

*Kiyoshi and Kiyoko
Tokutomi
Haiku Contest*

*2019 PRIZE WINNING
HAIKU*

*with
Comments by the Judges
Nanae Tamura
and
Nozomi Sugiyama*

The Annual Tokutomi Haiku Contest of the Yuki Teikei Haiku Society (YTHS) is named for Mr. Kiyoshi and Mrs. Kiyoko Tokutomi. Bilingual in English and Japanese, they founded the Society in 1975 to foster writing haiku in English along traditional Japanese guidelines, using three lines with a 5-7-5 syllable pattern and including a seasonal reference. The Tokutomi Haiku Contest is the oldest contest in the West that requires entries to follow this traditional form.

Yuki Teikei Haiku Society studies (but is not limited to) traditional form. For more information about the Society and about future contests, please visit our website at

www.youngleaves.org

First Prize - \$100

**acorn on my palm
the life of a mighty oak
flashes before me**

Priscilla Lignori

Whenever we find acorns, we often pick up some without hesitating even though we soon forget about them. Probably because we have DNA which descends from our ancestors who ate them after taking out the bitterness. Or, is it because we love these shapes and sizes to hold or touch? Or because they evoke nostalgic memories of childhood?

The author sensed the existence of the life of a mighty oak immediately. Even though the nut itself is very small and seems weightless on one's palm, it's a wonder of life that each acorn contains all the elements of life as an oak tree does: roots, trunk, branches, leaves and so on. It takes a long period of time before it produces acorns like its mother tree. Still, once it is grown up, it can live hundreds or thousands of years and show us its divine figure. The author got an excellent image, just by looking at a tiny acorn.

Congratulations, on your deeply moving haiku.

Second Prize - \$50

**first wind in the pines
it begins with a whisper
and so will it end**

Alison Woolpert

At dawn of the New Year's Day, only the winds through the pine trees are faintly heard. The author seems to be ready to welcome another new year, a little bit strained starting a brand new year but also thinking back on life until now. The author is just listening to the murmurs of his or her own heart in the winds. Sometimes winds have fiercely blown, but eventually they become almost soundless like a whisper.

The pine tree is a symbol of a long life in Japan, this haiku actually succeeds in creating a very tranquil and peaceful impression in its images, telling us each fleeting moment in our life is so special and precious.

Congratulations on your simple and profound haiku.

Third Prize - \$25

**boot prints and paw prints
through a patch of melting snow —
village far below**

Linda Papanicolaou

Now, at last, long-awaited Spring arrives. The author went out to walk the dog as usual, but this time naturally they walked further up the hill where they appreciate a panoramic view of the village, although snow remains even at the foot of the mountainside.

In the path, the snow has begun to melt and the expression "boot prints and paw prints" immediately shows us how they enjoyed their walk. We can even hear their rhythmic footsteps from this first line. Then, we can imagine the view of the village which is full of joy for the arrival of Spring with new greenery here and there.

Congratulations on your lively and picturesque haiku.

Honorable Mention

acorn necklaces
strung on white recycled string
shoebox memories

Wilma McCracken

the faintly white stubs
of the pollarded plane tree
quiet autumn dusk

Gregory Longenecker

in its final mile
the train to my childhood home
enters autumn dusk

Joan Zimmerman

park closes at dusk—
the plaintive howling of wolves
from deep in the zoo

Linda Papanicolaou



Brush paintings are the work of artist,
haiku poet, and YTHS member
Ann Bendixen
1942-2019

Contest Judges

Nanae Tamura is a haiku poet, haiku essayist, and translator. She has written a column in the “Shiki-shimpo” (Shiki Newsletter) for more than two decades. Translator for the yearly Shiki Calendar of Ehime University, she also translated and co-edited with Cor van den Heuvel the book *Baseball Haiku* (W.W. Norton & Co., 2007). She learned haiku mainly from her third teacher, Kiyoko Tsuda, who was a disciple of Takako Hashimoto and Seishi Yamaguchi. She is a judge of both the non-Japanese haiku for the “City Haiku Post” and the Haiku Koshien (a nationwide haiku competition for high school students held in Matsuyama). In her words, “I love haiku because it brings me close to nature and has magical power to tell me who I am always.”

Nozomi Sugiyama was born and raised in Hiroshima. After moving to Matsuyama in 1993, she joined the Japanese haiku group Kunugi (Japanese Chestnut Oak), which follows the yuki teikei form of haiku. She is the current dojin and editor of “Kunugi,” the group’s monthly magazine. As a member of the Association of Haiku Poets, in 2010 she published a haiku collection, *Gacho (A Sketch Book)*. She has been teaching haiku and renku for beginners, as well as lecturing at the NHK (Japanese Broadcasting Association) Culture Center on *Oku no Hosomichi, Bashō’s Narrow Road to the Deep North*. In fear of death by boredom, she constantly kept herself busy. Now, however, she believes that perhaps the most precious resource is, indeed, idle time to hatch haiku and enrich her life.

Yuki Teikei Haiku Society Announces



Winners
of the 2019 Tokutomi
Haiku Contest

Honorable Mention

exploring the depths
of the road’s snowmelt puddles
a band of wet boys

Barbara Snow

a bench facing west
in memory of his wife
big purple thistles

Johnnie Johnson Hafernik

immediately
our conversation lightens
two soaring skylarks

Alison Woolpert

a sketch of the hills
with colored pencils she adds
the soaring skylark

Priscilla Lignori

2019 Contest Guidelines

This contest is for English language haiku written in the traditional form which uses 3 lines in a 5-7-5 syllable pattern. Each poem is required to contain one (and only one) season word (kigo) from the following list for this year’s contest.

New Year: first wind in the pines; New Year’s tea / good luck tea/ lucky tea
Spring: skylark/soaring skylark; snowmelt/melting snow; thistle
Summer: sunburn
Autumn: acorn; autumn dusk
Winter: wolf; hot chocolate