



SEIZO TASHIMA

2020 H.C. Andersen Award Nominee from Japan

photo © Shigeru Akimoto

Children grow up to be adults. When they grow up and look back at the books they used to love, I don't want them to be disappointed because the stories were no more than cheap, juvenile devices. There is no meaning in picture books unless children can read them again as adults and be impressed with them as great works of art. Picture books ought to be art.

Why is it possible for children and people with intellectual handicaps to draw pictures that are so moving? It is because, different from adults, they have the flexibility to throw into their work all of the memory in their cells. It is the same power you see in the works of great artists such as Milo, Kandinsky, Klee and Picasso. As humans grow into adults, they stop listening to their inner voices. I want to listen to the voices of plants with the ears of a man from the ancient Jomon culture.

Two quotes from Seizo Tashima

From *Jinsei no oshiru* (Soup of Life, Tokyo: Kaiseisha, 2002)



photo © Kenji Tsuzuki



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Seizo Tashima

In 1940, Seizo Tashima was born in Osaka, Japan. His twin brother is Yukihiro Tajima, who is a dyer and picture book author. Seizo Tashima spent his childhood in Kouchi Prefecture.

In 1960, he won the Golden Award and the Special Award at the National Exhibition of Sightseeing Posters, he was only 20 years old.

Graduated from the design department at Tama Art College in 1962. While he was at college, he made a hand-printed picture book *Shibaten* (Shibaten the Monster).

In 1965, Tashima published *Furuyanomori* (Folk Tale: Leaky Loof of the Old House, text by Teiji Seta, Fukuinkan Shoten) which was his first picture book publication.

In 1969, he won the Golden Apple Award at the 2nd Biennale of Illustrations Bratislava (BIB) for *Chikara Taro* (Stromgman Taro, Poplar, 1967).

He moved to Hinode Village (now Hinode Town) in Tokyo.

In 1975, he published *Yagi no Shizuka* (Shizuka the Goat, Bunka publishing bureau, later largely redrawn and published from Kaiseisha). He, then, started struggling to destroy his previous style and create a new style.

In 1980, he broke new ground with his new style in *Hora ishikorogaokochitayo ne wasureyou yo* (Drop a Stone and Forget, Kaiseisha).

From 1986 to the beginning of 90s, Tashima was engrossed in the tour of live painting with the famous musician Hitoshi Komuro, the session was hold at about 90 venues throughout Japan.

In 1988, Tashima published *Tobe batta* (Fly, Grasshopper!, Tokyo: Kaiseisha), this book was awarded six prizes in Japan and abroad, and published in more than ten languages.

In 1990 he started to fight against the construction of a large waste repository in Hinode Town. He joined the movement for protecting Hinode Forest from destruction and chemical pollution, and conducting its environmental conservation activities. (The fight is still going on.)

In 1998, he developed cancer caused by chemicals from the waste repository and moved to Izu Peninsula of Shizuoka Prefecture. He also started creating art works using natural materials from the Hinode Forest.



In 1999, his *Daisuki* (My Most Favorite, Kaiseisha, 1997) was selected the IBBY Outstanding Books for Young People with Disabilities 1999.

In 2006-07, he hold the travelling exhibition with his twin brother Yukihiro.

From 2009, he participated the Echigo-Tsumari Art Triennial and started to create walk-in picture books. In 2012, He joined the co-publishing project "Picture Books for Peace from China, Japan and Korea" as one of 12 brave artists, and published *Boku no koe ga kikoemasuka* (Can You Hear My Voice?, Doshinsha) in three countries.

In 2013, as part of the 2nd Setouchi Triennial, he turned a building at Oshima Seishoen (sanatorium for Hansen's disease in Oshima island), which used to be a residence for inmates, into the "Blue Sky Aquarium," where mermaid and pirate, lost ship and various undersea creatures create a spatial poem. After that he has been continuing to create "The Forest Pathway/ Landscape Art" outside of the aquarium.

In 2016, he created "The Forest Pathway/ Landscape" around "Blue Sky Aquarium" at the 3rd Exhibition Setouchi Triennial.

His artworks were exhibited in abroad, for exampl in Korea and Paris. Now he is in the process of publishing a new book from Korean publisher.

STATEMENT

The Picture Books of Seizo Tashima: Life in Ongoing Metamorphosis

Yukiko Hiromatsu, critic/ curator

Half a century since his remarkable debut, Seizo Tashima's picture books have been powerful, passionate, affectionate, and innovative. Despite receiving the Golden Apple Award at the 2nd Biennial of Illustration Bratislava (BIB) in 1969 for *Chikara Taro* (Strongman Taro) while still in his twenties and countless picture book prizes after that, he has remained a skeptic of acclaim and popularity; he has struggled against any established style and broken away from his own precedents. Tashima has been active at the front lines of the picture book genre since the 1960s, which was a golden age for Japanese picture books, but even now at the age of 77 he is among the few artists to continue his ongoing endeavor to break through all previous concepts of picture books.

"My pictures are painted with the 'soup' boiled down from my life," says Tashima, and his whole career thus far is testimony to his idea that a work that resonates with readers is not just the product of the paints and brushes used. Reminiscent of the martial arts byword in Japanese *shin-gi-tai* (the oneness of spirit, technique, and physique), Tashima's picture book art is the product of the inextricable merging of spirit, technique, and action.

Philosophy of Art: Anger and the Value of Life

Tashima has published some 150 picture books of tremendous variety, some funny and fun, others serious stories of war, folktales, books for babies, and running through them we can

sense a consistent spirit. The wellspring of his art is anger and life.

The flame of Tashima's anger is still burning. It continues to fire his works, from the pages of his 1962 hand-printed *Shibaten* (Shibaten the Monster; ①) story, done as his art school graduation project, to his recent computer graphic-illustrated picture book *Kaizoku* (A Pirate; 2013; ②).

The target of his anger is war, destruction of the environment, discrimination, and the logic of the strong. Yet Tashima is wary of picture books that stoop to propaganda. Picture books should be above propaganda; they should be art that is made for the sake of children.

Boku no koe ga kikoemasu ka (Can You Hear My Voice?) (2012; ③) is one of the Picture Books for Peace from China, Japan, and Korea project jointly published at a time when political tensions were rising among the three nations. The works by





そのまんま、
 まつても まつても、おちてこん。
 ずいふんと たつて、小こえて、
 「たすけてくれよう。」
 と、いうのが きこえた。
 みまわすと、やれやれ、
 そこいらで、いちばん たかい まつの木の
 てっぺんに、ひっかかっておった。
 ちからたろうは、その まつを
 ねっこぐるみ ひっこぬいて、
 おろしてやった。
 みどろつこたろうは
 ためいきを つき、
 「どうか、いっしょに
 たびを させて
 けれや。」
 と たのんだ。

④ all 12 leading authors from the three countries are masterful, but the abstract style of expression of Tashima's contribution stands out. As a work published just fifty years after his debut as an artist, it held special significance for him. "When it comes to war and authoritarianism," says Tashima, "it is always the weak who are made to suffer, are hurt or killed. I thought that I could make an appeal, not only to children but adults, to transcend differences of nation and ethnicity in protest of the cruelty of war. I believe it is a work that would not have been possible in any other media than the picture book."

This book is a monologue by the protagonist who is made to go to war "for his country." He has to attack fellow human beings and he is attacked by them. His body is blown to pieces by a bomb but his spirit remains and feels the anger of his younger brother, the grief of his mother, and the chain of hate set in motion among people on both sides of the conflict. The pages do not show faces or details, but in the fierce brushstrokes symbolically portraying war, we can feel the strong emotions that are



shared across borders and over generations. With each turn of the page, the protagonist's heartrending cries echo within the reader and linger there.

Think of the calamities that have happened



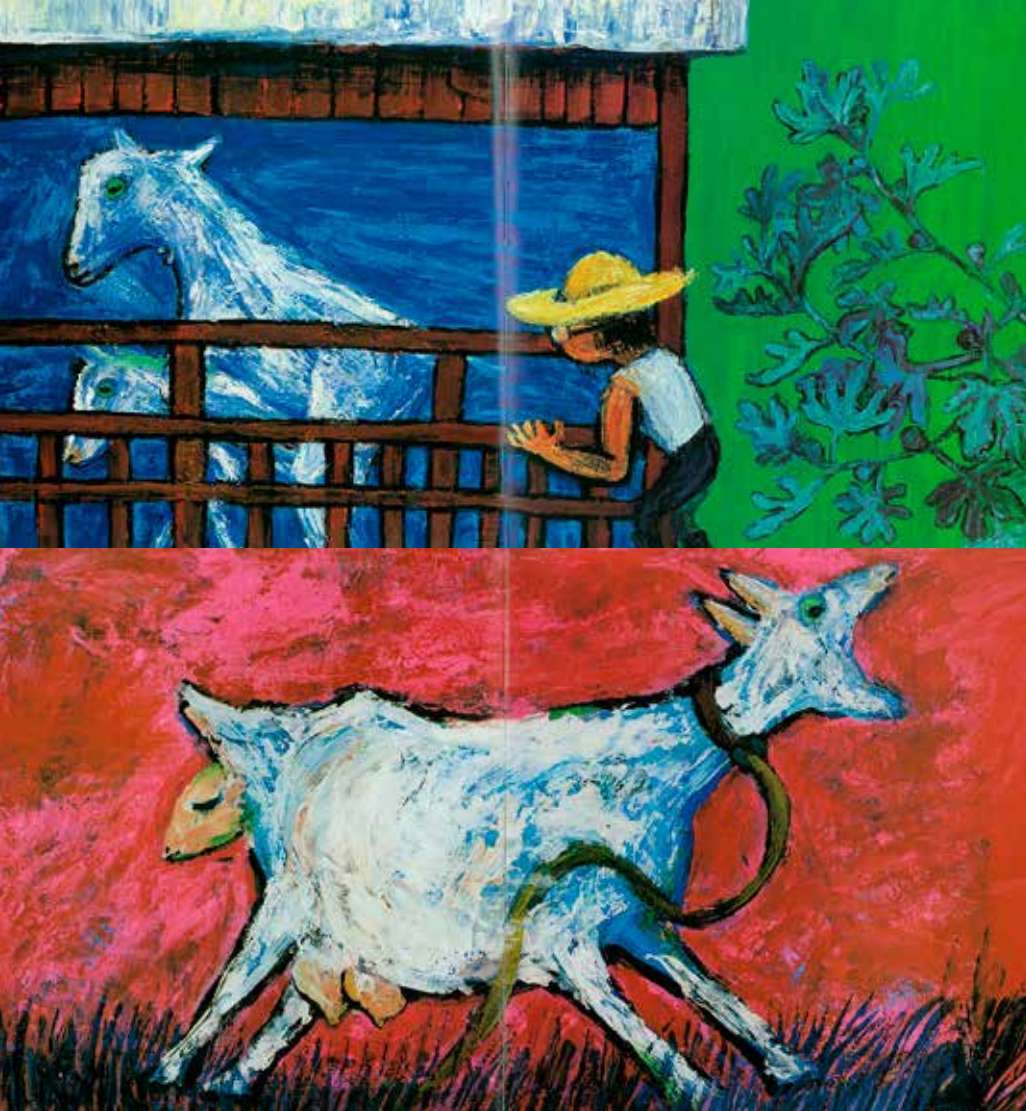
because of human greed. Remember the fury we feel against forces that threaten people's lives. Looked at the other way around, this is the fire of our profound love of humanity and nature.

⑤

Evolving Techniques of Expression

While the philosophy behind Tashima's work remains consistent, his technique of expression has changed, almost with each work he has produced. Let us look at these changes in some of his leading works.

The 1967 work *Chikara Taro* (④) is a folktale expressing the dreams and hopes of poor farmers of olden times. With humorous shapes and dynamic page compositions, Tashima's illustrations are bold and earthy. The freewheeling, primitive-looking pic-



⑥

tures make no attempt to hide the raw brushwork in opaque earth paints. The life force depicted here has not lost its power even half a century later.

The 1973 *Fukimanbuku* (*Fukimanbuku, the Girl and the Flowers*; ⑤) is also done with opaque earth paints, and the technique of thickness of the painting has a power that gives a sense of reality to the fantasy of the story. At the time, Tashima had recently moved from the city to the suburbs to take up the life of a farmer, and the respect for the power of nature and the earth he felt then comes across in this story with the innocent surprise and delight of Fuki, the girl who discovers the butterbur (*fuki*) field on the mountain. The page composition is audacious and diverse while maintaining a skillful continuity in the eventful story that unfolds, drawing the reader's eye over the pages.

The "Yagi no Shizuka" (*Shizuka the Goat*) series that Tashima began in 1975

⑦



are picture books based on the real story of a girl who receives a baby goat as a gift and how it grows up to give birth to a baby. Including powerful scenes of the mating of the goats and of the birth of the baby (⑥), Tashima depicts the lives of domestic animals with vivid immediacy. Readers found the stories easy to identify with, but the artist felt perplexed by their success and made up his mind immediately to discover a "completely new kind of picture book." Five years later, that search led to a new metamorphosis of his art.

The next major turning point in his career, Tashima recalls, was the creation in 1980 of *Hora, ishikoro ga okkochita yo ne, wasureyo yo*

⑧



ちいさな しげみの なかに、バッタが いっぴき かくれずんでいた。
そこには、おそろしい ものたちが いて、バッタを たべてしまおうと おらっていた。



かしてバッタは、なんと、いかれようと、いらいだった。じぶんの、もからで、あつむ、とが、うれしくて、うれしくて、しかなかったから、バッタは、とんだ、たか、たかく、じぶんの、はなで、じぶんの、ゆき、いほうへ、かぎに、のって、とんでいった。



⑨ (Drop a Stone and Forget; ⑦). The lithograph art of this story, says Tashima, was inspired by the pre-Columbian-era geoglyphs of the Nazca area in Peru. The old man in the story is full of energy and good intentions but prone to accidents, and the title comes from the prescription he comes up with to get over his failures and foibles. The combination of a humorous and philosophical story with abstract pictures feels richer the further we read.

Produced two years later, *Kusamura* (Ball in the Grass; revised edition 1989; ⑧) is an ambitious attempt to evoke the life of plants from the viewpoint of a ball bouncing into the grasses. The bright color scheme brings the lives of the stylized plants and insects cheerfully to life.

In his 1988 work *Tobe batta* (Fly, Grasshopper, ⑨), Tashima lets loose an explosion of the

energy of life. The grasshopper, after a long time hiding from the snake, spider, and praying mantis and other enemies, decides to come out into the open and take on its adversaries head on. The materials used are water colors mixed with white glue brushed onto coated paper. He also makes use of the sediment in his brush cleaning jar. The dynamism of nature's life-or-death struggle unfolds over the pages in the momentum of the brush and the blurring of the paint. Bold empty spaces and freewheeling combinations of design and representation work to beautiful effect. Particularly in the latter half of the book, he draws the reader into the story with a rhythm of the classic "page turner" technique that builds toward the immense sense of liberation at the story's end.

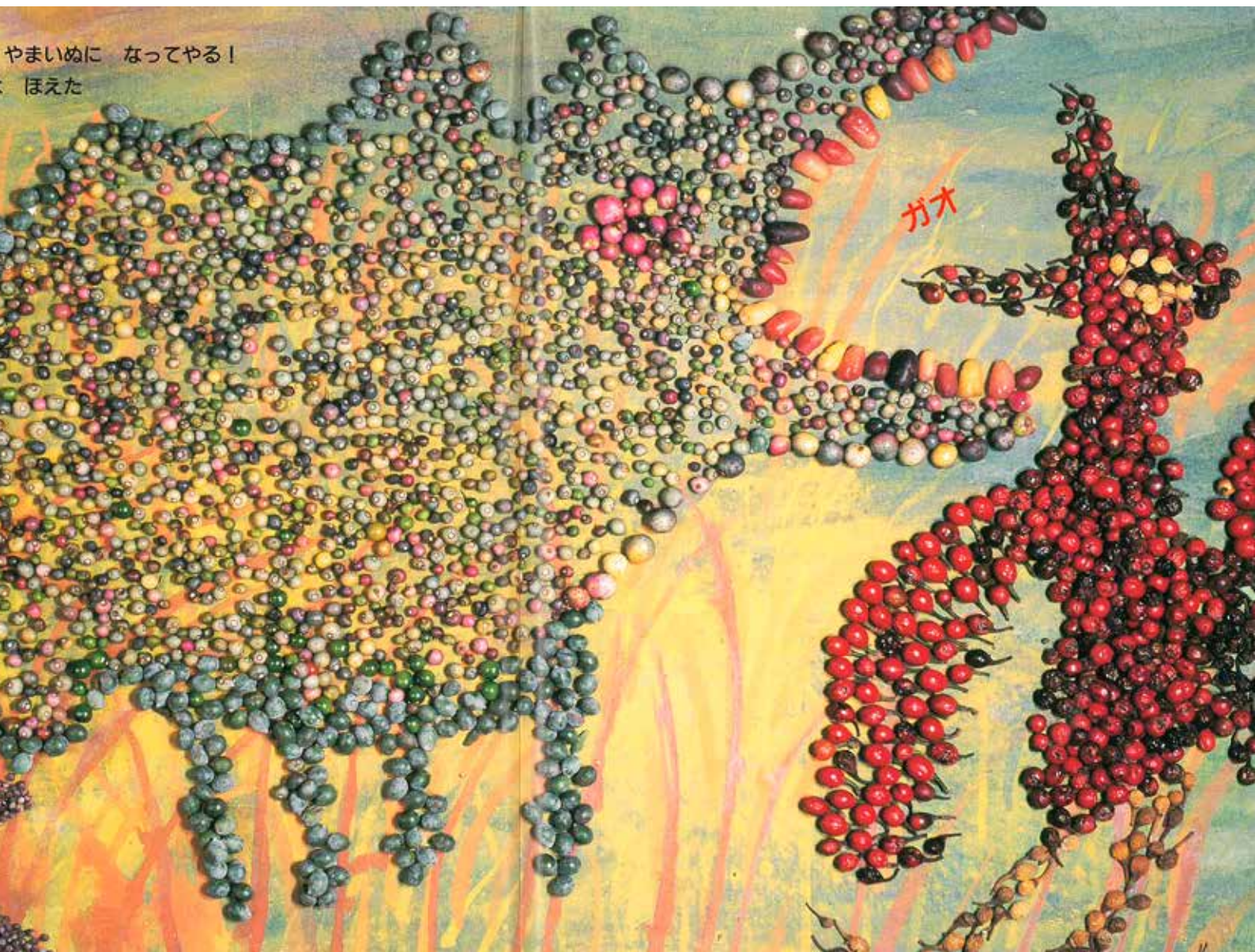
The next decade, the 1990s, Tashima could

not concentrate on his picture book art. Involvement in a movement opposing construction of a waste disposal plant filled his days, and then he developed cancer. During this mentally and physically difficult decade, Tashima pursued whatever work he could handle at the time. He produced illustrations for texts written by others, helped his twin brother Yukihiro Tajima with picture books, and collaborated with Seiji Murata, an artist with learning disabilities, in the production of an important trilogy of works. As a writer, too, he has published numerous excellent essays. In 1992 he wrote *E no naka no boku no mura* (My Village in Pictures) telling the story of his boyhood, and in 1996 it was made into a film which won the Silver Bear Prize at the Berlin International Film Festival.

Two works I would like to call special attention to are his picture books *Yama kara*

nigete kita: Gomi o poi-poi (I Escaped from the Mountain/Throw Away Garbage; 1993) and *Iroiro atte mo aruki tsuzukeru* (Keep on Walking Whatever Happens; 1999). The former book can be read from either end, presenting the story of how human beings throw away so much trash they have to build dumps in the forest from the viewpoint of trash-disposing humans (in vertically set type) and from the viewpoint of the animals of the forest (in horizontally set type). The stories are written to converge at the center of the book. The latter book is a collage of Tashima's previously created pictures and photographs of his works. Both works are particularly masterful distillations of the "soup" of Tashima's life at that time.

In 1998, Tashima moved to the Izu Peninsula, and there he began making picture books using nuts and berries from the forest. Gathering large numbers of shirodamo evergreen



berries, wild grape, and other nuts and seeds of the woods, he made arrangements of them, and, rather than affixing them to paper, he simply photographed them as the pictures for his works. Then, since he only used nuts and berries that had fallen to the ground, when there were not enough to adjust the picture created to his liking, he would have to wait until the following year to gather the needed materials. After taking more than two years, he published his first nut-and-berry picture book, *Gao* (Roar!; ⑩). This is truly a memorable work created through the power of nature, an immense amount of time and labor, and the author's inexhaustible pursuit of originality. The individuality of each and every nut and fruit breathes life into the pictures, appealing to sensations in the reader's body.

Since 2000 as well, Tashima has gone on shifting techniques and forms of expression with each new work he produces, his work energetically continuing to challenge the boundaries between picture books and fine art. There is nothing particularly new about the assertion that picture books are art, but Tashima's way of bringing art into picture books is unique. For example, in recent years, he has produced works that do not involve turning pages but expand the concept of "picture book." Turning in a direction contrary to the recent trend toward digital picture books, they are designed to prompt the reader to feel bodily sensations using all five senses. In 2009, using an abandoned school in Niigata prefecture, he created a "walk-in picture book" that opened as the Hachi and Seizo Museum of Picture Book Art (⑪).

"I keep thinking I can go on challenging my boundaries," he says, "I can break through convention more and more." Tashima's art continues to forge new territory for the concept of the picture book. Loyal to the voices of life that are at his root, he invariably takes the

position of the weak.

And Seizo Tashima has always been an activist artist. Around 1970, he was at the center of the picture book artists who opposed the Vietnam War. In the 1980s, even before the Art Brut movement came to Japan, he had seen its value and begun exchanges with the members of the Shigaraki Seinenryo home for people with learning disabilities and to talk about that work. In the 1990s he threw himself into the movement opposing construction of a waste disposal facility in the western Tokyo area of Hinode-machi. In recent years, he has participated in art projects all around Japan and created all sorts of works including large-scale installations. In all cases, these works are extensions of the style of expression he uses in his picture books.

While Tashima received international recognition from an early stage in his career, he has been considered somewhat of an outsider in Japan because of this rebellious stance and constantly innovative endeavors. Yet he has had a definitive influence on picture book artists in Japan and Asia coming after him. Astrid Lindgren Memorial Award-winner Ryoji Arai says, "My work would not be what it is without the groundwork provided by Mr. Tashima." The same could be said for Machiko Miroko, winner of the BIB 2015 Golden Apple award, and BIB 2011 Grand Prix author Cho Eun Young of South Korea, among many others.

All things seem to go according to the logic of the strong; everything seems destined to be ruled by reason and logic, and the human touch has disappeared. What is a picture book? What should we transmit to our children? We acclaim the achievements of Seizo Tashima, who has drawn out the "soup" of his life and gone on asking himself and his readers about those questions, and want to share him with the world.

ESSAY ①

The Transforming Creator of Picture Books

Seiichi Sawata

president of the Association for Studies of Picture Books/ editor

Seizo Tashima's early work, *Furuya no mori* (Leaky Roof of the Old House) was a startling one, his stormy, scrawling style (① ②) setting it apart from all the other works published in *the Kodomo no tomo* monthly. I remember being surprised to find through this picture book that such a style of expression was possible in a picturebook. In the case of *Fukimanbuku* (Fukimanbuku: The Girl and the Flowers) it was the original pictures, more than the book itself, that caught my attention. They were painted much more densely than *Furuya no mori* and the paint was thickly applied. The paint was thick and carefully finished; it reflected light from its surface, but light also

rose out of the deeper parts more thickly painted, creating the effect of the layers of light rising out of the dark areas of the work. But then after that he never used that style of expression again. Instead, his touch grew lighter and his brushwork grew clearer and more articulated, ranging with increasing freedom over the pages. The more freely he exploited the surfaces, the freer became his depiction of the elements within the pictures as well, making me think he was heading toward the abstract. Indeed, his *Kusamura* (Ball in the Grass) was a work of abstract art. That picture book was not painted by hand; it was apparently created with computer-designated



Furuya no mori (Leaky Roof of the Old House)



Fukimanbuku (Fukimanbuku: The Girl and the Flowers)



Kusamura (Ball in the Grass)

① ②

Furuya no mori (Leaky Roof of the Old House), his stormy, scrawling style

colors. Tashima was also pursuing increasing freedom in the materials of his art, bringing forth *Gao* (Roar!), in which the colors of the pictures are formed using nuts and berries he gathered in the woods. To make a picture that would take but a moment to draw with a brush he gathered massive amounts of the nuts and berries, arranging them, and finally photographing the result to obtain his original artwork. It was a technique that consumed an immense amount of time. He chose that kind of expression that could take years to complete and even required the involvement of other people, and yet the next thing you know he is using computergraphics, as seen in his *Hanajinma* (The Old Man Who Made Withered Trees Flower, ③④⑤).

Most picture book illustrators, once they decide their characteristic style of illustration, don't really change styles. If they use watercolors, they keep on using watercolors, or

if gouache, then they stick to gouache. But Tashima not only changes his style of art but switches his materials and media over and over. It is rare to find such an artist whose works change so greatly yet nevertheless come out as so very distinctively Seizo Tashima picture books. The transformations in his works at first seem a bit chaotic, but could be described as pursuing "life." That theme is something that has grown clearer in recent years. Observing Tashima in this way, he might seem to be more like a painter than a picturebook artist, and yet he is likely to prefer the profession of picture book artist. He not only creates picture books but



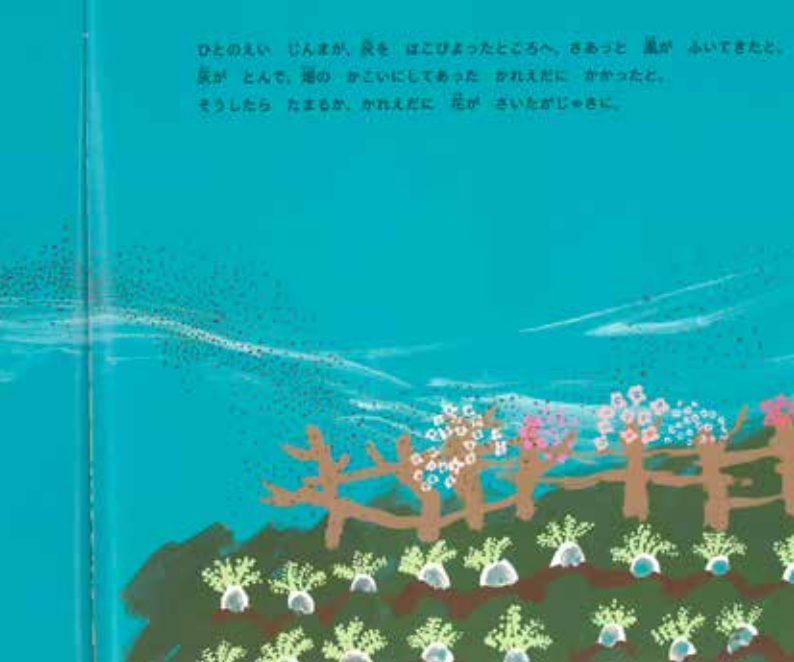
Gao (Roar!)



Hanajinma (The Old Man Who Made Withered Trees Flower)

「しろは どうしたがぜよ」と 問いにいった。そうしたら、
いじくそのわりい じんまが「あれは しんでしもうた」というた。
ひとのえい じんまと ばんばは、
しろを にわに いけてやったと。





④ ⑤ *Hana jinma (The Old Man Who Made Withered Trees Flower)*, hi uses computergraphics

also writes essays. We can discover another world of Tashima's art in books like *Tsuchi ni egaku* (Drawing the Ground), *E no naka no boku no mura* (My Village in Pictures), and *Jinsei no oshiru* (Soup of Life).

While a vigilant explorer in the diverse world of expression, Tashima has a good eye for balance. In the feature issue of the journal *Gekkan ehon* on Shinta Cho, among numerous articles of praise for author-illustrator Cho, there was one critical one. Why such an exception to the usual acclaim should have been included is explained in the editorial epilogue, where it says that given all the praise

lavished upon Cho in the feature, it seemed to make sense to include at least one critical voice. The author of the epilogue was Tashima.



Tashima's books: *Tsuchi ni egaku* (Drawing the Ground), *E no naka no boku no mura* (My Village in Pictures), and *Jinsei no oshiru* (Soup of Life).

translated by Lyne Riggs

ESSAY ②

Arm in Arm with All Living Things In Praise of the Unfinished

Chitose Kaise, art critic/ researcher

Reference from the catalogue of "Hachi & Seizo Tashima Museum of Picture Book Art, 2009-2015" *A Life-Size Picture Book: The School Won't Become Empty*, Gendai Kikakushitsu, 2015

"The song of the warbler among the blossoms, the voice of the frog dwelling in the water – these teach us that every living creature sings."

— "Kokin Wakashu, Kanajo," translated by Helen Craig McCullough in *Kokin Wakashu: The First Imperial Anthology of Japanese Poetry*

One wonders if Seizo Tashima has the ears of a poet who can hear the voices of all creatures that live. Butterbur fairies, goats in love, the adventures of grasshoppers and mantises, the songs of vegetables; he has consistently portrayed the voices and figures of the living things around him. In Tashima's hands, abstract symbols, letters, everything ends up as a living being. Dried up *kinomi* (anything from a tree that contains a seed of new life – nuts, berries, pods, pinecones etc.), driftwood, even school buildings vacated of their school children come back to life and start the journey along a new passage of time.

The Hachi & Seizo Tashima Museum of Picture Book Art, opened in Sana-da, Tokamachi City in 2009, is on a scale much bigger than we might expect from Tashima, the picture book artist with whom we are familiar. To say he was also acting here in the role of sculptor and installation artist would still not do the work justice. You are greeted as you arrive by goats and other colorful objects mobilized by a *shishi-odoshi* mechanism (a wooden device that inclines downward and then pops up again at regular intervals under the weight of flowing water), after which the views surrounding you change greatly – like you're turning the pages of a picture book – as a circus of *kinomi* leads you through the gym, corridor and classrooms. The rich concept and robust design are born out of the notion that plants, trees and their *kinomi*, fish, birds, insects, and all human beings are equal; each with their own soul, and a sense of unity with those lives that we ourselves consume in order to live. Encapsulated here in this carnivalesque space, are the footsteps of one man, Seizo Tashima. Let us trace them in chronological order.

Birth of a Picture Book Artist and Painter

In both the Picture Book Museum and Tashima's picture books, the protagonists are living things that we don't usually think of as members of urban society, and instead are seen as being more on the exterior of daily life; *kinomi*, plants, animals, insects, children, and so on. "I have felt strong em-



kinomi

pathy towards outsiders since I was small.”

Between the ages five and eleven, Tashima lived in his father’s childhood village, a place called Yoshihara, in the Agawa District of Kochi Prefecture (now part of Kochi City). He would play all day in the nearby hills and streams with his twin brother, Yukihiro, also later to become an artist. Exhilarating days spent absorbed in catching freshwater fish such as carp and sleepers developed Tashima’s acute sensitivity towards the creatures of nature. Mischievous, he would not tolerate the superiority of one living thing over another, and commuted to school daily with a boy who was discriminated against, in defiance of an intimidating headmaster (*E no naka no boku no mura* – My Village in Pictures).*

“Even now I wake up every day determined to make something new.” As a high schooler, Tashima, who loved drawing pictures, heard a lecture given in Kochi by the artist Taro Okamoto. Okamoto insisted that art has to come without warning or practice, much like an explosion, and not through building upon one’s experiences. “Art should start from zero,” these were the words that became engraved in young Tashima’s mind.

In 1959, Tashima enrolled in the department of graphic design at Tama Art University, aiming to establish his own style while studying design at the same time. An exhibition

of *dogu* (clay figures) inspired him to capture forms springing out from within, which resulted in *Katsuo no ipponzuri* (Pole Fishing), a work that earned him the Golden Award and the Special Award at the National



kinomi & washi

Exhibition of Sightseeing Posters. This style of portraying bodies by kneading a lump of earth to reaffirm its original texture, is also seen in works such as *Chikara Taro* (Strongman Taro, 1967).**

Once Tashima mastered the portrayal of bodies in dynamic motion in a manner that delicately balanced abstraction and realism, he began his journey as a picture book artist. Mud paintings depicting bodies clashing against each other, such as *Echigo Urasa Hadaka Matsuri* (Echigo Urasa Nude Festival) were selected for the Mainichi Contemporary Art Exhibition, which invited public submissions.

Recognized by Nihonga painter Masyoshi Nakamura, Tashima became one of the seven founding members of the Hito Hito Exhibition, and honed his individuality as a painter through friendship with experimental artists such as Kikuji Yamashita.

Tashima struggled in poverty for some time due to lack of work and in 1969, moved with his family to Hinode Village (now Hinode Town) in the Nishitama region of Tokyo, embarking on an almost entirely self-sufficient lifestyle, cultivating vegetables, and keeping goats and bantams (a variety of small poultry). Picture books such as *Fukimanbuku* (1973), and the *Yagi no shizuka* (Shizuka the Goat, 1975-1976) *** series depicting the story of the raising of a female goat who becomes a mother, are richly nuanced, with sumptuous colors and intense



pictures that propel the story from one page to the next.

Discovering Art Brut and Three-Dimensional Art

On the second floor of the Picture Book Museum, successively more immense children stand, assembled from driftwood and painted by a large number of people. Their enormous figures stick their hands and heads out of the classroom windows. There was a turning point in Tashima's life that set him on the path to this type of dynamic space design.

"Shigaraki Seinenryo was my art school." In 1984, while shopping for a ceramic bell in a bookshop, Tashima began his association with Shigaraki Seinenryo, a home in Shiga Prefecture for people with learning disabilities, when he was invited there by one of its directors, Kengo Kitaoka (currently Chairman of GLOW Social welfare Corporation). Encountering the creative activities of people with learning disabilities allowed Tashima to discover the attraction of previously unfamiliar materials such as *washi* (a kind of traditional Japanese paper), ceramic tiles and dishes, and aroused within him the desire to create three-dimensional art.

"It was as though you could see pictures emerging from within the *washi*." Unlike that produced for mass distribution, the *washi* made at Shigaraki Seinenryo had an unusual unevenness due to the *kozo* (paper mulberry plant) fiber used in its production. Enchanted and inspired by the images that he glimpsed, Tashima began to draw on this *washi* and went on to make collages with it using elements such as *kinomi*, branches and bird feathers. *Washi* made in welfare institutions in Shiga Prefecture are also used in the Picture Book Museum – including large pieces onto which *kinomi* are glued, and thick ones pierced through by the torsos of the huge children.

In 1990, Tashima began painting over the strange clay works of Takao Matsumoto, to make Macchan objects (Macchan being Mat-

sumoto's nickname). Faced with Matsumoto's work, Tashima saw a dynamism of form that made him feel "minuscule, like I was passing through and climbing and sliding down inside what he had made," as he wrote in *Fushigi no artist tachi* (My Amazing Artist Friends). This sensation inspired the outdoor sculpture *Mori no tori* (Bird in the Forest, 1990) made out of peach and plum trees bound with hemp-palm rope to look like a bird spreading its wings, the first of Tashima's three dimensional works.

Other notable collaborations include the three picture books *Mori e sagashi ni* (Searching in the Forest), *Kimi no kokoro no aji ga suru* (It Tastes Like Your Heart), and *Shiroi kuni* (White Land) (1991), in which Tashima wrote stories to accompany paintings by Seiji Murata, a resident of Shigaraki Seinenryo. Tashima heard every voices present in Murata's pictures, and accompanied them with dialogue and tales that would set off their allure. In collaborating with these unique artists, Tashima also used driftwood and *kinomi* – each one a different manifestation of life itself – in his collages.



Forest Conservation Campaign, and Return to the Use of Kinomi

Amazed by the ghost (known as Toperato) and other moving things that inhabit the school, visitors are also delighted by the original music and biotopes. Many of the people involved in the creation and upkeep of this multi-dimensional museum are friends Tashima made when he was an active member of a forest conservation campaign.

In 1990, two years after publishing *Tobe batta* (Fly, Grasshopper!), a picture book drawn in vivid strokes against a white background, Tashima began pouring himself into a campaign against the construction of a large waste repository near his home. Facing many obstacles, Tashima was so busy that he struggled to fit in his creative activities, but the time spent with comrades in the forest made him realize that he had an especially acute sensitivity towards plants and trees. And the people he met through the campaign would go on to become important supporters of his creative work.

Part of the area in danger of demise was purchased by a group of residents, and turned into an artwork by sculptor Isamu Wakabayashi. This garden with stone chairs and planted trees, *Midori no mori no ikkakujuza* (The Green Constellation of the Unicorn), inspired Tashima both as a living space, and for its grounding in resistance.

In 1998, Tashima developed stomach cancer and moved to the Izu Peninsula to recuperate. With time for creation on his hands, he started making art around themes based on the natural environment around him. These works include *Taoreru shonen* (Toppling Boy, 1998), *Chijou no seiza* (Constellation on the Ground, 2002), *MABUI* (2002) and *Jibaku suru otoko* (A Man Blowing Himself Up, 2003). From the garden he gathered magnolia nuts, huge amounts of unripe fruit fallen from wild cherry trees, and *shirodamo* (a kind of evergreen tree) berries, fixing them all into collages on *washi* paper with glue.

Objects that we overlook, like *kinomi*, and



driftwood washed up on the beach, can sometimes take on a startlingly poignant presence. Tashima was attracted by this at present, and rather than expressing his own thoughts through *kinomi*, he unexpectedly decided to make their presence more abstract, letting the voice of nature speak for itself. The rustling clusters of collaged *kinomi* stimulate us with their tactility, singing us a song that transcends time and space, like that of the nebulas, or of the spirits of creatures. He explored new methods of spatial expression in works such as *GAO* (2001), painted in the colors of *kinomi*, *Kogen ni furu hoshiboshi* (Stars Falling on the Plateau, 2005), in which *kinomi* hung in the lobby of a museum form constellations, and *Suijo no party* (Party on the Water, 2006), a group of sculptures assembled from driftwood.

Enter an Abandoned School and Find Yourself Inside a Picture Book

"I wanted to do something completely new." Tashima's spatial expression and network of collaborators came into their own in the Hachi & Seizo Tashima Museum of Picture Book Art which opened its doors during the 2009 Echigo-Tsumari Art Triennale. He had questioned the decision to close down a school which still had three pupils enrolled, and he brought it back to life by creating a fantasy world with children and a ghost (Toperatoto) as protagonists.

"I envision a museum that need not exclude living things in order to protect its artwork." Not only has Tashima displayed originals of his picture book works, he has also built bold installations using fallen *kinomi* and driftwood gathered from the beach. Children, ghosts and animals made from assembled and then colored driftwood leap around acrobatically in and outside the school. *Momijigafu* (sweet gum nuts) line up jovially, while magnolia nuts and



acorn cups form mysterious signs expanding into constellations that cover the four walls. Murmurs of reincarnation seem to reach from within the ground, and up into the heavens. In 2015 he created biotopes and rice fields next to the school for many creatures to inhabit. Shizuka the goat and her two kids escaped from the picture book pages and "enrolled" at the school, thus becoming protagonists in a new story.

People have been drawn to the school again, and the unique picture book atmosphere created has become a beacon in a community with a dwindling population. It could not have been realized merely out of the idea of expressing the world of picture books in three dimensions.

What emerges in this space, through many collaborators working together to realize Tashima's concepts, is something closer to a story told in a synthesized art form (ecclesiastical architecture, festivals, etc.), including not only picture book techniques but also elements of painting, sculpture and music. Walk around the figures that show different faces depending on the angle, follow with your eyes the lines of their bodies straight up to the ceiling, notice the writing and papers left behind on the blackboard and classroom walls, cast your eyes over the swirls of *kinomi*, gaze upon the fields and

goats from the classroom windows... by surrendering yourself to the space and letting your body and eyes drift, you will discover traces left behind, voices, songs and an infinite number of lingering stories.

Having started on the creation of a space that takes root in the land and breathes with the memory of the school, Tashima says "the nearer to completion it gets, the less interesting it becomes." Like an unfinished panel that is continuously redrawn, the collaboration with living things is never completed, changing from one day to the next. It is this sparkle of life and praise of the unfinished that renders the Hachi & Seizo Tashima Museum of Picture Book Art an oasis in our time.

translated by Lyn Riggs



AWARDS and OTHER DISTINCTIONS

1960 The 14th Golden Prize and Special Award of National Sightseeing Poster Competition - Japan

1967 *Furuya no mori* (Leaky Loof of the Old House, text by Teiji Seta, Tokyo: Fukuinkan Shoten, 1965) and *Kawauso don no kujira tori* (Otter Catches a Whale, text by Mikio Ando, Tokyo: Fukuinkan Shoten, 1966) were exhibited at the 1st Biennial of Illustrations Bratislava (BIB 1967) - Slovakia



1969 Golden Apple BIB 1969 - 2nd Biennial of Illustrations Bratislava for *Chikara Taro* (Mighty Boy, text by Yoshitomo Imae, Tokyo: Poplar, 1967) - Slovakia



1971 *Yumemi kozo* (The Dreaming Boy, text by Toshiko Kanzawa, Tokyo: Hikari no kuni, 1969) and *Yomi no kuni* (The Under World, text by Miyoko Matsutani, Tokyo: Kokudoshya, 1969) were exhibited at BIB 1971 - Slovakia



1974 5th Kodansha Publication Culture Award for Children's Books for *Fukimanbuku* (Fukimanbuku, the Girl and the Flowers, Tokyo: Kaiseisha, 1973) - Japan



1974 1st Hito Hito Exhibition: the Black Sun Seven Artists - Japan

1977 *Fukimanbuku* (Fukimanbuku, the Girl and the Flowers, Tokyo: Kaiseisha, 1973) was exhibited at BIB 1977 - Slovakia
Chikara Taro (Strongman Taro, Tokyo: Poplar, 1967) was selected a Good Picture Book of School Library Association - Japan

1981 *Hora ishikoro ga okkochitayo ne wasureyo yo*
(Drop a Stone and Forget, Tokyo: Kaiseisha,
1980) exhibited at BIB 1981

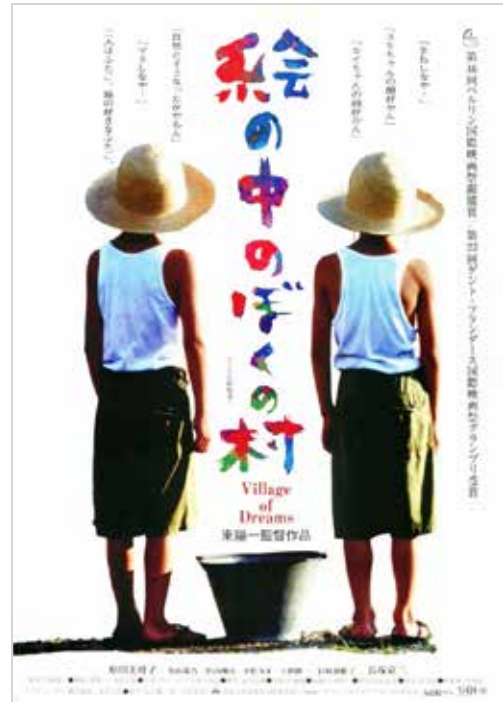


1988 For *Tobe batta* (Fly, Grasshopper!, Tokyo: Kai
seisha, 1988)
11th Nippon Picture Book Award - Japan
Graphic Award Recommendation Bologna -
Italy
Good Picture Book of School Library Associa
tion - Japan

1989 *Tobe batta* was exhibited at BIB 1989 - Slova
kia
38th Shogakukan Award for Children's Litera
ture for *Tobe batta* - Japan
Year of the Illustration for *Tobe batta* - Japan



1966 The Silver Bear Berlin International Film
Festival for the movie *E no naka no boku no
mura* (My Village in Pictures, text by Tashi
ma, Tokyo: Kumon Shuppan, 1992) directed
by Yoichi Higashi - Germany



Poster for the Movie "My Village in Pictures"

2001 *Hito no ii neko* (The Generous Cat, text by
Kazuya Nanbu, Tokyo: Shogakukan, 2001)
exhibited at BIB 2003 - Slovakia



2003 *Daisuki* (My Most Favorite, Tokyo: Kaiseisha,
1997) selected as IBBY Outstanding Book for
Young People with Disabilities 2003.



2003 *Okami no tomodachi* (The Wolf's Friend, text by Yuichi Kimura, Tokyo: Kaiseisha, 2001) exhibited at BIB 2003 - Slovakia



Exhibition "All of Tashima Seizo" at Ikeda 20th Century Memorial Museum - Shizuoka, Japan

2004 Exhibition "Seizo Tashima; Memory of Life; Nuts" at Matsudai Nobutai Gallery - Niigata, Japan

2005 Exhibition with Koichi Tanikawa and Chizuru Miyasako at Nerima Art Museum - Tokyo, Japan

2006 Exhibition with twin brother Yukihiro Tajima -07 at Museum of Art - Kochi, Japan at Niitsu Art Forum - Niigata, Japan

2008 Exhibition (drawing) at Hiratsuka Museum of Art - Kanagawa, Japan

2009 Exhibition the 4th Echigo-Tsumari Art Triennial 2009; Open "Hachi & Seizo Tashima Museum of Picture Book of Nuts" in Tokamachi city - Niigata, Japan

2009 *Okami no osama* (The Wolf King; text by Yuichi Kimura, Tokyo: Kaiseisha, 2009) was selected the Good Picture Book of School Library Association - Japan



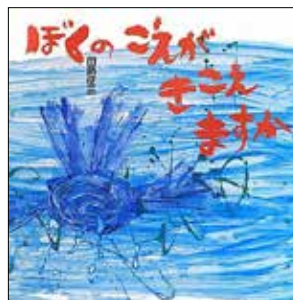
2010 Exhibition Art Burut Japonais at Halle Saint Pierre Museum - Paris, France
15th Japan Picture Book Award for *Okami no osama* (The Wolf King, Tokyo: Kaiseisha, 2009) - Japan

2011 Exhibition "Memory of Life" at Daikanyama Hillside Gallery - Tokyo, Japan
Exhibition "The Earth of Seizo Tashima" at Fukuyama Museum of Art - Hiroshima, Japan

2011 Exhibition at Goyan Aram Nuri Arts Center -12 Korea

2012 Exhibition the 5th Echigo-Tsumari Art Triennial 2012 - Niigata, Japan
Joined the "Picture Books for Peace from China, Japan and Korea" project

2012 *Boku no koe ga kikoemasu ka* (Can You Hear My Voice?, Tokyo: Doshinsha, 2012) exhibited at BIB 2013 - Slovakia



2013 Exhibition for the 2nd Setouchi Triennial 2014
- Kagawa, Japan



2015 Exhibition for the 6th Echigo-Tsumari Art
Triennial 2015 - Niigata, Japan

2016 Exhibition for the 3rd Setouchi Triennial 2016
- Kagawa, Japan

2017 Itochu advertisement with his illustrations
was awarded the Grand Prix of the 66th
Nikkei Shimbun Advertising Awards

2018 Itochu advertisement with his illustrations
was awarded again for the 67th Nikkei Shim-
bun Advertising Awards



2018 Exhibition for the 7th Echigo-Tsumari Art
Triennial 2015 - Niigata, Japan



Installation "Karada no naka kimochi no oku (Inside of Me, Deep in My Heart)," the base of *Watashi no mori ni* (Here in My Forest; text by Arthur Binard, Kumon Shuppan 2018)

2018 Nominated for Hans Christian Andersen,
Illustrator Award
IBBY Very Best Book for *Bokuno koe ga kikoemasuka* (Can You Hear My Voice?)



Co-Publishing Project: Picture Books for Peace
from China, Japan and Korea
Boku no koe ga kikoemasuka
(Can You Hear My Voice?)
Tokyo: Doshinsha | 2012 | ISBN 978-4-494-01967-0

5 Important Titles



【1】 ちからたろう | *Chikara Taro* (Mighty Boy) | text: Yoshitomo Imae | Tokyo: Poplar | 1967 | ISBN 978-4-591-00378-7

【2】 くさむら | *Kusamura* (Ball in the Grass) | Tokyo: Kaiseisha | 1982/ 89 | ISBN 978-4-03-331150-0

【3】 とべバッタ | *Tobe batta* (Fly, Grasshopper!) | Tokyo: Kaiseisha | 1988 | ISBN 978-4-03-331140-1

【4】 ガオ | *Gao* (Roar!) | Tokyo: Fukuinkan Shoten | 2005 | ISBN 978-4-83-4020342

【5】 わたしの森に | *Watashi no mori ni* (Here in My Forest) | text: Arthur Binard | Tokyo: Kumon Shuppan | 2018 | ISBN 978-4-7743-2796-9

ちからたろう

ぶん=いまえ よしとも え=たしま せいぞう



ちからたろう (Chikara Taro)

Mighty Boy | text: Yoshitomo Imae

Tokyo: Poplar | 1967 | ISBN 978-4-591-00378-7

ちからたろう

ぶん—いまえ よしとも え—たしま せいぞう



Mighty Boy

Seizo Tashima

text by Yoshitomo Imae | Tokyo: Poplar First print 1967

* **BIB 1969, Golden Apple** *



とんと むかし。
 それは もう、まずしい じいさまと
 ばあさまが おった。ふろなぞ、めったに
 はいれんものだから、からだじゅう、
 こんび(あか)だらけで あった。
 ある日のこと、じいさまが いった。
 「わしらは、もう、わらしは、できねえ。
 せめて、ふたりの こんびでも おとして、
 それで にんぎょうでも こさえるべや。」
 そこで、たのんでまわって、よまうよう
 ふろに いらしてもらうと、
 いや、でるわ でるわ、
 こんびが、まるで、きのこみたいに、
 ぼろんぼろん とれた。
 ふたりは、それを あつめて、
 小さな にんぎょうをつくった。

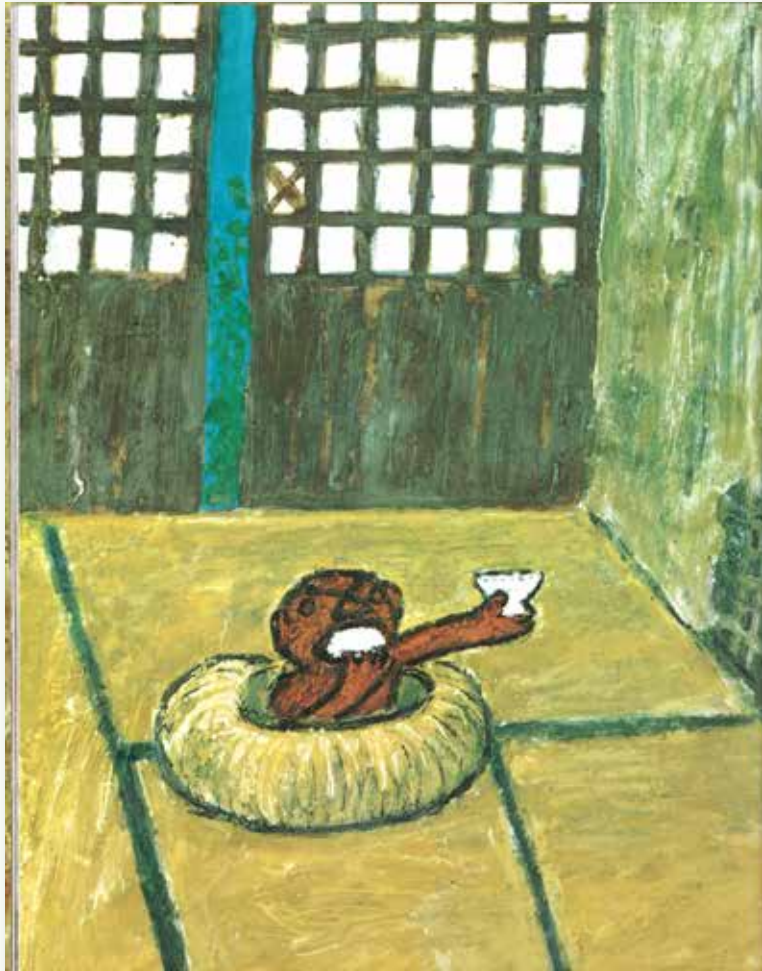
Once upon a time, a very very long time ago, there lived a very poor old man and old woman. They were so poor they couldn't even afford to take baths. They were covered in grime from head to toe.

One day, the old man told his wife,

"We can't have any children now that we are too old. Why don't we wash off the grime and make a doll out of it?"

So they went around and around their neighborhood and finally found a place where they could borrow a bath. They scrubbed and rubbed. So much grime! You should have seen the amount of grime that came off their bodies, just like mushrooms that explode right out after the rain.

The old man and the old woman kneaded and rolled their grime and made a little doll out of it.



ばあさまは、目をほそめて、
「まっくろけじゃが、かわええ。
こんびたろうと なづけましょ。」
というと、そうつと、えじこに ねかせた。
そして、ほんとの ことにも
するように、おわんに
まんまを もってやった。
と、こんびたろうは、いきなり 手を
のばし、ぼくと くってしまった。
ふたりは、たまげながらも
大よろこびして、三ど三ど、
どっさりと まんまを やった。
こんびたろうは、わいわしと
よくくって、くえば ぐうだけ
大きく なった。だが、どうしたことが、
ほぎやあとも いわず、ねたまんまで
あった。



“Though it’s as dark as mud, it sure is a cute thing. Why don’t we name it Grimey Boy?” said the old woman. She placed the doll into a basket and brought it a bowl of rice, just like she would for a real baby.

Suddenly, Grimey Boy reached out and gulped down the entire bowl.

Ay, the old man and the old woman were surprised! But soon enough they became happy and brought him one bowl, then another, then another.

Grimey Boy gulped down one bowl, then another, then another, and he grew as much as he ate. But no matter how much he ate, he didn’t cry, not one bit.





「だからよ、
そいつで つっぱって、
たってみるんじゃ。」
それならばと、
じいさまは、
むりにむりをして、
かなぼうを
たのんでやった。
できあがった
かなぼうは、
十にんの わかいしゅが、
やっそこすつとこ
かついで とどけた。

そのまんま、なんねんも
すぎたが、ある日、
とつぜん くちをきいた。
「なあ、おらに、
百かんめの
かなぼうを つくって
けろ。」
じいさまは
びっくりして、
「だども、まだ
尻こしも たたねえ
くせして、
どうする つもりだ。」

Just like that, years passed.

Then one day, Grimey Boy spoke.

“Hey, can you make me a really heavy steel club?”

The old man was very surprised.

“What are you going to do with that? You can’t even stand up on your own!”

“That’s exactly it. I’m going to try standing up using it as a staff.”

The old man went around the neighborhood, asking his neighbors to borrow money to make a steel club, just like the son wanted. After asking many people, he finally got the money he needed.

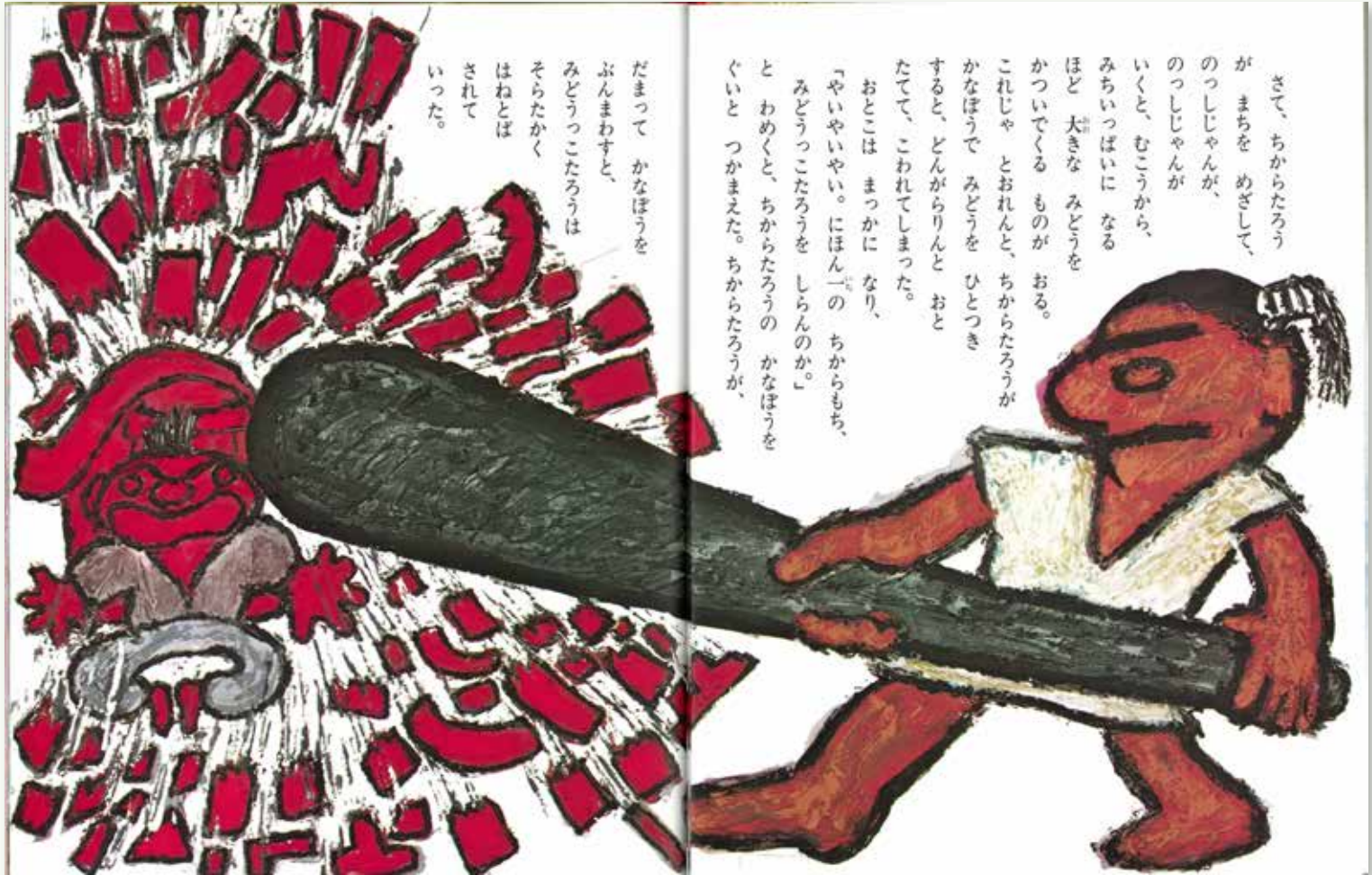
The finished steel club was so heavy that it took ten young lads to carry it to the old man’s house.



Grimey Boy put his hand, and with a holler, pulled himself up and streeetched his back. And as he stretched up and up, he grew and grew. He grew so tall that the old man had to stretch his neck up to see him. Standing straight, Grimey Boy was now a young man. Then he twirled the steel club as if he were twirling a radish.

"Oh, oh, you are so strong. You're not Grimey Boy anymore. You are Mighty Boy!" yelled the old man.

"Yeah, I like that name a lot better," Mighty Boy answered. "You know, I'm going to go on a journey. I want to see how my power can help people."



So he set out. He swaggered down the road. He rambled and sauntered toward the town. From the other side of the road came a man carrying the biggest shrine on his back, blocking everyone's path. Mighty Boy, knowing that he wouldn't be able to pass him, raised his club and struck the shrine. It shattered into pieces with a loud clang.

The man's face turned bright red and he yelled, "Don't you know who I am? I am Shrine Boy, the strongest man in all of Japan!" He grabbed Mighty Boy's club with his bare hand.

Without a word, Mighty Boy raised his steel club and swung it around, sending Shrine Boy high high up into the sky.

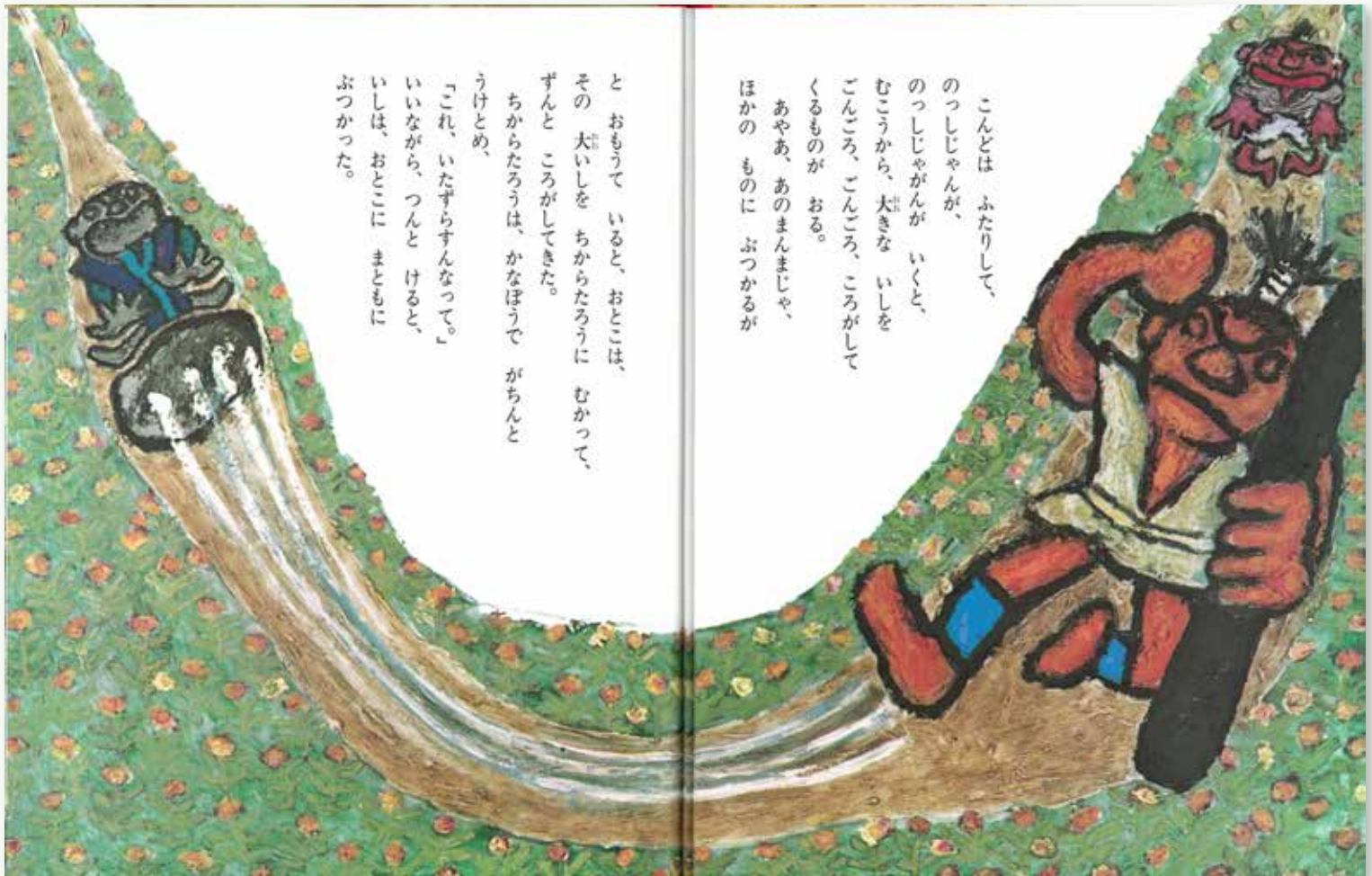


そのまんま、
まっつも まっつも、おちてこん。
ずいぶんと たって、小こえで、
「たすけてくれよう。」
と、いうのが きこえた。
みまわすと、やれやれ、
そこいらで、いちばん たかい まつの木の
てっぺんに、ひっかかっておった。
ちからたろうは、その まつを
ねっこぐるみ ひっこぬいて、
おろしてやった。
みどうっこたろうは
ためいきを つき、
「どうか、いっしょに
たびを させて
けれや。」
と たのんだ。

He waited and waited but Shrine Boy never came down. After a long time, Mighty Boy heard a small voice calling out to him, "Help. Help." Mighty Boy looked around, and there, at the very top of a very high pine tree, hung Shrine Boy.

Mighty Boy pulled the tree out of the ground, roots and all, and helped Shrine Boy get down.

With a big sigh, Shrine Boy said, "Take me with you on your journey."



こんどは ふたりして、
のっしじゃんが、
のっしじゃんが、いくと、
むこうから、大きな いしを
ごんごろ、ごんごろ、ころがして
くるものが おる。
あやあ、あのまんまじゃ、
ほかの ものに、ぶつかるが

とおもうて、いと、おとこは、
その 大いしを、ちからたろうに、むかって、
ずんと、ころがしてきた。
ちからたろうは、かなぼうで、がちんと
うけとめ、
「これ、いたずらすんなくて、」
いいながら、つんと、けると、
いしは、おとこに、まともに
ぶつかった。

So the two of them, Mighty Boy and Shrine Boy, swaggered together down the road. As they rambled and sauntered toward the town, they saw someone coming from the other side rolling a big rock down the path.

"Oh no. Someone's going to get hurt," they thought.

A man pushed the rock toward Mighty Boy and Shrine Boy.

Mighty Boy, with all his might, stopped the rock with his staff and flicked it back at the man who threw it. "Don't do that," Mighty Boy bellowed, and the rock hit the man directly.



Oh, the man got so angry.

“Do you know who I am? I am Rock Boy, the strongest man in all of Japan,” he yelled, and dashed straight at them. Shrine Boy stepped up.

They grabbed each other and wrestled this way and that way, but no matter how long they wrestled, not one of them moved an inch.

Mighty Boy watched, but soon enough, he lost patience.

“My turn,” Mighty Boy said. He grabbed Rock Boy’s neck and threw him in the air. Rock Boy flew through the air and landed in a pile of rubble in a stone quarry, buried up to his neck.

When Rock Boy somehow managed to crawl out of the rubble, he, too, begged Mighty Boy to take him with them on their journey.





さあ、こんどは
 三にんに なって、
 のっしじゃんが
 ずしん、のっし
 じゃがんがずっしん
 と いくと、
 どうとう 大きな
 まちに ついた。
 山の うえには、
 でっかい しろも ある。
 ところが、まっぴるま
 と いうのに、まちは
 人っこひとり
 みあたらん。どの
 いえも、戸を ぎっちり
 しめて、しゅんと
 しておる。

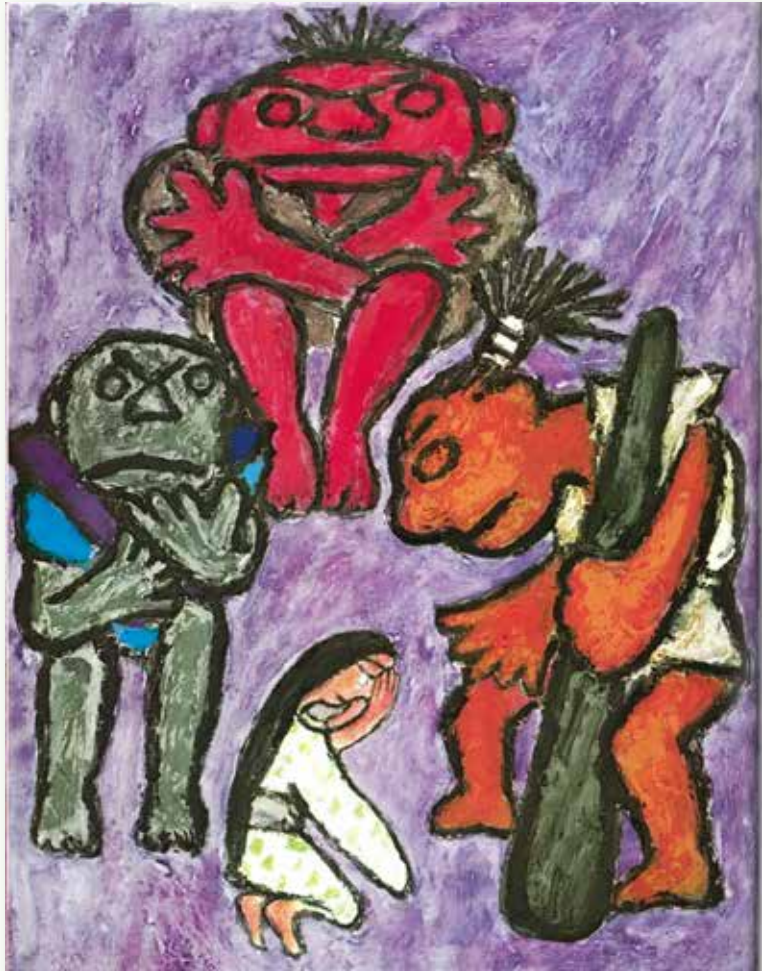
三にんは、くびを
 かしげながら、
 まちじゆうを
 ずいずいずいと
 みて、まわった。
 すると、まち一ばん
 の ちようじゃどのの
 やかたの まえて、
 むすめが ひとり
 うずくまっていた。

It was now the three of them. They swaggered down the road. They rambled and sauntered and finally reached a big town with a big castle up on the mountain.

But there was no one about, not one person in the town. With all the doors shut and locked, there was not a peep to be heard.

Puzzled, the three of them walked around the town, looking for anyone and anything, but not a person was about, and not a sound was to be heard.

Finally, there, in front of the biggest and richest house, a girl sat curled up, crying.



「あねこ、あねこ、なして、ないておるのか。」
 と、きくと、なきながら、ばけものがおつかねえからですと、こたえた。
 「ほやあ、ばけものだ。」
 「はい。それが、もう、大きな大きな、ばけもので、ねんに、どまちは、やってくる、おんを、ひとりずつ、さううていきます。」
 じひびきたて、あめかせ、ふかせて、むらの、田はたを、あらします。」
 「おさむらいしゆうに、たのめばいいが。」
 「とても、とても。たばに、なつても、かないません。ことしは

わたしの、ばん。
 もう、どうしようも、ありません。」
 「ふむ、そんなことか。ええとも、ええとも。おらたち、三にんで、たいじしてやつから、なくのをやめて、いえに、いれてけろ。」
 むすめは、三にんを、とつくり、みて、ほつとした、かおになり、やかたに、つれて、はいった。
 そこで、ちからたろうは、むすめをおくの、からびつに、かくし、じぶんは、その、まえに、どんとすわった。
 みどうつこたろうが、にわにいて、いしこたろうは、戸ぐちでまつことにした。

"Why are you crying, miss?" Mighty Boy asked.

"Because I'm scared of the monster," she cried.

"What, a monster?"

"Yes. It's such a big monster. It comes once a year and takes a girl away. It makes the earth rumble and brings rain and hurricanes, and it destroys our farm."

"Why don't you ask warriors for help?"

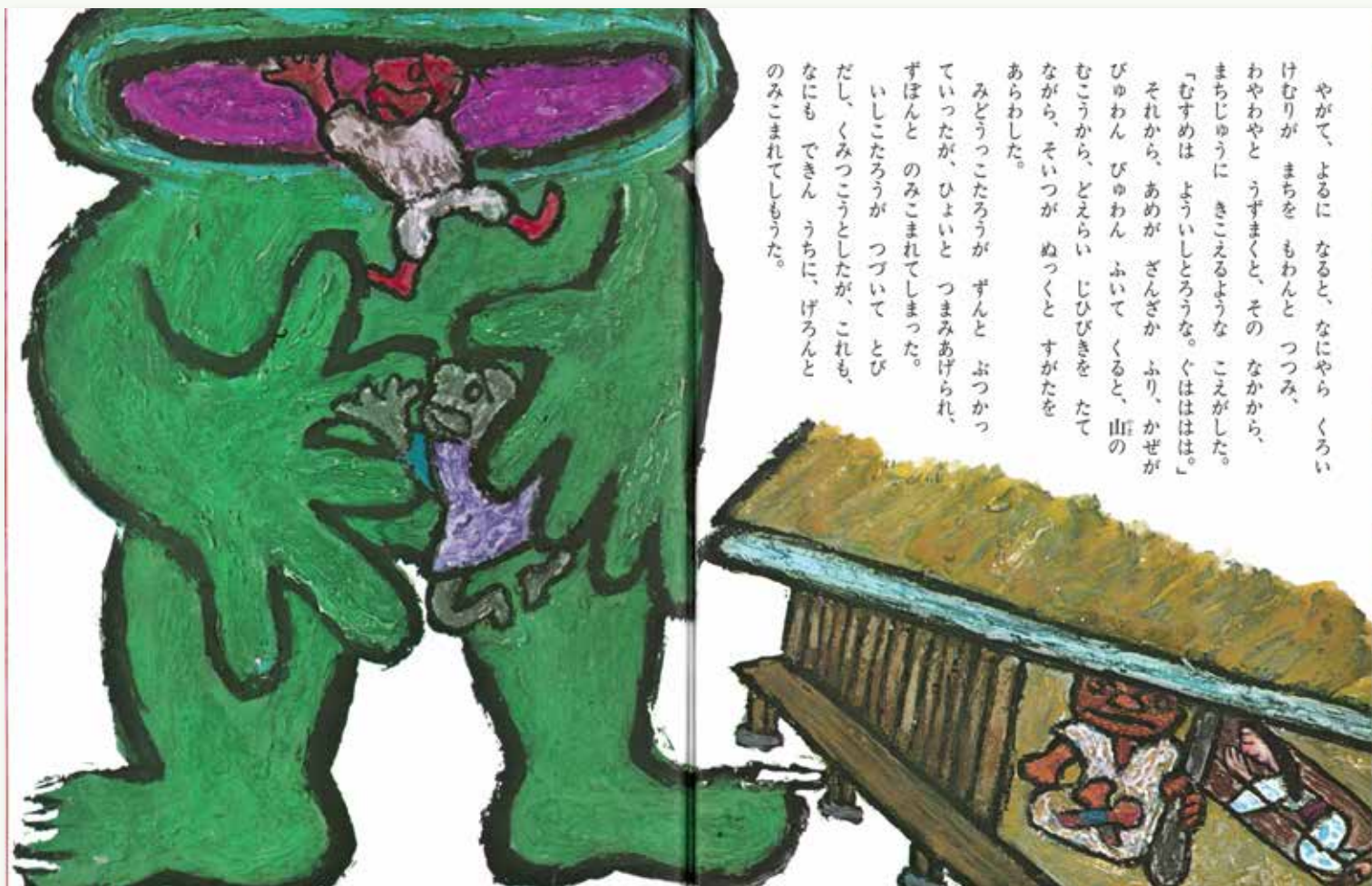
"Even a dozen or a hundred warriors won't help. It's my turn this year. There's nothing to be done!"

"I see...okay, okay, I understand. We'll get rid of the monster. Stop crying and go inside the house," Mighty Boy said thoughtfully.

The girl stared at the three of them for a very long time. Then, with a look of relief, she led them into the house.

Mighty Boy hid the girl inside an empty chest at the back of the house and closed the lid. He sat down in front of it. Shrine Boy stood guard in the yard and Rock Boy waited by the gate.





やがて、よるに になると、なにやら くらい
けむりが まちを もわんと つつみ、
わやわやと うずまくと、その なから、
まちじゅうに きこえるような こえがした。
「むすめは よういしとろうな。ぐはははは。」
それから、あめが さんざか ふり、かぜが
びゅわん びゅわん ふいて くと、山の
むこうから、どえらい じびきを たて
ながら、そいつが ぬつくと すがたを
あらわした。
みどうつこたろうが ずんと ぶつかっ
ていったが、ひよいと つまみあげられ、
ずぼんと のみこまれてしまった。
いしこたろうが つづいて とび
だし、くみつこうとしたが、これも、
なにも できん うちに、げろんと
のみこまれてしまった。

As soon as the night fell, dark smoke covered the entire town. Smoke whirled, around, and from the center came a loud voice that could be heard everywhere, "I hope a girl is ready for me." Rain poured down. Wind blew. The earth rumbled. And from the other side of the mountain, it appeared.

Shrine Boy tackled it, but it picked him up lightly and swallowed him.

Rock Boy ran out and tried to grab it, but before he could do anything, it gulped him down too.

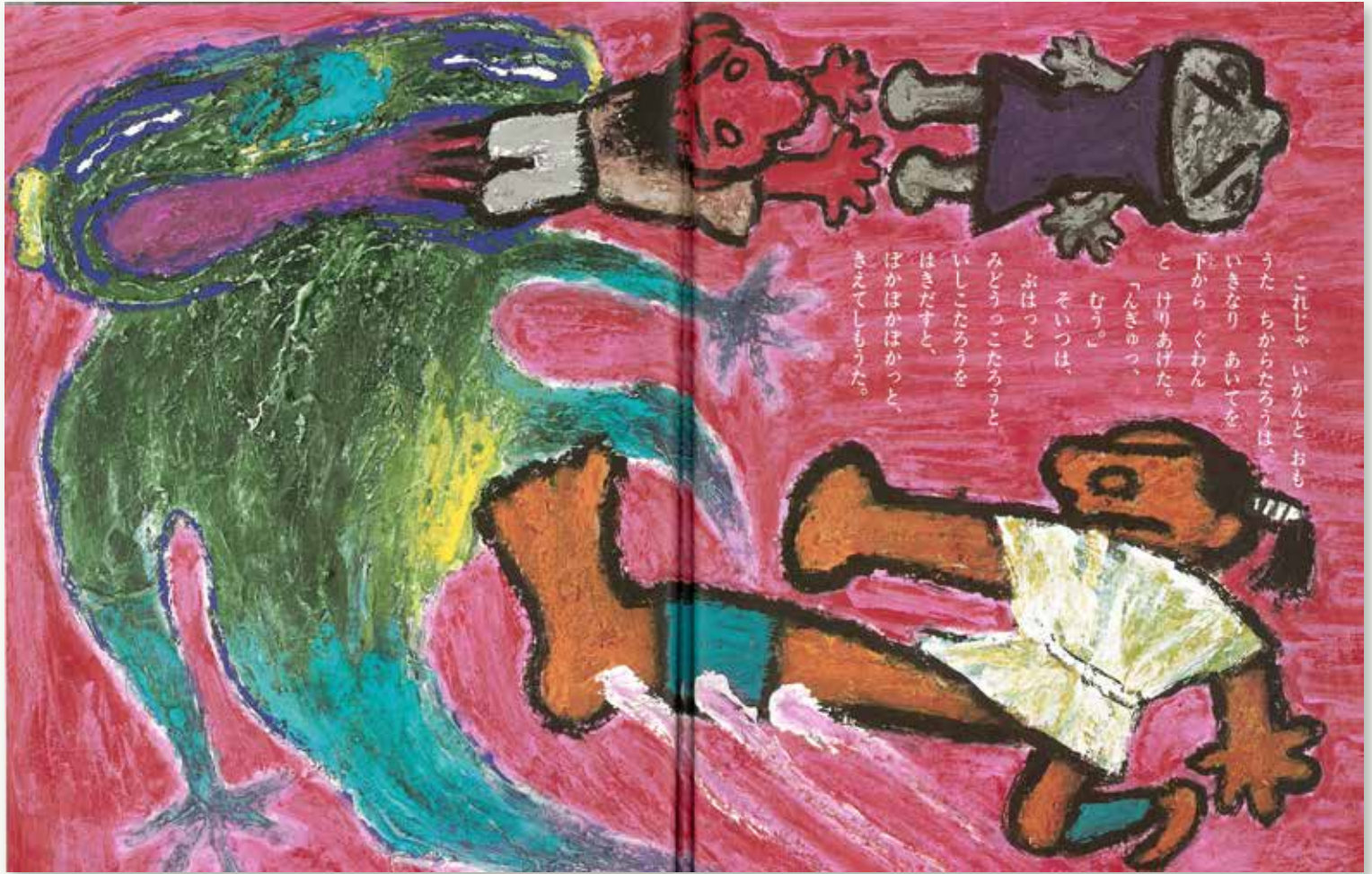


そこで、
ちからたろうが、すつくと たちあがった。
「ようし、こんだあ、おらが あいてだぞ。」
かなぼうを おるんぶるん ふりまわして
かかっていったが、そいつは かなぼうを
つまむと、あめみたいに まげてしまった。
「そんなら、とつくみあいだあ。」
ふたりは、えんさ わんさ、さんざん もみおうたが、
かちまけが つかん。どうかすると、ちからたろうの
ぼうが あぶない。

Mighty Boy had had enough and stood up. "It's my turn now!"

He brandished the club and ran toward the monster, but it grabbed the staff and bent it like melted candy.

Mighty Boy and the monster wrestled and grappled and struggled, but neither of them gave an inch away. Eventually, though, Mighty Boy gave an inch, then another...



Mighty Boy knew this wasn't good, so without warning, he kicked the monster from below.

It growled. Then it threw up Shrine Boy and Rock Boy and suddenly disappeared with a puff of smoke.



こわごわ ようすを
みていた まちの ものも、
大よろこびで、かくればしよから
でてきた。
ちようじゃが すすみでて、
「おかげさまで、むすめも、おらたち みんなも、
大だすかりですじゃ。おれいには、
なにが よいじゃろうか。」
三にんは かおを みあわせ、ふつふと わらい、
「そうじゃなあ。いちばん つかい かま いっぱい、
まんま たいてけろ。」
まちの 人らが ころろを こめて たいた まんまを、
三にんは、わしわしわしと たいらげた。そうして、
「いやあ、こりや、うめえ。こんな まんまを、もつと
もつと ふやすべや。」
と うなずきあつた。

All the townspeople, who had been watching from their hiding places, came out cheering.

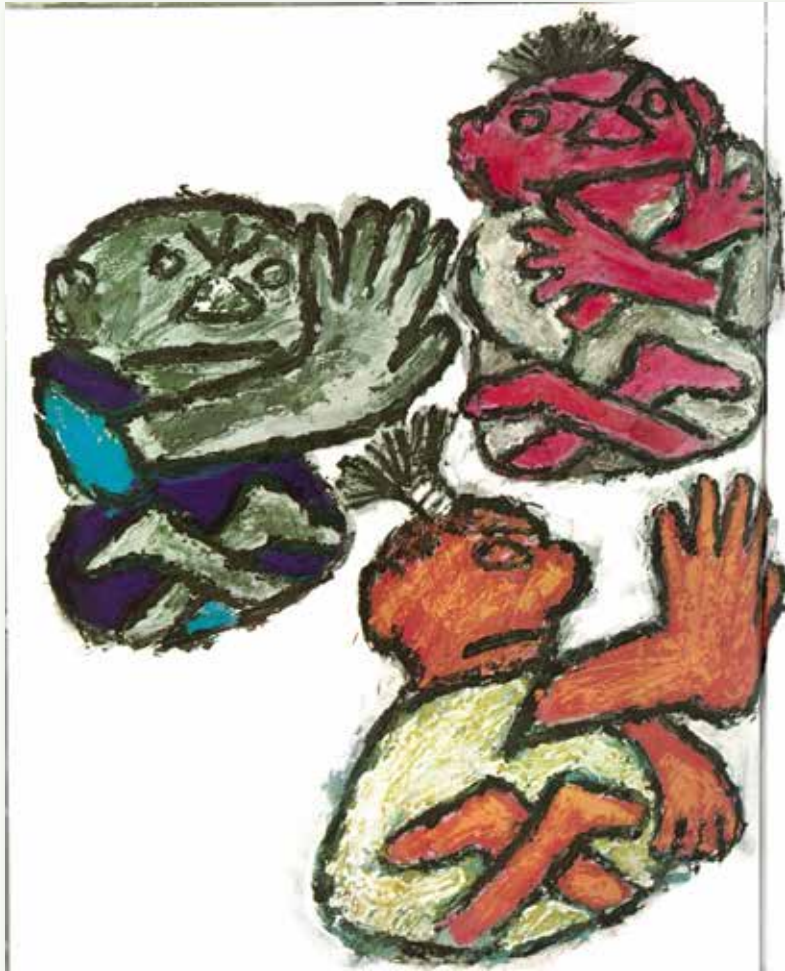
The rich man came forward and said, "Thanks to you, my daughter and everyone in the town are saved. How can I repay you?"

The three of them looked at each other and laughed.

"How about you find the biggest cooking pot and feed us?"

All the townspeople helped out in preparing the meal. Mighty Boy, Rock Boy and Shrine Boy ate the meal in one sitting.

"So good, so good! We need to produce more rice like this!" they laughed at each other.



そのときに なって、やつと、
しろから つかいが やつてきて、
三^三にんを めしかかえたいと いった。
三^三にんは、また ふつふと わらい、
「おらたちは、ここで
くらすほうが、
きらくじゃ。」
と、てんで、あいてに
しなかつた。
そのあと、三^三にんは
むらに すみつき、
ちからを あわせて、はたらいたもの
だから、むらの 田^田は、ぐんと
みのりが ようなつた。
むらも まちも ゆつたり おちついて、
みんな、のんびりと くらせる
ように なつたそう。



Finally, a messenger from the castle arrived with a message saying that the Lord would like to have them work for him.

The three of them laughed again. They told the messenger that they were fine where they were and sent him back to the castle.

So the three of them stayed at the village where Mighty Boy was from and worked hard together. The village had so much rice because of their hard work.

All was good in the village and the town. No one was bothered by anything anymore.



ちからたろうは、
たすけた むすめ
と、いっしょに
なり、じいさま
ばあさまを
むかえた。あとの
ふたりも、やがて、
むらの むすめと
いっしょになり、
そこで、ずうっと
くらししたそうなの。
さむらいども
だけは、すっかり
小^こそう になって
おったと。
ふはははは。

Mighty Boy married the girl he helped, and together, they lived happily ever after with the old man and the old woman. Rock Boy and Shrine Boy each found a girl and lived happily ever after in the village.

The village's warriors were ashamed and couldn't walk around proudly like they once did.

Serves them right.

translated by Mariko Nagai



A Picture Book Born Out of the Hearth by Seizo Tashima

Because I grew up in the mountains, old people in my neighborhood told me folktales from the time I was small.

These stories weren't anything like the fairy tales published as picture books, but more fascinating, more interesting to the child that I was. I think that the published fairy tales aren't all that interesting because the authors and illustrators think too much about writing for children. Too polite and uninteresting, these stories don't add anything to the imagination of children.

The tales told by those old farmers are told in dialects, and they embody our ancestors' vitality and humor. When I was working on this book, I wanted to resurrect the hand gestures and expressions of the no-longer-here old neighbors who told me stories in the dark rooms of my childhood, our faces lit only by the sooty hearth.

That's why I drew Mighty Boy, Shrine Boy, Rock Boy, their wives, the grimey old man and old woman who are too poor and too busy to take a bath, and, of course the monster, as strongly and as down to earth and full of life as if they had just popped out of the hearth ash, with smoke from the burning wood and steam from the sooty earthenware.

translated by Mariko Nagai



くさむら (Kusamura)

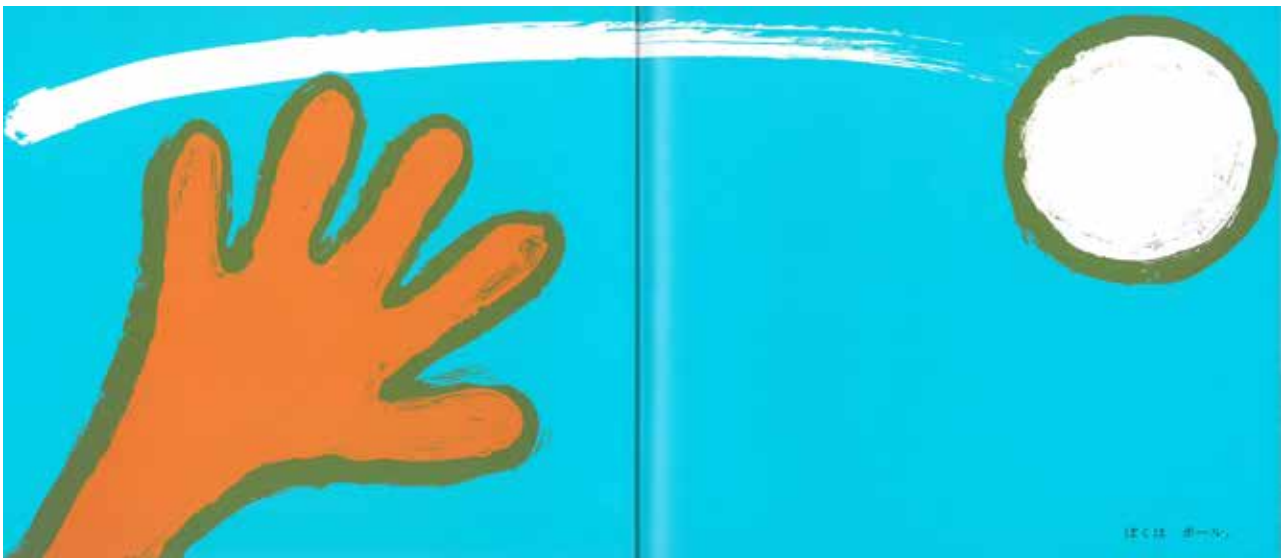
Ball in the Grass | Tokyo: Kaiseisha | 1982/ 89 |
ISBN 978-4-03-331150-0

Ball in the Grass

Seizo Tashima

Tokyo: Kaiseisha | 1982/ 89

What happens to the ball after it whizzes into the thick grass? Imaginative paintings done in bright primary colours take the reader with the ball on its journey. The book contains simple text. (from publisher's website)



I'm a ball



Bouncing into grass



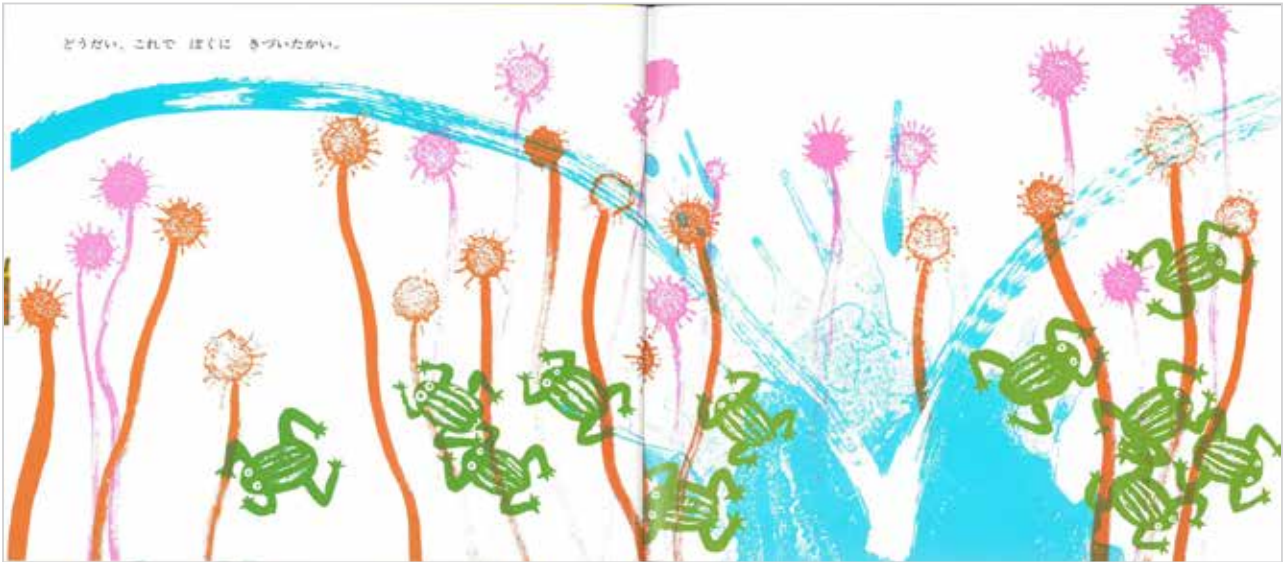
Flying through grass



So fast
No one knows I've passed



That's boring
C'mon let's play



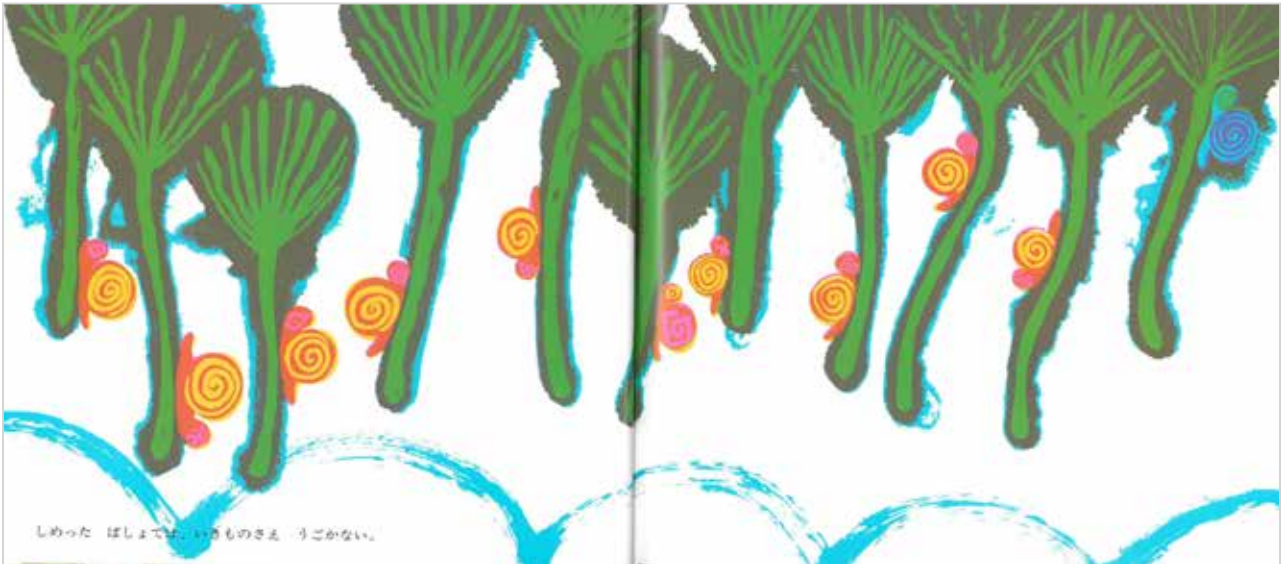
Do you see me now?



Sorry!!!



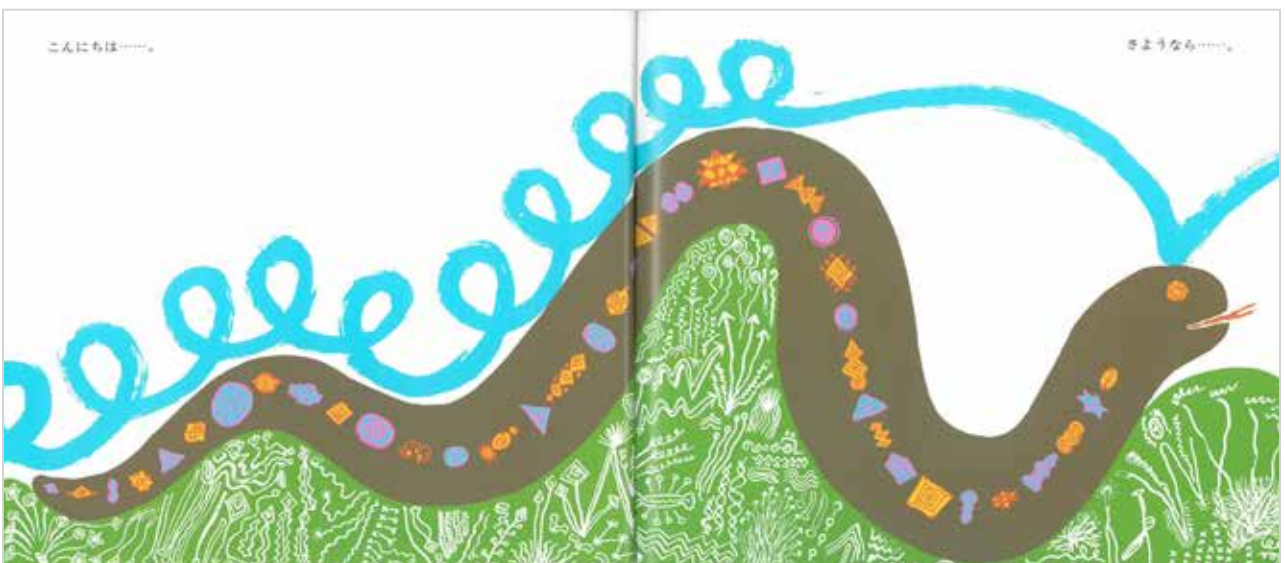
spiky grass, cool grass
soft grass, vigorous grass



In wet places
Not even living things move



Even grass will dance
in bright light



Hello Good-bye



くまむらの なかに、おおきな はなが さいていた。

A humongous flower blooms in the grassy field



おどろいたら、
はなびらは とおんだね。

Startled,
Petals fly



つるくきが、ほくそ、つかまえようとする。

Vines may try to stop my flight



But no one catches me



A little tired now



I roll off the grass

ぼくの こころは いろんな ものを つかまえたよ。



My soul has captured a taste of everything

translated by Sako Ikegami

田島征三



とべバッタ (Tobe batta)

Fly, Grasshopper! | Tokyo: Kaiseisha | 1988 |

ISBN 978-4-03-331140-1

Fly, Grasshopper!

Seizo Tashima

Tokyo: Kaiseisha | 1988

◎ AWARD

BOLOGNA INTERNATIONAL BOOK FAIR (Nominated for Graphic Prize)

NIPPON PRIZE FOR PICTURE BOOKS (Grand Prix)

SHOGAKUKAN AWARD FOR ILLUSTRATIONS FOR CHILDREN

Selected for GOOD PICTURE BOOK by School Library Association

Exhibited at BIB 1989

YEAR OF THE ILLUSTRATION 1989



Fly, Grasshopper!

Seizo Tashima

●REVIEW

A very powerful and delightful picture book

Making a picture book may seem to be fun and easy. In fact, it is possible to do it halfheartedly and complete it without effort. However, an artist suffers a great deal to draw just one piece, much more for the whole book. He has to dive into the depth of endless challenges, because there is no particular finishing point of working. The artist is just like a grasshopper wandering about the desert. With a frail mentality, one can only make a picture book that is not worth bothering about. Seizo Tajima is one of the artists who has that rare tenacious spirit. I can see it at the glance of the cover of this *Tobe batta* (Fly, grasshopper!). The thighs of the grasshopper are as big as that of a chicken. With this powerful thighs and fervent will to jump, the grasshopper flies to the sky.

I do hope children enjoy this picture book, and weary fathers, too.

Shiro Yadama, children's book author



A grasshopper lived hidden away in a clump of grass.

Close by there were other creatures – frightening creatures – who, given half a chance, would gobble up the grasshopper.



So the grasshopper spent every day in fear of his life.



But the grasshopper grew tired of living this way, trembling in the grass.



そして、ある日、バッタは、けつした。



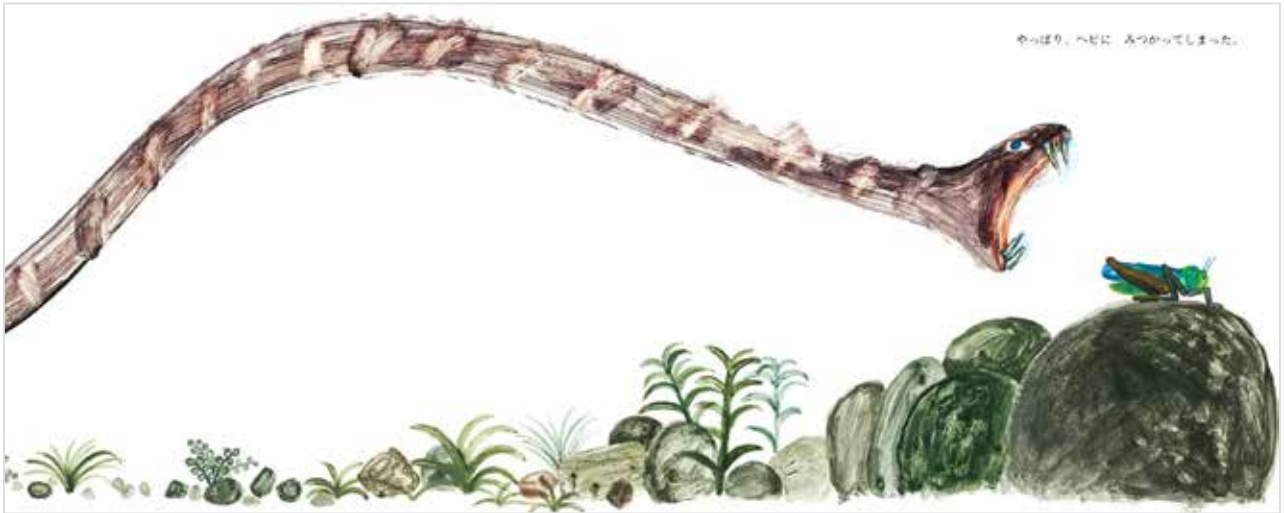
So one day he made up his mind.

バッタは、お好きな、いしの、てっぺんで、ゆうゆうと、ひなたぼっこを、はじめた。
そんなことを、すれば、すぐ、できに、みつかって、なべられて、しまうことを、
バッタは、しっていた。なのに、バッタは、そうした。



He crawled up onto the top of a large rock, and began to sun himself, quite openly.
Of course, he knew that he would soon be discovered and eaten by one of his enemies.
Even so, he still did it.



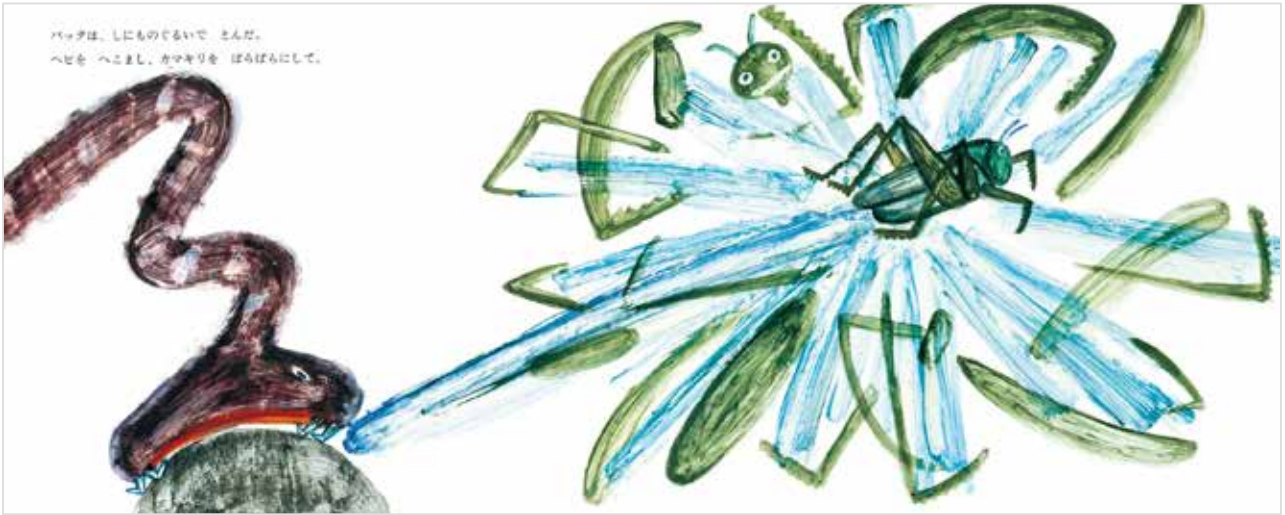


Before long a snake discovered him.



At exactly the same time a mantis also attacked.





The grasshopper jumped for his life.
He snubbed the snake and mangled the mantis,



Smashed a spider and its web.





Still going higher, he hit a bird in the sky like a bullet,



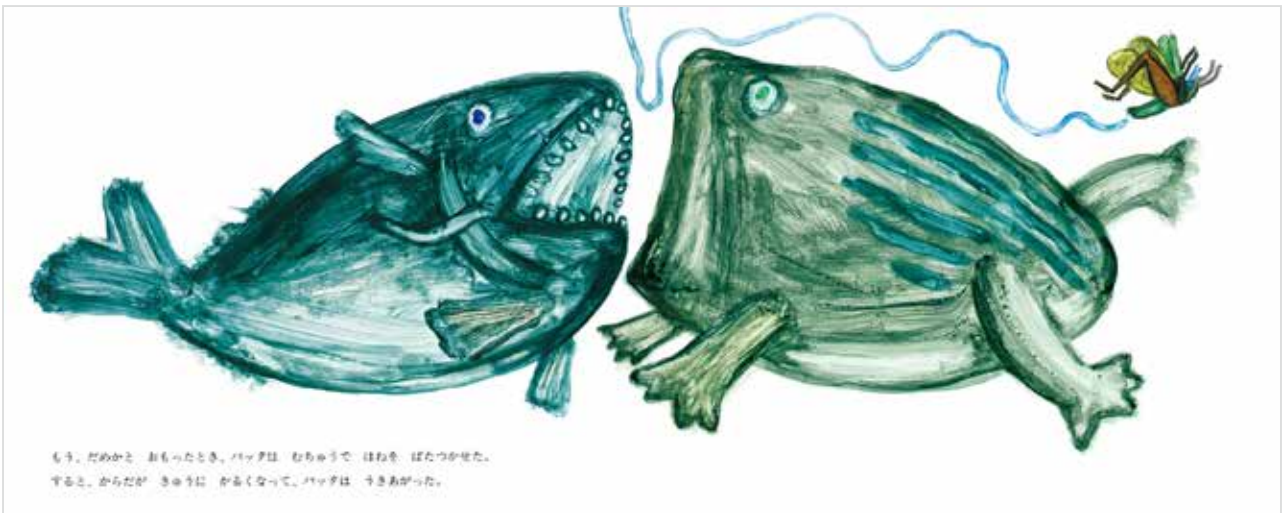
crashed through a cloud, and climbed up to where he was above all things.
But he could climb no higher.
Now he began falling down and down.





バッサは、じふんの せなかには ついてある
よんまいの はねに きづいた。
それは、いままでに いちども つがったことの
ない ものだった。

Suddenly the grasshopper realized that he had four wings on his back.
He had never used them before.



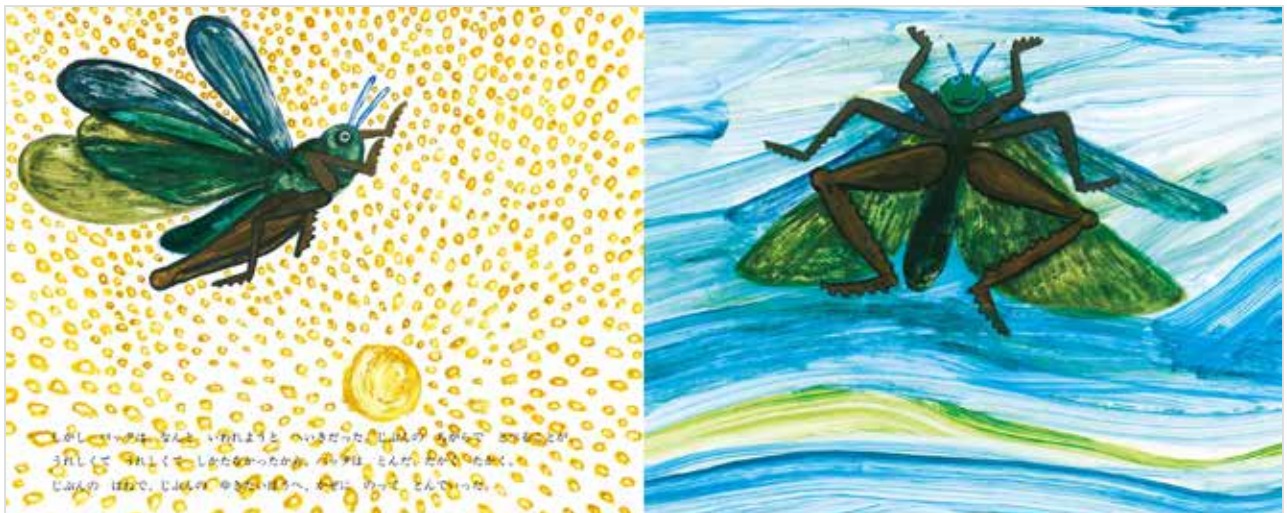
もう、だめかと おもったとき、バッサは、むちゅうで、はねを、ぼたつかせた。
すると、からだは、きゆうに、かろくなって、バッサは、うきあがった。

Just when he thought he was finished, the grasshopper began to flap his wings.
Immediately his body got lighter, and lifted him up.





“Call that ‘flying’?” laughed a dragonfly derisively, as it glided past.
“Strange insect!” giggled some butterflies who flittered by.



But the grasshopper didn't care what anyone said.
He was flying all by himself! He was happy... so happy.
The grasshopper flew higher and higher.
With his own wings, in his own way, he lay back on the wind, and flew.





The grasshopper crossed the desert,



and flew on and on.

English text from English edition in India © Kaiseisha, 1992



ガオ



たしませいぞうさく
田島征三・作

ガオ (Gao)

GAO (Roar!) | Tokyo: Fukuinkan Shoten | 2005
ISBN 978-4-83-402034-2

ガオ



田島征三・作

おやまの あかいわの てっぺんに げんきな やまいぬが すんでいた

GAO

Seizo Tashima

A great wild dog
on a big red boulder
on a lofty peak

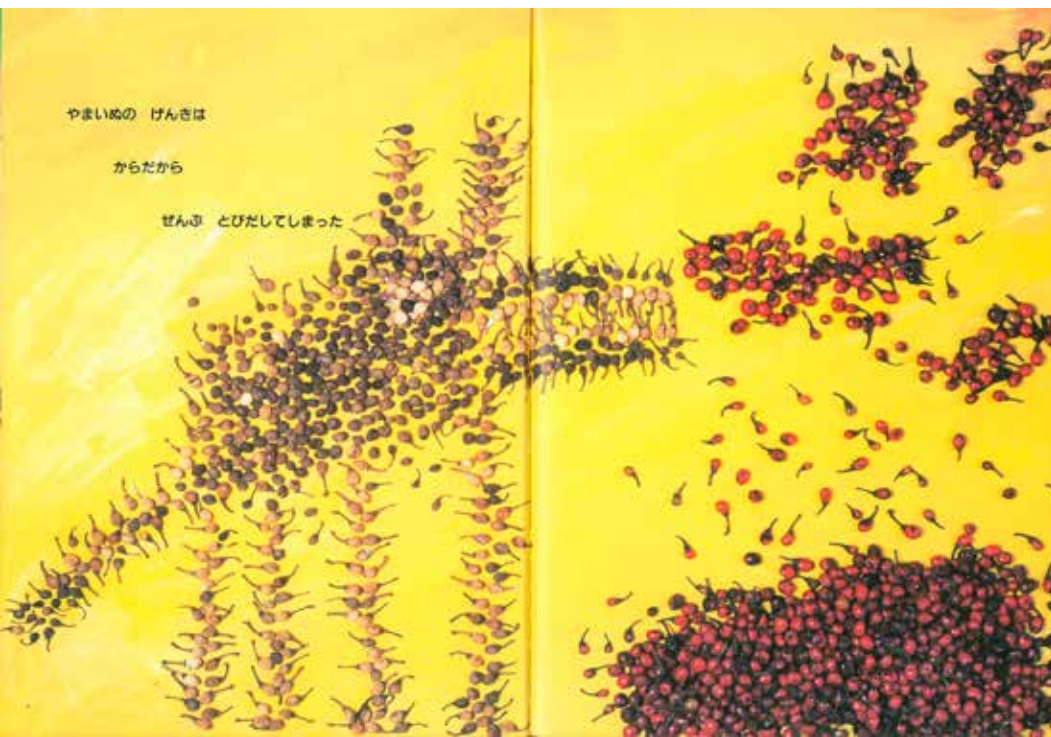
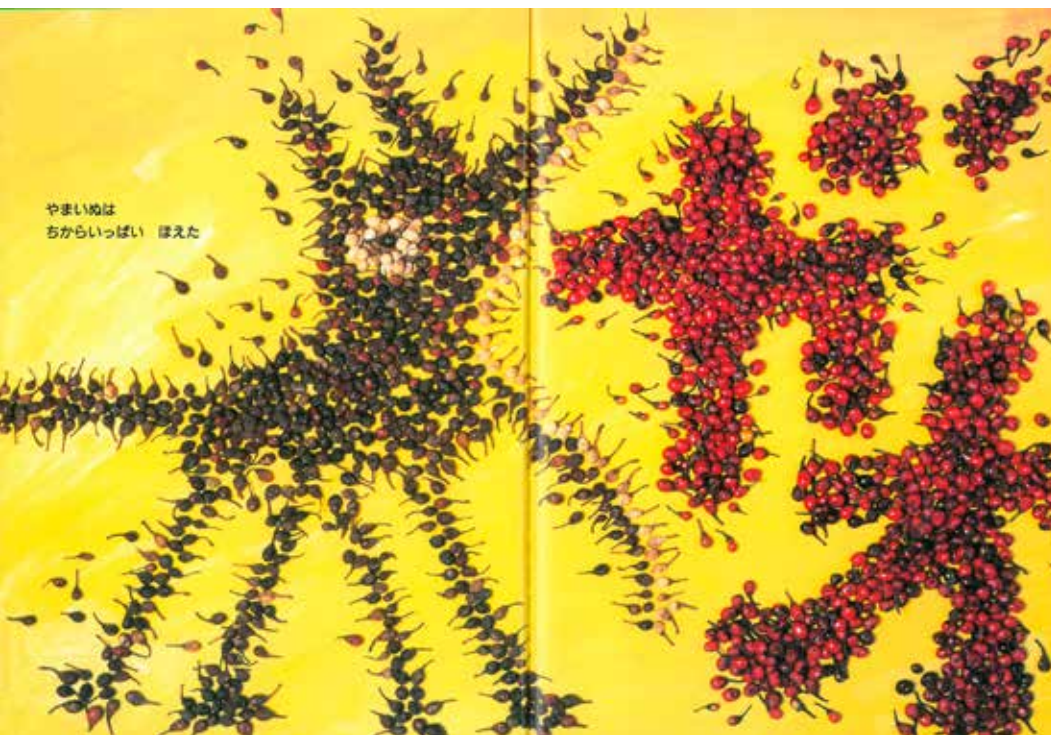


One day,
the great wild dog
Wanted to roar
with all its might
GRRRR....
RRROAR!

The wild dog roared as
loudly as it could

ガオ GAO RRROAR!

All of the dog's might
flew out of its body





The body fell apart
his might, a million
pieces

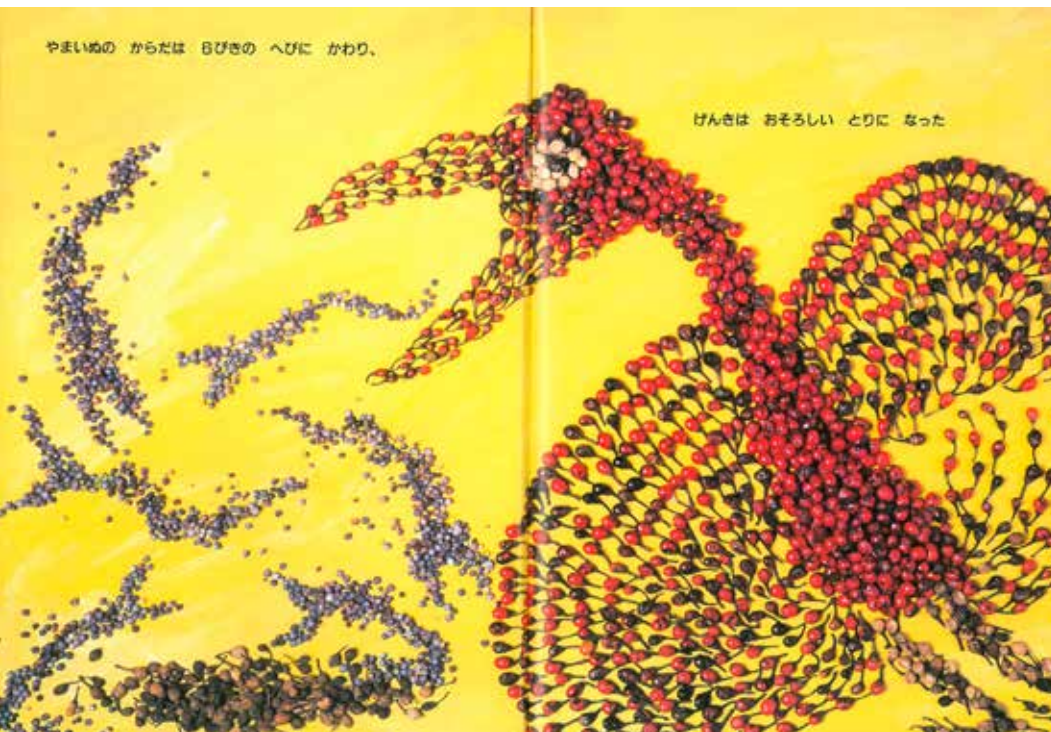
But...

The wild dog's body
transformed
into six little snakes

His might was now
a terrible bird.

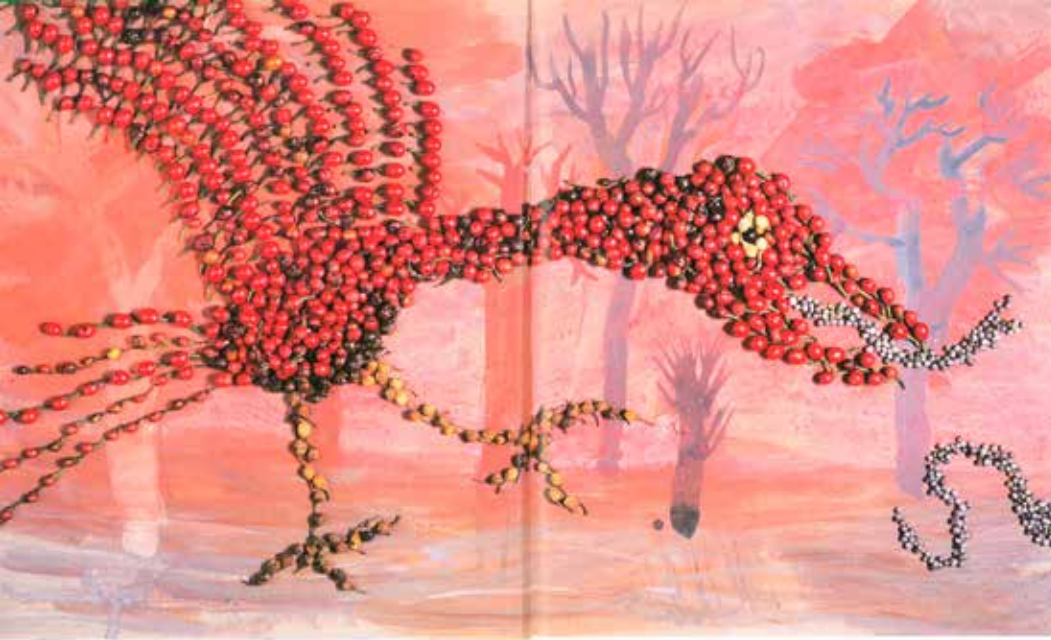
The huge terrible bird
began to eat the
snakes
one after the other.

Gobble, gulp
Gobble, gulp



おおきな おそろしい とりは へびを いっぴきずつ

たべはじめた ベロリ コクン ベロリ コクン



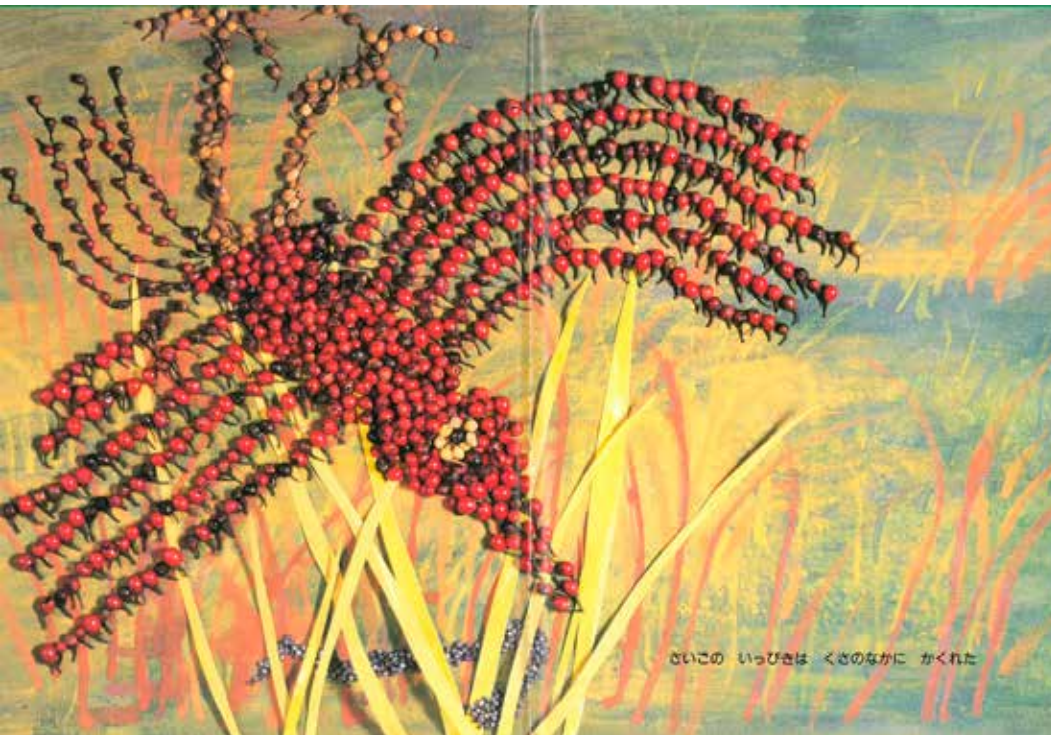
ペロリ コクン

ペロリ ペロリ コクン コクン

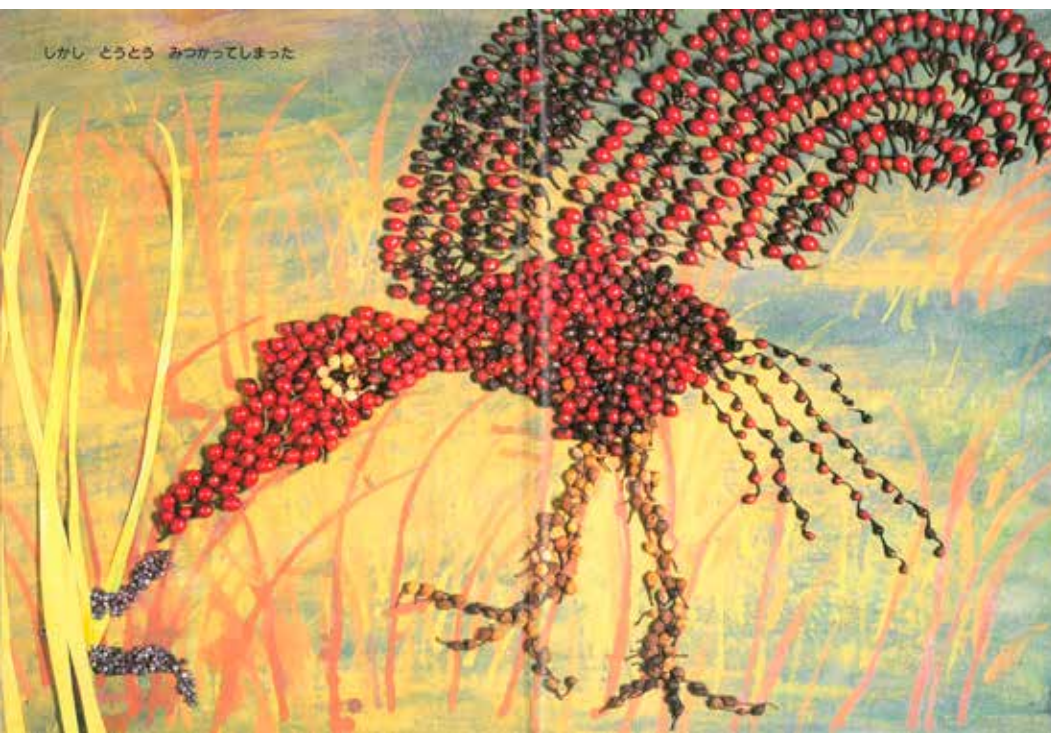
Gobble gulp.
Gobble gobble, gulp
gulp

The last snake hid in
the grass

But it, too, could not
hide



さいこの いっぴきは くさのなかに かくれた



しかし どうとう みつかってしまった



I will become
the great wild dog
on a lofty peak!
roared the last snake.

But then,
he became a frog
Won't give up yet!
Frogs can be strong!

The frog smashed
into the terrible bird

CRASH!!

Crumble!

Scatter!!

The terrible bird fell
apart



バラバラに なった とりは すなのうえに おちた
そして かわいい かえるに なった
なんだが なつかしい きもちに なって にひきは だきあった

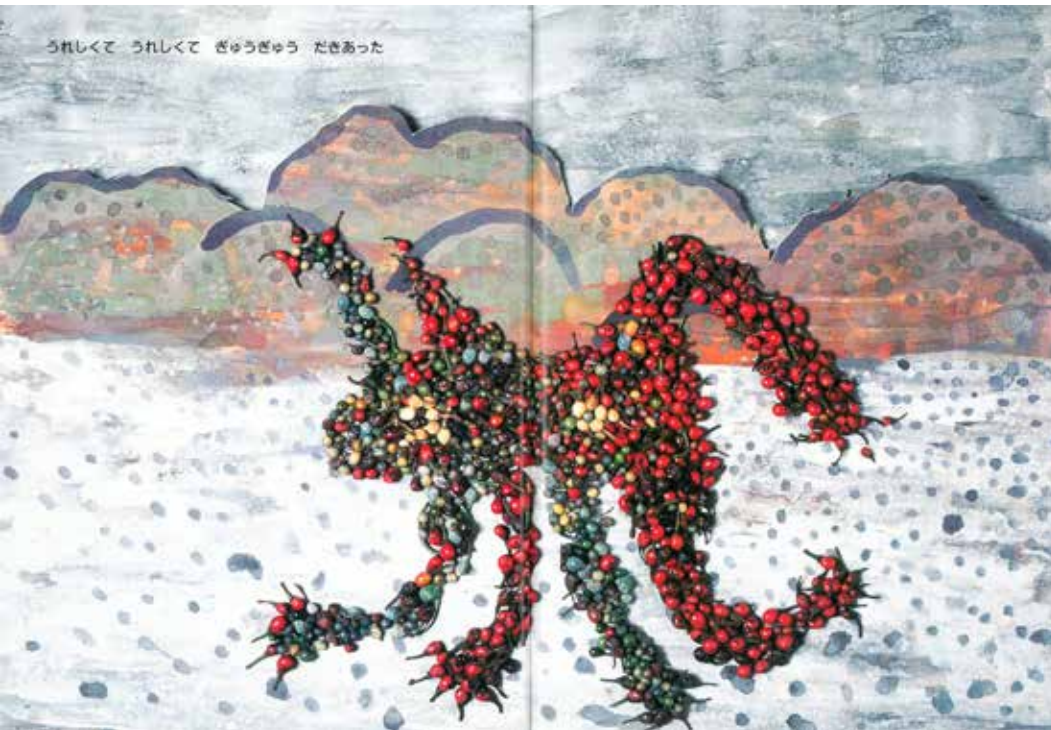


Falling on the sand
a cute frog emerged
Familiarity bred fondness
and the two frogs hugged

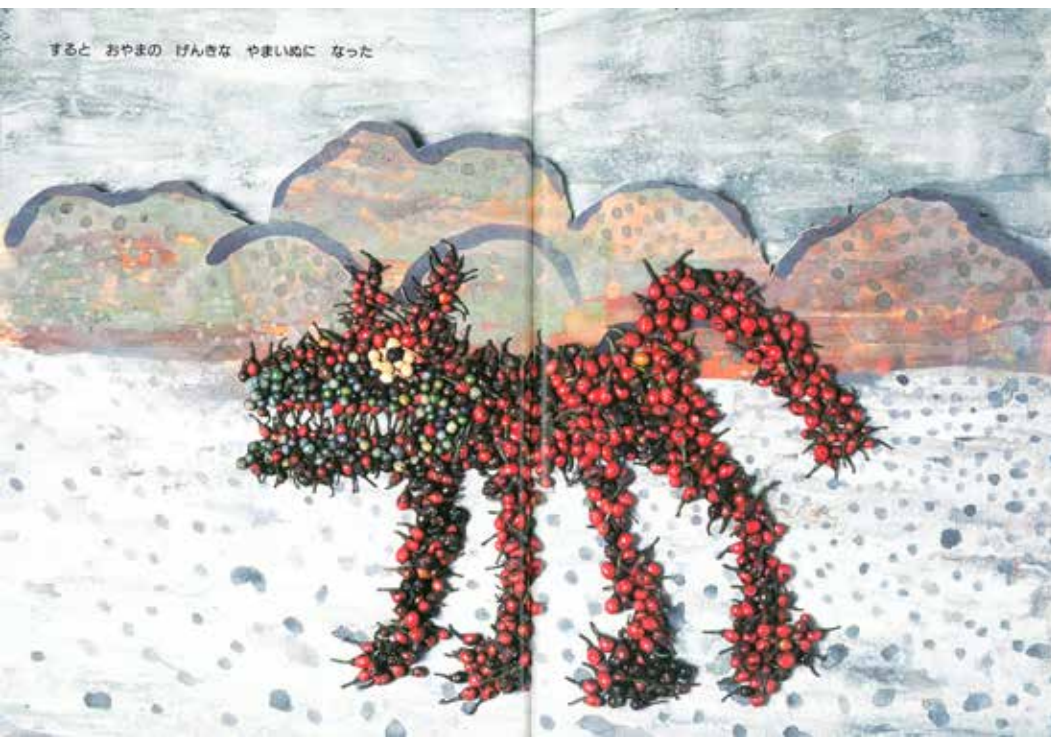
So happy to be together
they hugged harder and
harder

Until they became
a great wild dog.

うれしくて うれしくて ぎゅうぎゅう だきあった



すると おやまの けんきな やまいぬに なった





やまいぬは あるひ おおこえて ほえたくなった

One day, the great wild dog
Wanted to roar
With all its might

translated by Sako Ikegami



わたしの森に (Watashi no mori ni)

Here in My Forest | text: Arthur Binard

Tokyo: Kumon Shuppan | 2018 | ISBN 978-4-7743-2796-9



Here in My Forest

Seizo Tashima

text by Arthur Binard

Tokyo: Kumon Shuppan | 2018

It is snowing
again
here in my forest

Shuush shuush
Shuush shuush hush

thud shuush
thud shuush shuush hush



Snow
falling
from the sky
seems
light
but
it turns heavy
on the ground
I am
asleep
under the snow

As I sleep
I feel it

thud shuush
thud shuush shuush hush



In a hole
under the snow
I can't see
anything
but I know
it's sunny above ground
today
Snow
on the pine tree
slides down
and I feel the faintest thud
snow hits the ground

Maybe
snow is melting

As I sleep
I
wait



My neck twitches
My tail twitches
My nose begins to tickle
My body In the hole
under the snow
uncurls

There are so many things
under the snow
waiting with me
Yawn yawn stretch

Butterbur scapes swell
and push out
above the ground
Yawn yawn stretch

Ferns grow
and unfurl leaves above the earth
Yawn yawn stretch
We slowly
soak up water
The earth sips water
slowly



Snow
in the forest
Is melting
slowly

I am beginning
to get hungry
I want to open my mouth
and swallow something whole
from head to tail
I haven't eaten anything in a long time

Here in my forest
there are creatures
--- warm and live creatures ---
like field mice
like shrews
running around

I can see
their
warm bodies

Even in the darkest nights



Warm bodies
munmun

I can see
rabbit
bodies

Warm bodies
Munmun munmun

I have two
different sets of eyes:
ones that can see the light
and
the other
that can see warmth



Right between
my nostrils
and
seeing eyes
right where
it's indented,
that's where my *munmun* eyes are

I have them
on my left cheek
and also
on my right cheek

I can see
warm
munmun
--- all *munmun*'s

Oh look
there's
a delicious-looking
shrew



Munmun
gnaw munch
om nom nom
munch gulp nom



Sometimes humans come
here to my forest
they step on
everything
once they almost
stepped on me
and noticed me
at the last minute

“Oh my, that’s a mamushi snake!”
“Be careful! It’s poisonous!”
“You’re dead if it bites you!”
Run, run quickly!”

I’m so glad
they noticed me
if they had stepped on me
I would have bitten them
Run, run quickly!
Go as far away as you can!



よるおそく わたしの 森に
おおいに ニンゲンが
あらわれた
イヌを
つれて

どんどん
ちかづいて
わたしの
そばへ……
こないで
とにかく
こないで
ニンゲンや
かみたくないから
イヌも かみたくないから……

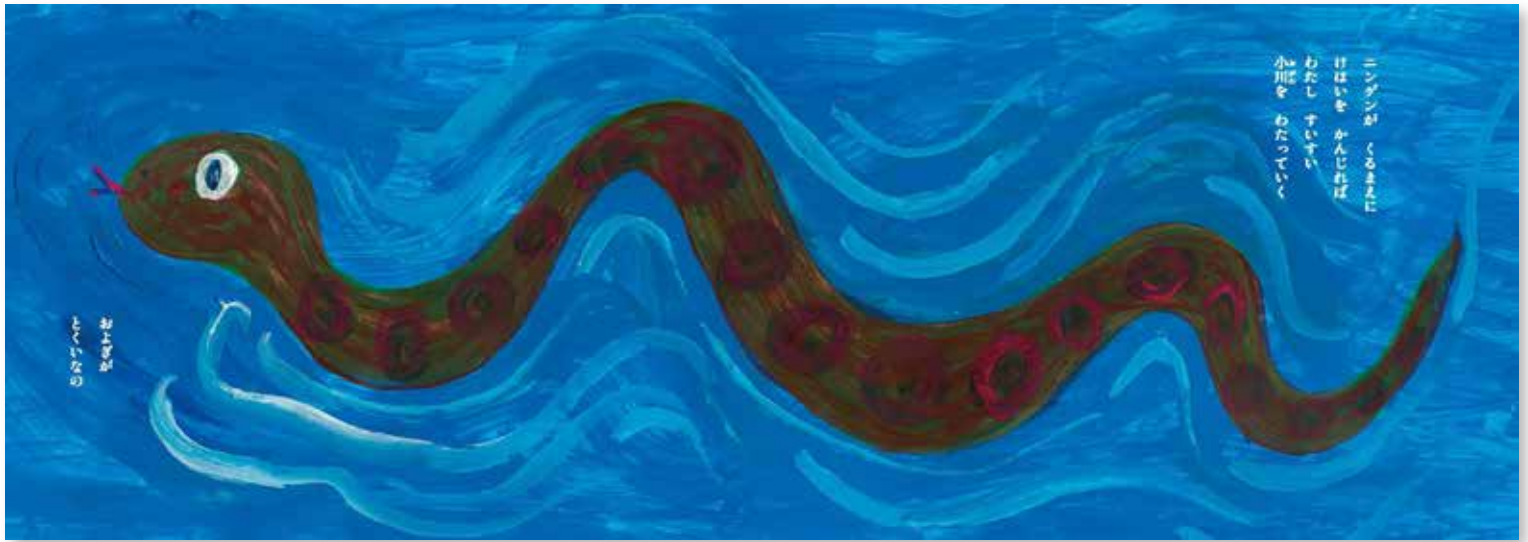
あめ
とどろきだしていへ

One late night,
a big human came
here to my forest
bringing with him
a dog

Closer and closer
they came
near me...

Don't come
just
don't come near
I don't want to bite
a human
I don't want to bite
a dog

Oh good
they walked way



If I sense
a human coming near
I dive into a stream
and swim away

I can
swim really well



I remember
last summer
I met him
in the deep of the forest

Under
the setting sun
his tail
and my tail
touched
and we danced

We danced
and danced
all night long

That's when
I wondered
when I would give
birth
to my babies...



Inside of me
 my first baby
 my second baby
 my third baby
 are growing

Yawn yawn stretch
 Yawn yawn stretch
 Yawn yawn stretch
 When I lie
 atop a warm rock
 they start wriggling inside of me

My shadow
 cast on the rock

The curve
 of my neck
 right at the nape
 I think that's my
 charm point

I wonder
 if my babies would have
 the same curve like mine



The birth day is today
 my body is filled
 up to the brim
 with my three babies

One
 two
 three
 puuuuuush

Here they come

Shuh shuh shuh swish splosh



As I stretch
my body
atop the carpet of moss
in the forest
I can feel
another me
floating out
from the tip of the tail
another me
as light as
air...

I turn my neck
around
and watch the other me
but it attaches itself to me
soon another me
floats out

from the tip of my tail
I turn around

but the other me
is already reattached to me

The me of today
and me of the past
are the same



I curl
up
on the river
bank
and stare
quietly

Where does
the water go
What does it turn into

I wonder
where my children are
and what they are doing

The wind
here in my forest
carries a hint of winter



It is snowing
tonight

Shuush shuush
Shuush shuush hush

Here in my forest

Here in My Forest Afterwords

This picture book was inspired by and born out of the forests in Niigata.

In *Hachi* hamlet in Tookamachi City in Niigata Prefecture, Seizo Tashima created *Ehon to Ki no Mi no Bijutsukan* (also known in English as Hachi & Seizo Tashima Museum of Picture Book Art) out of an abandoned school as a museum where you can experience picture books with all of your senses. This was part of the art exhibition at the 2009 Biennial Echigo-Tsumari Art Field Festival.

Arthur Binard, the writer of this picture book, visited Hachi hamlet numerous times over two years, and, inspired by four seasons and the lifestyle of Hachi, collaborated with Seizo Tashima and created an installation work, *Karada no Naka Kimochi no Oku* ("Inside of me, Deep in my Heart"), which was entered into the 2018 Biennial Echigo-Tsumari Art Field Festival.

The story of *Here in My Forest* is a story of this land.

TRANSLATION



とべバッタ

Tobe batta (Fly, Grasshopper!) | Tokyo: Kaiseisha
| 1988 | ISBN 978-4033311401



●**CHINESE (SIMPLIFIED)** : Beijing King Ear Images | ISBN 978-7-5489-0537-0 | 2012

●**KOREAN** : BORIM PRESS | ISBN 89-433-0245-2 | 1996

●**ENGLISH** : NATIONAL BOOK TRUST, INDIA | FLY, GRASSHOPPER! | 1994

NATIONAL BOOK TRUST, INDIA

●**BENGALI** : ISBN 8123700776 | 1993

●**HINDI** : ISBN 8123700768 | 1993

●**GUJARATI** : ISBN 8123700784 | 1993

●**KANNADA** : ISBN 8123700792 | 1993

●**MALAYALAM** : ISBN 8123700805 | 1993

●**MARATHI** : ISBN 8123700814 | 1993

●**ORIYA** : ISBN 8123700822 | 1993

●**PUNJABI** : 1994

●**TAMIL** : ISBN 8123700849 | 1993

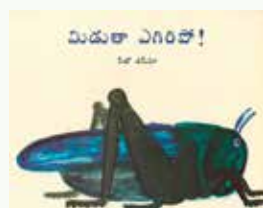
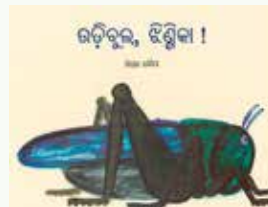
●**TELUGU** : ISBN 8123700857 | 1993

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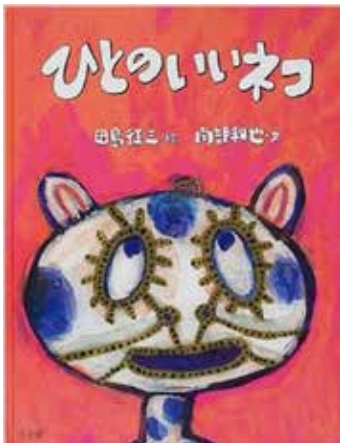
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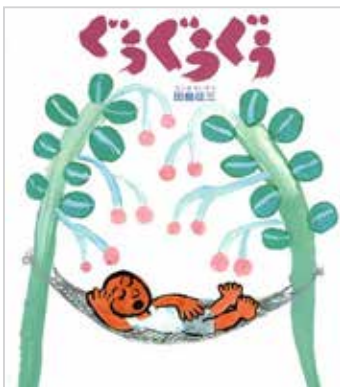
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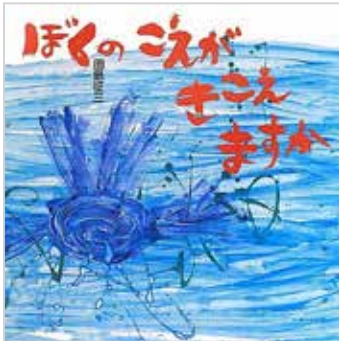
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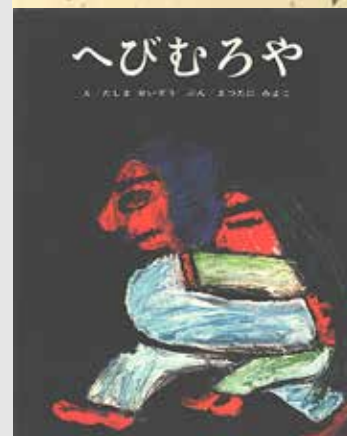
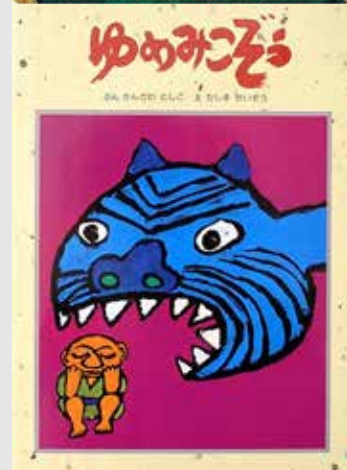
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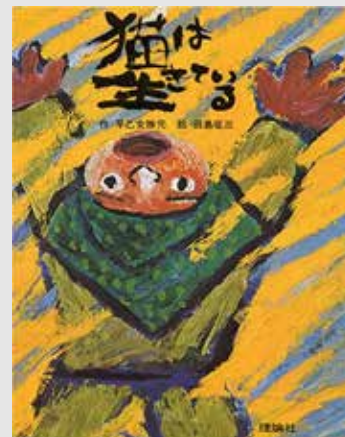
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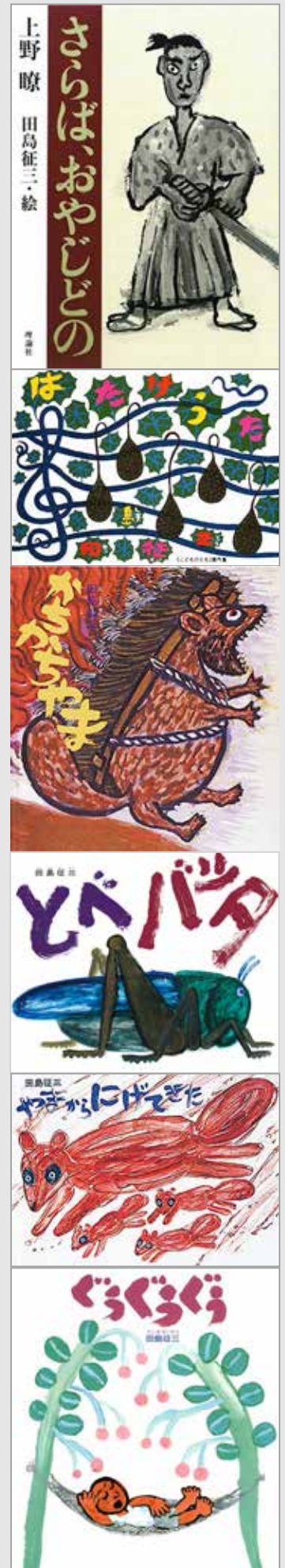
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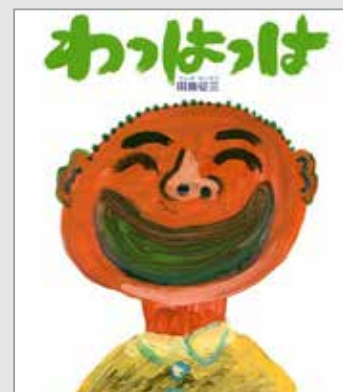
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