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Bashō's Parting with Sora

This painting, which falls in the category of 'Haiga' (a genre of Japanese painting expressing the spirit of *haikai*), is one of several by Yosa Buson (1716-83) on the subject of Bashō's (1644-94) *Oku no hosomichi*, the record of his pilgrimage through the northern regions of Japan that he made in 1689. This painting was made by Buson in 1778 in his sixtieth year, six years prior to his death.

The scene appears at the latter part of the horizontal scroll. Sora, Bashō's disciple, having fallen ill, is bidding farewell to his master at the Yamanaka Hot Springs to depart for his native Ise province to recuperate.

Buson, one of the greatest figures in the *haikai* tradition founded by Bashō, is also well-known for the excellence of his paintings. This is considered one of his masterpieces.