

Summary of Jouni Tossavainen's introduction to "Nature Poetry"

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In classical Chinese poetry, man and nature blend the same way I try to blend words and images online. That is why the motto of my blog *Word and Image* ("Kuva ja sana | Word as Image") is a text by the Chinese 11th century artist Guo Xi:

"A poem is a painting without form, and a painting is a poem with form."

Today, nature poetry leads us to the fundamental complications of thinking, writing, and politics. At the end of the day, nature poetry is not about individual texts or the correct interpretation of art; instead, it is about our survival.

A writer who is a poet by nature has difficulties knowing what we are talking about when we broach the topic of "nature". Where is the dividing line between nature and culture (if it ever existed) when current technology is able to create living organisms? What is the nature that modern man is destroying?

What is the poetry that we humans have thus far implemented and that is now also expected to take the future of our planet into consideration? Is the nature of an animal something else, something which can be reached by, for example, the Sami artist Nils-Aslak Valkeapää more readily than by academic scientific knowledge?

While climate change is, for science and scientists, an undeniable fact, writing poetry about it is a greater challenge than ever. It is a question of more than basic facts – it is a question of small details which make language enjoyable in the tsunami of societal, gender-polarized, racial, and geographical information.

Whose voice rings out as nature is destroyed? Are the poets who write their lines on wood and paper responsible for the ecocide of forests? Is it possible for a poet to write about nature, or anything else for that matter exclusively in the name of humans?