

## REVIEW by Klaus-Dieter Wirth

**Dietmar Tauchner: as far as i can**

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As an active long-time member of several international haiku societies I dare say that this publication is undoubtedly some sort of an oasis in the desert of inferior haiku which litter all parts of the world today. A fact that is all the more surprising since the Austrian Dietmar Tauchner made a name for himself as a remarkable haiku author in an amazingly short time. His approach is particularly sensitive and enlightened, his language concise and to the point, though always leaving space for deeper insights and various interpretations.

Well then, this latest collection of his encompasses a wide range of subjects where the author does not even shrink back from relating a special social aspect to a universal phenomenon:

expanding universe  
the homeless man looks  
for a place to sleep

Insofar it is not only his keen eye that makes us explore our surroundings but also his mind and heart. And yet almost all his haiku are anchored in nature, possibly a staple of the traditional view. Anyway the open-endedness of the form, the natural treatment of the themes, never too intellectually derived, warrant their freshness and modernity. It is significant, even masterly that Tauchner makes us realize in one of his Mauthausen haiku, based on a visit to this Nazi concentration camp, that nature can simply not be present in a place thoroughly dominated by barbarism:

gas chamber  
a man lifts up  
his child

On the other hand he likewise goes quite easily to extremes when revealing his innermost feelings:

at the abyss	cherry blossoms
lilac scent	my life
at the abyss	my death

Or note the macabre sense of humour in the one-liner:

someone laughs on the way to the quarry

Or as another positive impression Tauchner hardly ever gets too enigmatic. So he almost instinctively avoids running the risk of becoming merely empty on the contrary, such as in this rare example:

on a slip of paper  
a number without a name  
autumn drizzle

To sum up, a really judicious selection has resulted in a volume which accurately reflects the

author's true ability, his flair for sensing and conveying the depth of uncommon moments. The only thing to be regretted is one would have liked to read more than just 42 poems subdivided by the way into 6 parts (*again the hunt, as far as i can, lurid light, door to the stars, the boy i was, empty fields*), each containing 7 haiku (one of which a one-liner) with uppergraphs taken directly from one of their verses. Fortunately they occur only one to a page making it possible to savour their specific value in one's own time. Highly recommended!