

## \OSU KANNON GINKO WALK round-up

By Leah Ann Sullivan

If you were in Nagoya during August, you may have noticed fliers for the first OSU KANNON GINKO WALK in schools, cafes, open mics and live music venues. As organizer, teacher and member of the world English haiku community, I'm pleased that our first local ginko was a success. Beginning with a two-hour walk exploring the old Osu Kannon temple neighborhood and lively shopping arcade, we followed up with a writing workshop and reading at MONDO BOOKS in Kamimaezu. A ginko is a haiku field trip held at a specific location where participants write down images, sights, sounds and impressions, make haiku, share poems and enjoy each other's company.

Our local event was part of a global day of simultaneous poetry celebrations, 100Thousand Poets for Change. Brainchild of Michael Rothenberg, Big Bridge publisher, and his partner, Terri Carrion, poets in 95 countries, 550 cities and 700 events gathered to promote peace and sustainability. On September 24th, the writing workshop and reading part of our event was web-cast from Mondo Books in Kamimaezu.

Our quiet Osu Kannon event was a warm day of international friendship and learning about haiku. Twelve participants joined: four Japanese women of

different generations; an Australian man and his four-year old bi-lingual, bicultural daughter; three Americans, two women and a man; a British woman, an Irish man, and a Canadian woman. Most shared an interest in English, language arts and music. Between 9 am and 3 pm, we became close haiku friends and all expressed hopes to meet for future ginkos.

We began the morning by reading haiku aloud in Japanese with English translations, to bring an awareness of *kigo* (season words) from the start. Such examples as Kusume Tokoshi's haiku, *yonagabito tanoshimite kaku tegami kana* (this letter/of one who enjoyed writing/the whole night long) and Ishida Hakyō's *'hito wa mina tabisemu kokoro tori wataru* (people all/think of traveling--birds migrating) got us into the autumn haiku spirit. Likewise, translations brought up the question, 'Are English haiku written in 5-7-5 onji as in Japanese?' Another from Modern Haiku (Fall, 2000) Michael McClintock's 'first day of autumn/spaghetti/thick with sauce' with a 5-3-3 count shows just one of the current trends in which a haiku sense may be maintained when expressed in a different language.

After lunch and arrival at Mondo Books, participants quietened down for a writing workshop. I spoke on what does and doesn't make a haiku, fragment and phrase theory (Reichold 2002) and showed examples of my own work. Writers wrote out memories from the walk in their journals in prose form, then

we spent another hour putting together the diverse jumble of sights, sounds, tastes, smells and thoughts into haiku form. The owner of Mondo Books then recorded our reading with his iphone for the webcast.

Niira's 'bigger ice cream/look up, a young girl/ melt smiley' was a poem based on four-year old Naomi's encounter with a large plastic soft cream. Bryony Ollier's poem just captures Osu and the season-change:

'Half shadow street/a lace curtain drawn reveals dark space/Happy birthday Equinox'. Ayako Mima remembered her late husband in a senryu (a haiku based on human nature, not necessarily with a seasonal reference): 'takoyaki smells good/husband orders from heaven/he says hurry up'.

In addition to our poems, we offered statements for change in the world. Lisa Chow, a newcomer from Vancouver wrote, " My wish is that all beings will achieve inner peace and outer peace throughout this universe. Love & Light." Suzuko Tanaka read, "Don't spoil nature by nuclear energy.' Ollier, in keeping with one of the larger themes of the 100Thousand Poets for Change wrote, ' I hope that renewable energy becomes a real deal, that power is harnessed in trying to re-plenish our world, and not individuals wealth and greed.'

Future events will be in a bamboo conservation area and Kaisho no Mori.

UVa Library Etext Center: Japanese Text Initiative

Reichold, Jane. *Writing and Enjoying Haiku, A Hands-on Guide* (Tokyo 2002),

Kodansha

*Modern Haiku*, ed. Speiss, Robert, (Wisconsin 2002)