Bashō: Wanderer and Poet
Bashō: Wanderer to Poet

- Born in 1644 near Kyoto
- Son of a low-ranking samurai
- Served as a page to the son of a feudal lord
Bashō: Early Poetry

- Feudal lord’s son introduces Bashō to poetry
- Bashō’s earliest poem written when he was 18 under the name Sōbō
- Poems appeared in print
Bashō Leaves Home

- Bashō’s friend and employer dies abruptly
- Bashō was young and ambitious
- Possible scandal involving a woman or women
Bashō Goes to Edo

Clouds will separate
Two friends, after migrating
Wild goose’s departure.

(Bashō)
Bashō: Banana Tree

- Bashō named himself after a banana tree
- It just stood there
- Its leaves were fragile and tore easily
- Its flowers were non-descript and looked “lonely”
Bashō Banana Haiku

A banana plant in the autumn gale –
I listen to the dripping rain
Into a basin at night.

(Bashō)
Bashō: Poet to Wanderer

Against the brushwood gate
Dead tea leaves swirl
In the stormy wind.

(Bashō)
Bashō’s New Hut

The sound of hail –
I am the same as before
Like that aging oak.

(Bashō)
Dead Mother’s Hair Haiku

Should I hold them in my hand
They would disappear in the warmth of my tears –
Icy strings of frost.

(Bashō)
Another year is gone –
A travel hat on my head,
Straw sandals on my feet.

(Bashō)
Weather Worn Satchel

From this day forth
I shall be called a wanderer,
Leaving on a journey
Thus among the early showers

(Bashō)
Bashō Visits Home

Myriads of things past
Are brought to my mind—
These cherry blossoms!

(Bashō)
Sado Island

The rough sea –
Extending toward Sado Isle,
The Milky Way.

(Bashō)
Bashō’s Autumn

This autumn
Why am I aging so?
Flying towards the clouds, a bird.

(Bashō)
On a journey, ailing –
My dreams roam about
Over a withered moor.

(Bashō)