

# **Six Songs on Japanese Verse**

A Cycle About Life, Love and Loss: A Contemporary  
Interpretation of Universal Themes.

For soprano and piano.

Japanese verse from ancient as well as modern times.

Translations by authorities in the scene of Japanese literature.

Composed in spring 2020 by Maurick Reuser.

Ki Tsurayuki (868-946)  
(tr. Geoffrey Bownas)

# I. The Spring Mountains

Maurick Reuser

**Allegro non troppo** (♩ = 60-65)

Soprano

Piano

3

**mf cantabile**

I crossed the spring moun - tains,

*legato*

6

**poco ritenuto**

Spring of the ca - tal - pa bow,

8

**a tempo** *crescendo*

I crossed, I crossed the

*crescendo*

10

*più dolce*

*f* Spring moun-tains, Of the ca-tal-pa bow. Ca-tal -

*f* *simile*  
*diminuendo*

13

pa bow!

8

*p* *tr* *m.d.* *m.s.*

16

*mf* *sonore*

And the track could not be cleared,

*legato* *mp* 3

19

*poco ritenuto*

So man - y, man - y flow - ers,

*poco ritenuto*

**a tempo**

*p* **crescendo poco a poco**

So o

*8va al loco* *pp* **mysterioso** *simile* **crescendo poco a poco**

man-y, So, so man - y, so man - y flow - ers, So man - y

**allargando**

**poco meno mosso**

had fall - en, The track could not be

*marcato* **f**

**tempo primo**

**poco ritenuto**

cleared, The flow - ers, had fall - en, so man - y, did

*mf*

33

**a tempo**

fall.

*pp*

*crescendo poco a poco*

36

38

*f*

*loco*

40

*mf*

I crossed the moun - tains, I crossed the

*tr*

*tr*

*legato*

*mf*

*mp*

43

*crescendo*

spring moun - tains, And the, and the track could not, not be

*crescendo*

*en dehors*

46

**f**

cleared.

**f**

*crescendo*

48

**molto rallentando**

**mf**

*perdendosi*

50

**a tempo**

**rallentando**

3'15"

**pp**

*dolce*

*morendo*

**Ped.** \*

# IIa. After the Kiss

Miki Rofu (1889 - 1964)

(tr. Geoffrey Bownas)

Maurick Reuser

**Recitativo accompagnato** (♩ = 80)  
*p rubato, un poco parlando*

Soprano

Piano

*poco rit.*

'Are you a - sleep?', — 'No', — you say. —

5 *a tempo* *poco f* *più dolce* *poco rall.* *a tempo*

Flow-ers in May, — Flower-ing at noon.

9 *p* *più f* *più p* *pp*

In the lake side grass, — Un-der the sun, — 'I could close my eyes and die here,' you say.

16 *mp crescendo* *f* *pp* *attaca*

The musical score is written for Soprano and Piano. It begins with a tempo of 80 beats per minute and a style of recitativo accompagnato. The Soprano part has lyrics: "'Are you a - sleep?', — 'No', — you say. —". The Piano accompaniment starts with a piano (*p*) dynamic. The score is divided into systems. The second system (measures 5-8) has lyrics: "Flow-ers in May, — Flower-ing at noon." and includes performance markings: *a tempo*, *poco f*, *più dolce*, *poco rall.*, and *a tempo*. The third system (measures 9-15) has lyrics: "In the lake side grass, — Un-der the sun, — 'I could close my eyes and die here,' you say." and includes dynamics: *p*, *più f*, *più p*, and *pp*. The fourth system (measures 16-20) includes dynamics: *mp crescendo*, *f*, and *pp*, and ends with the instruction *attaca*. The piano part features various textures, including sustained chords and moving lines in both hands.

Shiraishi Kazuko (b. 1931)  
(tr. Geoffrey Bownas)

# IIb. The Pond

Maurick Reuser

**Andante con moto** ( $\text{♩} = 65-70$ ) *mp cantabile* **poco rit.**

Soprano

Piano

*p dolce e cantabile*

*Red. Red. Red. \**

5 **a tempo**

8 *en dehors*

11 *crescendo*

*crescendo*

'Go home,' I said, 'To-night I  
don't want you, so go home,' I said.  
'Go home,' I  
said, sniff-ling sob-bing you went off and sniff-ling sob-bing,



13

*diminuendo* **molto rallentando** **poco a tempo**

I \_\_\_\_\_ have no place to go back to. \_\_\_\_\_

*legato cantabile*

*mp* *simile*

*diminuendo*

16

*mp*

Your \_\_\_\_\_ path as you went weep - ing \_\_\_\_\_ from my heart, \_\_\_\_\_ I \_\_\_\_\_

19

*mf* **più animato**

traced \_\_\_\_\_ a - gain and a - gain. \_\_\_\_\_ Your \_\_\_\_\_ tear \_\_\_\_\_ stains, \_\_\_\_\_ spread a - cross \_\_\_\_\_ my

*crescendo*

*crescendo*

22

**poco ritenuto**

bod - y \_\_\_\_\_ To be - come a pond, \_\_\_\_\_ and that pond \_\_\_\_\_ en - gulfed \_\_\_\_\_ my heart, my heart \_\_\_\_\_ That

*diminuendo*

24 **a tempo** **rallentando** **a tempo**

night I went to sleep, that night...

*pp e con amabilità*

*Red.* *m.d.* *m.s.*

26

*più p* *mf*

29 **ritenuto** **tempo primo**

That pond en-

*sub. più f* *p dolce e cantabile*

32

gulfed my heart, your tear stains...

*più forte* *p*

*Red.*

poco rall.

a tempo

non rit.

8

*pp* *ppp* *p* *pp* *morendo*

\* *Led.* *Led.*

### III. What a Delight It Is

Tachibana Akemi (1812-1868)  
(tr. Geoffrey Bownas)

Poems of solitary delight

Maurick Reuser

**Allegro comodo** (♩ = 120) *mp cantabile semplice*

Soprano

What a de - light it is, when on the bam-boo mat-ting

Piano

*mp con pedale* *non legato* *simile* *p*

9

in my grass thatchet hut, all on my own, I make myself at ease.

*f ma non troppo* *simile*

18

*mf*

What a de - light it is, — when bor - row - ing rare writ - ings from a friend, I o - pen

*p legato*

out, the first sheet. — What a de - light it is, —

*p*

*mp* *pp*

— when skim - ming through the pa - ges of a book, I dis - co - ver there a man, a man writ - ten of

*p* *crescendo*

there, who is just like me. —

*mf* *crescendo* *mf*

65

*mp*

What a de - light it is, when all\_ say it is a ve-ry difficult book, and I under stand it with no trouble at

*p legato*

74

*ritenuto*

all.

*mf f p mf*

85

*più mosso*  
*p* *mysterioso e poco rubato*

*stringendo*

What a de-light it is, when I blow a - way the ash, \_\_\_\_\_ to watch the crim son of the glow - ing fire, \_\_\_\_\_

*p* *crescendo*

93

*molto allargando* *ff* *tempo primo*

\_\_\_\_\_ and hear the wa - ter \_\_\_\_\_ boil. \_\_\_\_\_

*ff* *mp*

101

*poco rit.*   *accelerando*   *allargando*   *a tempo*   *rallentando*

107

*tempo primo*

*mf cantabile semplice*

What a de - light it is, when a guest you

114

can - not stand ar - rives, then says to you 'I'm af - raid I can't stay long,' and soon goes

120

home.

*più f*

*mf*

*mf*

What a de - light it is, when I find a good brush and Steep it hard in wa-ter, lick it on my

*mp molto legato*

tongue and give it its first try...

*legato*

*mp dolce e più cantabile*

What a de - light it is, when spread - ing pa - per, I take my brush, and

*p simile*

find my hand bet-ter than I thought.

*mf*

*Red.* \* *simile*

*p misterioso*

What a de - light it is, when af-ter hundred days, of rack-ing my brains, that verse, that wouldn't come,

*pp*

*Red.* \*

sudden-ly, turns out well.

*mp dolce*

*ritenuto*

*calmando*

*a tempo*

*rallentando*

*p* *mp* *mf*



195 **Larghetto** (♩ = 55)  
*mp cantabile sostenuto*

What a de - light it is, when of a morn - ing, I get up and

*p ma non troppo* *sub. p* *sub. p*

Detailed description: This system contains measures 195 to 198. The vocal line is in treble clef with a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#). The piano accompaniment is in grand staff. The music is in a 3/4 time signature that changes to 5/4 and back to 3/4. Dynamics include *mp cantabile sostenuto*, *p ma non troppo*, and *sub. p*.

go out, to find in full bloom a flow - er, a

*più crescendo* *più f*

Detailed description: This system contains measures 199 to 201. The vocal line continues in treble clef. The piano accompaniment features a *più crescendo* and *più f* dynamic marking. The time signature changes to 5/4 and then 7/8.

flow - er, that yes - ter - day was not there.

*ritenuto molto* *meno f*

Detailed description: This system contains measures 202 to 204. The vocal line ends with a fermata. The piano accompaniment is marked *ritenuto molto* and *meno f*. The time signature changes to 3/4 and then 2/4.

205 **Quasi a tempo primo, ma assai meno mosso** (♩ = 110) **non ritenuto** 4'30"

*mp con tenerezza*

Detailed description: This system contains measures 205 to 208. The vocal line is mostly silent, indicated by a long horizontal line. The piano accompaniment is in grand staff, marked *mp con tenerezza*. The time signature is 2/4. A rehearsal mark is present at the end of the system.

# IV. Like the Pearl of Dew

Lady Kasa (mid-late 8th century)  
From Six tanka written for Yakamochi

Intermezzo

Maurick Reuser

**Adagio religioso** (♩ = 65) **molto rall.** **a tempo**

Soprano

Piano

*p*

*legato 5 poco crescendo*

**rallentando** **a tempo**

*mp* *pp* *f* *sub.p*

**più mosso** (♩ = 80) *mf legato*

Like the pearl of dew, in the grass in my garden, in the

eve - ning sha - dows, I shall be no more.

*più f* *sub. meno f* *mp* **rallentando**

The score is written for Soprano and Piano. It begins in 4/4 time with a tempo of Adagio religioso (♩ = 65). The piano part features a complex accompaniment with many five-finger chords. The tempo changes to molto rallentando and then back to a tempo. The score includes dynamic markings such as p, mp, pp, f, and sub.p. The lyrics are in English and describe a scene of dew in a garden. The score ends with a final rallentando.

13 a tempo

ritenuto

a tempo

16 rallentando

Poco allegro (♩ = 45)

Lady Heguri - A thousand years you said  
*mp cantabile*

23

29

poco rall.

ritenuto

2'40"

# V. Like the leaves

Adagio ♩ = 65 ritenuto

Soprano

Piano

*f marcato e molto crescendo* *fff p* *mp smorzando*

6 **Andante dolente** ♩ = 75

*mp legato* *poco arpeggiato* *crescendo* *mf diminuendo*

12 *mp cantabile sostenuto* *crescendo* 3

I loved her like the leaves, the lush leaves of spring, that weighed the branches of the

16 3 3

wil - lows standing on the jut ting bank, where we two walked to-gether, while

19 *rallentando* *diminuendo* *a tempo* *mp*

she was \_\_\_ of this world. \_\_\_ My life was built on her; but man \_\_\_ can not \_\_\_ flout the

23 *rallentando* *più mosso* (♩ = 90) *p* *crescendo poco a poco*

laws \_\_\_ of this world. To the wide fields \_\_\_

26 *f*

\_\_\_ where the heat haze shimmer - s hid - den \_\_\_ in a white cloud, \_\_\_ white as

29 *più animato* *mf*

white \_\_\_ mul - ber - ry - rope, she soared like \_\_\_ the morning bird, \_\_\_

32 *f* *molto ritenuto* *più mosso* (♩ = 100) *mf scherzando*

hid - den from our world, like the set - ting sun. The

*mf* *mp poco scherzando*

*legato ma poco meccanicamente*

35

child she left as token, whimpers, begs for food, but always find-ing, finding

*en dehors*

39 *poco rit. cantabile* *l'istesso tempo* (♩ = 100)

nothing I might give, like birds, like birds that ga - ther rice-heads in their beaks,

*dolce e molto legato*

*Red.* *Red.* *Red.* *Red.*

42 *crescendo* *diminuendo*

I pick him up and clasp him in my arms, and clasp him in my arms.

*crescendo* *diminuendo*

*Red.*

By the pil-low where welay, my

*p poco arpeggiato*

\* *red.* \*

wife and I as one, the day - light I pass, lone - ly till the dusk, the

*crescendo*

black night I lie, sigh-ing till the dawn. I grieve, yet know no

*poco rit. a tempo f*

rem - e - dy, I pine yet have no way to meet her

*simile*

*crescendo* *diminuendo*

*p crescendo*  
The one I love, men say,

*p*

is in the hills of Ha - gai, so I la - bour my way there, smash-ing

*sempre legato*

*p simile* *p* *p* *p* *p* *p*

*diminuendo* *poco rit.* *a tempo* *crescendo*

rock - roots in my path, yet get no joy from it,

*p* *p crescendo*



68

for, as I knew her in this world, I

70

*poco diminuendo* find not the dim - mest trace. *perdendosi*

72

*poco ritenuto* *a tempo* *rallentando*

*diminuendo* *mp legato*

77

*Adagio ma con moto* ♩ = 65 *rallentando* 4'30"

*p poco crescendo* *ff* *p* *mp* *perdendosi*

*Ped.*

# VI. Rather Than Cry

**Poco allegro** ♩ = 116-120

Soprano

Piano

*ff*

*sf*

5

*legato*

*p*

*marcato*

8

*p*

11

*f*

*f*

*mp cantabile grazioso*

It was in a

*più f* *mf e dolce* *mp*

dream, what year, what night, I donot re - mem - ber, that I met her, —

*p simile*

— she'll be dead and gone by now. —

*con moto*

Hea - vy lar - ding of oil on her black hair, white as the fur\_ of a

*simile*

32

*risoluto*

rab - bit dy - ing in tor - ment, her thick pow - der, blood

35

col - oured lip - stick daubed on her mouth.

*crescendo*

38

*poco ritenuto*

*diminuendo*

40

*tempo primo* *mf poco scherzando*

A - mong a crowd of girls she

*mf* *simile* *mp*

45

rallentando

sang filthy songs one after another, to a sprightly samisen.

49

a tempo *p* crescendo poco a poco

Putting down, as if it, it were water, stuff that took the skin,

52

poco allarg. a tempo

off your tongue. By her side young sprouts of twenty

56

più precipitato più accelerando

not drink-ing...

Red.

60 **Vivace** (♩ = 138) **p** gloomy

"Why sing like this?" I

*pp* *leggiero* *crescendo poco a poco*

This system contains measures 60, 61, and 62. The vocal line is in treble clef with a 2/2 time signature. The piano accompaniment consists of two staves (treble and bass clefs) with a 2/2 time signature. The piano part features a steady eighth-note accompaniment. The lyrics are: "Why sing like this?" I

asked, in a dream

This system contains measures 63, 64, and 65. The vocal line continues with a long note in measure 63. The piano accompaniment continues with the same eighth-note pattern. The lyrics are: asked, in a dream

and she re - plied,

This system contains measures 66, 67, and 68. The vocal line has a long note in measure 66. The piano accompaniment continues with the same eighth-note pattern. The lyrics are: and she re - plied,

with a drunk - en flushed

*diminuendo*

This system contains measures 69, 70, and 71. The vocal line has a long note in measure 69. The piano accompaniment continues with the same eighth-note pattern. The lyrics are: with a drunk - en flushed

72

**slentando**

laugh, \_\_\_\_\_

74

**stringendo**

*mp*

**poco allargando**

**Vivace**

'Rath - er than cry...'

*p crescendo molto* *ff* *sf*

78

2'50"

*p* *ff* *sf*

Kakinomoto Hitomaro (± 650-750)  
(tr. Geoffrey Bownas)

# The Autumn Moon

## Epilogue

Maurick Reuser

**Adagio** ♩ = 60      **poco rit.**      **a tempo**      **rallentando**

Soprano

Piano

*mp legato*

*calmando*

4 **a tempo**      *mp molto cantabile*

The au - tumn moon,

*p* *legato*

7 *p* *crescendo*

we saw last year, shines a - gain,

*pp* *crescendo* *m.d.* *m.s.*

10 *mf*

shines a - gain.

*mp*



12

*mp* *crescendo*

But she who was with me then,

15

*diminuendo*

The years sep - a - rate

18

*poco rit.* *a tempo*

for ev - er.

*colla voce* *mp legato*

21

*rallentando*

*calmando* *dolce*

1'40"