

Notes on #Twenga9

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.

Twenga is an eight year old form of renga, written using twitter, developed by Paul Conneally (Master Poet) and myself (Gavin Wade – Host Poet). This new form breaks and maintains many traditional renga rules and develops 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 new Twenga (9) we have continued to adapt 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". Gavin altered it for 8 and Paul has altered the 8 version once more, now beginning in Spring and also introducing new themes including different continents. 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 person's 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 9 Schema

SHEET ONE - SIDE ONE

1. spring
2. spring
3. spring blossom
4. misc.
5. equality
6. winter
7. travel
8. travel

SHEET ONE - SIDE TWO

9. summer
10. summer
11. urgent actions
12. love
13. love
14. love
15. autumn
16. autumn moon
17. autumn
18. misc.
19. spring
20. spring flowers
21. spring
22. europe

SHEET TWO - SIDE ONE

23. lamentations
24. urgent actions
25. misc.
26. misc.
27. winter
28. winter love
29. love
30. love
31. love
32. asia
33. underwater
34. misc.
35. summer travel
36. summer moon

SHEET TWO - SIDE TWO

37. familial love
38. love romantic
39. love sexual
40. equality
41. lamentations
42. winter
43. winter
44. africa
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. winter moon
66. winter
67. north america
68. urgent actions
69. equality
70. misc.
71. summer flower
72. summer mountain
73. misc
74. travel
75. travel
76. travel
77. love
78. love

SHEET FOUR - SIDE ONE

79. love
80. antartica
81. spring moon
82. spring
83. spring
84. travel and love
85. love
86. autumn
87. autumn
88. autumn animal
89. misc.
90. oceana
91. winter
92. winter

SHEET FOUR - SIDE TWO

93. misc.

94. misc.

95. spring flower

96. spring

97. spring religion

98. equality

99. misc.

100. misc.