

a woman
a woman's body—
the flowering quince
—IPPEKIRO NAKATSUKA

stepping around
the moss blossoms—
yearning for someone
—TEIJO NAKAMURA

the irises—
I break off a stem
and go to my love
—KIYOKO UDA

rose fragrance—
our first night
folds into whitening skies
—SOJO HINO

in the dark
where you undress
a blooming iris
—NOBUKO KATSURA

the fire in my heart
can light
the withered fields
—KIKUNO INAGAKI

I turn off the light—
my heart a precipice
before the moon
—SHUSON KATO

moonflowers—
the deep folds
begin to open
—HISAJI SUGITA

the body arches
at its rainbow peak—
“petite morte”
—JUSHIN (SHIGENOBU) TAKAYANAGI

rainy cottage—
after lovemaking
the scent of jasmine tea
—IKUYO YOSHIMURA

shall we die together,
my lover whispers—
evening fireflies
—MASAJI SUZUKI

the nape of his neck
draws me in—
moth to flame
—MASAJI SUZUKI

longing to kiss-sip
your round eyes—
autumn mist
—DAKOTSU HIDA

sharing this pomegranate
with you—
I split it open
—TAKEO NAKAJIMA

nights of spring—
tides swelling within me
as I'm embraced
—YOSHIKO YOSHINO



Haiku is celebrated as a concise form of poetry able to convey a singular moment with great clarity. While haiku most often depicts the natural world, when focused on the elements of love and sensuality, haiku can be a powerful vehicle for evoking the universal experience of love. Written by contemporary Japanese poets as well as by haiku masters, these poems share not only the haiku poets' visions for love, but also their visions of the poignant moments that express it.

—Artwork by Ioana Grecu. Text excerpted from *Love Haiku* (© 2010 Shambala Publications), translated and edited by Patricia Donegan with Yoshie Ishibashi. Compiled by Carrie Grossman.