

peeling potatoes, recalling her buttocks

From beginning to end I kept falling into inspired pieces of satirical lunacy, including ridiculous hyperbole, wonderful wordplay, pop-culture references, political allusions and similes. I became involved in all its absurdity no matter where I opened a page. This book is a state of mind.

Thank you, Alan Pizzarelli for a place of joy ... inside *Mind Zaps*. In these turbulent times, we need a place to let the good times roll.

Walk with Gandhi, by Gabriel Rosenstock, illustrations by Massood Hussain (Ireland: Gandhi 150, 2019), 109 pages; 8½" × 11". Matte four-color card covers; perfectbound. ISBN 978-1-9162254-0-4. Price: \$19.00 from online booksellers.

Reviewed by Jennifer Burd

I found it refreshing to revisit the life of Mahatma Gandhi through poetry and painting in *Walk with Gandhi*, a book of haiku by Gabriel Rosenstock with beautiful watercolor illustrations by Massood Hussain. At times I felt I was indeed walking with Gandhi, experiencing his life and outlook in a way I wouldn't from reading a more academic presentation. Rosenstock, an accomplished Irish haiku writer and promoter of Irish culture, presents the book's haiku in both English and Gaelic. While the book aims to reach young adults, it is suitable for adults as well.

In *Walk with Gandhi*, the haiku use imagery based on Gandhi's life to create moments of insight that also resonate with contemporary life. While the book doesn't teach about haiku structure, some of Rosenstock's haiku do showcase the power of the form by presenting particular moments—actual or imagined—from Gandhi's life, such as seeing a bird, touching a cold railing, or having a thorn extracted from a foot. Some of the illustrations depict realistic scenes, while others include visual symbolism or metaphors. Each spread of the book also includes prose commentary that provides educational notes and quotes, and at times highlights parallels with Irish culture and language. Keeping in mind the

challenge Rosenstock has set for himself with the multiple purposes of this book, I come away with a positive impression overall.

Still, I feel that the book's aims of teaching history and representing Gandhi's ideas—while also making connections between Indian and Irish culture—are demanding purposes to ask of poetry, and that they burden the haiku in *Walk with Gandhi*. However, given that delivering this content through haiku would be a challenge under any writer's hand, I think Rosenstock manages to strike a good balance in several of the pieces, including the following:

not alone ...	the fast begins ...
a spider shares	louder and louder
your prison cell	the chirping of birds
a hand	
like any other hand ...	
the untouchables	

The less successful haiku, especially when considered together with their companion illustrations, often still work well as “little vignettes, snapshots” (as all the pieces are described in the book's introduction). However, many of the haiku either lack a cut, use too many abstractions, or involve too much “telling” (versus showing through imagery and juxtaposition), and rely on the companion illustration to complete their meaning:

let's see ...
 what empire is on the rise
 what empire wanes?

(The piece immediately above is paired with an illustration of Gandhi reading a newspaper.)

Christian, Jew,
 Hindu, Mohammedan
 ... God has no religion

(The piece immediately above is paired with an illustration of four people without their faces painted in.)

The more successful of those pieces dealing with abstract themes also include more concrete imagery:

birds of peace	our hearts
catch fire ...	no longer hear it ...
skies redden and darken	spinning wheel

Though the prose commentaries add interesting and informative details of Gandhi's life and thinking, at times I felt they weren't in sync with the haiku idea presented on the same page. And in some cases, I found that the prose notes contained a kernel of insight or lived experience that perhaps would have made a more interesting haiku than the one actually paired with it.

Still, because of its poetic presentation, I feel that this will be an appealing and compelling book for young people learning about Gandhi's work and life. The book also contains useful questions for reflection and a timeline. Ending the book's haiku sequence with Gandhi's death, Rosenstock leaves the reader with one of the more noteworthy pieces in this ambitious collection:

silence amid ruins
 ... a doll's voicebox
 broken