

Notes on #Twenga8

Renga is a thousand year old Japanese form of extended haiku written by multiple authors. It is an incredibly successful shared artform displaying complex and sophisticated ways of collaborating and organizing space, time and thinking.

Paul Conneally (Master Poet) and myself (Gavin Wade – Host Poet) have written a new form of renga into being on Twitter that we christened Twenga. This new form breaks many renga rules but developed new ones. In Twenga 1-6 we wrote alternate verses, switching a couple times across the 100 verses from the two line verse to the three line verse, introducing other writers across the Twengas. Twenga 7 was a full on shared writing experience between 7 writers – a twitter version of the original renga meetings.

In this next Twenga (8) we have adapted the traditional schema that we used for Twenga 7 – a hyakuin schema devised according to the pattern used by the poet Sogi in his "Solo Sequence of 1492". The schema provides a theme for each verse such as Autumn, love or lamentations which underpins the position you write from, always in the present.

The key writing principle in renga and twenga is link and shift. What this means is that after Paul has written the first verse (hokku), our second verse (wakiku) must link to the first but also shift away from the subject, place or particular items used in the previous verse. Then we all write a third verse (daisan) which whilst linking and shifting to the wakiku must in no way link to the hokku. One persons verse is picked each time, or sometimes combined. Sounds complicated but it's not. It's a way of moving around the world, responding to what is around you, in your memories and in your imagination.

Just to reiterate, it is most vital to twenga that one verse not be followed by a verse with repeated or associated links. A link with "snow" should not have "icehouse" in the following one. It is in the leaps between the verses that lies the beauty of the twenga. The link must be close enough for the reader to follow but far away enough to avoid a repeat.

It may be useful for you to know that renga and twenga should be read out loud. You should try it. It's even better when you read it with some one else and take it in turns to read two or three verses at a time. Another point worth mentioning is that the 100th verse also links back to the hokku, so that it makes a loop.

#Twenga 8 Schema

SHEET ONE - SIDE ONE

1. winter
2. winter
3. autumn Moon
4. autumn
5. equality
6. misc.
7. summer
8. summer

SHEET ONE - SIDE TWO

9. travel
10. travel
11. urgent actions
12. love
13. love
14. love
15. spring Flowers
16. spring
17. spring
18. autumn Moon
19. autumn
20. autumn
21. equality
22. summer

SHEET TWO - SIDE ONE

23. lamentations
24. urgent actions
25. misc.
26. misc.
27. spring Flowers
28. spring
29. spring love
30. love
31. love
32. love
33. misc.
34. travel
35. autumn travel
36. autumn Moon

SHEET TWO - SIDE TWO

37. autumn
38. love
39. love
40. equality
41. lamentations
42. misc.
43. misc.
44. misc.
45. misc.
46. misc.
47. travel
48. travel
49. love
50. love

SHEET THREE - SIDE ONE

51. love
52. religion
53. equality
54. autumn Moon
55. autumn
56. autumn
57. travel
58. love
59. love
60. spring Flower
61. spring
62. spring
63. travel
64. lamentations

SHEET THREE - SIDE TWO

65. autumn Moon
66. autumn
67. autumn
68. urgent actions
69. equality
70. misc.
71. spring Flower
72. spring
73. spring
74. travel
75. travel
76. travel
77. love
78. love

SHEET FOUR - SIDE ONE

79. love
80. misc.
81. urgent actions
82. winter
83. winter
84. travel and love
85. love
86. summer
87. summer
88. misc.
89. misc.
90. misc.
91. autumn
92. autumn Moon

SHEET FOUR - SIDE TWO

93. autumn

94. misc.

95. spring Flower

96. spring

97. spring religion

98. equality

99. misc.

100. misc.