

Kiyoshi and Kiyoko

Tokutomi

Haiku Contest 2016

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

**flowering dogwood-
mother's belongings all fit
into one suitcase**

Priscilla Lignori

Haiku is a form of poetry that favors the use of imagery, and this piece is its splendid achievement. One can visualize a single suitcase---perhaps small and humble---left in a room. It might contain her old diaries, letters, picture albums, and her personal effects. This sure has an intense, vivid image. We can share the author's sadness to have lost his/her dear mother. The art of juxtaposition is working here very effectively as well. The flowering dogwood is like a message from the deceased which must console and solace the author. It's a beautiful eulogy haiku. I'd like to congratulate the poet who has succeeded to sublimate the sorrowful experience into a praiseworthy haiku.

Second Prize - \$50

**river baptism
the brief cellophane rustle
of dragonfly wings**

Ferris Gilli

The first line 'river baptism' of this haiku is quite impressive which poses us kind of a mystery. What does this biblical image lead us to? The author then, presents the sensitive, delicate expression which turns out to be the description of a dragonfly. This comes as a pleasant surprise on the third line. It's moving that the poet has the affectionate and careful observation even for a small creature. We can almost see the transparency of the wings and hear their subtle sound. The tiniest whisper may be resonating with the cosmos. These modest seventeen syllables offer us the whole beauty of nature and universe.

Third Prize - \$25

**four petals unwind
releasing a pink path stream
flowering dogwood**

Marilyn Ashbaugh

The basic art of haiku is to 'sketch' every living thing, great or small. This work is a superb example of it. The poet is looking at the dogwood closely and objectively and found his/her own words to depict the flower. It is not at all a tiresome cliché-like explanation or commentary, but a unique, lyric expression. What a charming haiku flower the author has brought into bloom!

Honorable Mention

coin by coin by coin
pockets lighten each hour
setting up May Day
Kit Nagamura

hisses and crackles
on the shortwave radio
Orion aloft
Phillip Kennedy

Year of the Monkey
our grandson's new motorbike's
diminishing roar
June Hopper
Hymas

abandoned farm house
gaping holes on the front porch
filled with Queen Ann's lace
Adelaide B. Shaw

Queen Anne's lace bouquet
in labeled mayonnaise jar
wife's weathered gravestone
Wilma McCracken

frost-tipped artichokes
the song of a field worker
thin but still hopeful
Joan Zimmerman

blue-green dragonfly
racing against its shadow
how slow the earth spins
Meik Blöttenberger

honest opinions
spill out from dense foliage
a chickadee flock
Elaine Whitman

high in the old oak
gall wasps shaping their secrets...
those unbidden thoughts
Marietta Jane
McGregor

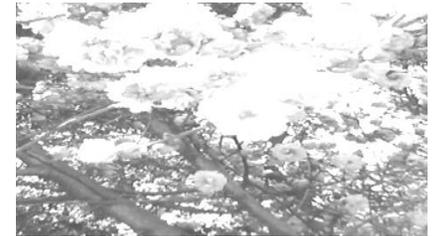
Contest Kigo

The contest chair selected these kigo for the 2016 contest: for New Year, *Year of the Monkey and first laughter*; for spring, *flowering dogwood and May Day*; for summer, *Queen Anne's lace and chickadee*; for autumn, *dragonfly and oak gall*; and for winter, *frost-nipped/frost-tipped artichoke, Orion*. 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, translator. Marie serves on the executive committee of the Haiku International Association, as a member of the Association of Haiku Poets and a member of the Selection Committee of *HAIKU MASTERS*, a TV program of NHK World. She finished San Domenico School in San Anselmo, California and Keio University, Tokyo. Her writing includes a book of criticism, *One Grain of Cosmos* (shortlisted for the A.H.P. Award for criticism in 2016) and a collection of haiku that was shortlisted for the Haidan Award in 2014. Marie explores haiku from an international standpoint. Her critical essays appear serially in major haiku periodicals.

spring airport
the departure board
blinking and beating
Marie Mariya

Yuki Teikei
Haiku Society
Announces



Winners
of the
2016
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