



Ko-Uta: Little Songs of the Geisha World

Liza Crihfield

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This book of Japanese poetry and lyrics explores a little-known style of Japanese song called *Ko-Uta*.

A Ko-Uta is translated as "little song" in Japanese. Unfamiliar to most Westerners, *ko-uta* are particularly in tune with the tradition of Japan's Edo-era merchants. Some *ko-uta* are aesthetic, many are earthy.

Ko-uta are sung to the accompaniment of the *shamisen*—a traditional, three-stringed Japanese lute. *Ko-uta* come to life when they are sung, and the best example of where they live is in the geisha world. To help give some idea of the geisha world, this Japanese music book has provided a complete score of one song.

Readers with some experience with *haiku* and other forms of Japanese poetry will find that *ko-uta* share many things with those forms. Yet, *ko-uta* retain their own unique interest, making this book a fascinating addition to any collection of Japanese literature or art.



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