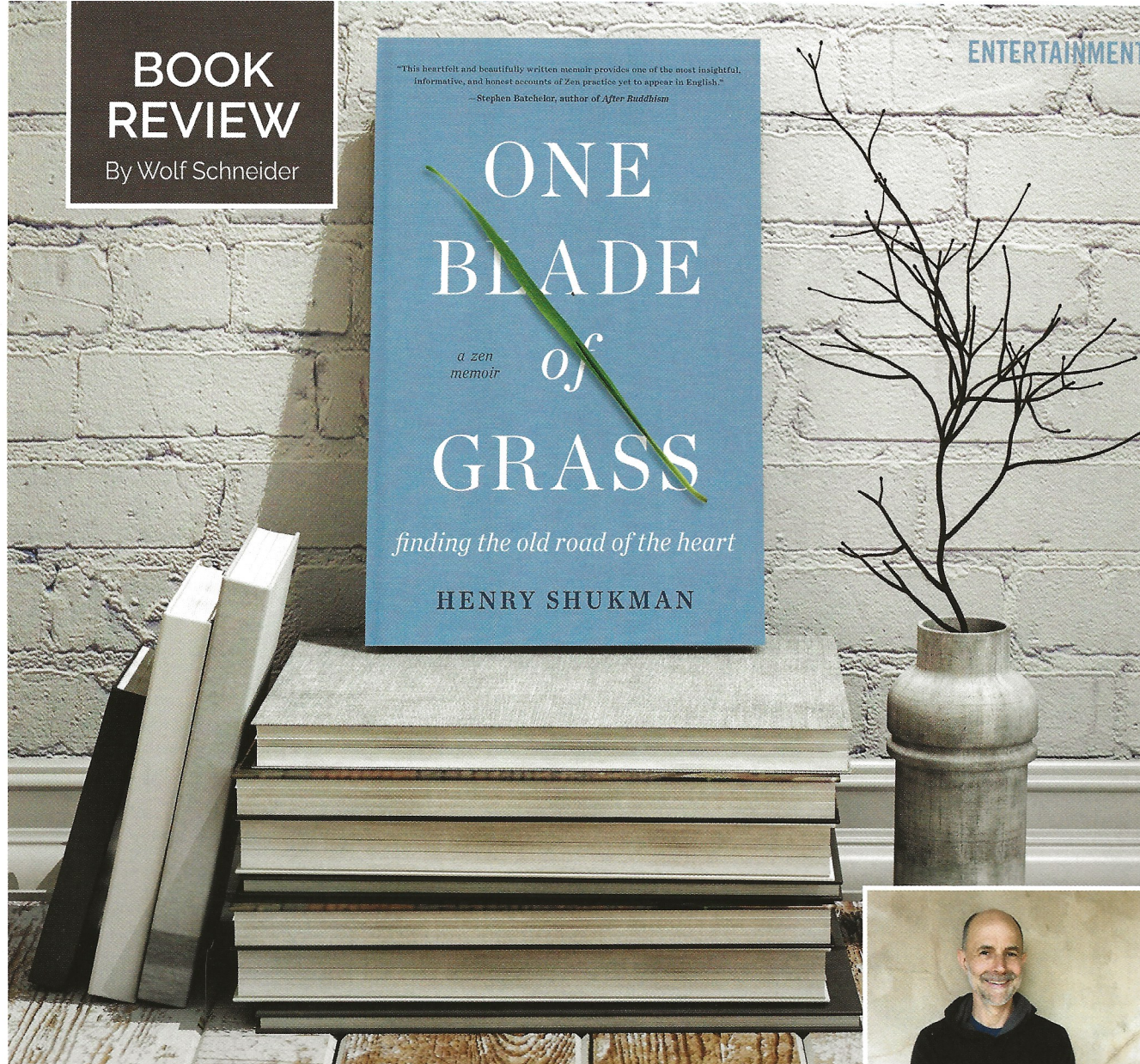


BOOK REVIEW

By Wolf Schneider

ENTERTAINMENT



ONE BLADE OF GRASS

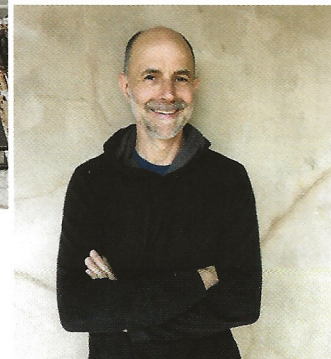
FINDING THE OLD ROAD OF THE HEART, A ZEN MEMOIR

IN HIS DEEPLY HONEST CHRONICLE *One Blade of Grass: Finding the Old Road of the Heart, A Zen Memoir*, author Henry Shukman traces his life path from anxious English teenager to travel writer to Zen teacher who now runs the Mountain Cloud Zen Center in Santa Fe.

Growing up in Oxford with academic parents who divorced, the angsty Shukman suffered from eczema and depression. Everything improved when he went to work at an *estancia* in Argentina, experiencing a spiritual awakening there. For years afterward, Shukman wandered the globe as a travel writer, poet, and author. He first came to New Mexico to write about the vestiges of D.H. Lawrence's time here. Shukman got his start in Zen here too, while also being struck by the landscape. He writes, "I fell in love with the hills around Santa Fe, hills of chunky

red earth, fragrant with small pines and juniper. I fell in love with the town too, its ocher mud buildings sitting squat and hunched under the sky, fragrant with the wood smoke that began to be burned as autumn rolled in, overseen every day by sunsets that were apocalyptic, with pillars of cloud smoking over the city, and late sunlight flooding the streets."

Now *that's* description. There's plenty to realize in this book about meditation and Zen wisdom, and yet there's so much more, too. Shukman expresses his depth of feelings, insights, and observations with an incisive candor that is magnetic. Whether recounting how he helps an old man to die, speculating on causes and effects in daily relationships, studying with his spiritual teachers as he progresses from Zen student to teacher, describing the angles of the Jemez Mountains, or finding peace within, he taps into so many things worth knowing. ■



Henry Shukman ©Luke Wientzen