

# the heart of a haiku

a space for a little poem  
to weave its magic!

part 2  
the resonance

I continue with rasa and resonance today, for rasa plays a very important role in how Indians understand art forms and resonance plays an equally important and crucial role in haiku.

What is rasa?

What is that 'something' that gives sugar its sweetness?

That is what rasa — the aesthetic essence — is to a work of art. Just as the wave is part of the ocean but still rises repeatedly from the ocean and reaches the shore to touch you, so is 'rasa' an intrinsic part of any work of art, but arises constantly out of that art to touch your being. That 'connect' I spoke about last Monday.

Rasa means the aesthetic emotion - a flavour, the distilled essence of the mood created in the listener's mind — the residue left in our minds after we appreciate a piece of art.

Haiku relies on resonance. As I've told you, I have been drawn to a particular haiku a number of times simply because the poem continues to echo in my mind and begins to live in my memory . . . it reverberates, adding more texture and resonance as the years pass.

Enjoy these haiku, which I don't think need explanation. Do give special attention to the way words reflect and link to one another, giving unity and completeness to the words coming together as a poem. See how Basho uses a filming technique of zooming in on a whitefish. Nick Virgilio's 'lily' became world famous, and most of us have tried our version of 'out of itself!' It all culminates in the 'haiku spirit,' of which poets speak so highly. .

If a certain haiku flies above your head, let it go. Move on to the next one, but do come back to it later!

After the storm  
a boy wiping the sky  
from the tables

— Darko Plazanin Sambo

In the twilight of dawn  
A whitefish, with an inch  
Of whiteness

— Matsua Basho  
Tr. by Makoto Ueda

lily . . .  
out of the water  
out of itself

— Nick Virgilio

far down the railroad tracks  
the brakeman's lantern  
gets lost among the fireflies

— Alan Pizzarelli

spring scents  
the dog and I walk  
through different worlds

— Kirsty Karkow

night songs  
gathering oneness  
a wolf's howl

— Kala Ramesh

above the moor  
not attached to anything  
a skylark sings

— Matsua Basho  
Tr. by Makoto Ueda

doing laundry  
at the river's edge  
the flow of gossip

— Angelee Deodhar

migrating geese—  
the things we thought we needed  
darken the garage

— Chad Lee Robinson

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Passionate about taking haiku to everyday spaces, **Kala Ramesh** initiated the 'HaikuWALL India,' where she gets graffiti artists to paint haiku on city walls. As an external faculty member of the Symbiosis School for Liberal Arts she teaches undergrads haiku and other allied Japanese short forms of poetry.

Publishing credits:

*After the storm*: Ehime Prefecture, 1990 National Cultural Festival

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*far down the railroad tracks:* Paperclips Press Here 2001  
*spring scents:* shorelines 2007.  
*night songs:* cattails – January 2016  
*above the moor:* Basho and his Interpreters by Makoto Ueda  
*doing laundry:* Asahi Shimbun, May 2014.  
*migrating geese:* The Heron's Nest XIII.1