

The SCBWI Japan Newsletter

Summer 2013

Carp Tales is the bi-annual newsletter of the Japan chapter of the Society of Children’s Book Writers and Illustrators (SCBWI). The newsletter includes SCBWI Japan 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*, email [contact \(at\) scbwi.jp](mailto:contact@scbwi.jp). The submission deadline is June 1 for the Spring/Summer issue and December 1 for the Fall/Winter issue. All articles and illustrations in *Carp Tales* are © SCBWI Japan and the contributing writers and illustrators. For more information about SCBWI Japan, see www.scbwi.jp.

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From the Editors

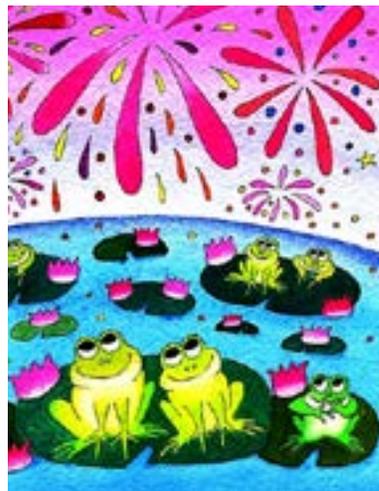


Illustration by Hitomi Otani

The spring and summer of 2013 has brought many member successes, new publications, and recognitions for those in our busy region. We’re so pleased with the wonderful opportunities our members had this past spring and summer to engage in critiques and creative exchanges. Member-to-member feedback and the manuscript input received by US editors Sylvie Frank (Paula Wiseman Books/Simon & Schuster) and Sally Morgridge (Holiday House) in April resulted in reports of new progress made by many in our regional family. We hope that our member news and events continue to

motivate us all to keep working, revising, and sending our creative projects into the world. Let our goals for the remainder of 2013 be forefront in our minds and let us all strive to exceed our expectations and self-imposed limitations. Also, *Carp Tales* will be moving to a blog format this fall. Enjoy this last PDF edition and look forward to enjoying more frequent articles, interviews, and additional content year-round. Let’s create!

Misa Dikengil Lindberg, *Carp Tales* Editor
Jenny Desmond Walters, *Carp Tales* Assistant Editor

SCBWI Japan Event Wrap-Ups

by Holly Thompson and Jenny Desmond Walters

Creative Exchange

February 2, 2013

For this winter exchange, all writers/translators were asked to share their work in advance so that the meeting time was focused entirely on sharing feedback. Participants were enthusiastic about this approach to the exchange, and found the format especially helpful. We met in two separate groups first, illustrators and writers/translators, then together for discussion of the works that benefitted from comments from both. Work submitted included longer MG and YA fiction, as well as nonfiction, biography, and fantasy picture books.

Digital Illustration with Paul Richardson

March 3, 2013

SCBWI Japan member illustrator Paul Richardson gave this thorough presentation on digital illustration. After briefly discussing hardware, he gave an overview of the software available, discussed the software he has personally used, and described the differences between them. He then focused on Sketchbook Express and detailed projects workflow. He showed his process with pencil sketch, scanning, digital drafting with



Digital Illustration with Paul Richardson

a pen tablet, making adjustments to composition, and refining his digital drawing. He showed examples of the ways he works with layers using a sample book cover. Participants had the chance to try working with Sketchbook Express or to observe others experimenting. Thanks to Paul for an excellent workshop, well received by all who attended.

Meet the Illustrator Dinner with David Wiesner

March 21, 2013

SCBWI Japan members had the opportunity to meet David Wiesner, an American author and illustrator of award winning picture books such as *Tuesday* (Caldecott Medal), *Flotsam*, *Art & Max* and many others. Attendees met David, his wife, and daughter over dinner at Kyo Machiya Gotanda in Tokyo. Participants of this members-only event enjoyed asking questions about David's art, inspiration, wordless books and latest projects. They also discussed ideas and topics from David's daytime lectures sponsored by the Japanese Board on Books for Young People (JBBY). A special bonus during dinner was the creation of a unique piece of collaborative art that began with an initial drawing by David and was then added to by each guest at the table. Member illustrators added to David's original drawing with complementary drawings of their own. Member writers contributed with words from the heart. David's family members participated by adding their unique touches. SCBWI Japan is grateful to David Wiesner and his family for their support of SCBWI and its regional members around the globe.



Kerry Martin conducting open portfolio critiques

Open Portfolio Critiques with Kerry Martin of Clarion Books

April 12, 2013

The SCBWI Japan Open Portfolio Critiques event with Kerry Martin, Senior Designer at Clarion Books, was held on Friday evening. Kerry Martin first gave an introduction to her work at Clarion, and then shared a few words about illustrators receiving critiques. Participants viewed the participant portfolios laid out on a table, and Kerry managed to critique all twelve portfolios in a little over two hours. This was quite a marathon! Her comments covered points on the SCBWI Gold Form for Illustrators (positive aspects, areas for improvement, overall presentation, continuity/consistency, perspectives and composition, marketability and next steps). There was a wide range of work shown, and she offered so many helpful comments. Because of the large size of the group, it was sometimes difficult for everyone to see details in the work being discussed, but everyone felt it was so much more instructive to have open critiques rather than private critiques and to learn from all of the critiques offered. Yoko Yoshizawa heroically



Results of the Sketch and Word Crawl

interpreted for Japanese speaking illustrators throughout the evening. Non-illustrators attending took notes for illustrators on the Gold Form so that they could focus during the critique on listening to Kerry's comments but would also have a written record of the comments.

Distance Critiques with Two US Editors plus Workshop: Interpreting Critiques and Planning Next Steps for our Work
April 20, 2013

This event was the follow-up to sending work for critique by two US editors—Sylvie Frank, Associate Editor at Paula Wiseman Books/Simon & Schuster, and Sally Morgridge, Editorial Assistant at Holiday House, who offered written distance critiques of picture book text, dummies, and MG/YA novel openings to SCBWI Japan members. Sixteen members participated, including those unable to attend the event, and the critiques were divided evenly between

the two editors. At the Tokyo event, participants received the editors' critiques, had time to digest them quietly, then in turn reflected on our critiques—which comments seemed helpful, which ones we questioned, and which comments we might disagree with. Afterward, groups formed according to genre, age range, or format to briefly discuss next steps. Participants found the editors' critiques to be thorough and overall very helpful, and most everyone seemed to agree that meeting together when receiving critiques was beneficial and enabled us to consider various ways to interpret comments. We hope to hold a similar sort of event in 2014.

Miura Sketch and Word Crawl
May 29, 2013

SCBWI Japan member Colleen Sakurai planned this event at her family's Sakurai Temple House. Participants met up in Zushi and took the bus down the Miura coast—which offered a hazy glimpse of Mount Fuji—to Akiya. First we relaxed in the Temple House, full of Colleen and Shoichi Sakurai's antiques and artwork, and so content were we all, that we didn't want to move on. But the weather cooperated and we were able to take a river walk and stop along the banks to eat our bento lunches, then to work privately at sketching or writing. After discussing the creative outcomes, we meandered back to the Temple House, walked around the



Illustrators at the Creative Exchange

temple grounds and cemetery, and strolled through Akiya to the *Tateishi* (Standing Rock) scenic area. We walked along the rocky beach, and met again at a park area as a group to discuss project goals. Everyone felt renewed and refreshed and grateful to the Sakurai's for organizing such a satisfying sketch and word crawl.

Creative Exchange
June 15, 2013

This was the final creative exchange before the summer break. Both writers and illustrators participated. Writers shared their work in advance for discussion at the event. For most of the exchange, illustrators and writers met in separate groups, then joined to discuss texts for author/illustrator picture books. This approach again worked extremely well, and both writers and illustrators seemed motivated and energized by the feedback received.

About the Newsletter Designer

Miki Bromhead works as a graphic designer for the blogging company Six Apart (www.sixapart.jp) while moonlighting as a Pokemon trainer. Born and raised in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, she lives with her husband in Saitama, Japan. If you enjoy food and Pokemon, you might enjoy following her on twitter [@zombiemiki](https://twitter.com/zombiemiki).

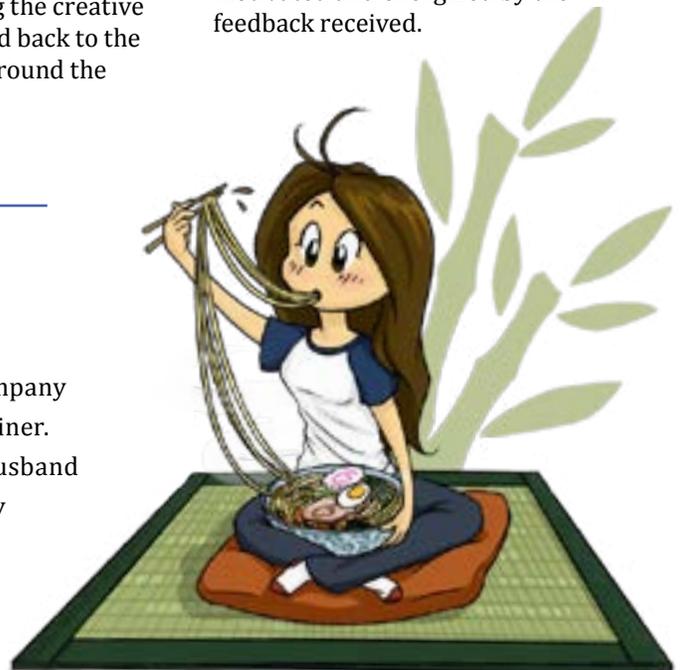


Illustration by Jessica Vanderpol

The 1st Asia and Oceania Regional IBBY Congress in Bali 2013

by Naomi Kojima

I have always wanted to go to Bali, and I have always wanted to go to an International Board on Books for Young People (IBBY) Congress, so it was my wish come true when I heard the 1st Asia and Oceania Regional IBBY Congress would be taking place in Bali, May 23-26, 2013. The IBBY Congress was also taking place right before The Asian Festival of Children's Content (AFCC) in Singapore, which I had already made plans to attend, and this made it possible for me to go to two children's book conferences in one trip. I registered right away.

The IBBY congress in Bali was hosted by INABBY, the Indonesian Section of IBBY, under Congress Leader Dr. Murti Bunanta. 125 delegates from 20 countries across Asia, Oceania, Europe, and the US gathered to enjoy presentations, discussions, and book talks.

The Congress was held at the Ananta Legion Hotel, where most of the delegates stayed. At the Opening Ceremony, Dr. Murti Bunanta expressed her hope that the inaugural regional congress will bring the IBBY National Sections of the Asia-Oceania region closer together, and that the spirit of friendship will encourage each of us to work with great passion and tirelessness to serve children with an abundance of good books.

Dr. Murti Bunanta and her Committee of Volunteers made us feel at home. The Congress was soon beginning to feel like a large family. I was happy to see friends from AFCC, and enjoyed meeting delegates from South Korea, Indonesia, India, Cambodia, Thailand, Taiwan, China, Singapore, Brunei, Australia, New Zealand, Denmark, Finland, Norway, the US, and Japan.

Sessions began at 9 a.m. and continued until 6 p.m. There were plenary sessions where representatives of each IBBY national chapter gave a report on their activities and shared their ideas on how to strengthen IBBY Asia-Oceania. I was



Illustration by Izumi Tanaka

surprised to see how young many of the IBBY representatives were. I learned about the challenges and aspirations; and about each country's dedication and effort to promote the love of reading, and develop and publish quality children's books.

There were storytelling performances after dinner, and one evening we were treated to a Balinese Shadow Puppet Performance. Sitting on the floor listening to the storytellers, I felt like a child again. I was fascinated by the rich oral tradition and storytelling of Asia, and was amazed by the storytellers from the US, Australia, and Denmark.

There were not many illustrators at the congress, but illustrators were not forgotten. I led a 90-minute Illustrations Discussion session. I was delighted to see the work of young and talented illustrators, eager to learn about and discuss illustrations for children's books.

I moderated a parallel session, which consisted of 3 presentations: Citra Remi, a graphic designer from Indonesia on "Designing Digital E-Book (apps) for Preschool Children through the Story of Sri Pohaci, a Sundanese Goddess of Rice"; Jeong Jim Lim, a writer from South Korea, on "Reviving the Times of Namsadang, Korea's Traditional Folk Performance Troupe, through Children's Stories"; Swati Raji, a writer from Pune, India, on the preservation of regional languages by creating and providing well written and illustrated children's books in "Telling Stories with Big Themes in

Less Words". The speakers each had their unique and creative way of bringing stories to children, and I felt fortunate to be part of the session as moderator.

The sessions overlapped, and I know I missed many, but I learned about the changing role of a storyteller in Singapore, about South Korea's reading promotion program for the increasing number of multicultural families, and about how Indonesian girls frame themselves in girls' comics. I also enjoyed the sessions by the Japanese delegates. Tetsuya Watanabe spoke about the Kumata Books and author Shigeo Watanabe; Akiko Sueyoshi spoke of the portrayal of women in Japanese children's literature; Etsuko Nozaka presented on "Kamishibai: Kayoko Horiguchi"; and in "Living the Stories: Purpose of Reading Children's Literature of the World," Hisae Adachi and Keiko Ushiro spoke of the importance of introducing Japanese children to literature from around the world, which they have been doing through their 30-year-old magazine *Children of the World*.

At the Closing Ceremony on the evening of the fourth day, the Congress ended with everyone dancing and hoping to meet again at the next Asia and Oceania Regional IBBY Congress in Malaysia in 2015.

It was difficult to say goodbye to Bali, but early the next morning, Sueyoshi, Etsuko Nozaka, several others, and I headed to the airport for our next destination, the Asian Festival of Children's Content 2013 in Singapore.

Naomi Kojima is a picture book author and illustrator. Born in Japan, she has divided her life between the United States and Japan. She is the writer and illustrator of Utau Shijimi (Singing Shijimi Clams) and The Christmas Song Book, and the Japanese translator of Dear Genius, The Letters of Ursula Nordstrom.

Asian Festival of Children's Content 2013: Three SCBWI Japan Members' Perspectives

by Avery Fischer Udagawa, Holly Thompson, and Naomi Kojima

This was my third year to attend and second year to present at AFCC. After offering the conference's first session on translation in 2012, I helped to organize a half-day Translation Seminar for 2013, which addressed the AFCC topic of "Asian content for the world's children."

In the first session of this Translation Seminar, SCBWI Japan's Alexander O. Smith used examples from Japanese-to-English entertainment translation to urge translators to show "agency" and create engaging translations with a strong voice. He encouraged translators to avoid "awkward info dumps" about culture and showed how to use inventive writing that recreates readers' experience of the original.

Next, SCBWI Japan Regional Advisor Holly Thompson spoke about her experience editing 10 short story translations by 10 translators for *Tomos: Friendship Through Fiction: An Anthology of Japan Teen Stories*. Based on this experience, she identified several musts for translators including the need to "be an artist, not a machine" and to "read, read, read" children's/teen books in the English language (target) market.

Next, in a session about promoting translations, I identified ways for translators to spread the word about titles they have translated. Translators can also judiciously bring deserving titles to English-language publishers' attention. For details on how to do this, I interviewed acclaimed translator Laura Watksinon, co-founder of the Dutch chapter of SCBWI. Read Laura's informative responses in full on the SCBWI Japan Translation Group blog (<http://ihatov.wordpress.com>).

In the final session of the Translation Seminar, Alex, Holly, and I joined publisher Harvey Thomlinson of Hong

Kong and Mohd Khair Ngadiron of the Malaysian Institute of Translation and Books to discuss the market for Asian children's and teen stories translated into English. We also discussed the elements that make a translation from Asia more likely to sell. It was gratifying to see the Translation Seminar attended by listeners from around Asia who could apply the content to their work. The seminar was, however, just the beginning of offerings that I found useful as a translator. As in past years, I gained terrific ideas and inspiration at the two-day AFCC Writers and Illustrators Conference and Media Summit.

The sessions I attended this year included "The Current State and Future Possibilities of Asian-Themed Publishing in the US," presented by Shen's Books publisher Renee Ting, who drew on census and publishing data to reveal a need for Asia-themed books in the US marketplace. Another eye-opening session was "First Pages—Writing Critique," in which Renee Ting, author Wendy Orr, and editor Vatsala Kaul Banerjee of Hachette India critiqued submissions of unpublished manuscript excerpts submitted anonymously. Ahmad Redza Ahmad Khairuddin, president of the International Board of Books for Young People (IBBY), presented a thought-provoking talk about the role of children's literature in the world. I also appreciated the sessions "Grabbing Your Reader's Attention" by authors Candy Gourlay and Kathleen Ahrens, and a roundtable on Asian-themed books that featured author-reviewer Daphne Lee, author-publisher Anushka Ravishankar, and reviewer Marjorie Coughlan of PaperTigers.org. It was a special honor to moderate a session presented by two speakers from Japan: Etsuko Nozaka, a prolific translator from Dutch, English, and French into Japanese and



Akiko Sueyoshi, Gambaatar Ichinnorov, Bolormaa Baasansuren, Akiko Beppu, Etsuko Nozawa, Naomi Kojima, Holly Thompson

representative of the International Kamishibai Association of Japan, and Akiko Sueyoshi, an acclaimed Japanese author whose works range from picture books to novels and have garnered numerous awards. These two speakers' dedication to and passion for their work were palpable and inspiring to listeners who filled their room to capacity.

Outside the sessions at AFCC, I relished the chance to network with colleagues and friends at daily lunches, dinners, coffee breaks, tea breaks, and informal chats. AFCC presents a great chance to network not only with translators, but also with editors, agents, writers, illustrators, and librarians—all of whom have expertise to offer about children's books. I gained names of publishers to approach about translations and schools open to translator visits. Perhaps the most enjoyable part of AFCC was catching up with acquaintances from Singapore, Australia, and Japan whom I see yearly at the event. I enjoyed seeing SCBWI Japan members receive lots of attention this year: Holly Thompson and Naomi Kojima gave keynote addresses; Alex drew fans' awe for his work translating iconic videogames and novels; and Trevor Kew let us congratulate him on his marriage. The presence of editorial director Akiko Beppu of Kaisei-sha and the Japan-based writer-illustrator team Bolormaa Baasansuren and Gambaatar



AFCC Translation Panel (Standing: Holly Thompson, Harvey Thomlinson, Avery Fischer Udagawa; seated: Alexander O. Smith, Mohd Khair Ngadiron)

Ichinnorov of Mongolia, who received recognition, helped to make this year all the more special.

Children's translators of Asia: Put AFCC on your calendar for next year! Not because it is a translators' conference, but because it is a children's content conference that offers connections with key partners in publishing. It is a chance to spread your wings, encounter books not sold in Tokyo, and visit an accessible city in Southeast Asia. It is also a great place to encourage developing children's publishing cultures around the region. The dates for next year are set: May 31 to June 4, 2014. I hope you will give AFCC a try!

Avery Fischer Udagawa's translations from Japanese include the middle grade historical novel J-Boys: Kazuo's World, Tokyo, 1965 by Shogo Oketani and a story by Sachiko Kashiwaba in Tomo: Friendship Through Fiction--An Anthology of Japan Teen Stories.
www.averyfischerudagawa.com

Returning home after Asian Festival of Children's Content 2013 in Singapore always results in a bit of post-AFCC let down. AFCC offers such a vibrant gathering of writers, illustrators, translators, editors, publishers, librarians, and readers from all over Asia, this can't be helped.

For the first time, AFCC was held at the National Library Singapore. Although the library venue is not as cozy as the historic Arts House of previous years, the location is central and the facilities are accessible and comfortable for all, including a 16th floor pod with phenomenal views of Singapore, and a spacious outdoor plaza for book sales, food, and events. Plus there is a gelato shop across the street . . .

The country of focus for AFCC 2013 was Malaysia (2014 will be India), so the program included a Malaysia night celebration; and many Malaysian books, authors, and illustrators were featured during the festival. Project Splash! Asia was also celebrated—this features an annotated bibliography of water-themed stories from Asia. The organizers are still collecting titles of stories to grow the bibliography further, so feel free to send them in via PaperTigers.org.

This year I was an invited speaker in the translation seminar—a new track for the conference—on editing stories in translation, reflecting on my experience with the *Tomo* anthology. This track was organized by SCBWI Japan Translation Group coordinator Avery Fischer Udagawa and also featured SCBWI Japan translation member Alexander O. Smith. I hope this track continues to be a feature of AFCC and ultimately enables more children's and YA titles from Asia to be translated into English.

I also delivered a keynote talk, "Stories Set in Asia: Selling Them Overseas," in which I shared key questions agents and editors tend to ask—questions that writers need to consider as they write stories set in Asia intended for markets outside of Asia. Shortly after the keynote was a launch celebration for my verse novel *The Language Inside* (Delacorte/Random House, 2013) outside in the plaza. I was grateful to Bookaburra Books of Singapore for handling book sales for all of my books.

On the first evening of the Writers and Illustrators Conference at AFCC, the Singtel Asian Picture Book Awards and the Hedwig Anuar Children's Book Awards were announced. What a thrill to see Japan-based Bolormaa Baasansuren of Mongolia win first prize for illustration for her book *Old City*, and to see her husband Gambaatar Ichinnorov shortlisted for the text of this book. Bolormaa had shared a dummy of this book with illustrator John Shelley and me for feedback in 2007 after our workshops in Mongolia.

I attended as many sessions as I could during the conference—"Challenge, Trauma and Recovery in YA" with authors Susanne Gervay and Wendy Orr; "Asian-Themed Publishing in the US" with Shen's Books publisher Renee Ting; "Celebrating Diversity in Children's Picture Books" with IBBY president Ahmad Khairuddin; "Grabbing Your Readers' Attention" with authors Candy Gourlay and Kathleen Ahrens; "The Future of Publishing in Digital Space"; First Pages critiques; sessions on blogging and more. Between sessions I browsed and purchased books from around Asia.

SCBWI has a major presence each year at AFCC with regional SCBWI teams from around Asia and Oceania plus SCBWI members from regions around the world in attendance. AFCC is as much about the conversations with new and old friends and evening gatherings by the river as it is about the sessions and keynotes and special events. Already I'm missing those friends from around Asia and looking forward to AFCC 2014.

Holly Thompson is author of the YA verse novels Orchards (APALA Asian/Pacific American Award for Literature) and The Language Inside, and the picture book The Wakame Gatherers. She edited Tomo: Friendship Through Fiction—An Anthology of Japan Teen Stories. She teaches at Yokohama City University.

Each May I look forward to visiting Singapore to attend the Asian Festival of Children's Content. This is my fourth year to write about AFCC for *Carp Tales*. Last year I wrote that AFCC 2012 was special, but it seems every year is special at AFCC.

This year I served on the inaugural SingTel Asia Picture Book Award judging panel. Established to encourage and inspire the publications of more Asian-themed picture books, the award is given to one author and one illustrator of an unpublished picture book with a distinctly Asian theme. This year a total of 158 manuscripts were submitted from 19 different countries, out of which 79 had illustrations.

On the first day of the Writers and Illustrators Conference, I gave a keynote talk on illustration titled "Reaching for the World; the Art of Asian Illustrators of Children's Books." I introduced the work of Asian illustrators and their books, which have traveled well across the world. I was touched that throughout AFCC, people stopped me to say that they had learned a lot about Asian illustrators, and they felt encouraged that Asian illustrators were doing well in children's books.

I spoke to many illustrators in between sessions, and they showed me their work and picture book dummies. My mind was already in critique mode by the time "First Look: Illustration Critique" started. Illustrator Yusof Gahjah, writer Shirin Yim Bridges, and I looked at illustrations projected on the screen. It was the first time for us to see them. It took a good amount of concentration and stamina to view and remember many sets of six illustrations, and then give honest and constructive comments. I enjoyed seeing at the illustrations, and it was interesting to hear Yusof's and Shirin's comments.

This year two Japanese speakers, Akiko Sueyoshi and Etsuko Nozaka, presented. Akiko Sueyoshi, who has written over 100 children's books, gave a talk called

"My Journey as a Writer." Etsuko Nozaka, who is a translator of Dutch children's books and an advocate of Kamishibai, spoke on "Picture Books, the Kamishibai Way." The room was packed with an enthusiastic audience, and I felt people had a strong interest in Japanese children's books. This made me hope that many more Japanese writers and illustrators will come to AFCC.

Each year I look forward to meeting illustrators, and I was delighted to moderate "Asian Illustrators Panel: Injecting Asian Flavor into Your Work," with Singapore-based illustrators Patrick Yee, Stephanie Wong, and Jade Fang. It was inspiring to see three different styles of illustrations.

The launch of Project Splash! Asia was also inspiring. In celebration of the UN International Year of Water Cooperation, AFCC 2013 presented this special session on the use of water in Asian picture books. The bibliography made me think how we take our abundance of water for granted in Japan. I was surprised and happy to find *Singing Shijimi Clams* in the bibliography, and I hoped that the clams, in their small way, would be able to inspire children to value the importance of water.

I attended sessions by illustrators Chris Nixon, Julia Kaergel, and Samantha Hughes; a graphic novel session with publisher Wolfgang Bylsma, illustrator Sonny Liew, and writer Paolo Chikiamco; a session on writer and illustrator relationship with Norman Jorgensen, James Foley, Ken Spillman, and Chris Nixon; a panel on Asian themes in children's books with Daphne Lee, Anushka Ravishankar, and Marjorie Coughlan; translation sessions with Avery Fischer Udagawa, Alexander O. Smith, Mohd Khair Ngadiron, and Holly Thompson; and First Pages-Writing Critique.

On the Awards Presentation Night, the Hedwig Anuar Children's Book Awards and the SingTel Asian Picture Book Awards were announced. The SingTel Asian Picture Book Author Award was presented to Debra Chong of Singapore,



Singtel Asian Picture Book Award illustration winner Bolormaa Baasansuren with Rama Ramachadran (Executive Director National Book Development Council of Singapore) and Gambaatar Ichinnorov, shortlisted for text

and the Illustrator Award was presented to Bolormaa Baasansuren of Mongolia. It was wonderful that all winners were present at the awards ceremony.

Each year after AFCC, I go home with a joyful spirit and a year's supply of creative energy. Much of this comes from the inspiring sessions, but it also comes from reuniting with old friends and making new friends. It was wonderful to be at AFCC with SCBWI Japan friends Holly Thompson, Avery Udagawa Fischer, Alexander O. Smith, Gerri Sorrels and her family, and Trevor Kew. I was very happy to be able to share the AFCC experience with Akiko Sueyoshi and Etsuko Nozaka, and it was also very special for me that my editor Akiko Beppu came to AFCC this year.

I thank Executive Director Mr. Ramachandran, Festival Director Kenneth Quek, and everyone of the Program and the Organizing Committees for a wonderful AFCC this year. I look forward to attending again next year!

Naomi Kojima is a picture book author and illustrator. Born in Japan, she has divided her life between the United States and Japan. She is the writer and illustrator of Utau Shijimi (Singing Shijimi Clams) and The Christmas Song Book, and the Japanese translator of Dear Genius, The Letters of Ursula Nordstrom.

Translating From Wherever

by Alexander O. Smith

Packing up and going off to work from wherever is the promise of the Internet age, and one that would seem to mesh well with the often solitary work of the translator. Yet it's hard to reconcile this idea with the need to develop the long-term relationships with clients that are key to building a career. When I was faced with the prospect of leaving a comfortable location in Tokyo near a client for whom I had worked in-house for years to return to my family home in northern Vermont, I felt like I was jumping off a cliff.

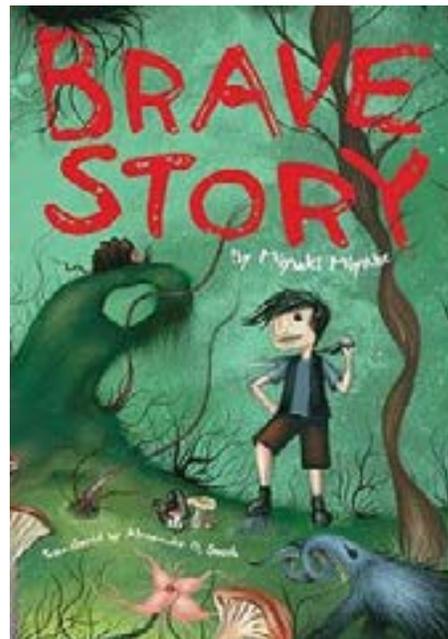
The first thing I knew I would need were clients who wouldn't require me to be on site. During my in-house days, I did mostly game work, translating the voluminous dialogue and story text. This could be done at home, but there was much else, like checking a game in development or testing builds to make sure text and voice was properly implemented, that required trips in to the office. Continuing to work for these clients would mean transitioning to work through on-site proxies—either game services agencies or in-house localization teams. Hedging my bets, I decided I would also need to diversify. Having worked on a handful of novels by then, I put more energy into fitting literary translation into my schedule and budget. As my clients for this work were publishers already in the US and the UK, my physical location didn't matter.

In the early summer of 2007, my family moved from a bustling corner of western Tokyo to a small town in Vermont with a population of fewer than nine hundred people. At first the advantages were clearer than the disadvantages. Being in touch with American culture—the books, the TV shows, the people—was ultimately just as important to me for creating

entertainment in English as keeping tabs on my source culture, possibly even more important. I also had easier access to schools, professional groups, such as the American Translators Association, and fan conventions, like PAX and PAX East for games, where I could give talks on my work, and most importantly, interact face-to-face with my audience. Here, the groundwork I'd done before leaving Japan paid off, too. I had plenty of projects lined up, both books and games, for my first year back in the States. It wasn't long after the move, however, that I realized keeping the work coming wasn't the problem. Doing the work was the problem.

Even when I was working from a home office, my work in Tokyo had been collaborative in nature, sometimes deeply so. Though a few one-off jobs or novels might have been largely solo affairs, there were always one or two projects that involved meetings, or even better, late night drinking sessions where the real ideas were brought out, prodded, and thrown at the wall to see what stuck. As much as I dreaded the occasional disorganized “creativity by committee” meeting, I discovered that I relied on that back and forth to keep the creative and productivity juices flowing.

A year of spinning my wheels passed before a solution presented itself. Joseph Reeder, a translator from the game company where I'd worked in-house, was looking to move back to the US. We started a partnership that eventually turned into a two-man company (Kajiya Productions). Whether we were working on a game translation, a novel translation, or writing original material, someone would be there to cross-check, help work through tricky passages, and provide a sounding board for ideas. Skype made our geographic removal



The English publication of Miyuki Miyabe's Brave Story, translated by Alexander O. Smith

inconsequential (Joe was in Austin, Texas) and we could always jump on a plane for anything that required more than a day or two of real-time collaboration. This collaboration, plus e-mail lists and Facebook groups to keep in touch with colleagues in translation and publishing on both sides of the Pacific, was instrumental in recreating the productive environment I needed.

So not only clients, but also collaborators are key ingredients to keeping a remote career alive. The challenge to anyone in my situation, I realized, is learning how much you require of each to keep the work flowing. At least it seems that, with online connectivity and a willingness to travel for an annual call on clients or to rub elbows at conferences, location is optional. I did eventually relocate back to Japan in 2012, but it was more a family decision than a career move. While meeting with the media and potential partners face-to-face has



Alexander O. Smith

made it easier getting a new publishing company (Bento Books) off the ground, it's nothing my partners and I couldn't have done with a few strategic client visits and online collaboration.

So to anyone contemplating a change in scenery, my advice is to jump. With a little bit of groundwork you'll be able to get any local clients ready for the change, diversify to new clients who can handle working remotely, and set up your environment so you can remain productive. For translators, writers, and other creative types unafraid to travel a little and

communicate online a lot, the Internet really does deliver on its promise. The world is your oyster. Just make sure your oyster gets good Wi-Fi reception.

Alexander O. Smith is co-founder of Kajiya Productions and Bento Books. He has been translating video games, novels, and more from Japanese to English for fifteen years. He is currently based in the hills of Kamakura, Japan, where he is working on his 30th novel in translation.

Writing Irresistible Kidlit: A review

by Claire Dawn

I've long admired Mary Kole. She's the force behind www.kidlit.com, one of the "101 Best Websites for Writers," according to *Writer's Digest Magazine*, and a leading children's book agent in the US. After hearing her speak at an October 2011 event, I knew I had to get my hands on a copy of her soon-to-be released craft book *Writing Irresistible Kidlit* (Writer's Digest Books, 2012).

Kole begins and ends the book with the "business book-ends." Chapter 1 is a market overview, covering who the readers are, the history of kidlit, the current market, the viability of series, opportunities, and an analysis of the MG and YA markets. The penultimate chapter focuses on developing your career in kidlit, mainly how to get an agent. There are sections on how to write a query—including "Query Don'ts"—what an agent does, and how you should choose one.

The seven middle chapters focus on the craft of writing for children. Chapter 2 gets deeper into the minds of the MG and YA audiences, discussing what is acceptable and popular with both groups. Chapter 3 focuses on your book idea, looking at hooks, originality, and loglines. Chapter 4 is about

storytelling foundations, focusing on beginnings, the balance of action and information, and the choice of tense and POV.

Chapters 5 through 7 are the real meat of the book, taking up more than 60% of its bulk. Chapter 5 focuses on character. In MG and YA, character is of utmost importance. More so than in adult work, the audience wants to identify with a character. "Readers want to see themselves in stories—that's how they care." (37) Kole describes how to introduce a character, how to make the reader care by creating a strong character objective and conflict. She also proposes the idea of employing a "core identity"—comprised of core strength, virtue, role, flaw, emotions, boundaries, and outlook and fixed beliefs—to ensure fascinating, complex characters. (106)

Chapter 6 focuses on plot. Kole starts off with a lament of the decreasing attention spans of the readership and the competition books face from other media. As a result, a plot has to stay tight or it will lose the reader. To achieve this, she suggests stakes and tension. "If plot is the engine that drives the story, stakes and tension are the twin fuels that keep the engine

burning hot." (167) I really enjoyed the section on subplots and the muddy middle, which put forward concrete fixes for the saggy middles with which many writers struggle.

In Chapter 7, "Advanced Kidlit," Kole looks at imagery, word choice, theme, authority and authenticity. In the section on imagery, she reminds us not to be overly dependent on visual imagery. "We experience life in all five senses." (204) This is also the chapter where she defines voice. She admits that giving a simple one-liner definition of voice never fails to be vague, so she breaks it down into a list: word choice, imagery, syntax, rhythm, mood and simplicity. Kole then goes on to address theme and its importance in children's literature. She even provides a list of good themes for these audiences. Finally, she speaks of authority and authenticity.

"Authority goes hand in hand with confidence. Writing with authority isn't about the writing at all. Actually...the writing fades away." (240) Here, she also takes a moment to remind novelists to take care of our creative selves and how we grow toward authority.

There are certain features that Kole uses throughout to enhance information and (*continued p.13*)

SCBWI Member Profile: Benjamin Martin

Interviewed by Miki Bromhead

Benjamin Martin hails from Phoenix, Arizona, in the US. After graduating in 2008, he came to Japan as an English teacher through the Japanese Exchange and Teaching (JET) Program. He has been living and working on small islands in Okinawa Prefecture since. Ben enjoys Japanese history and culture, and shares his love for Japan through writing and photography on his blog morethingsjapanese.com.

In 2011 his first manuscript placed in the top 1% of the Amazon Breakthrough Novel Award (ABNA) contest, and was subsequently published by Tuttle Publishing as *Samurai Awakening*. The sequel, *Revenge of the Akuma Clan*, is set for October 2013.

Congratulations on your novel, *Samurai Awakening*, winning the 2013 Crystal Kite Award! What motivated you to begin writing *Samurai Awakening*?

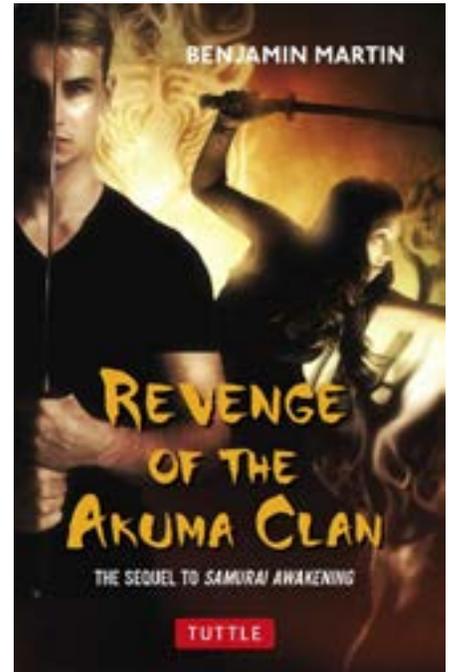
I have to say again how honored I am that the members of SCBWI Japan and the rest of the region chose *Samurai Awakening*. I'm still growing as a writer, and I find it amazing that so many great authors, illustrators, and book lovers chose to recognize my work. As for writing *Samurai Awakening*... The JET program brings thousands of people from around the world to teach Japanese students about their language and culture, but there is no reciprocal program. Reading the book *Things Japanese* was my first "I want to write" moment, but it was such a daunting task that I thought it was beyond me. Instead, I decided to focus on creating something for western students so that they might get a small part of my experience in Japan through a fun and entertaining story.

What writing related difficulties did you face while writing *Samurai Awakening*? How did you overcome them?

I came up with the idea in a few days of brainstorming, and then had to figure out what media to create in. At first I saw it as a *manga*, but I can't draw so that was out. Having never written anything longer than my final business plan, I didn't think I could write a novel. I decided on a screenplay. I had to learn the structure of how to write one, but a few hours of Internet research had me naively confident on the subject. I started writing and had an 89-page script in just two weeks. I edited it and had people read it. I edited again, and then realized it needed to be a book. I spent several of the eventual 12 drafts learning simple structure and grammatical points. It was a steep learning curve but the entire process was fascinating.

Tell us about the publication process for *Samurai Awakening*.

I subbed to agents, but again ran into the common errors and pitfalls of the uninitiated. I sent queries before they were ready. While I was researching agents, however, I also researched publishers. One of my most oft-used books was *The Learner's Kanji Dictionary* from Tuttle Publishing. I had other books by them as well, and when I found their website I saw they focused on Japan. I was also pleased to see they did children's books. What I did not see was YA, which I felt might be an opportunity. I followed their guidelines and after a few weeks let them drift from my mind. With many potential books in the slush, Tuttle takes a while to respond, so I continued



Revenge of the Akuma Clan by Benjamin Martin, the sequel to *Samurai Awakening*

revising, kicking myself the whole way for sending an early version. The ABNA came up so I entered in 2011. I made it to the semi-finals, which Tuttle was thrilled with. I signed with Tuttle and delivered in the fall of 2011. The first edition of *Samurai Awakening* came out in October 2012.

What message do you hope readers will take with them after reading *Samurai Awakening*?

I hope readers enjoy spending time with David in Japan. If I can introduce some new aspect of Japanese history or culture, I'm thrilled, but really I just hope it's a good time. The kids I've talked to who have read *Samurai Awakening* seem to like the things they discover about Japan. It's a truly proud moment when kids who've read my book tell me about the things they learned, and how much they enjoyed it along the way.



Benjamin Martin

Besides your blog and Facebook page, you also actively tweet and host a radio program. Do you think social media interaction is important for a writer, or is it mainly a hobby? Did it help with the publication of *Samurai Awakening*?

I joined Facebook back when it was college-only as a way to stay in contact with friends around campus. I joined Twitter purely for sinister PR related goals, and now use it more than Facebook. I have a love/hate relationship with social media. It can

be a time drain, taking me away from writing, yet it keeps me up to date on news, lets me interact with other authors and readers, and can help clear my mind when I can't figure out what to write next. Living on small islands in Okinawa, it's an important outlet since I cannot travel easily. I try to find a balance between content creation and sharing that will be entertaining and useful for the awesome people who choose to follow me. Social media didn't help me get published, but it does give me writing practice and helps spread ideas and news.

What are your current writing projects?

Revenge of the Akuma Clan, book two in the *Samurai Awakening* series is coming this October from Tuttle and is now available for pre-order. *Revenge of the Akuma Clan* continues the story of David Matthews in Japan as he comes to terms with his position as Japan's protector. One of the things I really love about the second book is that I was able to work in my experiences traveling on school trips with my students into the story.

Currently, I'm working on book three and the next of the *Jitsugen Samurai Diaries*, my self-published work. I've also continued working on *More Things Japanese* (<http://morethingsjapanese.com/>) and have a new online project

to promote the island I've been living on for the last two years (<http://kumeguide.com>).

What is one of the most important lessons you have learned while living and writing in Japan?

Be tenacious. The only one who will ever stop you from writing is you. Even if no one ever read *Samurai Awakening* or *More Things Japanese*, I would still write them for myself. I love hearing feedback and it is definitely exciting to hear others enjoy my work, but I love stories and getting to write them is just fun.

Be flexible. Japan is wonderful, but it is not as homogenous a society as it may appear to foreigners. I love all the unique things that come up, and being flexible has allowed me to take advantage of a lot of great opportunities. How many people can say they've competed in sumo competitions?

Miki Bromhead works as a graphic designer for the blogging company Six Apart (www.sixapart.jp) while moonlighting as a Pokemon trainer. Born and raised in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, she lives with her husband in Saitama, Japan. If you enjoy food and Pokemon, you might enjoy following her on twitter @zombiemiki.

Featured Illustrators

Hitomi Otani was born in Tokyo, Japan, and studied English-American Literature at Doshisha Women's College of Liberal Arts. While residing in Los Angeles, she exhibited her greeting cards in local galleries and participated in several art festivals. Her illustration publications are *Animal Curiosities* and *Incredible Inventions* by Linda Polon (Good Year Books, 2012, 2013). She teaches English in Japan and is working on her first picture book. www.hitomiotani.com

Izumi Tanaka grew up in Nagasaki, Japan. She is a self-taught illustrator trained in traditional Japanese painting. She loves to draw nature, animals, and children. Visit her at <http://izumi-picturebooks.jimdo.com/>.

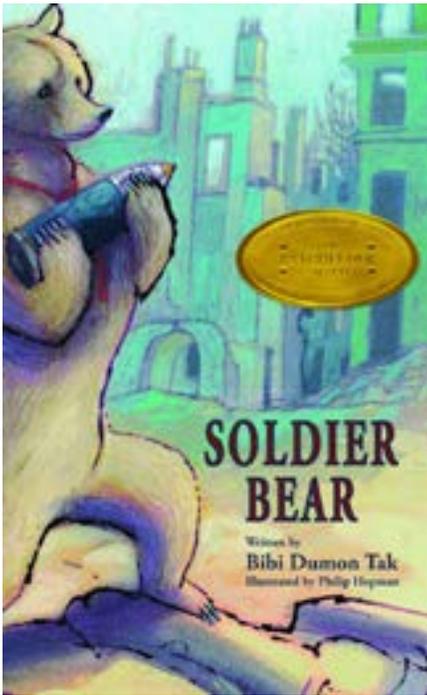
Jessica Vanderpol is an illustrator who specializes in watercolors, acrylics, and Photoshop. She enjoys illustrating a wide variety of subjects—from fantasy, to science fiction, and everything in between. Most of her children's book characters tend to be cats, since they are curious, spirited, and overall fun characters to draw. <http://jessicavanderpol.daportfolio.com/>

SCBWI and T(ranslators) Chat with Translator Laura Watkinson

Interviewed by Avery Fischer Udagawa

*Editors' note: Laura Watkinson translates into English from Dutch, Italian, and German. Passionate about children's and YA literature, she co-founded the Dutch chapter of SCBWI in 2008. Her translation from Dutch of *Soldier Bear* by Bibi Dumon Tak (Eerdmans, 2011) won the 2012 Mildred L. Batchelder Award.*

In a May interview with Avery Fischer Udagawa, Laura encouraged translators of children's literature to bring deserving titles to light and to network, especially with SCBWI. Below are short excerpts from the interview, timed for the Translation Seminar at Asian Festival of Children's Content 2013 in Singapore. To read Watkinson's complete responses, please see "An Interview with Laura Watkinson" (May 30) on the SCBWI Japan Translation Group blog: <http://ihatov.wordpress.com>.



Soldier Bear (Eerdmans, 2011) won the 2012 Mildred L. Batchelder Award

Whether we're translators, illustrators or writers, we're there for each other when it comes to commiserating—and, of course, celebrating!

Avery Fischer Udagawa: You founded the Dutch chapter of SCBWI—as a translator. What do translators gain from interacting with writers and illustrators? And vice versa?

My SCBWI friends in Amsterdam are a great bunch. We have similar attitudes toward work and fun. I don't think any of us followed our career paths with the idea of making lots of money, but we're all motivated by great stories and meeting other people who are working hard to convey their ideas to young readers. So there's a lot to talk about when we meet up. When you're working as a freelancer, it helps to have friends you can contact for advice and support. "Do you think this clause in this contract makes sense?" "Does the editor have a point here?" "What do you think about this title?" Whether we're translators, illustrators, or writers, we're there for each other when it comes to commiserating—and, of course, celebrating!

Once a translated book is published, how can the translator contribute to promotion?

Good old Twitter and Facebook help here, as does a blog or website. I was once involved in a "blog tour" to publicize an adult novel that I translated for Peirene Press in the UK . . . The publisher had built up a relationship with a number of book bloggers and she invited them to submit questions for

the author and translator. We then went on a virtual tour of the blogs, answering questions as we went, and readers who were interested in the interview followed us from blog to blog.

I also took part in a panel discussion about translation at the American Library Association (ALA) conference in Chicago, which focused on the translation of *Heartsinger*, published by Arthur A. Levine Books. Marianne Martens chaired the discussion, and publisher Arthur A. Levine, editor Cheryl Klein, and author Karlijn Stoffels all took part. That was a great experience and raised the profile both of the book and of the translation process.

What benefits come from having a Web presence?

If you have a website, people always know where to find you. It's also a good place to keep potential clients informed about what you've been up to lately. I've found that some of my clients, particularly authors that I work with directly, often communicate with me through Facebook or Twitter these days, rather than emailing. Both Facebook and Twitter are good for staying up to date with what's going on with publishers and fellow translators. I've also had plenty of queries and even offers of work arrive through FB, Twitter, and, of course, my website.

When Bibi Dumon Tak's *Soldier Bear*, which I translated for Eerdmans, won



Translator Laura Watkinson

the ALA's Batchelder Award for the best translated book, my SCBWI friend Roxie Munro sent a happy message to me via Facebook only minutes after the publisher had contacted me with the good news—and her message was followed by lots of other lovely comments on Facebook, Twitter, and via my website. These things matter, particularly when you're used to working in isolation.

Translators often work “behind the scenes,” but do they have power to bring stories that deserve to be translated to light?

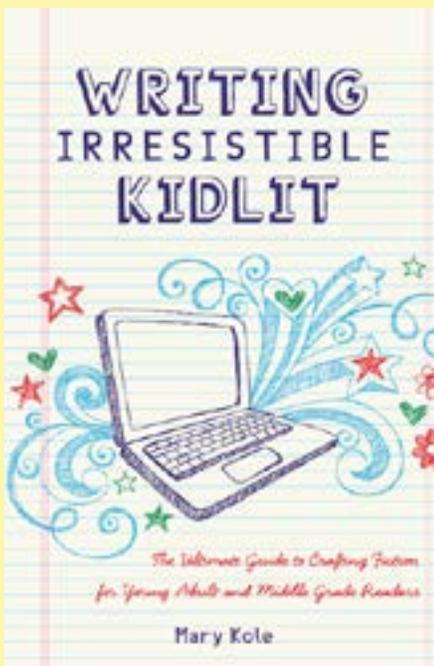
Absolutely. That's something very important that translators have to offer to publishers. We often hear that publishers would love to publish more books in translation, but they need people with language skills not only to translate the text, but also to help with making the selection . . .

As an example, one of my recent projects is a book for Arthur A. Levine Books, which is now in the final editing stages: *Hidden Like Anne Frank* by Marcel Prins and Peter Henk Steenhuis. The book features a number of accounts by Jewish people who, like Anne Frank, went into hiding during the Second World War, but survived to tell their own tales. I translated some publicity material about the book and thought it sounded like a perfect candidate for translation. Editor Emily Clement at Arthur A. Levine had also heard about the book and asked me to write a report. I was very enthusiastic and the book made it through the various stages and was selected for publication. It's been a beautiful title to work on and I'm really looking forward to seeing the finished book.

I'm also absolutely delighted to be translating a classic Dutch children's book for Pushkin Children's Books in the UK. Tonke Dragt's *The Letter for the King* was published in 1962 and was voted the best Dutch children's book ever in a “winner of winners” poll of all books that had won the award for best children's book of the year. Astonishingly, it has never been translated into English. Adam Freudenheim from Pushkin is committed to publishing some of the best children's stories from all around the world and he was really excited when he found out about this title. Publishers really do want to hear from enthusiastic readers and translators!

Avery Fischer Udagawa's translations include the middle grade novel J-Boys: Kazuo's World, Tokyo, 1965 by Shogo Oketani and the YA story “House of Trust” by Sachiko Kashiwaba in Tomo: Friendship Through Fiction—An Anthology of Japan Teen Stories. www.averyfischerudagawa.com

(continued from p.9)



offer additional tips. Definition boxes feature important terms like logline, inciting incident, motivation and narration. There are also quick Bonus Tips from successful authors and editors, such as Holly Black, author of *The Spiderwick Chronicles*, and Andrew Harwell and Alessandra Balzer, MG/YA editors at HarperCollins. Kole's worksheets and exercises are designed to help you better understand your characters and setting. My favorite feature is “From the Shelves.” Here Kole provides text samples from recent MG and YA bestsellers that feature top-notch examples of the writing elements that make kidlit great.

In chapter 9, the conclusion, Kole wraps up with a list of craft books she has quoted throughout, some

encouragement for writers, and a list of all the novels quoted (which is a fantastic to-read list). I think this book would make a great addition to any children's book author's library. And even if you do find a few ideas that rub you the wrong way (such as the insistence on outlining) then remember, “That's the asterisk to every maxim about writing: If you can do it well, no one will notice that you're doing something familiar. Make it new and make it better.” (206)

Claire Dawn is a Barbadian YA writer, currently living in Iwate. Her most recent work can be found in Japan Times Shukan ST and Tomo: Friendship through Fiction. She blogs at <http://aclairedawn.blogspot.com>.

SCBWI Japan Member News

Juliet Carpenter recently translated a shortened version of *The Tale of the Bamboo-Cutter* for NHK radio to be broadcast overseas in August as part of a series introducing Japanese folk tales. The four-minute read-aloud is followed by an interview with the translator. NHK plans to broadcast the series on TV and eventually come out with picture books.

Annie Donwerth Chikamatsu's middle grade verse novel, *Somewhere Among*, has been named a winner in the manuscript competition of the Writers' League of Texas. She will read an excerpt at the Writers' League of Texas Agents & Editors Conference held in Austin, Texas this June. Annie attended the LA-SCBWI conference in August.

Deborah Iwabuchi (member) and Kazuko Enda (non-member) published a middle grade ebook, with Asahi Media, now available as a Kindle book in the US, UK, and Japan. The book, *Little Keys and the Red Piano* by Hideko Ogawa, is the story of a kitten who loves to play the piano. The story, though a fantasy, gives a realistic look at life in Tokyo.

Suzanne Kamata's YA debut *Gadget Girl: The Art of Being Invisible* was published in May by GemmaMedia. Additionally, her story "The Returnee" was accepted for publication in *Cricket Magazine*, and her YA story "Day Pass" appears in *Sucker Literary Anthology*.

Naomi Kojima was commissioned to illustrate the cover of the 2013 summer

issue of *Onigashima Tsushin*, a Japanese biannual literary magazine for writers of children's books. <http://onigashima-press.com/>

Naomi Kojima was also invited to participate in the exhibition "From Hand to Hand—Picture Book Author's Messages for Children—Remembering 3.11", currently showing at the Tokyo Chihoro Museum until August 4, 2013. The exhibit displays the work of 110 children's book artists from 7 countries, expressing messages of hope for the future of Japan's children. The exhibit will tour Japan until the end of 2014. <http://handtohand0311.org/>

Trevor Kew's *Playing Favourites* was featured in the Canadian Children's Book Centre's Spring 2013 edition of *Best Books for Kids and Teens*. Also, the Junior Library Guild of America chose *Playing Favourites* as a recommended book for young readers for 2013.

Leza Lowitz and Shogo Oketani's debut YA novel, *Jet Black and the Ninja Wind*, is due out by Tuttle Publishing in October 2013.

Benjamin Martin's book *Samurai Awakening* by Tuttle Publishing won the 2013 SCBWI Crystal Kite Award for the Middle East/India/Asia region. His sequel, *Revenge of the Akuma Clan*, will be released later this year.

Mariko Nagai's verse novel manuscript, *Dust of Eden* (working title), was bought by Albert Whitman, and is forthcoming

in Spring 2014. The excerpt of this novel was first published in *Tomo: Friendship Through Fiction - An Anthology of Japan Teen Stories* (Stone Bridge Press, 2012) edited by Holly Thompson.

Shogo Oketani's novel *J-Boys: Kazuo's World, Tokyo, 1965*, translated by Avery Fischer Udagawa, has been published in Japan as a bilingual book by IBC Publishing. The Japanese title is *J-Boys: Kioku no naka no kodomotachi*.

Holly Thompson's YA verse novel *The Language Inside* was published by Delacorte/Random House in May 2013. Her poem "Cod" was published in the Poetry Friday Anthology for Middle School, and her poem "What They Call Me" was published in *Cricket Magazine* in March.

Jenny Desmond Walters's picture book *Fairy Tale Countdown* and nonfiction reader, *Solid, Liquid, Gas*, were released by TunTun English, an imprint of Unibooks (Korea) in April 2013. The books are available in print and as part of an online, extended resource with interactive illustrations, a retelling of the story, and original song lyrics written by Jenny.

Yoko Yoshizawa showed oil paintings and prints of animals at Gallery Hippo <http://www.gallery-hippo.com/index.htm> from August 30 to September 8, 2013. Yoko is one of the participants in "Children's Books by 10 illustrators and 5 Book Designers" to be held at Galerie Malle <http://galeriemalle.jp/contact-form-english> from December 10 to December 23, 2013.

Bulletin Board

The 42nd Annual SCBWI Summer Conference on Writing and Illustrating for Children will be held August 2-5, 2013, in Los Angeles, California. <http://www.scbwi.org/>

The 20th Tokyo International Book Fair (TIBF2013) takes place July 3 (Wed) – 6 (Sat), 2013, at Tokyo Big Sight, Japan. <http://www.bookfair.jp>

The 7th Annual Japan Writers Conference takes place November 2-3 at beautiful Okinawa Christian University. It is free and open to all. Published writers, translators, editors, agents and publishers who would like to lead a session are invited to submit proposals. <http://www.japanwritersconference.org/>

Scholastic Asian Book Award (SABA) is now accepting submissions for the 2014 award. The deadline for submissions is October 21, 2013. The award is presented to recognize outstanding writers of children's material in Asia or of Asian origin. <http://www.scholasticbookaward.asia/>
Itabashi Art Museum, Tokyo June 29 – August 11
<http://www.itabashiartmuseum.jp>

Otani Memorial Art Museum, Nishinomiya August 17 – September 23. <http://otanimuseum.jp>

Kawara Art Museum, Takahama September 28 – November 4
<http://www.takahama-kawara-museum.com>

Ishikawa Art Museum, Nanao November 8 – December 15
<http://nanao-art-museum.jp>

About SCBWI Japan

SCBWI Japan, the Japan 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; Jenny Desmond Walters is Assistant Regional Advisor; Yoko Yoshizawa is Illustrator Coordinator; and the SCBWI Japan Advisory Committee includes Miki Bromhead, Patrick Gannon, Sako Ikegami, Suzanne Kamata, Naomi Kojima, Misa Dikengil Lindberg, Gerri Sorrells, Izumi Tanaka, and Avery Fischer Udagawa.

Website

The SCBWI Japan website features information about SCBWI Japan, 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 Japan events, and this newsletter. Bookmark the site! www.scbwi.jp

Volunteers

SCBWI Japan is run by volunteers and always needs your help! Volunteers make SCBWI Japan 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 Japan newsletter *Carp Tales*. For further information, e-mail [contact\(at\)scbwi.jp](mailto:contact(at)scbwi.jp).

SCBWI Japan Listservs

SCBWI Japan 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 Japan 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 Japan community. Membership in the listservs is open to both members and non-members of SCBWI. For details, e-mail [contact\(at\)scbwi.jp](mailto:contact(at)scbwi.jp).

SCBWI Japan Online Critique Group

Critique groups provide support, encouragement, motivation, and marketing suggestions. The SCBWI Japan Online Critique Group is for SCBWI Japan 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 Japan members interested in joining should e-mail [contact\(at\)scbwi.jp](mailto:contact(at)scbwi.jp).

SCBWI Japan Translation Group

The SCBWI Japan Translation Group is for members and nonmembers involved in translating children's and young adult literature from Japanese into English. The Translation Group maintains a blog at <http://ihatov.wordpress.com>. The Translation Group's listserv is a forum for discussing issues related specifically to J to E translation for children, including translation opportunities, SCBWI Japan translation events, online critiquing, and marketing of translations. E-mail [contact\(at\)scbwi.jp](mailto:contact(at)scbwi.jp) for an invitation.

Membership

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



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