



# The SCBWI Tokyo Newsletter

Fall/Winter 2009

*Carp Tales* is the bi-annual newsletter of the Tokyo chapter of the Society of Children's Book Writers and Illustrators (SCBWI). The newsletter includes SCBWI Tokyo chapter and member news, upcoming events, a bulletin board of announcements related to writing and illustrating for children in Japan, reports of past events, information on industry trends, interviews with authors and illustrators, and other articles related to children's literature. To submit inquiries or learn how to contribute to *Carp Tales*, contact [info@scbwi.jp](mailto:info@scbwi.jp). The submission deadline is May 1 for the spring issue and November 1 for the fall issue. All articles and illustrations in *Carp Tales* are © SCBWI Tokyo and the contributing writers and illustrators. For more information about SCBWI Tokyo see [www.scbwi.jp](http://www.scbwi.jp). The *Carp Tales* logo is © Naomi Kojima.

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The second half of 2009 was filled with SCBWI Tokyo events of all sorts, including some held outside of central Tokyo. July featured a panel of illustrators discussing the Bologna Book Fair experience. September included two events: illustrator Naomi Kojima speaking on storyboarding and picture book dummies, and senior designer Kerry Martin from Clarion Books discussing how to become a picture book illustrator. October's talk on picture book writing by Holly Thompson was held in Kyoto during the Japan Writers' Conference. November's all-day event featuring Alvina Ling, senior editor at Little, Brown Books for Young Readers, along with senior designer Alison Impey, took place at Yokohama International School and drew participants from many prefectures of Japan. December had members back in Tokyo for the final creative exchange of the year.

In this issue of *Carp Tales*, we bring you an interview with Alexander O. Smith, translator of the Batchelder Award-winning novel *Brave Story* by Miyuki Miyabe; a feature on two books that resulted from research on sister cities; a piece on the new P.A.L. membership level at SCBWI; and an article for illustrators on getting the most out of the Bologna Book Fair.

Also included are updates on member activities, event reports, and notices of upcoming opportunities. We hope you enjoy this issue.

**Holly Thompson, *Carp Tales* Editor, SCBWI Tokyo Regional Advisor**  
**Avery Udagawa, *Carp Tales* Assistant Editor**  
**Annie Donwerth Chikamatsu, *Carp Tales* Assistant Editor**

# Event Wrap-Ups

by Holly Thompson

## **Creative Exchange: The Bologna Experience with Ayano Imai, Kiyo Tanaka and Shimako Okamura July 11, 2009**

At this event, three illustrators who have visited the Bologna Children's Book Fair shared tips for making the most of this experience. They showed slides of exhibition areas, booths, illustrator spaces, the bulletin board for posting promotional material, bookstores in Bologna and more. Advice was given on topics ranging from the size and type of promotional material illustrators should take, to opportunities for showing portfolios, to social and professional networking opportunities at or near the fair. The many insights were appreciated by members preparing to submit work for the 2010 Bologna Illustrators Exhibition. See the article on p. 11 of this newsletter for more details.

## **Storyboards and Picture Book Dummies for Good Bookmaking with Author/Illustrator Naomi Kojima September 12, 2009**



*Naomi Kojima discussing storyboards*

At this hands-on morning workshop, Naomi Kojima explained the role of storyboards and dummies as important and effective tools in creating picture books. She demonstrated different approaches to the opening pages of books, and showed how storyboards enable writers and illustrators to see the basic rhythm of a book, learn how text may be distributed, and discover if there are any redundancies to the book plan. She emphasized consistency of design and shared two storyboards of her own. After the storyboarding demonstrations, she distributed 32-page notebooks and the text of a traditional children's story. Participants marked up the text, then cut and glued sections onto dummy pages. Those who worked quickly then sketched the story on

the pages. Participants had the chance to discuss their dummies in groups, comparing text breaks and page turns and seeing what worked versus what didn't. This hands-on approach won everyone's enthusiasm, and participants later shared via the SCBWI Tokyo listserv their experiences of applying what they'd learned at the workshop to their own projects at home.

## **Why Haven't They Called Me? What Happens After You Submit your Picture Book to a Publisher with Kerry Martin, Senior Designer, Clarion Books September 26, 2009**

This event began with Kerry Martin doing private portfolio reviews for five illustrators. In her talk, Martin first covered favorite books she has worked



*Kerry Martin with Kae Nishimura*

on at Clarion, including books illustrated by Kae Nishimura, who was in attendance. Next Martin discussed the process of selecting illustrators based on editors' needs and described how designers work with illustrators. Her list of do's and don'ts for sample illustrations and for sending postcards and print-outs of art samples was extensive, detailed and full of specific advice. "Send



*Kerry Martin (third from right) with illustrators and portfolios*

postcards of new work every two months," she advised. "Have an easy-to-navigate website that's easy for us to print off." Martin explained that Clarion has a portfolio drop-off day once a week and urged

illustrators visiting New York to make an appointment and visit. Martin's Q&A was full of practical information for illustrators, and discussion continued over dinner at the restaurant Un Café.

**Writing for Children: The Picture Book  
with Author Holly Thompson  
followed by an SCBWI Informational Meeting  
October 17, 2009**

This talk provided an overview of the picture book for participants in the third annual Japan Writers Conference in Kyoto. Included were picture book structure, basic elements of fiction for picture books, and do's and don'ts for writers starting out in the genre. A number of SCBWI Tokyo members attended all or part of the two-day conference, which featured workshops and presentations by poets, journalists, fiction writers and creative nonfiction writers.

**The World of Children's Book Publishing  
with Senior Editor Alvina Ling of  
Little, Brown Books for Young Readers  
November 14, 2009**

Thanks to a generous SCBWI regional grant, SCBWI Tokyo was able to invite Little, Brown editor Alvina Ling for a full-day event on children's book publishing held at Yokohama International School. The event



*Alvina Ling, charming her audience*

began early in the morning with eight pre-booked private manuscript critiques. Public events began at 10:30 a.m. with Ling's talk My Path to Publishing; Your Path to Publication, a personal narrative full of helpful metaphors and nuggets of advice. Next was Thinking Like Your Editor, a talk in which Ling detailed the path of a manuscript from acceptance to publication. At noon, participants dispersed to area cafes or chatted

over packed lunches. Illustrators had the opportunity to discuss their portfolios with Little, Brown senior designer Alison Impey. After lunch, Ling continued her in-depth look at the publishing world in The Realities of Children's Book Publishing in the U.S. Ling and Impey then presented Matchmaking: Finding the



*Alvina Ling, second from right, and Alison Impey, center front, with some participants in the November 14 event*

Perfect Style and Illustrator for a Text. They showed slides of selected texts, the artwork of various artists considered to illustrate each, and rough sketches and finals by the illustrators ultimately selected. The event concluded with a Q&A incorporating both prewritten and selected questions for Ling and Impey. Dinner at the sake pub Hamajin in Momachi rounded off a very full day.

**SCBWI Tokyo Creative Exchange  
December 5, 2009**

This event was preceded by a brief planning meeting to determine SCBWI Tokyo events for spring 2010. The creative exchange brought together a dozen authors and illustrators, most with work to show for feedback. Participants read, viewed and critiqued a number of works, including a poem, a picture book for early readers, a revised picture book dummy, a full-color dummy, a classical Japanese legend retelling, a new picture book dummy, and several new picture book stories. A dinner followed, serving as SCBWI Tokyo's end-of-year *bonenkai* celebration.

*Holly Thompson is author of the forthcoming YA novel Orchards (Delacorte) and the picture book The Wakame Gatherers (Shen's Books). Regional Advisor of SCBWI Tokyo, she teaches poetry and fiction writing at Yokohama City University. See [www.hatbooks.com](http://www.hatbooks.com).*

# A Tale of Two Stories and Four Cities

by Margi Preus

This is a tale of two stories. Both have links to Japan and America; both have resulted in sister city relationships and are stories of fostering friendship and understanding between nations. Both stories were lost or barely known—at least on the American side of the ocean—for many, many years.

## Story 1

**Time:** 1946

**Place:** Yokosuka shipyard

*One of thousands of temple bells that were given up by the Japanese as scrap metal during World War II is discovered intact by the crew of the U.S.S. Duluth, a navy destroyer stationed in Japan. Delighted with their unique war trophy, crew members load the bell onto their ship and take it back to the United States.*



Temple bell leaving Duluth, Minnesota, in 1954

*Eventually it wends its way to a small city in northern Minnesota, where it reposes in dignified silence on the floor of City Hall. Nine years later, in 1954, a visiting Japanese professor sees the bell and does some research. When its origins are discovered, the Minnesota mayor sends it back without much fanfare. As far as this small city is concerned, end of story.*

## Story 2

**Time:** 1840s

**Place:** Off the coast of Shikoku

*A fishing boat is swept away from the coast of Japan in a storm, and the fishermen are shipwrecked on an island until they are rescued by an American whaling ship. Unable to take them back to Japan due to its isolationist policies, the captain arranges*

*accommodations in Hawaii for all but one of the castaways. The remaining castaway, a bright boy of 15, is invited to return with the captain to America to live with him as his son. The boy learns English, the secrets of navigation and all about America and her inhabitants. Many adventures later, he returns to Japan—just before the arrival of Commodore Perry—and becomes a valuable advisor to the Shogun, even earning the rank of samurai. He goes on to become so famous in Japan that every school-aged child, even if he or she knows nothing else about him, will one day know the name of John Manjiro.*

Both of these stories were remembered in Japan but mostly forgotten in the U.S. Following World War II, however, President Eisenhower encouraged citizen diplomacy as a way to heal international relations, and the sister city model gradually gained in popularity. Many Japanese cities formalized relationships with cities in the United States. In the 1980s, Ohara (in Chiba) and Tosashimizu (in Kochi) established sister city relationships with Duluth, Minnesota, and Fairhaven/New Bedford, Massachusetts, respectively. The connection between these cities was not random or coincidental. They were connected by stories.

Ohara never forgot the name of the city that returned its bell. The bell was placed in a special *shoro* and named the American Japanese Friendship Peace Bell. In 1989, Ohara's mayor sent a letter to Duluth requesting a sister city relationship. Duluthians were befuddled. Who? What? The story of the bell had been forgotten for 35 years. Nonetheless, later that year, a sister city relationship was established and, in 1991, Ohara sent Duluth a replica of the bell, which



The Ohara bell

now hangs in its own *shoro* in a hilltop park. The two bells are positioned so that their tones might merge across the ocean, resonating in a message of peace.

Fairhaven and New Bedford are the small cities in Massachusetts that hosted Manjiro back in the 1840s, and which hold a special place in the hearts of the people of Tosashimizu, where Manjiro grew up. The cities reconnected with Japan at widely spaced intervals: in 1918, in 1976 and again in 1987, when Crown Prince Akihito visited the cities and a sister city relationship was established. But in the U.S., outside of these two cities, Manjiro's story was virtually unknown.

In 2002, I traveled to Japan for the first time with a sister-city delegation to Ohara (now Isumi City). My thirteen-year-old son suggested I write the story of the



*The author shares her book with Japanese children*

Peace Bell for children. I had been dimly aware of the story before we went to Japan, but being warmly welcomed by the people of Ohara, I *felt* the story. That story is *lived* in the relationship between the two cities. I tried to capture that in a picture book illustrated by Hideko Takahashi entitled *The Peace Bell*.

While researching this book, I became acquainted with:

1. Lots of things I didn't know about Japan.
2. Many beautiful and powerful books about children's experiences of the atomic bomb. However, I could not find any picture books in English concerning the life of an ordinary child growing up in rural or small-town Japan during World War II. (Writers, are

you paying attention?)

I also made a happy acquaintance with:

3. Paul Creager, who was filming a documentary about bells that were taken as war trophies. (More about *Resonance: The Odyssey of the Bells*, at [www.resonancefilm.com](http://www.resonancefilm.com))
4. John Manjiro (as depicted in Rhoda Blumberg's nonfiction picture book, *Shipwrecked!*). Manjiro became my next writing project, a middle grade novel based on his life.

Manjiro's story led me to Tosashimizu and the Ashizuri Cape in the summer of 2009. I thought I was finished writing and that I was just paying a visit. But being in that beautiful, rugged place—inhaling the salty ocean air and the sweet aroma of *bonito* smoking over wood fires, tasting sea bream mixed with rice, meeting people who all seemed like they could be relatives of Manjiro (open, friendly, individualistic people interested in many things)—I was once again reminded of the importance of Place, and of the influence it must have had on Manjiro. Being so far from the center of power probably nurtured an independent spirit in the people—which was passed on to Manjiro. The wild, untamed beauty of the area must have encouraged in Manjiro an appreciation of the beauty and wildness of the world, of America, and of the somewhat wild Americans and their crazy ideas.

After that visit I did a lot of rewriting on the *tatami* floor of my friend's family home.

In attempting to tell these stories, I have traveled to Japan twice, read everything I could about these subjects, puzzled over incomprehensible translations, struggled over contradictory accounts, and had a whole new world open up for me.

I would not have discovered that world if it weren't for Duluth's sister city relationship with Ohara/Isumi City. There are hundreds of cities in Japan connected to cities all over the world. Probably every one of them has a story to tell—perhaps for you to tell.

*Margi Preus is the author of The Peace Bell (Henry Holt, 2008) and Heart of a Samurai, a historical novel based on the life of John Manjiro (Abrams Books for Young Readers, forthcoming in 2010), as well as other books and plays for children.*

# Translating Japanese YA Literature into English: An Interview with Alexander O. Smith

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by Avery Udagawa

Alexander O. Smith is the Vermont-born translator of Miyuki Miyabe's *Brave Story*, a novel that won the prestigious Mildred L. Batchelder Award for publisher VIZ Media in 2008. The Batchelder, awarded to publisher of the best translated children's book released in the U.S., had been awarded for translations from Japanese just twice before in its forty-year history.



Smith, who earned an MA in Classical Japanese Literature at Harvard University in 1998, has become known for localization of Japanese video games such as *Vagrant Story*, *Final Fantasy XII*, and *Phoenix Wright: Ace Attorney*. He has also translated a range of novels, including those in Kaoru Kurimoto's *Guin Saga* series (Vertical, Inc.) and, most recently, Keigo Higashino's *The Devotion of Suspect X* (forthcoming from St. Martin's Press). Formerly based in Tokyo, Smith responded to questions from his home in New England.

**How did you wind up translating *Brave Story*? Did you propose the project, or did the project come to you?**

I had worked on several much smaller “light” fiction novels for VIZ Media before (the *Fullmetal Alchemist* series), and may have mentioned my interest in Miyabe's work to them at that time, specifically her book *ICO*, based on a video game of the same name. Whether that influenced VIZ's choice of me as translator or not, they had already selected *Brave Story* and acquired the translation rights when they contacted me. Incidentally, I still think *ICO* would make a great English novel!

***Brave Story* is 816 pages long; the original was published in multiple volumes. How long did it take to translate this tome, and did its sheer length present a challenge?**

At my fastest, 816 pages represents about three months of work. As it happened, *Brave Story* took twice that long to translate because the project fell during a long trip to the U.S. in preparation for my eventual move here. (I was living in Tokyo at the time.)

Anything that long is a significant challenge, as you have to keep a good glossary to maintain internal consistency, and it can be hard to maintain a high level of throughput for such a long stretch of time. I've done a few six hundred-page novels since then, and it never gets easier, though *Brave Story* was by far the longest I've tackled.

**Did a lot of back-and-forth take place with VIZ Media and/or Miyuki Miyabe in the editing phase?**

As a freelancer, I'm not as involved with that side of the operation as I might be were I an on-site translator, for better or for worse. I know VIZ has a good reputation for taking care of their properties, so I would assume there was a sufficient amount of communication there, but I had nothing to do with it.

***Brave Story* is a fantasy but set in contemporary Japan. Portions of the text include references to cram school, traditional husband and wife roles, Shinto shrine practices, and so on. Were there particular subjects or passages that proved difficult to translate for a non-Japanese audience?**

Generally speaking, the vast majority of cultural references can be explained or written around in such a way that they're not too jarring to the Western reader. An example of writing around might be omitting a reference to taking off shoes upon entering a building if the reference is too distracting and not integral to the plot. While I'd prefer to leave all the cultural cues in a given passage, you have to consider that reading “he took off his shoes in the entranceway and stepped up into the house” is a very different experience for a Japanese reader than it would be for, say, an American reader. That said, I try to leave in everything I feel doesn't necessitate a long-winded

explanation that would be even more distracting to the reader.

Where such cultural cues do matter to the plot, however, you have to be creative with working in explanations in ways more subtle than a footnote. I don't have any specific examples of this from *Brave Story*, but I have two from other books I've translated: In Natsuhiko Kyogoku's *The Summer of the Ubume* (Vertical, Inc.), a character visiting a hospital has to leave from a back door wearing hospital-issue slippers. Every Japanese reader would know that when entering smaller clinics (especially in the 1950s, when *Ubume* is set), you would take off your shoes and put on slippers provided by the hospital. For the English version, I had to insert a brief passage describing the character's footwear exchange on his way in.

Another example: in a more recent novel, Higashino's murder-mystery *The Devotion of Suspect X*, a *kotatsu* is integral to the plot. In this case, I had to insert a description along the lines of the character "tucking his legs underneath the low, heated *kotatsu* table in the middle of the room." The character then complains that the *kotatsu* is off, and "fumbles around for the cord" to switch it on. The action is the same as in the original: the man sits under the *kotatsu*, complains it's not on, and turns it on. What's added are the descriptors "low" and "heated" and the reference to the "cord." This way, even if Western readers might not know exactly what a *kotatsu* is after reading this, they will have the salient information (it's low to the ground, it's heated, and it has a cord) in a way that doesn't distract them from the experience of reading.

### Winners of the Mildred L. Batchelder Award for Translations from Japanese

1982 Lothrop, Lee & Shepard for *Hiroshima no Pika* by Toshi Maruki

1997 Farrar, Straus & Giroux for *The Friends* by Kazumi Yumoto, translated by Cathy Hirano

2008 VIZ Media for *Brave Story* by Miyuki Miyabe, translated by Alexander O. Smith

2009 Arthur A. Levine Books of Scholastic Inc. for *Moribito: Guardian of the Spirit* by Nahoko Uehashi, translated by Cathy Hirano

**In contrast to the portions set in reality, much of *Brave Story* unfolds in an imaginary world called Vision, which is populated by fantastic creatures such as karulah, giblewolves, and darbabas, and home to strange phenomena such as wind-spheres, a pattern-elevator, and stinging mist. Was it a challenge to translate the dozens of fantastic names and descriptions?**

While the world of Vision was fantastic, it conforms to the Western-inspired fantasy found in many Japanese role-playing game (RPG) scenarios. Since my "day job" is translating Japanese video games, including RPGs, I was right at home here. For the more adventurous namings (such as "giblewolves" for what could have been translated "corkscrew wolves"), I consulted with my editor Eric Searleman at VIZ ahead of time.

**Was it a challenge to move back and forth between translating scenes set in the real world—in which characters speak in contemporary idiom and refer to pop culture icons such as Jackie Chan and Ichiro Suzuki—and scenes in Vision that involve more formal speech? ("You go to the capital, no?") Were there particular works in English that you consulted along the way?**

More than a modern world/fantasy world divide, I think the translator's foremost task when approaching dialogue is to fully realize an English-language version of each character, and remain true to that character throughout. With *Brave Story*, there were clear stylistic differences between some of the Vision characters and the real-world characters, so a roadmap for characterization existed. The trick is to recreate those differing characteristics in a way that makes sense to the English reader.

While there weren't any particular works I used to keep me on track for *Brave Story*, that is something I've done in the past to keep elements of a characterization true. For instance, if you wanted someone archaic but not *too* archaic, you might choose a character from a fantasy novel or movie and ask, for every line, "Is this something I could imagine So-and-So saying?" While the character might be different from, say, Aragorn in *Lord of the Rings*, you could use him to check the level of archaic speech and provide boundaries for your own characterization.

**The title of the translation, which is an exact anglicization of the Japanese title (*Bureibu sutori*), is unconventional English. *A Story of Bravery*, or a title that applies *brave* to the story's main character**

**(*Brave Wataru*) would be more conventional. What prompted the decision to translate the title this way?**

I can't claim credit for translating the title, as book titles are often a marketing decision left to the publisher, not to the translator. My guess is that they went with *Brave Story* because a movie had already been announced with that name, and they wanted to be consistent across the property.

***Brave Story* features an eleven-year-old main character but includes some rather gory scenes of murder and mass destruction, perhaps making it a hard sell to North American readers around the same age (or their parents). Did you translate with a particular audience in mind? Did you have direction from the publisher?**

I didn't receive specific instructions, other than general language guidelines. The target audience was roughly the same as that in Japan: teenagers. Personally, I think that age group can deal with quite a bit of violence—I think the portrayals of Wataru's home life were probably far more traumatic. My goal was to stay as true to the original as possible, and VIZ indicated that were there any content concerns, they would deal with that in an editing pass on their end.

**Did you have any say in the fascinating design of the VIZ Media version of the book, which (among other things) features a map of Vision in the endpapers and an evolving sword graphic in the margin wherever the hero finds a gemstone for his sword?**

No, though I love it and think it's a great touch that supports the video-game nature of the narrative.

**You are a prolific translator not only of fiction but also of video games and manga. The main character in *Brave Story* enjoys video games and uses his favorite series to interpret his experiences. Have you worked on projects as a localizer and translator that fed especially well into this project? Can you describe how translating a novel about video games differed from the process of actually localizing a game?**

It always helps to know where an author is "coming from," so my experience with the RPG genre helped tremendously in interpreting the more video game-y scenes in *Brave Story*. In particular, I'd point to one game I translated: Final Fantasy Tactics Advanced (FFTA) for Nintendo's Game Boy Advanced, which had a very similar target audience and theme to *Brave Story*, and which, in fact, I had translated only a few months before I started *Brave Story*. There was even some speculation that FFTA was a source of Miyabe's inspiration for *Brave Story*, but I never heard this confirmed.

Of course, the opposite has also been true. Translating Kaoru Kurimoto's Guin Saga series for Vertical, Inc. informed my understanding of Japanese video games, many of which were written by people who list Kurimoto's work high among their sources of inspiration.

As far as the differences between novels and video games, assuming the novel is a new property that doesn't require extensive knowledge of an ongoing storyline, novels require far less "busy work" than video games. You don't have to "play through" a novel to understand how the scenes work, and there are no game mechanics or menu text to worry about. Nor do you have to conform to the sometimes labyrinthian file structures found in video games when working on a novel. I did find that, coming from a video game translation background, I felt most at home when translating dialogue. The descriptive passages—which, in a video game, would be rendered through on-screen action—required far more effort on my part.

## Announcing SCBWI Tokyo Translation Day 2010

Translators, take note! The first SCBWI Tokyo Translation Day will be held on Saturday, June 12, 2010, at Yokohama International School. This all-day event will focus on translation of Japanese children's and young adult literature into English, with emphasis on (1) craft and (2) paths to publication for aspiring translators.

Speakers will include Cathy Hirano, translator of 1997 Mildred L. Batchelder Award winner *The Friends* and 2009 Batchelder winner *Moribito: Guardian of the Spirit*, and Cheryl Klein, editor of the Moribito series at Arthur A. Levine Books, Scholastic Inc.

Watch for more information in *Carp Tales* and via the SCBWI Tokyo Translation listserv. To join the listserv, which is geared to J-E translators for children, contact Avery Udagawa (averyudagawa@yahoo.com) or Sako Ikegami (sako@yamaneko.org).

**Please tell us a bit more about your journey to becoming a translator. Did you start out in video games? In fiction? What do you consider to be your focus now?**

My first professional translation work was doing subtitles for home dramas (the equivalent of soap operas or miniseries) for KIKU television in Hawaii. As a student, I also translated quite a few classical Japanese tales, usually with a folklore bent. Both kinds of translation prepared me for video game translation, as with subtitling you learn how to write within the ever-looming character limitations of on-screen displays; and my familiarity with fox folklore (my undergraduate honors thesis was on fox beliefs throughout Japanese history) helped a great deal in deciphering the more academic sections of my recent novel translation, *Summer of the Ubume*.

When I knew I would be moving to the U.S. in 2007, I tried shifting my work (primarily video game-based at the time) to more printed material, though I found it wasn't as difficult to continue the game work from the U.S. as I had feared. My focus now is evenly split among novels, manga, and game work, and I think I've (recently) reached the point where I'm equally comfortable in all three, and still learning more about all three with every job.

**What courses of action would you recommend to aspiring translators of Japanese children's and teen literature into English? Is it helpful to gain a foothold in a field other than literature, as you have?**

I think the reality of literary translation is that most people doing it earn the bulk of their income from work in other genres or even other activities entirely, such as legal work or an academic career. Literary translation can be so time-consuming that I wouldn't want to be in the position of trying to squeeze as much value per hour out of it as possible. So, from a practical standpoint, unless you're independently wealthy, I would say yes, develop yourself in another field first, and then do what you can to increase your time spent on literature.

An established career in another field of translation can also be a foot in the door when it comes to making contact with a publisher of literature in translation, since some skills like schedule management and Japanese reading ability would translate directly to literary work. To aspiring literary translators, I would recommend competitions such as the Shizuoka International Translation Competition to both see whether you have what it takes, and, if you do, start establishing a reputation. Editorial work or even publishing your own writing would also be a way to distinguish yourself to a publisher looking for translators or rewriters.

**You have written some fiction of your own. Is it for adults? For young adults?**

The fiction I've written for publication (specifically, short stories written in conjunction with my design work on the Kamigawa expansion of the trading card game Magic: The Gathering) has been for teens to college-age readers. If translation work ever dries up, more writing is high on my list of things to do, though since I went freelance in 2002, I've been lucky to get weekends off. Maybe someday!

**What are your current projects? Can you give us a sneak preview of your latest Miyabe translation, which I understand is coming out from VIZ Media early in 2010?**

Actually, yes, I can direct you to a preview of Miyabe's *The Book of Heroes (Eiyu no Sho)*, as one was recently posted on VIZ's Haikasoru imprint site: [www.haikasoru.com/excerpt/](http://www.haikasoru.com/excerpt/). All my current work is under NDA, unfortunately, but I can tell you that I just finished *The Devotion of Suspect X (Yogisha X no Kenshin)* which was great, and I'm currently working on another epic-length fantasy novel, as well as two games with my translation partner Joe Reeder doing the bulk of the work on those for now.

**Thank you again for participating in this interview.**

You're welcome!

*Avery Udagawa recently earned her MA in Advanced Japanese Studies from The University of Sheffield. Her final project was an annotated translation of the short story "Winter Earnings" by Shogo Oketani, which features an eight-year-old living in working-class Tokyo in the mid-1960s.*

# What Is This P.A.L. Thing?

## An Explanation of the New SCBWI Membership Tier

Adapted from an article by Denise Vega

### What is P.A.L.?

In August 2008, the SCBWI board created a new membership tier called P.A.L., which stands for “Published and Listed.” This level of membership is open to those whose books, articles, poems, stories, illustrations, photographs, films, television work or electronic media for children have been commercially published by one of the organizations listed in the SCBWI Market Surveys. Self-published, vanity published, and print-on-demand do not qualify members for P.A.L. status, but do qualify them as Full members.



### Why was P.A.L. created?

In an effort to return to its original mission, the SCBWI board wanted to create a tier that acknowledged authors who had pursued publishing their work through traditional channels. P.A.L. is a way to maintain uniform and fair professional standards. However, SCBWI still supports those who have chosen to self-publish or publish via vanity press and print-on-demand and, of course, those who are working hard at their craft and are still pre-published!

### What are some of the benefits for P.A.L. members?

The P.A.L. members will be given extra privileges, including the right to display or sell their books at certain SCBWI regional or international events, join the SCBWI speaker's bureau, and others. In the SCBWI Tokyo Chapter, some of the benefits are:

- Having a listing on the SCBWI Tokyo website Books page
- Having a listing on the SCBWI Speakers page
- Eligibility to participate in SCBWI Tokyo Showcase events
- Priority when authors or illustrators are sought to speak at SCBWI Tokyo events
- Priority when authors or illustrators are sought to critique at events
- Exposure at conferences in which our chapter exhibits, including the Bologna Book Fair

### How do I know if I'm qualified for the P.A.L. tier?

The easiest way to find out if you are eligible for the P.A.L. level is to log in to the SCBWI website, choose **Member Home** near the top of the page, and then choose **Manage My Profile**. Scroll down until you see *If you are published in the children's literature market...* and click the arrows next to the name of the publisher that most closely fits your publication (Traditional Press, Small Press, etc). *Note that those published in magazines and other media are also eligible for P.A.L. status, not just those who have published a book.* Another way to check is to choose **Member Home**, and then choose **Resource Library**. On the left side, choose **SCBWI Publication Guide Online**, then choose **SCBWI Market Surveys**. Depending on the type of publication you've written, you can open the guide that best fits your work. However, the Member Profile listing is the more up-to-date listing.

### What if my publisher is not listed anywhere?

If your publisher is not listed, you can enter it in the **Other** box under all the publisher lists on your profile page. When you do this, you will automatically be designated a FULL member and the publisher's name will go to the Committee for vetting. If they decide it should be on one of the lists, it will be added. SCBWI Tokyo has sent the SCBWI P.A.L. vetting committee a list of approved Japanese publishers. This list is on the SCBWI Tokyo website ([www.scbwi.jp](http://www.scbwi.jp)) in the FAQ section; see question number five.

### What if a previous publisher was on one of the lists, thus designating my status as P.A.L., but my current publisher is not on the list. Will I still be a P.A.L. member?

As of this writing, if you select **Other** and enter your publisher's name, your membership status will become FULL. The development team is aware of this issue and is working to resolve it. For now, to keep your status as P.A.L. but to have your publisher reviewed, go ahead and enter your new publisher in **Other** and save your profile. This ensures that the publisher's name will be sent to the committee for review and possible inclusion on one of the lists. Next, change your title back to a P.A.L.-listed title and

consider adding your new title to your bio so others will know about it. Once the web team has fixed this issue and your status doesn't change along with your newest book, we will let members know.

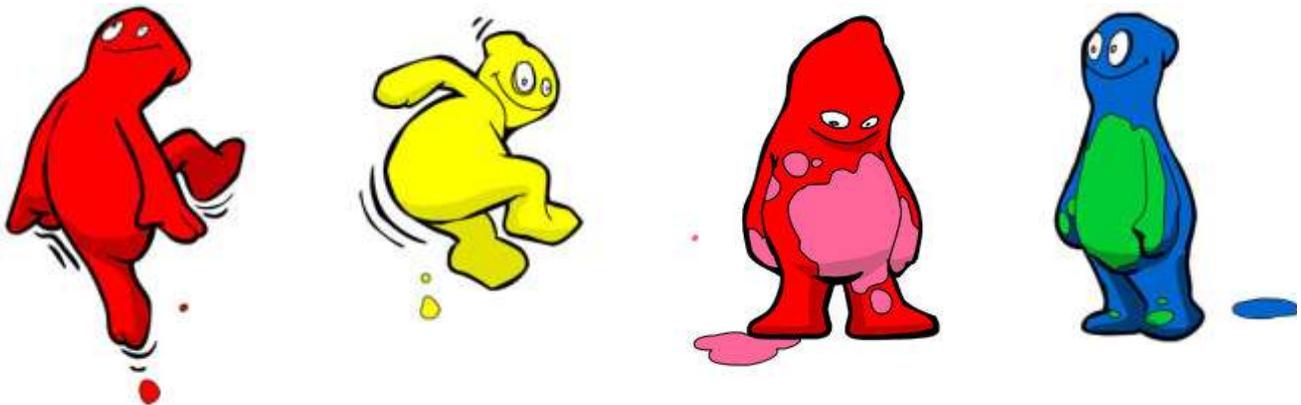
### How does a publisher qualify as a P.A.L. publisher?

Though the committee reviews a number of qualifications when determining status, some of the questions the committee will ask are: (1) Does the publishing company put out a publishing list and catalogs of its books? If so, are these catalogs accessible to bookstores, the public, and to brick and mortar stores, not just online? (2) Is its distributor national or at least regional—is the publisher distributing beyond just online sales such as Amazon

(which has no brick and mortar storefront)? (3) Have books published by the publisher been reviewed in nationally recognized review journals (e.g., *Booklist*, *Publishers's Weekly*, or *School Library Journal*)? (4) What are the contract terms for authors? These are just a few of the questions the committee members ask as they determine whether the publisher is P.A.L.-qualified.

If you have additional questions, contact your SCBWI regional advisor.

*Denise Vega is the Co-Regional Advisor of the Rocky Mountain Chapter of SCBWI and the author of five books for young people, from toddler through teen.*



© Rob Foote

## Featured SCBWI Tokyo Member Illustrators in this Issue

**Mariko Francis** was born in Melbourne, Australia, and studied fine arts at RMIT University, The Art Student's League in NYC, The School of Visual Arts in NYC, and The New York Art Academy. She has exhibited her works in Melbourne (Tolarno's Gallery), Singapore (Chateau d'Arts) and New York (Agora Gallery). She is currently working on an A-Z illustrated book and welcomes personalized illustration requests. Her website is [www.marikofrancis.com](http://www.marikofrancis.com).

**Rob Foote** was born in South Africa and studied Fine Art. He has had two books published in South Africa, three in Japan, and has more on the way. He won first prize in the Coca Cola young South African designers competition and is currently working on educational illustrations for AEON and JIEC Japan. He has won a large number of imaginary publishing awards. Take a look at his work at [www.robfoote.blogspot.com](http://www.robfoote.blogspot.com).

**Yoko Yoshizawa** is a writer, translator, illustrator and printmaker. Recent publications include *Oogui hyotan (The Magic Pumpkin, 2005, 2007)* from Fukuinkan and *Google English Writing (2009)* from Kodansha International. From April 2008 to March 2009 she contributed Animal Sayings from Around the World to the insert booklet for the monthly picture book series *Kodomo no tomo* from Fukuinkan. Her column Animal Idioms and Sayings appears every two weeks in the *Asahi Weekly*. See <http://yokobooks.exblog.jp/>.

# Illustrators, Make the Most of the Bologna Experience!

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by Kiyoko Tanaka with Holly Thompson

Many illustrators from around the globe travel to Bologna each spring to attend the Bologna Children's Book Fair ([www.bolognachildrensbookfair.com](http://www.bolognachildrensbookfair.com)), which will be held this year from March 23 to 26. The Bologna Children's Book Fair is the single largest book fair worldwide for children's books. Whether or not your work is accepted into the Illustrators Exhibition, a trip to Bologna will be an inspiration, certain to further your career significantly.

So how can you make the most of your trip? What should you do before you go? What strategies will help when you are there? Here are some suggestions.

## Before you go

- Consider registering for the Before Bologna SCBWI Symposium and Showcase, a one-day conference at the fair site, scheduled this year for Monday, March 22. The conference will have a track for illustrators and opportunities to meet with art directors and editors; the conference fee includes a pass to all days of the fair. See [www.scbwibologna.org](http://www.scbwibologna.org).
- Book a hotel room or apartment share in Bologna.
- Prepare promotional materials including the following:
  - posters/flyers to hang on the bulletin board
  - pamphlets or flyers (A4 or A3) that show book covers and sample illustrations, to leave with editors and publishers
  - business cards, postcards, bookmarks
  - dummy copies (with text in English) that you can leave with publishers
  - your portfolio with sample illustrations
- Practice speaking English.
- Contact non-Japanese publishers via e-mail in advance (one to two months before the fair) to set up appointments to show your work during the book fair. (Note that it is difficult to make appointments by e-mail without connections; it is important to network in Japan in advance by joining workshops, events, and seminars to meet editors, publishers and art directors from overseas.)
- Learn which Japanese publishers will attend the fair, but keep in mind that if you live in Japan, Japanese publishers prefer to meet with you in Japan rather than at Bologna, where they are extremely busy.

## At the fair

- Check the bulletin board regularly for notices, and post your contact info and posters daily; illustrators do sometimes get illustration work from these postings.
- Visit the SCBWI booth where Yoko Yoshizawa, SCBWI Tokyo's Illustrator Coordinator, will be volunteering during certain time slots.
- Make appointments with publishers and editors. Visit the publishers you really want to work for and ask if they will glance at your portfolio, even if they won't view it officially. It is possible to make appointments during the fair. If you learn of possibilities to meet art directors or editors at a specific booth, and if it is difficult to make an appointment, check and visit their booths every day because their schedules change during the fair, and an opportunity might open up.



*An event at the Illustrators' Café*

- Line up to show your work to publishers who are viewing portfolios.
- Visit the Illustrators Exhibition.
- Attend events at the Illustrators' Café.
- Make the most of your time; talk with people around you even when waiting in a line or riding a bus.
- Purchase books in styles that you admire.
- Pick up catalogs of publishers that interest you.
- Network with other illustrators and join dinners and gatherings. If you are an illustrator living in Japan, you can join the dinner organized by the Itabashi Art Museum. Please ask them about the details before you leave Japan.

### While in Bologna

- Take advantage of the many other book-related events in the city.
- Attend gallery exhibits. Opening receptions are great opportunities to meet people.
- Visit quality bookstores to learn which books are current top sellers in Europe. Check bookstore event schedules for exhibitions of original illustrations and other happenings.
- Visit Sala Borsa, the library at Piazza Maggiore, for more information on events in the city. There you can get a free booklet with event listings.



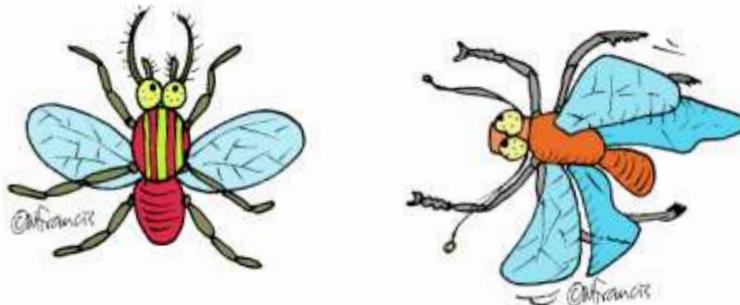
*Gannino Stoppani, famous bookshop near Piazza Maggiore*

### After You Return

- Organize all the materials you have brought back.
- Follow up with publishers, editors and art directors.
- Continue to develop your artwork.
- Start planning your Bologna Illustrators Exhibition submission work for the following year.
- Visit the Itabashi Art Museum and other venues in summer to see the Illustrators Exhibition while it travels through Japan, and to attend the opening receptions for the exhibit. The Itabashi Art Museum offers workshops with top editors, art directors, and illustrators from outside Japan. Through these events, illustrators in Japan have opportunities to meet editors, make publishing connections, and learn which editors attend the Bologna Children's Book Fair every year.

Make the most of your trip to Bologna, then share your tips and suggestions with other illustrators so that they, too, can benefit from the Bologna experience.

*Kiyoko Tanaka is an illustrator of children's books. Her works were accepted for the Illustrators Exhibition at Bologna in 1995 and 1996. Since then she has visited the fair every three to four years.*



© Mariko Francis

# SCBWI Tokyo Member News

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**Suzanne Kamata's** young adult story "How Harumi Became a Punk Rocker" has been accepted for inclusion in the anthology *Women's Work* (GirlChild Press, 2010).

**Naomi Kojima's** picture book *Utau Shijimi (Singing Shijimi Clams)* is now a play. Nagoya-based children's theater Gekidan Urinko performed *Utau Shijimi* for their New Year's Performance, 2010.

**Daniel Schallau** has published his second children's picture book, *Come Back Soon* (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2009). Daniel worked for four years on the book's highly detailed illustrations. For a sneak peek, visit his website, [www.danielschallau.com](http://www.danielschallau.com).



Don't Shoe a Goose © Yoko Yoshizawa

**Holly Thompson's** verse novel *Orchards* was sold by her agent Jamie Weiss Chilton of the Andrea Brown Literary Agency to editor Francoise Bui of Delacorte, an imprint of Random House, in a two-book deal. *Orchards* will be published in 2011, and Holly is busy writing a second book for Delacorte.

**Avery Udagawa** is credited for assisting Etsuko Nozaka with translation of the kamishibai *Hiyoko-chan (Baby Chick)* for a bilingual edition (Doshinsha, 2009).

**Yoko Yoshizawa** has signed a contract with *Asahi Weekly* to continue her bimonthly column on animal idioms and sayings in 2010. She has written the column since April 2009.

## Bulletin Board

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**The 11<sup>th</sup> Annual SCBWI Winter Conference** will be held January 29-31, 2010, in New York. See [www.scbwi.org](http://www.scbwi.org) for information and a schedule.

**The 2010 SCBWI Bologna Symposium and SCBWI Showcase at the Bologna Children's Book Fair** will be held in Bologna, Italy, on March 22, the day before the Bologna Children's Book Fair, March 23-26. Visit [www.scbwibologna.org](http://www.scbwibologna.org) for details and registration information.

**The International Library of Children's Literature** in Ueno, Tokyo, will present Children's Books Going Overseas from Japan, an exhibition commemorating the 10th anniversary of the opening of the library and the National Reading Year, February 20-September 5, 9:30-17:00. Visit [www.kodomo.go.jp](http://www.kodomo.go.jp) for more information.

The **Asian Festival of Children's Content** will be held in Singapore May 6-9. The program will feature the Asian Children's Writers and Illustrators Conference, Asian Children's Media Mart including the Asian Children's Rights Market, master classes, workshops and more. See [www.bookcouncil.sg](http://www.bookcouncil.sg) for a flyer and details.

### SCBWI Tokyo's Updated Links

The extensive list of museums, bookstores, and other facilities in Japan offering regular exhibitions and events on the subject of children's literature has been moved to the SCBWI Tokyo website in the Links section: [www.scbwi.jp/links.htm](http://www.scbwi.jp/links.htm). Please have a look at the many listings. We will continue to highlight events of particular interest to SCBWI Tokyo members in the Bulletin Board section of *Carp Tales*, and we welcome announcements of member exhibitions and events of interest to SCBWI Tokyo members.

# About SCBWI Tokyo

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SCBWI Tokyo, the Tokyo regional chapter of the Society of Children's Book Writers and Illustrators, offers support, information and community to illustrators and writers of children's and young adult literature in Japan. Holly Thompson is Regional Advisor; Yoko Yoshizawa is Assistant Regional Advisor and Illustrator Coordinator; the SCBWI Tokyo Advisory Committee includes Annie Donwerth Chikamatsu, Rob Foote, Janice Foster, Patrick Gannon, Suzanne Kamata, Naomi Kojima, Midori Mori, Gerri Sorrells, Izumi Tanaka, Patrik Washburn and Elina Yamaguchi.

## Website

The SCBWI website [www.scbwi.jp](http://www.scbwi.jp) features information about SCBWI Tokyo, an online gallery, a speakers directory, a member books section, FAQs, a volunteer page, listserv information, useful links for writers and illustrators, announcements of upcoming SCBWI Tokyo events, and this newsletter. Bookmark the site!

## Volunteers

SCBWI Tokyo is run by volunteers and always needs your help! Volunteers make SCBWI Tokyo an important and vibrant chapter of SCBWI. Volunteers can help in many ways: with their time at actual events, by helping to plan events, by assisting with translation, and by writing articles or conducting interviews for the SCBWI Tokyo newsletter *Carp Tales*. For further information, contact [info@scbwi.jp](mailto:info@scbwi.jp).

## SCBWI Tokyo Listservs

SCBWI Tokyo maintains two main listservs (e-mail groups): one in English and one in Japanese. These networks link members and supporters of SCBWI across Japan in active online communities. Members of the listservs receive up-to-date information on SCBWI Tokyo and announcements of events, and share news related to writing, illustrating and publishing for children. Everyone is welcome to post comments and questions of interest to the SCBWI Tokyo community. Membership in the listservs is open to both members and non-members of SCBWI. For details, e-mail [info@scbwi.jp](mailto:info@scbwi.jp).

## SCBWI Tokyo Online Critique Group

Critique groups provide support, encouragement, motivation and marketing suggestions. The SCBWI Tokyo Online Critique Group is for SCBWI Tokyo members who are serious writers and writer/illustrators working on children's or young adult literature who would like to share their work with other writers for constructive feedback online. At this time all manuscripts must be posted in English; a Japanese-language critique group may open soon. SCBWI Tokyo members interested in joining should contact [info@scbwi.jp](mailto:info@scbwi.jp).

## SCBWI Tokyo Translation Group

The SCBWI Tokyo Translation Group is for members and nonmembers involved in translating children's and young adult literature from Japanese into English. The Translation Group's listserv is a forum for discussing issues related specifically to J to E translation for children, including translation opportunities, SCBWI Tokyo translation events, online critiquing, and marketing of translations. Moderators are Sako Ikegami ([sako@yamaneko.org](mailto:sako@yamaneko.org)) and Avery Udagawa ([averyudagawa@yahoo.com](mailto:averyudagawa@yahoo.com)). Please contact one of them for an invitation.

## Membership

Membership in SCBWI Tokyo is included in general SCBWI membership. To join SCBWI, visit the main SCBWI website at [www.scbwi.org](http://www.scbwi.org) and click on About SCBWI. Payment can be made online, by post with a U.S. bank-drawn check, or by post with an International Postal Money Order. Benefits of SCBWI membership include eligibility for grants, free posting of illustrations and publicity of published books on the SCBWI Tokyo website ([www.scbwi.jp](http://www.scbwi.jp)), discounted admission to all SCBWI events and conferences, and much more.



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