

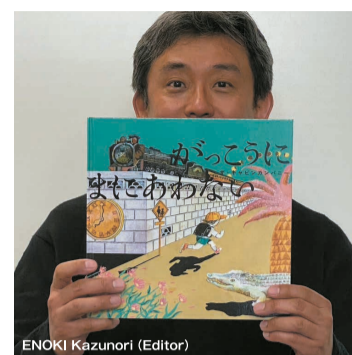
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Japanese Picture Books  
nihon ehon

JAPAN FOUNDATION   
JBBY

**Bologna Children's Book Fair 2024**  
A selection of Japanese children's books will be on display at JF & JBBY Joint Booth Hall 29-C15.

1. What's New? Picture Books You Don't Want to Miss
2. A New Wave in Picture Books from Independent Publishing Houses
3. Lifelong Favorites

# 1. What's New? Picture Books You Don't Want to Miss



**Late for School**  
(がっこうにまにあわない)  
Text/III. The Cabin Company  
AKANE SHOBO | 2022 | JPY1500  
ISBN 978-4-251-0955-6  
Rights Sold : Chinese (Simplified),  
Chinese (Complex), Korean  
Contact : Tuttle Mori Agency  
foreignrights@tuttle-mori.com

Share the thrills and spills of a boy trying to get to school on time!

Readers find themselves as tense as the boy in the story as he dashes to get to school on time. The road is full of obstacles, and midway through he faces a test that will have readers on pins and needles. But, never fear, a beautiful and mysterious event awaits him at the end. Enjoy a picture book brimming with the author's own cultural influences, including novels, movie scripts, manga and more.



**The Earth Passport**  
(ちぎゅうパスポート えほん作家から地球の子どもたちへ)  
Text/III. ABE Hiroshi, et al.  
BL Publishing Co.,Ltd. | 2022 | JPY1800  
ISBN 978-4-7754-1000-5  
Rights Sold : All rights available  
Contact : TAKANO Naoko (aima inc.)  
naoko.takano@aima.info

A passport to travel freely in countries without borders

Wars throughout the world are full of suffering children. Twenty-four picture book creators in six countries have joined together to create imaginary countries where children need never give up hope. The pages are connected in a pleated style to keep the hands and hearts of citizens of one country linked to those of their neighbors. The aim is to get readers to feel they can travel to any country and unite with the people there.



**The Tiny Little Boy**  
(あのこ)  
Text/III. HIKASU Tomomi  
Bronze Publishing Inc. | 2022 | JPY1300  
ISBN 978-4-89309-708-9  
Rights Sold : All rights available  
Contact : MIYASHIRO Reiko (International Div.)  
foreignrights@bronze.co.jp  
Stand No. : Hall 29-A1

A gift from the window. Happiness from a tiny little boy

A tiny little boy comes in from a tiny window, bringing gifts that are even smaller. A little bird, fish, eggs, sweet potatoes and a teeny-tiny toy. The desire to please someone he loves brings happiness, the greatest present of all. Children throughout the world await this little boy. Lines are copperplate prints and the red of the boy's hat is warm and inviting.



**Seitoku, the Crybaby:**  
The Boy Drawn into the Battle of Okinawa  
(なきむしせいとく 沖縄戦にまきこまれた少年の物語)  
Text/III. TAJIMA Yukihiko  
DOSHINSHA PUBLISHING CO.,LTD. | 2022 | JPY1600  
ISBN 978-4-494-01248-0  
Rights Sold : All rights available  
Contact : INOUE Koji (Editorial Dept)  
k\_inoue@doshinsha.co.jp

The Battle of Okinawa as told by an author who has studied it for over 40 years

This is a story of the Battle of Okinawa at the end of World War II, told from the viewpoint of a young boy. Illustrations are made with stencil painting, a technique that helps avoid the visual horror of war, but underscores a hope for peace by contrasting scenes of fields covered in flowers with a bleak, colorless battlefield. This book was chosen for The White Raven 2022 and won the 54th Kodansha Picture Book Prize in 2023.



**Animals Brag About Their Bottoms**  
(おしじまん)  
Text/III. SAITO Maki  
Fukuinkan Shoten Publishers,Inc. | 2022 | JPY900  
ISBN 978-4-8340-9848-2  
Rights Sold : Chinese (Simplified), English, German, Italian, Korean  
Contact : TANIMURA Atsuki/UESUGI Yoko  
Contact : KUMAKURA Sakiko (Editorial Dept.)  
international-rights@fukuinkan.co.jp  
Stand No. : Hall 29-C13

Take a good look at the bottoms these animals are so proud of!

The rabbit brags about its cute round bottom, while the hippo says "Mine's round too, and it's much bigger!" Tigers and zebras sport bottoms with stripes. The mandrill has one with lots of colors. The sheep's bottom is fluffy, while those of rhinos and armadillos are quite hard. All are different, but they're all bottoms to be proud of.



**Playing in the Dark!**  
(まっくらあそびしよう!)  
Text/III. HATA Koshiro  
Hold Shuppan Publications, Ltd. | 2022 | JPY1400  
ISBN 978-4-593-10328-3  
Rights Sold : Chinese (Simplified), Korean  
Contact : ISHIHARA Noe (Editorial Dept)  
ishihara@hold-pub.co.jp

There are lots of ways to have fun in the dark!

Two brothers go visit their grandmother and discover just how dark it can be when the lights go off. The older brother comforts his frightened little brother by using toys to make shadow pictures, and flashlights and cameras to create light art. Readers will want to try these ideas out on their own. By the end of the story, darkness is more fun than scary.



**Fishy**  
(さかなくん)  
Text/III. SHIOTANI Mamiko  
KAISE-SHA Publishing Co.,Ltd. | 2022 | JPY1300  
ISBN 978-4-03-350180-2  
Rights Sold : Chinese (Simplified), Chinese (Complex), Russian, Italian, Korean  
Contact : NOMAKA Yoko  
Contact : IMAMURA Yoko (Editorial Dept.)  
foreignrights@kaiseisha.co.jp  
Stand No. : Hall 29-B18

A book that describes the amazing world where a little fish lives

Fishy lives in the water. When he goes to school, he has to apply lotion to his gills, and wear rubber pants and a helmet full of water. It's a lot of work. He likes school, but not PE, because it's so hard for him to run. Fishy's life is the same as ours, but different somehow. Read all about it here!



**I am Going to be a Big Sister**  
(わたし おねえちゃんになります)  
Text/III. AIZAWA Fumi  
Koguma Publishing Co.,Ltd. | 2023 | JPY1200  
ISBN 978-4-03-721-0261-2  
Rights Sold : All rights available  
Contact : KUMAKURA Sakiko (Editorial Dept.)  
kuma@kogumasha.co.jp

When my sister is born, I'll take her to a field of flowers, and then...

The author of this book was selected for Bologna Illustrators Exhibition in 2021 and 2022. This is her debut publication, based on her selected work. Told in a warm, sensitive style, the reader learns that little Uta is about to become a big sister. The animals in the forest send her a letter that gets Uta excited about what will happen next.



**See You Tomorrow**  
Text/III. MIYAZAKI Nobue  
ELVIS PRESS | 2018 | JPY2500  
Rights Sold : All rights available  
Contact : KURODA Yoshitaka (Publisher)  
info@elvispress.jp

The joy of being able to say "see you tomorrow"

This book was created by MIYAZAKI Nobue of the illustrator unit STOMACHACHE, known for its artwork in magazines and advertising. MIYAZAKI also does embroidery, patchwork quilting, pottery, woodblock prints, and writes haiku. This picturebook uses a variety of expressions to make a fresh appeal for the blessings of everyday life.



**Children's Crusade 1939**  
(子どもの十字軍)  
Text BRECHT Bertolt,  
Translate/III. HARADA Takehide  
Hidamarisha | 2023 | JPY1600  
ISBN 978-4-909749-16-1  
Rights Sold : All rights available  
Contact : NAKAMURA Masumi (Publisher)  
nakamura@hidamarisha.com

Even today, children are searching for peace

Children are portrayed through paper-cut illustrations, so they are not realistic; anyone can imagine themselves as one of these children. While the beautiful colors seem to emit rays of hope, the reality of the children makes our hearts ache. But we hope and believe this ache will turn into a strong desire for peace. The book cover is made of Heiwa Orihime, paper recycled from origami cranes left at the Peace Memorial in Hiroshima. It contains prayers for peace from people all over the world.



**Treasures of the Sea**  
(うみのたからもの)  
Text/III. TAKAO Yoko  
KODANSHA | 2023 | JPY1600  
ISBN 978-4-06-93147-8  
Rights Sold : Korean  
Contact : KITAOKA Morio (Foreign Right Dept.)  
morio.kitao@kodansha.co.jp  
Stand No. : Hall 29-B14

A shell on a hand leads the imagination to ancient times at the bottom of the sea

This heavy shell in hand is a fossil—a fossil of a shell. How long has it existed? The author of this skillfully crafted picture book has reported on shells and the ocean for many long years, and he gently weaves into the story things and wishes that cannot be seen. Illustrations are cut out and formed into beautiful collages that stimulate the imagination. A single shell takes the reader into a vast story that spreads through time and history in the sea.



**How Little Monster Popori Faced Anger**  
(かいじゅうポポリはこうやっていかりをりまて)  
Text/III. ARAI Hiroyuki  
PIE International Inc. | 2023 | JPY1350  
ISBN 978-4-7592-5775-8  
Rights Sold : Chinese (Simplified), Chinese (Complex)  
Contact : TAKANO Naoko (aima inc.)  
naoko.takano@aima.info  
Stand No. : Hall 29-B13

Making life easier for children with anger issues

Through a little monster named Popori, the reader learns that anger is not a bad emotion, but rather, one that is very important. This picture book helps children face their emotions and learn to deal with anger without having to explode, making it the ideal material to help start a conversation with children about emotions.



**A Year in the Life of Nekomata Cat Spirits**  
(かいじゅうネコマタ猫の一年)  
Text/III. ISHIGURO Ayako  
POPULAR PUBLISHING CO., LTD. | 2022 | JPY1500  
ISBN 978-4-591-17184-4  
Rights Sold : All rights available  
Contact : YAMAMORI Kentaro (Overseas Business Division)  
foreignrights@popular.co.jp  
Stand No. : Hall 29-A136

This is the story of a Nekomata family!

"Nekomata," are Japanese cat spirits that are said to live for hundreds of years. The year starts in February for Nekomata, who are similar to humans but also quite different. This book follows one year in the life of a family of Nekomata cat spirits, and their quintuple kittens.



**Three Tree Frogs' Adventure**  
(あまがえるのぼうけん)  
Text TATEN0 Hiroshi, III. KAWASHIMA Haruko  
Sakibunka-sha Group | 2021 | JPY1300  
ISBN 978-4-418-2015-9  
Rights Sold : Chinese (Simplified), Chinese (Complex), Korean, English  
Contact : IZUKA Yukiko (Foreign Rights)  
y-izuka@sekibunsha.co.jp  
Stand No. : "World Lounge", Hall 29-Mall1

A story of growth and hope among innocent-but-tough frogs living in the modern age

The story tells about frogs doing their best to live in the natural world. The author's message is that it's not timid or cowardly to run away or hide: these are weapons for survival. Illustrations are by an artist who has raised and observed frogs for more than a decade. Water colors are authentic representations of the reptiles in this picture book full of the power of their lives.



**The Snow Theater**  
(ゆきのけきじょう)  
Text/III. ARAI Ryoji  
SHOGAKUKAN INC. | 2022 | JPY1600  
ISBN 978-4-09-725193-4  
Rights Sold : Chinese (Simplified), Chinese (Complex), Korean, English  
Contact : SANO Sawako (Foreign Rights)  
sawako.sano@shogakukan.co.jp  
Stand No. : Hall 29-B22

The curtain is raised on a beautiful stage

Something happens to a boy, his father and his friends in a small town covered with snow. The book is a skillful portrayal of the boy's feelings and the comradely relationship between him and his father. The story is divided into scenes, and the spread illustrations of the theater are dynamic and appealing. A simple but mysterious story about an event in the snow country.



**The Boy Who Collects Seeds**  
(種をあつめる少年)  
Text SAWANO Megumi, III. NAKAMURA Mafune  
Nijirohonya Inc. | 2023 | JPY2000  
ISBN 978-4-909693-30-5  
Rights Sold : All rights available  
Contact : TAKANO Naoko (aima inc.)  
naoko.takano@aima.info  
Stand No. : Hall 29-B57

Thinking about the night sky while cooking in the kitchen

"As evening falls, the young boy goes to a restaurant to get seeds." SAWANO Megumi is the cook who runs the restaurant in the story. She opens her own place after two years of training in Italy. As she works, she comes to see seeds in tiny sources of life, and she begins to collect them. Sawano, also the author of this book, tells a story of entrusting the seeds to a boy she meets in her imagination. This beautifully lyrical book is made with copperplate prints.

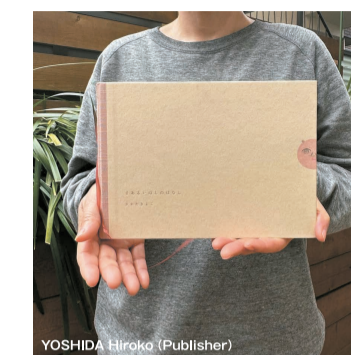


**A CLOUD**  
(雲ひとつ)  
Text/III. KOMAGATA Katsumi  
GALLERY KOMAGATA | 2022 | JPY1200  
ISBN 978-4-910427-1-0 C0770  
Rights Sold : All rights available  
Contact : KOMAGATA A.  
one@one-stroke.co.jp  
Stand No. : Hall 25-A165-B142 (One Stroke)

Limiting himself to the color white, KOMAGATA Katsumi pursues expression through paper

In a minimalistic world, one might be able to imagine the movement of clouds to be like your family or other people around you. By limiting the use of words, the reader can interpret the cut-out clouds in their own ways. The last pages have scenes of mountains in giclée print, each one representing one of the four seasons. The book is available in a limited edition.

# 2. A New Wave in Picture Books from Independent Publishing Houses



**The Story of a Round Star**  
(まあるいほしのはなし)  
Text/III. SAKATA Kyoko  
BBBooks | 2022 | JPY3500  
ISBN 978-4-908439-19-3  
Rights Sold : All rights available  
Contact : YOSHIDA Hiroko  
yoshida0425@gmail.com

Beautifully designed and printed, this is a tale of the journey and awakenings of a round star

SAKATA Kyoko's illustrations for The Gold Bird were displayed at BIB and the book won the Japan Picture Book Award. The star in this tale has been travelling for hundreds of millions of years through space, a place that is sad, precious and a little bit mysterious. The book was printed to come as close as possible to recreating the original illustrations. Binding is in pink cloth, the title in gold leaf, the stars in silver, and there is a ribbon bookmark sewed in—a treasure of a picture book.



**Becoming a Little Bear**  
(くままでのおざらい)  
Text/III. INOUE Nana  
Be Nice Inc. | 2016 | JPY4800  
ISBN 978-4-905380-19-3  
Rights Sold : All rights available  
Contact : SUGITA Tatsuhiko (Publisher)  
info@benice.co.jp

A warmly philosophical picture book, each copy made by hand

A philosophical picture book that begins with the motif of a plate. Risograph printing creates a simple, retro-style impression that makes the story even more interesting and mysterious. The technique used to attach the cloth cover on the three-dimensional circular design is an extremely difficult one. The book received a Silver Medal at the competition for "The Best Book Design from All Over the World" held during the Leipzig Book Fair.



**One-Two-Three**  
(いちにのさん)  
Text/III. KIKUCHI Chiki  
Ehonvarusubanbanurukalsha | 2014 | JPY2600  
Rights Sold : All rights available  
Contact : ARAKI Kenta (Publisher)  
rusubancontact@gmail.com

The numbers from one to ten are hidden in the fun illustrations of this picture book

Enjoy the unique wording used by KIKUCHI Chiki in this counting book. Each copy is made with multiple printing methods, including off-set print, silk-screen and more. The binding is by SAITOH Hideyuki.



**Mist'ery Train**  
(みえないりゅう)  
Text/III. KATO Hiroyuki/KOBAYASHI Dai  
Unpublished  
Rights Sold : All rights available  
Contact : KATO Hiroyuki (Author)  
hirokki1984@gmail.com

It's all so mysterious: the mountains, the forest, and the fog

The Kyotango area is famous for its dense fog, as well as many legends about demons and dragons. The aim of this book is to communicate the appeal of the region's features, history and atmosphere. For a misty effect, tracing paper is used between the pages of this art book, which sends the reader on an adventure, traveling in a train through the mist. The only effort required of the reader is turning the pages, one by one.



**The Invisible Dragon**  
(みえないりゅう)  
Text/III. mirocomachiko  
MISHIMASHA PUBLISHING CO. | 2023 | JPY2500  
ISBN 978-4-909394-90-3  
Rights Sold : All rights available  
Contact : SUMI Chiharu (Editorial Team)  
chiharus@mishimasha.com

Can you see me? The story of a life that shakes up the five and "sixth" senses

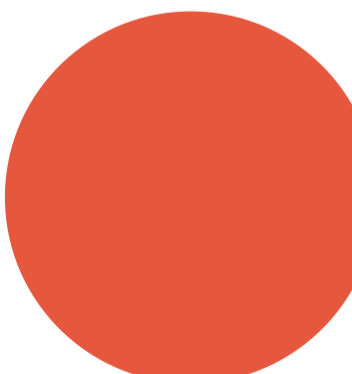
Long ago, a dragon was worshipped as the god of water. In this story, an invisible dragon is born in a small ocean, and then heads off to other natural settings: the sky, mountains, rivers and more. This story describes the origins of life, with a view to solving environmental problems. This powerful work, the first since the author immigrated to an island in the South Seas, describes the harmonious whole of living creatures, and embodies the incredible richness and love the author has discovered in her new home.



**I'm Right Here**  
(Je suis là ここにいるよ)  
Text/III. Shizuka  
Moon & Compass | 2023 | JPY2400  
ISBN 978-4-909734-01-3  
Rights Sold : All rights available  
Contact : NISHIYAMA Masako (Publisher)  
info@moon-compass.com

A moving picturebook that uses a semitransparent paper device to heal the sadness of loss

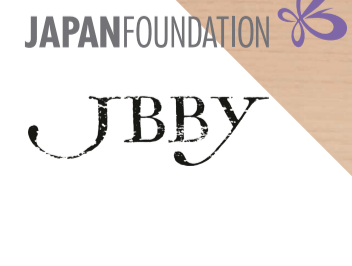
Has there ever been a book as touching as this? A little boy loses his beloved cat. The cat, portrayed on semitransparent paper, can no longer see him, but the picture helps the boy feel the cat is nearby. Memories of the beloved shape, voice, smell and warmth are resurrected. The device, used as a way to deal with the sadness of losing a loved one, will move the reader. Readers will also appreciate the mist-like effect—or could it might even appear to be light—of the beautiful white ink on paper.



**Hall, a Boy in Istanbul**  
(海峡のまちのハリル)  
Text SUEZAWA Yasufumi, III. KOBAYASHI Yutaka  
Sanrinsha | 2021 | JPY2700  
ISBN 978-4-9048116-7-9  
Rights Sold : All rights available  
Contact : NAKAOKA Yusuke (Publisher)  
y-naoka@srinsha.co.jp

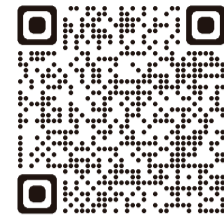
A story of friendship that transcends borders, set in Istanbul during the Ottoman Empire

The story is set a century ago, in the declining Ottoman Empire, once the center of the world. In the capital lives Halli, the grandson of an ebru (Turkish-marbling) craftsman. Halli becomes friends with Tatsuki, the son of a Japanese man working for a trading company. Halli shows Tatsuki around town, and Tatsuki's eyes are dazzled by the new sights. Through the eyes of a new friend, Halli comes to a new appreciation for his hometown and for ebru.



# 3. Lifelong Favorites

## Selections from the Bookshelves of Young Readers in Japan



<https://www.worthsharing.jp/go.jp/en/lifelong-favorites/>

In 2021 the Japanese Board on Books for Young People (JBBY) and the Japan Foundation selected 59 Japanese children's books recommended for translation into other languages. "Lifelong Favorites — Selections from the Bookshelves of Young Readers in Japan" covers books written in Japanese, chiefly for children aged between 5 and 12, that are widely read in Japan — books that can be found on children's bookshelves as well as local and school libraries across the country.

At BCBF 2024, we showcase a selection of 10 books from the following three categories:

- 1) Folktales that most children growing up in Japan hear
- 2) Long-time sellers published between 1970 and 2000 that remain popular among children today
- 3) Books published after the year 2000 that are expected to become long-time sellers themselves

The Japan Foundation Support Program for Translation and Publication can offer priority support for those seeking to publish translations of these books.



### 1) Folktales



**Folktales of Japan**  
(日本のむかしばなし)  
Text SETA Teiji  
Ill. SEGAWA Yasuo,  
KAJIYAMA Toshio  
Nora Shoten | 1998 | 159 pp  
ISBN 978-4-931129-83-2  
Originally published in 1971

### 2) Long-time Sellers



**How the Monkeys Spend Their Day**  
(おさるのまいにち)  
Text/Ill. ITO Hiroshi  
KODANSHA | 1991 | 85 pp  
ISBN 978-4-06-197822-5

### 3) 21st Century Classics



**Yashajin River**  
(夜叉神川)  
Text ANDO Mikie  
Ill. TANAKA Chisato  
KODANSHA | 2021 | 242 pp  
ISBN 978-4-06-521852-5



**When the New Child Came**  
(あたらしい子がきて)  
Text IWASE Joko  
Ill. UEJI Naoko  
Iwasaki Shoten | 2014 | 126 pp  
ISBN 978-4-265-05491-6



**The "Oh, My" Field**  
(あららのはたけ)  
Text MURANAKA Rie  
Ill. ISHIKAWA Eriko  
KAISEI-SHA Publishing Co.,Ltd. |  
2019 | 215 pp  
ISBN 978-4-03-530950-5



**My First Kojiki: Japanese Mythology**  
(はじめての古事記)  
Text TAKENAKA Yoshiko,  
NEGISHI Takako  
Ill. SUZUKI Koji  
Tokuma Shoten | 2012 | 128 pp  
ISBN 978-4-19-863517-6



**Oof the Bear Cub**  
(くまの子ウーフ)  
Text KANAZAWA Toshiko  
Ill. INOUE Yosuke  
POPLAR PUBLISHING CO.,LTD. |  
2020 | 137 pp  
ISBN 978-4-591-16818-9  
Originally published in 1969



**Yours Sincerely, Giraffe**  
(ぼくはアフリカにすむキリンといひます)  
Text IWASA Megumi  
Ill. TAKABATAKE Jun  
KAISEI-SHA Publishing Co.,Ltd. |  
2001 | 102 pp  
ISBN 978-4-03-501040-1



**Tunnel Forest, 1945**  
(トンネルの森 1945)  
Text KADONO Eiko  
KODANSHA | 2015 | 196 pp  
ISBN 978-4-04-067713-2



**Invitation to Bon Festival**  
(盆まねき)  
Text TOMIYASU Yoko  
Ill. TAKAHASHI Kazuo  
KAISEI-SHA Publishing Co.,Ltd. |  
2011 | 191 pp  
ISBN 978-4-03-530610-8

## The Japan Foundation (JF) and Japanese Board on Books for Young People (JBBY) Joint Booth Members



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Deputy Director/  
Literary Arts Section  
The Japan Foundation



**MATSUOKA Kiyoko**  
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Itabashi Art Museum



**HIROMATSU Yukiko**  
Picture Book Author/  
Critic/  
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**MORIIZUMI Ayami**  
Coordinator JBBY/  
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**TAKAGI Yoshiko**  
Curator/  
Itabashi Art Museum



**TAKANO Naoko**  
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JBBY Board Member



**KAKINOKIHARA Masahiro**  
Art Director/ Designer  
10inc.

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JBBY Secretary General

**SASAOKA Tomoko**  
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