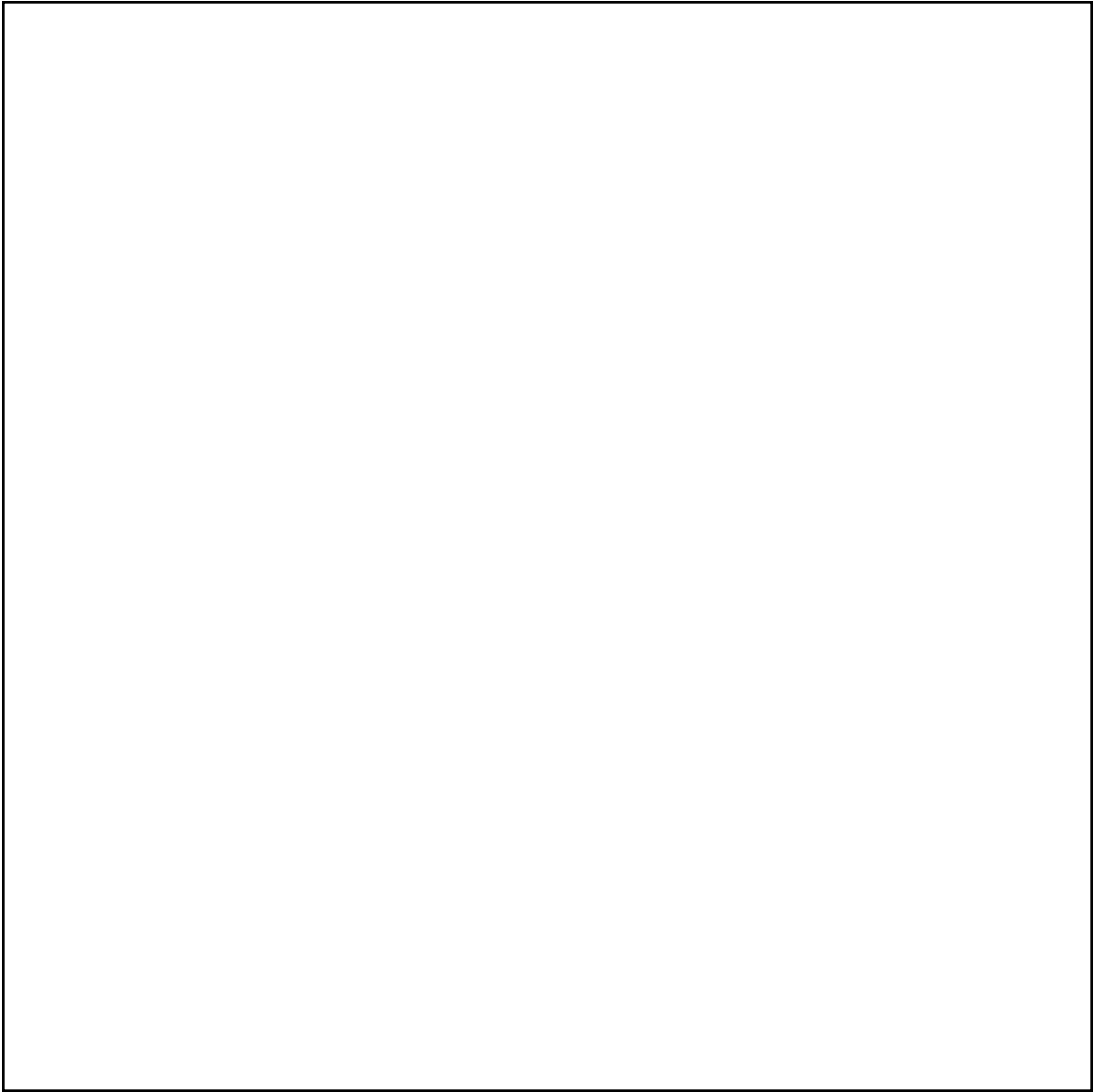
— Matsuo Bashō (1644-1694)

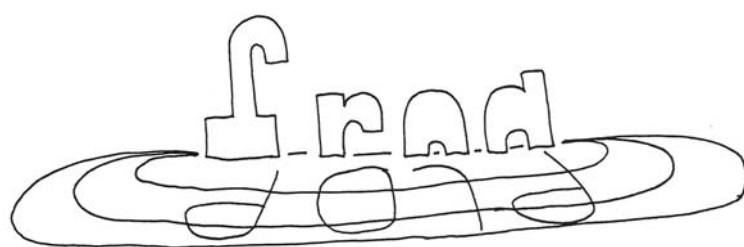
The old pond;  
A frog jumps in —  
The sound of water.

— Translated by R.H. Blyth

**email to basho**

re:pond  
respond





old pond leaping  
into mind of frog

old pond leaping —  
the mind of frog

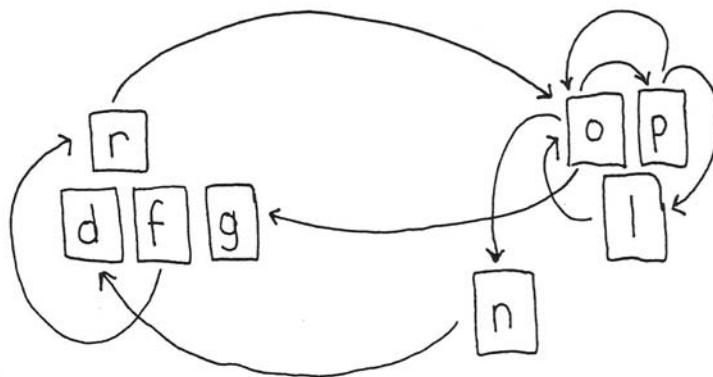
old frog  
leap from the water  
soundlessly  
still the rippling mind

old pond  
sound fond  
frog find

the body is 98% water  
each cell a tiny pool

basho, i said  
you sit in silence

yes, he said  
a billion frogs  
make little sound



leaping water —  
the mind ponding  
frog sound

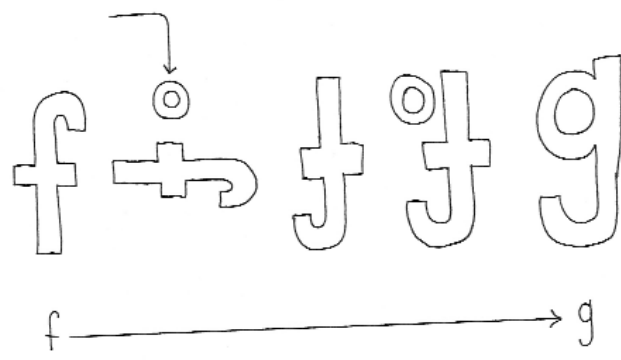
old pond  
sound in mind of frog —  
pond-old and unsound —  
teach again the mind to leap



frog, you are old as i  
the old leaps flagging  
the weary mind

frond-friend  
the watersongs sound fallow  
without you

old( ( ( ( ( ((frog))) ) ) ) ) ) ) ) ) ) pond



old pond  
it's a good thing it wasn't  
a rhinoceros

1. splash
2. 17<sup>th</sup>-century japan
3. a riverside house in edo
4. matsuo basho 1644-1694
5. a frog-shaped opening
6. a frog
7. an old pond
8. paper
9. a reed pen
10. no mind
11. an instant

basho  
frog in the throat  
leaps in the mind

frogs on fronds in the bogpond  
loghop leap lilypads pools

thongs plodding sodden sink sudden o'er bog brink  
think bogfrog fog songs sound cool

**moon over pond**



**(evening)**

pond holding  
its breath

the frog

old pond  
universes rise & fall  
a single splash

basho  
i asked

but what if we weren't  
ready?

as og is to ond, he said  
you'd get the water's lash

water-shaped hole in silence  
frog-shaped hole in pond

poem shaped hole in mind

old pond  
cracking

the frog in winter

old (    )  
    (    ) pond  
    (    )  
water (    )  
    (    )  
    (    ) sound

(frog)



**integeribbit**

p<sup>3</sup>o<sup>3</sup>ndfrgl

**after basho**

o  
p | nd  
f r | g  
p l | p  
↓  
o

### **numbered series**

1.

fr old og  
spl po ash nd

spl old ash  
po fr nd og

spl  
fr  
ash  
og

spl old ash po fr nd og

2.

fr sp og lash  
spl fr ash og

spl fr as og h  
o spl ld as po h nd pl fr op og

3.

b spl ash o

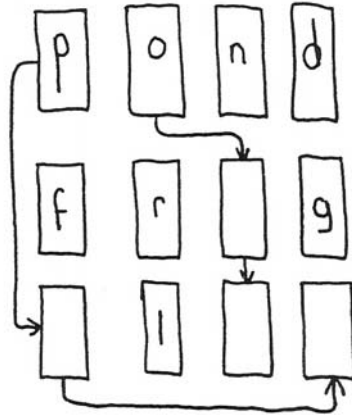
spl b ash o g ld p fr on d g

old man  
asleep by the pond  
toad told the tale

## **2 haiku**

fr fl ay og to sp ad f lash  
spl fl fr ay ash

o pl ld op : po fr nd og  
old fr spl po ash og nd



frog longing  
the pond-old sound  
of water lapping

basho  
trembling  
as  
water  
ripples

frogs  
leap  
over  
his  
grave

in the mind of pond  
frog is an opening

in the mind of frog  
the pond opens

the splashed mind

one fun young tongue sung song saying  
pond-sound song frond-friend frog finds fine for frog fall fable

in the mind of frog  
haiku

### **basho's pond**

to        and        fro  
to(ad)   and        fro(g)

### **basho's enlightenment**

p   OH!   nd  
fr   OH!   g  
pl   OH!   p



old pond  
frog-leap-in  
the tiny splash  
soaking stars

ol po  
wa so  
a fr

o o  
w s  
a f

.ld .nd  
.er .nd  
.og

## **pondensation**

opwsaf

f pp

rool

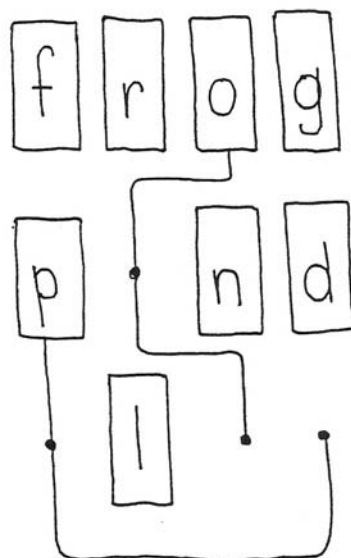
olno

gddp

**basho inflamed**

extinguished by  
water-sound

b  
o  
s p f r g  
l  
a a  
y s  
h



old frog  
fold  
pond

old plash  
frond

old ash  
splond

frold ash  
splog

fold splash  
pond

tadpold  
tadpond  
tadplop  
tadpole

philosophy

old pond draws the line  
frog crosses it

frogment of bashogination  
pondment of frognition  
ploperty of water

frog  
despondent

pond  
respondent

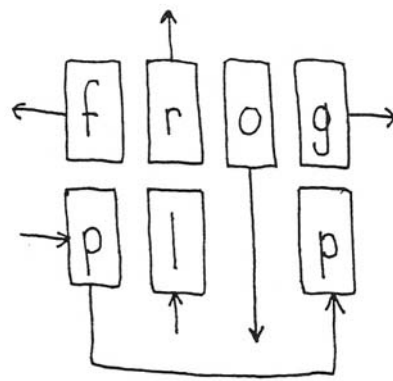
pond  
frog resplendent

other pond  
other frog  
same plop



circinate fronds of a young fern  
circumscissile pod of plantain  
chthonic chuckle-head

once ponded a tide  
the moon out  
a frog sponding to it  
a-ponded, apon'd it



**basholation**

O

---

O

oldpond  
frogplo  
poldpo  
ndfro  
gplo  
pol  
dp  
o  
n  
d

a

---

a

splsh

---

o

frg

---

ol po  
wa ( ) so  
a fr

before nightfall  
frog fall

old pond  
the moon's pool

so much noise  
a single fall

gravity ponding a frog  
frogging a pond  
holding basho to the ground

basho  
you shift vowels  
sound the certain splash

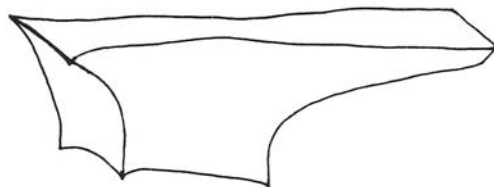
a frog leaps into a pool of light

o   o  
ae — ou  
a   o

from nowhere  
a frog dives down onto  
a watery planet

now the rippling stars

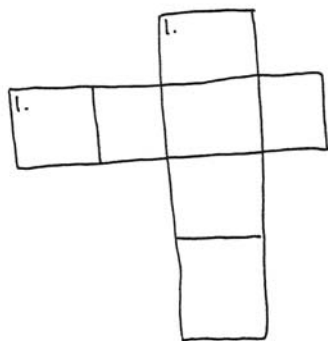
old frog  
leap-splash this:





the frog leaps  
leaves a lilypad  
to remember

old pond  
frog weeping:  
water sound



down.  
1. warted basho.

across  
1. smooth basho.

a leap in the dark  
lit by an old man's way

a leap in the dark  
an old man's way

a leap in the dark  
lights an old man's way

basho  
frogs on the brain

also  
the universe

ripples in water  
memories of tadpole youth

basho  
frog shift

the sounds remain  
the fronds refrain

**ripples (in glass houses)**



a. throwing stones



b. jumping frogs

**zen basho**

p0nd  
+ fr0g  
pl0p  
-----  
0

**somes**

1 x f  
1 x r  
3 x o  
1 x g  
3 x p  
1 x n  
1 x d  
1 x l  
-----  
bash0

**corrupted haiku**

chinese  
water  
torture

noah's shaken as  
the frog leaps in

**basho's bonanza: a love  
poem for lorne green**

pond  
eros  
a

**basho's place in the  
catholic church**

supreme pondiff

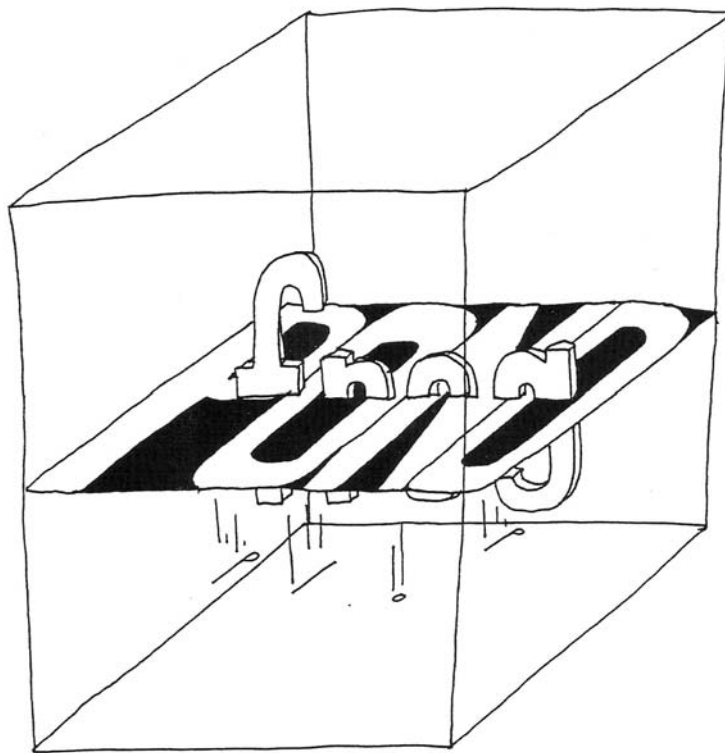


splash of  
green-eyed monster

i've pushed  
basho into the pond

surprised by a frog  
of course! a jewish man, i've  
no foresight either

**aquarium**



frond  
pop  
plog

frop  
pog  
plond

frnd  
oplpo  
plnd

**ripples**

p(o)nd  
f r(o)g  
pl(o)p

( )o( )( )  
( )( )o( )  
( )( )o( )

((o)))  
(( (o))  
(( (o))

### **basho's nipples**

( ) ( ) ( ) ( )  
( ((o))((o)) )  
( ) ( ) ( ) ( )

### **plague**

p f f  
o r pr  
np p o oo f  
doppleganger  
nolo d o  
dnop g  
dp

**plagued by word 6.0**

oxy-acetylene welding nutshell;  
noxious dope-fiend —  
non-transparent dixieland.

**microsoft word thesaurus  
reads basho**

pool;  
frog in one's throat —  
drops noisily.

old pond  
has frogs  
also  
time

old pond  
stars  
frogs

old computer  
crash!  
no frogs

pond  
frog

frondship

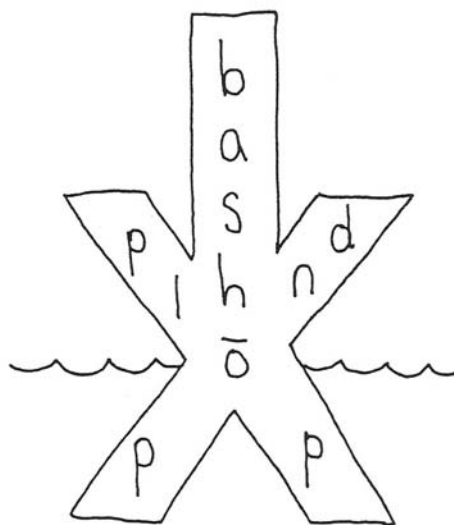
**basho was proclaimed a god in the buddhist pantheon**

by the way



pond puzzle filled with  
frog-shaped piece

```
      pond
    po(frog)nd
  po(   )nd
po(     )nd
po((    ))nd
po(((   )))nd
po((((  ))))nd
po((((  ))))nd
```



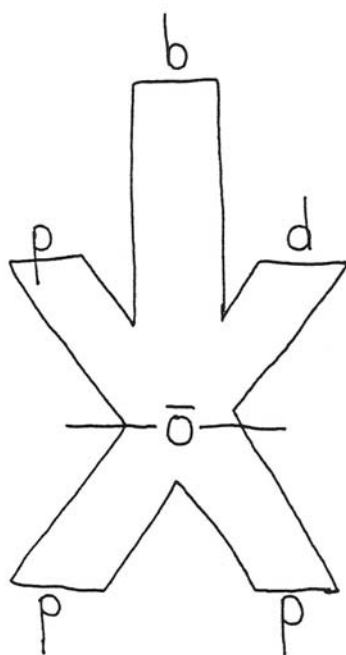
no pond  
frog jumps  
on paper

frog lounging:  
the pond  
just before the plop

old pond  
frogmenting  
“the greatest basho on earth”

pond  
ponder

pondest



**glyph**

*an alphabetic transposition and gloss*

source:

old pond  
water sound  
a frog

where a=b:

pme qpoe  
xbufs tpvoe  
b gsph

**line 1:**

pme, the sound of poem — pome — the o a tiny pond, a moon  
risen from the lips and then lost by cloud, or pme, pomme as  
if o its picture felled by arrow off the head of a frightened  
child.

qpoe, kapow — the sound of arrow hitting apple, qpoe, poet-  
ry truncated, 'try' broken off, q the p reflected in a pool of  
water, as if p poetry tried suddenly tried to turn its head.

**line 2:**

xbufs, x marks the spot where the confident father aimed, the spot where the young saint ended his alphabet, the teacher marking x: wrong. buf s — buffs, aficionados, they've taken a shine to it, then later, ex-buffs, their enthusiasm dimmed, gone cloudy, they've polished it off and now regret it, x crossing it out, taken the apple back.

tpvov, typed over it, typo vers (fr.), vov — no sibilance in their 'voice,' vov calling out as the arrow hits the mark, kapow. no time for reflection now. too late to cut it short, diving first, then thinking of water.

**line 3:**

b, an existential imperative, the apple bisected, the command follows. b, speckled with droplets of water, apple juice, the moon covered by clouds in the mist. gsph the gasp as the apple falls, as the cold water closes, as the poem is thought of, the sudden breath like gsph, a gospel remembered, the young saint writing, coming to x like a glyph.

vowels

shift

beneath

you

yet

you

beneath

shift

vowels



(fr)	o	g		
	p	o	n	(d)
	p	l	o	(p)

old frog  
wart found  
a polyp!

toad  
lasered  
a frog reborn!

old pond on TV  
rippling

do not adjust  
your set

**the pond will not be televised**

old pond TV:  
a TV  
in the pond  
on the TV  
an old pond  
in the pond  
another TV  
someone holds up a sign  
frogs fall like mice from heaven

frog leaps  
into wet jacket  
disturbs the fronds of style

frog leaps  
under bridge  
  
of old man's nose

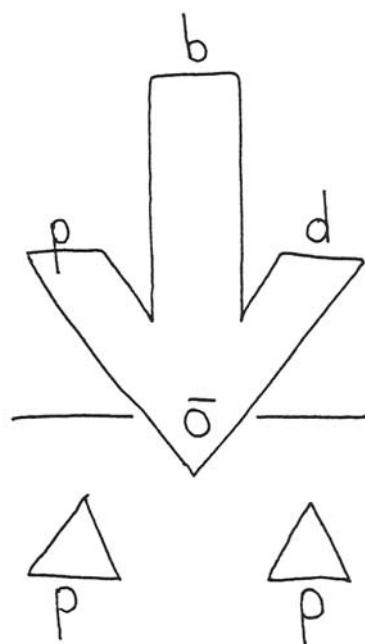
**from *haiku night in canada***

moon a yellow puck  
poet plops frog into pond  
yes: he shoots. he scores.

o  
frog leaping  
into the centre of  
itself

old pond  
no gravity  
frog leaps over the surface  
of sound

gravity  
splashes  
(in)  
an old man's mind



**basho / human / frog / water**

“i have had this splash  
since  
i was young”

pond asks basho  
to imagine  
a frog



basho hears frog  
imagines pond

pond hears basho  
imagines frog

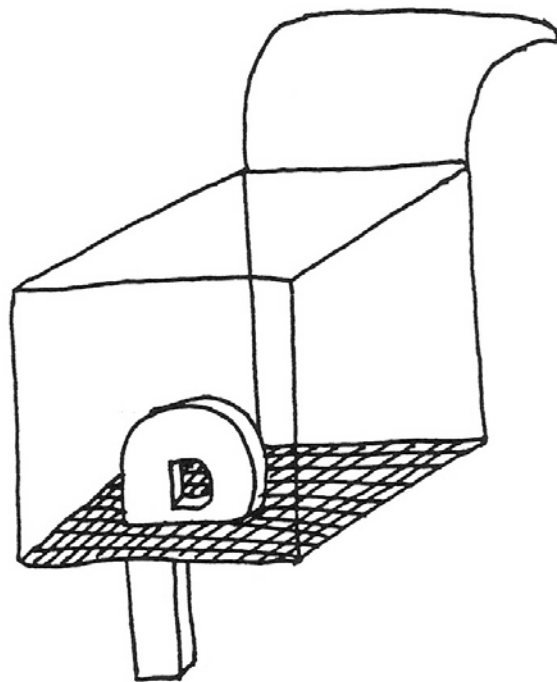
not pond-sound  
ear-sound

it's not the splash  
but that  
the frog leaps

old pond  
wants to be  
left alone

old pond  
remembers only  
one frog

frog sleeps:  
the sound of pond



a frog jumps

the division of pond and frog breaks down

the pond is identical in size and shape to the frog

in its formative stages the pond was a drop of water. seeing it suddenly glisten, one could easily have mistaken it for a tadpole

the pond leaps, surrounding the frog like a raincoat

it is believed that the pond opened before the actual and apparently sudden impact of the frog

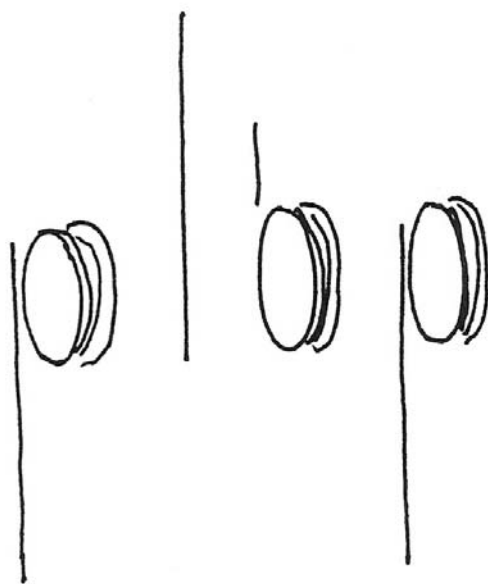
as the frog ponds, the pond frogs

the moment of illumination is not that instant when the  
frog hits the surface of the pond

it is that moment when the frog knows it is going to leap,  
that moment when the pond prepares to open. it is that  
moment when the path between frog and pond first finds its  
form, arching from lily pad to the filigreed edge of broken  
meniscus

we are deceived by the sound of water

**yo-yo by pondside**



pond dreams  
by the sound  
of frog

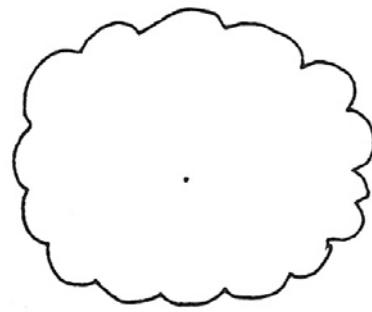
frog leaps  
ha!  
mouth opens

water sound  
someone's pulled  
the frog  
from under me



frog:  
pond bound

**ponderous**



p l o p

p o n d

f r o g

.

old pond  
a patient eye  
a frog

skinner's poem  
typing a line  
reach the end and  
a bell goes off

skinner's pond  
bell rings  
frog drops

frog  
skinner dipping

furu ike ya  
kawaku tobikomu  
mitzu no oto

furtive glance  
kangaroo court  
mitigation

fierceness frozen water dog sound  
keel toasted koala  
misuse may choose

**old saws**

you can't teach  
an old pond  
new frogs

you can lead a mind to a pond  
but you can't make it leap

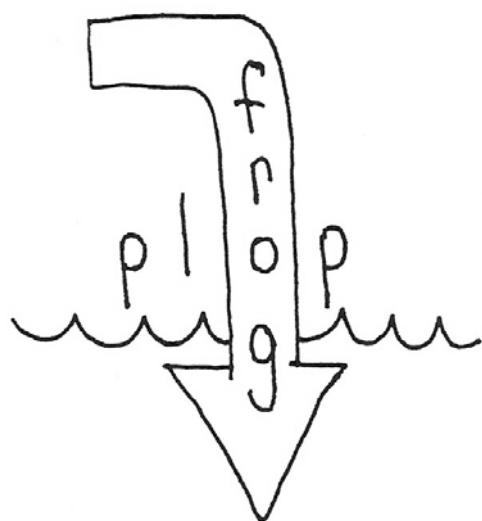
a frog in the mind  
is worth  
two in the pond

a leap in the pond  
is better than  
two minds

the frog never  
leaps  
far from the splashed mind

the water never  
lands far from  
the frog

you can't teach  
eveningness  
to an old pond



### **Re-evaluating *Silence on the Frogpond***

In 1985, W. Hood published *Silence on the Frogpond*, a work that proved to be extremely influential in the field of molecular poetics. He states that:

old pond  
no sound  
a frog

He asserts that frog and pond do not come into contact. Indeed, he states, the molecules of the pond and frog are positioned in such a way that they do not collide but rather pass by each other.

f	f	f	f	f	f
p	p	p	p	p	p

— frog/pond model proposed by W. Hood, 1985

However, Hood's model fails to consider the observed release of energy during the frog/pond interaction. If, as Hood's model contends, the molecules of the frog and pond are to



interpenetrate, then some further explanation is required in order to explain the discrepancy in total energy. When the molecules intersect, the bonds of attraction, due to Van der Waals forces, are broken. How are we to account for this “missing” energy? Where does it go?

After extensive research into this problem, a solution of startling simplicity has been discovered. The “missing” energy can be accounted for by taking into consideration neurological change in the observer — the same neurological change observed by M. Basho all those years ago in his seminal work of 1674:

leaping water —  
the mind ponding  
frog sound  
— M. Basho (1644-1694)

Precise measurements are unavailable as there are currently an insufficient number of reproducible results. Further, a dependable means of accurately determining how much energy is released into the cortex during this interaction has not been devised. In preliminary research, measurements of up to 5.3 units Basho (international Basho standard: 1 Basho = 575 kilojoules) have been recorded, but this figure needs to be substantiated by independent researchers.

Additionally, further research remains to be undertaken from the perspective of motivational analysis. Johnston (1986) has theorized that the energy present in the mind of the frog can be considered as resulting in the leap, but, as we have suggested elsewhere (Barwin and beaulieu, 1987), we must more closely examine the role of the pond in creating the leap. Investigation of this kind will certainly be met with much skepticism, for it goes against the current belief that, in the words of one anonymous poet:

old pond:  
mere plop

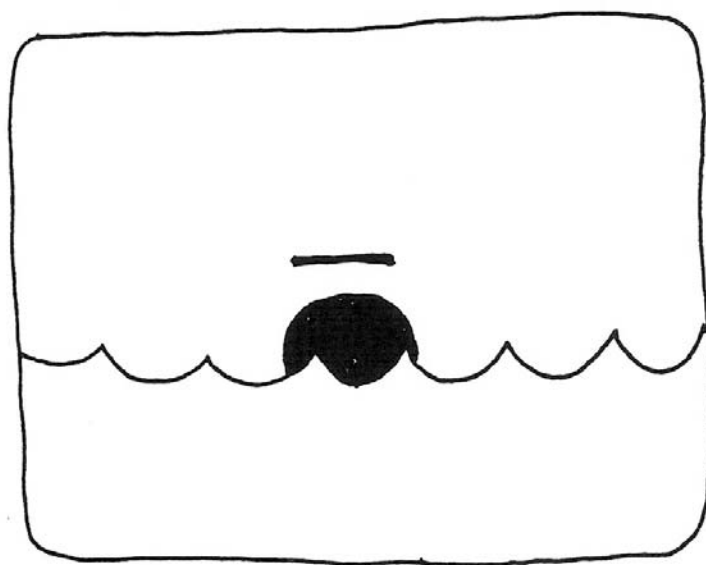
Continued research of this important area needs to be completed if we are to dispel this superficial view. We are confident that further study will provide us with more specific data concerning the dynamics of the frog/pond interaction and prove conclusively that frog, pond, and human are linked by their intrinsic interdependence.

### **BASHOGRAPHY**

Barwin, Gary and beaulieu, derek. "Pond Regards to the Frog." *The Journal of the International Bashological Society*. Vol. 27, No. 4 (1987). 46-54.

Hood, Wharton. *Silence on the Frogpond*. Toronto: Plopologics Press. Monograph No. 24 (1985).

Johnston, Herman. "Analysis of Cortical Change in Leaping Frogs." *Frog Kinetics Journal*. Vol. 7, No. 18 (1986). 34-45.



old man  
leaps  
follows an idea  
into the pond

old pond  
malaplop!  
the green toed

old pond  
frog jumps in

homelessnessless

old pond  
frog

listlessnessless

f r o d

**do-it-yourself aha moment**

old pond

something;  
something somethings —  
something.



old pond  
plop  
some frog

dlo dno  
polp  
a gorf

### **Frog at the Bar**

The sky was threatening to burst and so I ended up at Sam Meniscus' Bar before the usual time. Met this old guy nursing a drink at a table at the back. He was looking to talk, and time had almost run out on his beer.

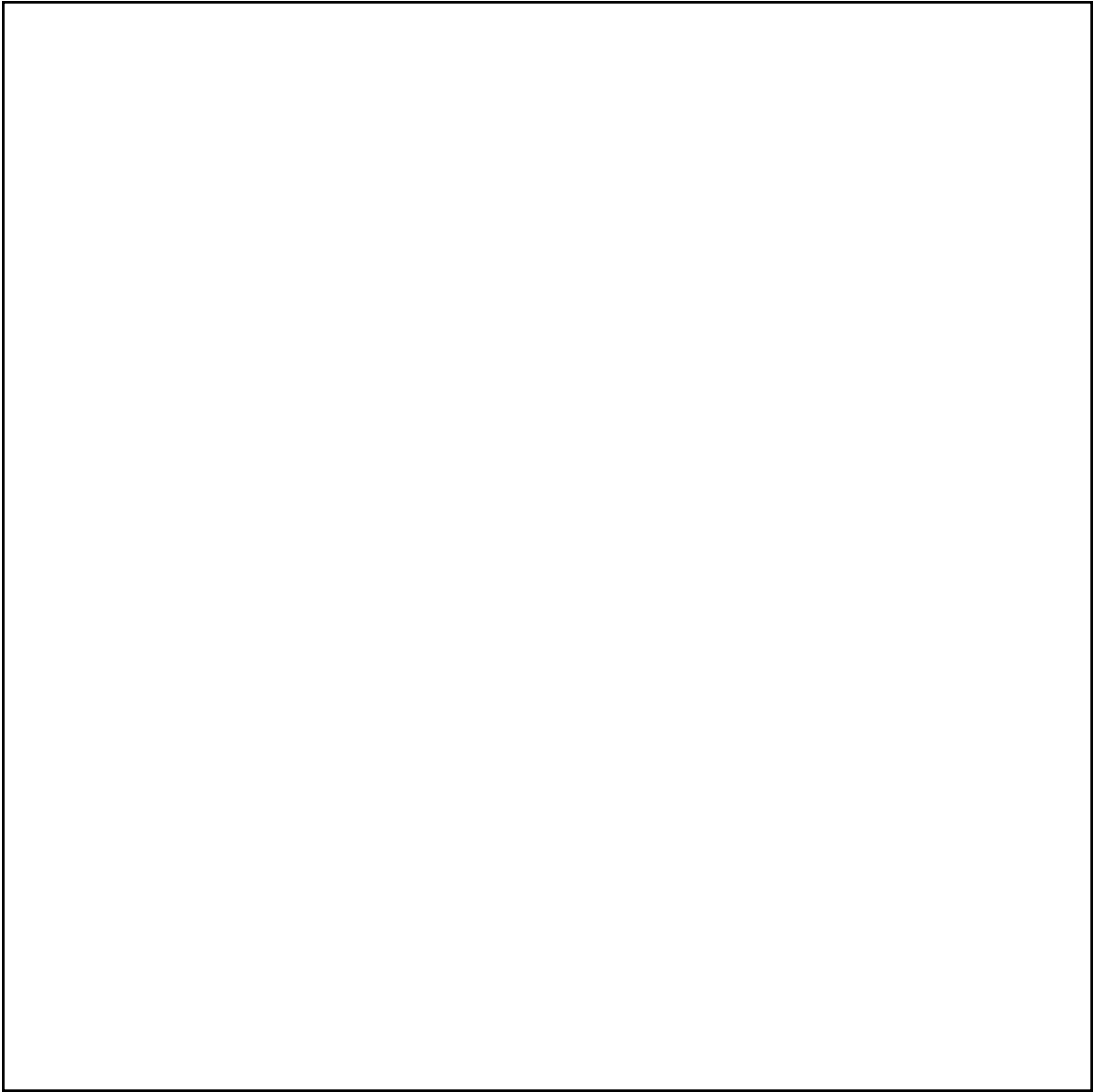
"It's about seeing," he said. "And about not seeing." His watery eyes were rheumy ponds, and his whole body trembled slightly as he spoke. "You see the rain out there? Imagine trying to see a single drop fall, trying not to see any of the other drops. That's what I had to do. That's what I had to accomplish. And it wasn't easy. You think it was easy?"

I drained my bourbon. Motioned to the barman for another. "Don't figure so."

"Well, that's how it was with the frogs. Thousands of the things. All burping, and bubbling, and hopping all over the place. It wasn't easy to ignore them, the warty buggers. Slimy green jumping rats. So I sees this one frog and I train my eye on him. Trick was to ignore all the other frogs. The first couple of hundred times I lose him quick. But I go back to the pond for months. You think I had anywhere better to go? Think I'd hang around the station waiting for the goddamn

bus to the friggin' Deep North? Not this gutterball. So the weather's getting cold. We're all moving slow — me, the frogs, the girls plopping down grey stuff at the soup kitchen. So finally I blank out all the other frogs and stick my eye to the big mother frog. And then it jumps from its place on the slobbery bank. AND IT HITS THE GODDAMN SURFACE OF THE POND WITH A SOUND LIKE MY TEETH BEING PULLED OUT. The pop of the pink denture goo snapping off my I-don't-know-what-colour-they-are gums. I knew it would be like that. Perfect. A single island of pure uninterrupted sound in my sorry and always interrupted life. When I heard it I knew I'd been waiting for that sound ever since I was denture-cream pink and wrapped in diapers. And you know what I did? You'll never guess, not in a million. I ripped open some smokes and wrote on the package. In Japanese. A guy back at the bunk told me what it was. Five, seven, five. A haiku. Whatever the hell that means. I'd wanted to watch the frog, hear it crack open the pond. But what was the point? It's been almost four hundred years. I'm still trying to figure it out."

the frog is gone  
its splash only reaches me now



### **frogknowledgements**

“I will smite all thy borders with frogs.”

– *Exodus* 8: 2-3

“andor think about translating some of the  
other haiku that basho has written instead of  
his stupid frog pond thing for crissakes”

– Darren Wershler-Henry, *the tapeworm foundry*

These poems res(pond) not only to Matsuo Basho’s haiku, but  
are equally homages to the translative work of Dom Sylvester  
Houédard, Steve McCaffery, jwcurry, and bpNichol. Thanks  
must be made for their teaching, poetry, and influence.

**pieces and drafts of *frogments* have appeared:**

**derek beaulieu** – through the following presses: housepress, kitsch in ink press, poemEpress, poetic immolation press; and in the following magazines: *The Capilano Review*, *Empty Galaxy*, *in grave ink*, *Laughing Gland*, *Peter O'Toole*, *RAW NerVZ HAIKU*, *Queen Street Quarterly*, *Polartis*; and online in [sic].

**Gary Barwin** – in/on the following books, chapbooks, T-shirts: *Raising Eyebrows* (Coach House Books), *Outside the Hat* (Coach House Books), *Cruelty to Fabulous Animals* (Moonstone Press), *frogments from the fragpool* (Proper Tales Press), *Basho translation from Fragments from the Frogpond* (housepress), *Two Basho translations* (Flying Camel Editions), *Ukiah poems 4* (Underwhich Editions); and from the following (a)periodicals: *Geist*, *Rampike*, *Border/lines*, *Industrial Sabotage*, *sh'wipe*, *Toronto South Asian Review*, *Inkstone*.

Thanks to all those involved in the creation, distribution, and support of the above publications.

**Gary Barwin** is a writer, composer, and performer. His music and writing have been published and presented in Canada, the US, and Europe. He received a PhD in Music Composition and was the recipient of the 1998 KM Hunter Foundation Artist Award. *Seeing Stars*, a YA novel, was a finalist for both CLA YA Book of the Year, and an Arthur Ellis Award. He teaches creative writing courses at McMaster University and music and creative writing at Hillfield Strathallan College. In addition to many vertebrate publications, he is the author of numerous invertebrates, many from his own series of Nottingham editions. Barwin lives in Hamilton, Ontario and online at [garybarwin.com](http://garybarwin.com).



Photo: Robert Majkut

**derek beaulieu** has been an editor at both *filling Station* and *dANDeLion* and special editor of *Whitewall of Sound* and *Open Letter*. In addition to his magazine editing work, he was the editor/publisher of *housepress* and is the author of several books of poetry, including *with wax* (Coach House Books, 2003). derek is also the co-editor of *Shift & Switch: New Canadian Poetry* (The Mercury Press, 2005). His poetry, criticism, and artwork have appeared in magazines and galleries across Canada. He lives in Calgary with his young daughter.



Photo: Nikki Sheppy



### Narrow Road from the True North

