

the eight directions of the wind

Edmund de Waal at The Huntington

on porcelain

Wu-Chüeh: Two Poems

Tu Fu (712–770)

No. 1

Lingering sun: rivers and mountains brighten.
Spring winds: flowers and grass give out scent.
Soil thaws and swallows fly.
On the warm sand sleeping, drake-and-duck.

No. 2

Jade river: birds are dazzling white and whiter.
Green mountains: flowers seem to flame.
This spring: look! is going.
What day is the day of return?

Tu Fu, “Wu-Chüeh: Two Poems,” in *Chinese Poetry: An Anthology of Major Modes and Genres*, 2nd ed., Revised, trans. and ed. Wai-lim Yip, p. 232. Copyright 1997, Duke University Press. All rights reserved. Republished by permission of the copyright holder, and the Publisher. www.dukeupress.edu.

To See a Friend Off

Wang Wei (699–761)

Dismount and drink this wine.
Where to? I ask
At odds with the world:
Return to rest by the South Hill.
Go. Go. Do not ask again.
Endless, the white clouds.

Wang Wei, “To See a Friend Off,” in *Chinese Poetry: An Anthology of Major Modes and Genres*, 2nd ed., Revised, trans. and ed. Wai-lim Yip, p. 247. Copyright 1997, Duke University Press. All rights reserved. Republished by permission of the copyright holder, and the Publisher. www.dukeupress.edu.

Taking Leave of a Friend

Li Po (701–762)

Green mountains lie across the north wall.
White water winds the east city.
Here once we part,
Lone tumbleweed; a million miles to travel.
Floating clouds; a wanderer's mood.
Setting sun; an old friend's feeling.
We wave hands, you go from here.
Neigh, neigh goes the horse at parting.

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Spring Scene

Tu Fu (712–770)

All ruins, the empire; mountains and rivers in view.
To the city, spring: grass and trees so thick.
The times strike. Before flowers, tears break loose.
Separation cuts. Birds startle our heart.
Beacon fires continued for three months on end.
A letter from home is worth thousands of gold pieces.
White hair, scratched, becomes thinner and thinner,
So thin it can hardly hold a pin.

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River Snow

Liu Tsung-yuan (773–819)

A thousand mountains—no bird's flight.
A million paths—no man's trace.
Single boat. Bamboo-leaved cape. An old man
Fishing by himself: ice-river. Snow.

Liu Tsung-yuan, "River Snow," in *Chinese Poetry: An Anthology of Major Modes and Genres*, 2nd ed., Revised, trans. and ed. Wai-lim Yip, p. 234. Copyright 1997, Duke University Press. All rights reserved. Republished by permission of the copyright holder, and the Publisher. www.dukeupress.edu.