

Kiyoshi and Kiyoko

Tokutomi

Haiku Contest 2015

Judge:

Marie Mariya

Prize-Winning Haiku

with Judge's Comments

Kiyoshi & Kiyoko Tokutomis

The Annual Tokutomi Haiku Contest of the Yuki Teikei Haiku Society (YTHS) is named for Mr. Kiyoshi and Mrs. Kiyoko Tokutomi, bilingual speakers of English and Japanese. They founded the Society in 1975 to foster writing haiku in English along traditional Japanese guidelines, with the inclusion of a season word in each haiku and the use of a 5-7-5 syllabic pattern. YTHS studies (but is not limited to) this form. The Tokutomi Haiku Contest is the longest-lived contest in the West that requires contest entries to follow this traditional form.

First Prize - \$100

**on the bay waters
summer fog hides a question
one yellow kayak**

Elaine Whitman

This haiku is picturesque with inner depth at the same time. The juxtaposition of summer fog with a yellow kayak is elegantly presented here. The contrast of colors, milky white and bright yellow, carries a vivid image and gives life to this piece.

This work does not end there. The summer fog is hiding a question. Whose kayak is this? When was it last used? Where are they heading next? It is a mystery that could be developed into a long story. It's a fantastic example that even though haiku consists of only three lines, it offers so much more to ponder.

Congratulations!

Second Prize - \$50

**along the river
students set up their easels
the scent of wild grape**

Priscilla Lignori

This haiku conveys a fresh and youthful image. The students are sketching and the kigo works perfectly to enrich the scene. Some of the students may be chattering and others may be concentrating on their art. They must be enjoying themselves in the refreshing air and sunshine.

It is sometimes difficult to use the right kigo at the right time. If it is too direct or too distant, neither will do. The use of wild grape emphasizes the youthfulness of the students, and the poet is sensitive enough to seize it. The resulting synesthesia improves the beauty of this poem.

Third Prize - \$25

**eyeglasses folded
beside a worn-picture book...
quail calls fade away**

Ferris Gilli

This piece conveys a nostalgic atmosphere that brings back childhood memories to the reader. The poet is probably aged because they need eyeglasses to read the picture book. The word "worn" suggest the author's attachment to this book and they reread it for themselves or their grandchildren. The images of the book may still linger in the poet's mind. However, the good old days never come back as quails squeaky calls disappear. It's like a beautiful close-up scene in a black and white film.

Honorable Mention

nothing on canvas
heavenly bamboo pressing
against my window

Brett Brady

vernal pool deepens
covering some stepping stones
sky laps at my feet

Marietta McGregor

silver-mine ruin
the laughter of children still
fills the golden hills

Joan Zimmerman

distant golden hills—
a shoebox of baseball cards
I saved for a son

Meik Blöttenberger

its sprightly shimmers
concealing old Avalon
distant vernal pool

Phillip Kennedy

Summer fog lingers
sounds of a Chopin nocturne
subtle shades of gray

David D. Sherertz

kids bunched together
heads bent over their cell phones
wild grapes ripening

Joseph Robello

evaporation
summer fog slowly unveils
a three-legged chair

Desiree McMurry

eleven quail chicks
grey heads flashing through the grass
heading East, one West

Toni Homan

Contest Kigo

The contest chair selected these kigo for the 2015 contest: for New Year, *first dream* and *young year*; for spring, *vernal pool* and *plover*; for summer, *golden hills* and *summer fog*; for autumn, *quail* and *wild grape*; and for winter, *heavenly bamboo* and *snowboarding/ skiing*. Some modifications to the contest kigo were acceptable, including the alteration of a kigo from singular to plural (or vice versa).

See the YTHS web site www.youngleaves.org for more information including future contest.

Contest Judge

Marie Mariya is a haiku poet, literary critic, a member of the Association of Haiku Poets and the Haiku International Association. She graduated from the San Domenico School, San Anselmo, CA, and majored in French Literature at Keio University, Tokyo.

Marie explores haiku from an international standpoint. Her writing includes a book of criticism on haiku, One Grain of Cosmos. Her collection of haiku was shortlisted for the Haidan Award in 2014. She is currently working on a series of essays on haiku and Western Art for a major haiku periodical.

worn jacket's shell button
a gentle reminder
---autumn sea

Marie Mariya

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Haiku Society
Announces



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