

The Kiyoshi and Kiyoko Tokutomi
Haiku Contest
2008

Judges:

Yoko Senda
and
Naoki Kishimoto



Prize-Winning Haiku
with Judges' Comments

First Prize - \$100

across my closed eyes
the cloud shadows come and go
spring melancholy

Desiree McMurry

The poet closes his/her eyes and sees the light and shade changing. The clouds are passing in front of the sun. How long does he/she keep his/her eyes closed? For a long time? He/she is wrapped up in spring melancholy.

Inside the small world of melancholy, the poet feels the movement of the time and the world outside through the movement of the clouds and is being cured by it. (NK)

Clouds moving like travelers in the sky stir up all kinds of feelings that are peculiar to youngsters: dream, hope, yearning, uneasiness, melancholy, etc. Spring melancholy is a subtle feeling. It is not cheerful, but is neither desperate nor hopeless. On the contrary, thanks to spring as the season full of the energy of rebirth, sometimes it can be a beautiful feeling.

By making use of clouds and the kigo, this haiku has vividly created a scene of adolescence. (YS)

Second Prize - \$50

one tiny cricket
the darkest color chirping
in the crayon box

Elinor Pihl Huggett

The cricket has the darkest color in the crayon box. This may be an ordinary fact but is certainly one discovery of the poet. The image of the darkest brown crayon chirping is fascinating. Near the crayon box on the desk in the dark room, a cricket is chirping. (NK)

What a refreshing surprise! You open a crayon box as if you were a kid, then you find a tiny, dark cricket chirping among all the colors of the rainbow. The contrast between black and rainbow colors is astonishing.

With the cute cricket, the familiar crayon box has changed into a magical music box. (YS)

Third Prize - \$25

I watch my neighbour
Watch her cat that is watching
A fallen fledgling

Lorraine Ward

A watcher is watched. The beginning is I. I watch my neighbor that watches her cat that watches a fallen fledgling. (A little like "This is the house that Jack built.") The eyes do not meet but reach a fallen fledgling. Thus a delicate fallen fledgling is stressed. The change of tense varies the rhythm attractively. (NK)

The refrain of watch/watching is very effective in this haiku. I watch my neighbour. I wonder what she is watching. She is watching her cat. Then, what is the cat watching? Well, it is watching a poor, fallen fledgling, waiting for the moment to jump on the prey, full of joy and excitement.

The movement of viewpoint creates a suspenseful atmosphere and brings our heart into our mouth. (YS)

The Kiyoshi and Kiyoko Tokutomi Haiku Contest

This contest is for English language haiku written in the traditional form in three lines of 5, 7, and 5 syllables. Each poem is required to contain one (and only one) season word from an assigned list. The poets chose from among the following kigo:

New Year:

first dream

Spring:

fledgling, spring melancholy

Summer:

sunflower, thunderstorm

Autumn:

cricket, jack-o-lantern

Winter:

sleeping mountain, wolf moon

HONORABLE MENTION

*first dream of the year--
sensations of innocence
mingle with the dawn*

Carolyn Thomas

*brief flutter of wings
the fledgling awkwardly lands
on a tricycle*

Michael Ketchek

*spring melancholy
our reflection distorted
by water ripples*

Deborah P Kolodji

*midnight thunderstorm
the flash of so much white in
the old horse's eye*

joan iversen goswell

*returning a smile
the sunflowers seem to be
having a good day*

Jerry Ball

*the entrepreneur
my child brings home a cricket
in every pocket*

an'ya

*The cricket's chirp fades
with each step of my father—
the old wooden stairs*

Eduard TARÄ

*from the porch of the
old bachelor's house – the smile of
the jack o'lantern*

joan iversen goswell

*smiling too nicely
at the tax-collector's door,
the jack-o-lantern*

Michael Dylan Welch

*midnight scrabble game
in my hot pink pajamas
the sleeping mountain*

Deborah P Kolodji

YTHS website: www.youngleaves.org

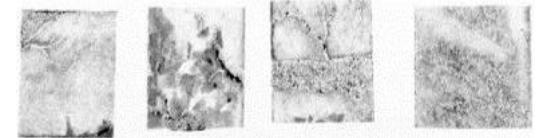
Contest Judges

Naoki Kishimoto, born in 1961 in Okayama Prefecture. Inspired by Ryunosuke Akutagawa's haiku, he began writing haiku in junior high school. As a student at Tokyo University, he joined haiku groups led by Tetsuo Kosada, Akito Arima, and Seison Yamaguchi. He won the Shinjinsho (New Voice) Award from the Association of Haiku Poets (Haijin Kyokai) in 1995. He has published three haiku collections, *Keito (Cockscomb)*, 1986), *Shun* (name of an ancient Chinese king, 1994), and *Kentan (Healthy Appetite)*, 1999), as well as two books of essays on haiku. He is a leading member of the Ten'i (Providence), Yane (Roof), and Yu haiku groups. His writing, following the traditional style, is known for its simplicity and plainness.

Yoko Senda, born in 1962, began writing haiku when she was fifteen. As a student at the University of Tokyo, she joined Aki (Autumn) haiku group led by the late Yatsuka Ishihara as well as a haiku seminar led by Tetsuo Kosada. She joined Akito Arima's Teni (Providence) haiku group when it was established in 1990. She has published two haiku collections, *Hashi no anata ni (Beyond the Bridge)*, 1991), and *Kumo wa ohkan (Crown Cloud)*, 1999), and is a coauthor of *Jyuuni no gendai haijin ron (Twelve Essays on Modern Haiku Poets)*, 2005), in which she writes about Ishihara. She is also a member of the Association of Haiku Poets, and the Japan Writer's Association.

Cover Art: Patricia J. Machmiller's
"Cherry Blossom Quilt"

The Yuki Teikei Haiku Society Announces the Winners of the



Kiyoshi and Kiyoko
Tokutomi



Haiku Contest

