

## Oriented to the Orient

The red bridge arches like a Chinese acrobat.  
Slate stones coax me over the still, green pond.

Himalayan blue poppies bow as servants  
beside the raked gravel path.

Yunnan pines flirt with dancers' fans,  
freeze in tai chi poses.

Burgundy maples drape their kimonos  
over a charming and charmed tea house.

Scarlet camellia petals tempt like nigiri sushi  
on a low banquet tray of celadon moss.

I rest against the silken sky — tiny stars embroidered —  
a blind-stitched cushion.

*by* Sidney Bending