PERFECTION: AN ARS POETICA

The archer fish knows refraction.
As it spits from its tropical mire
to shoot down crickets for dinner,
it adjusts for the kink in light—
the light that shifts direction
from water to air,
from the imposition of its world
to the world above, of heaven.
Is this a marvel of creation,
a piece of the grand design,
or an accident of evolution?
Or is this miracle simply gained
from the need to feed—
trial and error that perfects the poem?

MICHAEL DYLAN WELCH

photo by Dean Davis

Michael Dylan Welch has had his poems engraved in stone, printed on balloons, and read for the Empress of Japan and at the Baseball Hall of Fame. In 2012 one of his translations from the Japanese was printed on the back of 150 million U.S. postage stamps, and that same year he was keynote speaker for the Haiku International Association annual conference in Tokyo. He has published his poems, essays, and reviews in more than twenty languages in hundreds of journals and anthologies and dozens of books. He lives in Sammamish, Washington, and served two terms as poet laureate for nearby Redmond, where he is also president of the Redmond Association of Spokenword and curator of SoulFood Poetry Night. Michael runs National Haiku Writing Month (www.nahaiwrimo.com) and his personal website, devoted mostly to haiku, is www.graceguts.com.