

CONOR HULTMAN - 飛び込む jumped in 音 sound

古池や old pond 水の蛙 frogs of water by Plague Circus Press, 2026

Immersing oneself in a palette of words allows for the narrative of introspection

Conor Hultman wastes no time in presenting his collection of haiku, and his style allows for no compromises: one must leap into the pond of rainbow-colored unconsciousness to find the poetry that resonates in irregular waves. The reader must set aside all preconceptions when engaging with the text to fully appreciate Hultman's exquisite poetry; each HEX color code evokes specific moods that can be interpreted as scenes from life, memoirs, thoughts, or regrets. Although the reading experience works only when one lets go of Western conventions, this allows the words to form cross-cutting and diagonal connections, in which the sinuous movement of the eyes reveals previously hidden meanings. As expressed in the title, sound (音) allows for another, albeit subtle, layer of interpretation; when pronouncing Hultman's words, their connections immediately become clearer.

This does not mean it is impossible to find themes that “飛び込む jumped in 音 sound 古池や old pond 水の蛙 frogs of water” brings to light – some explicitly written in capital letters by Hultman, others slightly more hidden. A prime example is haiku #50F4C5 (in celadon/turquoise), in which “A REFLECTION ON,” “MY WORK,” and “LIFE” appear, as well as “mature” and “ugly,” which, together with “torture,” “her,” “lips,” “journey,” “etc.,” and others, form part of the vocabulary used to express a poem of the ephemeral, where the hypothetical becomes factual only insofar as the reader focuses on it; part of the adventure of reading thus becomes discovering all the words that make up Hultman's chant. An “I,” a “she,” an encounter, a reflection: all of this repeats itself and takes on new forms of life, from the sensual #F6687A to the unsettling #CE39E6, and so on and so on and so on...

No artificial intelligence can understand this book, because a machine cannot lock eyes like we do: like frogs in the pond created by Hultman and poured out by Plague Circus Press. “飛び込む jumped in 音 sound 古池や old pond 水の蛙 frogs of water” remains a micro-publication worthy of being reread on hot, sleepless nights, in the apathy of solitude, or to disconnect from everything and immerse oneself in the bizarre. It will be interesting to see how this, along with other experimental literary publications, will gain a foothold in the karstic landscape of X or other platforms where literary niches exist in which haiku reigns supreme; the minimalism of the expressive liminal giving way to schizophrenic, posthuman maximalism.

Recommended for those who still wish to love. My favorite haiku remain #D3735E and #7803A9.

-Cristiano Cardone