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It's cold!!!! But spring is just around the corner...

Popoki's Hot News!

ART APPRECIATION AND PO-KAI!



On 7 March, Teshi-nyan sensei will lead us in an art appreciation workshop. We will use what we learn in future Popoki Friendship Story Project and other activities. For details, see page 6 of this issue.

PIECES OF PEACE



One of Popoki's friends, Aastha-nyan, sent the following piece of peace:
"My friend went to a Jinjya (shrine) and prayed for my better health on hearing the news of my ailment. I take peace in knowing I have such amazing friends in my life :)"

Please contribute a bit of peace! What sort of 'peace' did you encounter today? Please let us know by sending a message to Popoki's e-mail.

PHOTO EXHIBIT!



New! 3.8-10 "The Great Eastern Japan Earthquake Yoko Itoh Photo Exhibit" Kyoto-Shi Kokusai Koryu Kaikan, 9:00-20:00 (See p.6). Itoh-san lives in Otsuchi-cho and is a good friend of Popoki's so please go have a look! (See her interview in Popoki News No.89).



Thank you for your continuing help!

Popoki's Friendship Story - Our Peace Journey Born out of the Great Northeastern Japan Earthquake is getting a good reception, thanks to help from his friends. Please help to let more people know!

More information about the book at:

<http://popoki.cruisejapan.com/monogatari.html>

* You can purchase a copy at the Kobe YMCA!

Gathering for Peace with Popoki ~Thinking “Peace” through films~

Akira Nishiyama
(Graduate School of International Cooperation Studies, University of Kobe)

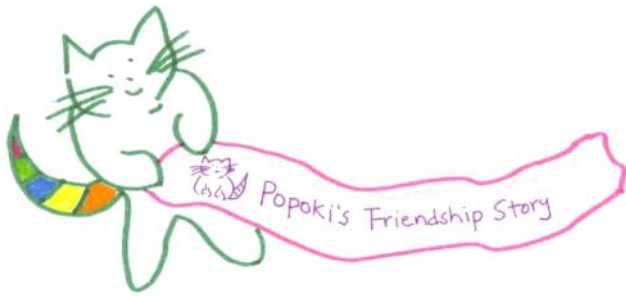


On Feb 2nd 2013, we, members of Popoki Peace Project, held a film festival in cooperation with Kobe YMCA and Kobe YWCA. Last year was our first film festival, and this was the second time. There were 20 participants this year and they watched three films and had discussion.

The titles of the films were “Tanza” and “Children of Jesus in America” which are from the film called “Invisible Children” made by UNICEF and FAO, and “ACTING TOGETHER ON THE WORLD STAGE - Performance and the Creative Transformation of Conflict”. The former films focus on children who are struggling in situations such as suffering as a child soldier or from the physical and mental pain of the stigma of HIV/AIDS. The latter film focuses on how artists and peacemakers in conflict areas transform violence/trauma/mental pain after the conflict and how they try to promote “understanding different others”.

Although discussion was not active at first, we had a lively exchange of opinions in the end. Especially with regard to the last film, the methodology of the artists (peacemakers) is similar to our Project, so we could have more active discussion. Opinions such as: “Art is the tool for creating “empathy” between people”, “Art has no hierarchy”, and “Art enables us to use all five senses” made us reconfirm that art connects people in ways that differ from other forms of communication. I was particularly impressed by the words of one activist, “Methodology does not necessarily have to be language if it moves people’s hearts.”





Messages from Tohoku

Interview with Yoko Tobai-san

By Taro Taniguchi and Yusuke Nishiyama

Yoko Tobai is a poetess from Otsuchi. She was not in Otsuchi when the Tsunami came. She is a volunteer, listening and talking with those who experienced the disaster. She is doing her activity through giving poetry readings and selling her publications directly, and not via commercial publishers.

Members of Tobai-san's extended family had houses around Otsuchi station and a street which before the earthquake had many pubs. She has been reluctant to visit those houses, but she took our visit as an opportunity to do so. Some members of her extended family have still not been found, and she has asked the police to search for them.



Q. When did you start to write poetry?

A. When I was a high school student, with some of my close friends. But it was not professional and also it was not meant for publication.

Q. Did the disaster change the way you write poems?

A. Yes. Before the disaster, words came to my mind naturally. Now, I go and touch the stricken area and imagine people who lived there and

what their life must have been like. I wrote poems after the tsunami, and I cried, and my poems were read, and then I was publishing a book! It was surprising.

Q. What color would you choose to express what you saw when you visited Otsuchi after the disaster?

A. It was brown. The blacktop on the roads was broken so you could see the soil. The road was not a road. Also the trees burned by the fire were brown.

Q. If you express the tsunami by color, what color would you chose?

A. I have never thought about it in that way. But I feel it as "blue" after the disaster. There is not a reason, or logic, or anything. Blue is cool, but also warm. I have become to like the color now.

Q. It has been almost a year and half since the disaster. Has the brown color that you said before changed with the four seasons?

A. Grass and weeds have grown and the color is changing. Of course, it is part of the changing seasons. I think it is not just the seasons, but the four seasons after the disaster.

Q. It is impressive that you can express your feelings through poetry. What kind of reaction you get?

A. The reaction to poetry reading is different for each person. There are people who do not feel anything and others who cry. It is strange to say that I am happy to see people cry, but if my poem reached the person's heart and they cried, all the same, I am glad. I want my words to reach peoples' hearts. Poems are the same as colors. I am happy if there are some people who think it is a beautiful.

Q. There are plans to build a high breakwater here. How do you feel about that?

A. I don't think people will be relieved if a high breakwater is built. We won't be able to see, or hear, the sea. I am worried that a tsunami could possibly break it and arrive without any warning.

Q. What do you think about the people who come to Tohoku as volunteers?

A. People have different opinions. Some elderly people say that before the disaster there were no people who visited, but now they are enjoying the chance to talk with a lot of people. There are people who cannot go out and they stay home, and many of those people want to talk. So I think it is important to go to their houses. On the other hand, some of people who want to return to an ordinary life have unpleasant feelings toward volunteers.



Q. Is there something that volunteers should be cautious of?

A. Please do not forget to have consideration for people. People who experienced the disaster have suffered from trauma, even they do not look like it. Some people do not want others to touch on it, but others want to talk about it. It's better to look carefully. Of course, it would be good if those people could laugh.

Q. Please give us a message for people in Japan and abroad.

A. "Please do not forget." Please do not forget about the nuclear power station accident, the present situation and what happened, so that mistakes will not be repeated.



—A collection of poems by Yoko Tobai-san is due to be published on February 25, 2013. This collection is of poems in which Tobai-san expresses her thoughts and feelings about Tohoku. Details will be provided in the next Popoki News. This book will show you a side of Tobai-san that we could not include in this interview, and you can learn her real feelings that she wants to express through words. Surely you will find "something special" in this collection of poems—

Popoki's friend NAMIKO KOBAYASHI-nyan

February 2013, Otsuchi Town, Iwate Pref. (**Namiko Kobayashi-nyan**, **Popoki**, **Suzanka-nyan**)

"Popoki, Popoki! Look...there are so many different colorful shops around here...☺"

"Yes. This place is called 'Fukkou Kirari Shoutengai', which means 'Happiness recovery bright shopping street' in English."

"What? Fu...fu...Fukkou Kirari Shoutengai?"

"It's a bit of a difficult phrase, isn't it? 'Fukkou Kirari Shoutengai' is a so-called 'Kasetu Shoutengai', literally 'Temporary Shopping center in English, which means that all shops are in temporary buildings. It was built here after the disaster on the playground of Otsuchi North Elementary School. 'Oh, I see. It's really big, with so many different shops,'"

"Yes, there are about 40 shops in this shopping center. It's the biggest local temporary shopping center here in Otsuchi." "Wow! That's amazing. OK, Popoki, shall we go?"

"And this is how Popoki and Suzanka-nyan came to be walking around and around and around the shopping center. Then suddenly Popoki asked..."

"Suzanka-nyan, do you like chiffon?" "Chiffon cake? Yes, I love it!"

"OK, then, I'll take you to a good place, called 'Tezukuri Koubou Chiffon', which means homemade chiffon. The owner, Namiko Kobayashi-nyan, is Popoki's very good friend."

"Hi! It has been long time...how are you doing? Please take a seat and I will make you a coffee," Namiko Kobayashi-nyan always welcomes us with her sweet smile.



"Wow! So beautiful a place, it feels like home. Different kinds of breads, lunch set for everybody and the main menu item...all kinds of tasty looking chiffons cakes! Is everything homemade?"

"Yes, I make them all. I always liked making breads and cakes..."

"Ms. Namiko Kobayashi has always liked to make breads and cakes. Also when the tsunami hit Otsuchi, she was at her job in the shopping center, making bread.

"And then the tsunami came..." "Yes...it was suddenly dark. I remember that someone was screaming...Run away...ruuun to HIGH...HIGHER places!!" Ms. Kobayashi was all right, but her home...Otsuchi...disappeared under the sea.

"I felt I lost everything. I was very angry and wanted to forget, especially my bread. I thought I will never ever bake again."

"Oh, That had to be very sad. So what happened after that to make you change?"

"Well, after a while, one day...one of my good friends came to visit me and told me...

"You must have lost a lot. Your machines, your recipes, almost everything... but there is one thing you definitely didn't lose...your 'ude'" (in English, *ude* is literally arms but here it means skills).You can do it again! Please make our beloved bread again."

"Oh, Those are very nice words" But still Ms. Kobayashi said she didn't have much confidence. But then... "It was really great timing. My son brought me beautiful red roses for my birthday...after that I felt, 'Yes! I can do it again!'"

Ms. Kobayashi established her own bread and chiffon cake shop 'Tezukuri Koubou Chiffon' in 'Fukkou Kirari Shoutengai' temporary shopping street.

"OK, now, so how about a taste of my special menu from today?"

"I would like to! Me too!"..."But...what is this?...Matcha (green tea) Chiffon?"

"Looks like Matcha right. But it's not. This is chiffon made with 'wakame' (a kind of seaweed).

"Wakame?! Wow! Otsuchi is famous for that. There are Adzuki beans in it too!

"Yes. With Adzuki tastes it very good. Please try!"

"Itadakimaaasu" "Buona Aporetit!

Oh. With aroma of wakame, but very sweet!

"Nyaaaaan...so soft...sweet...this is the best chiffon cake I have ever tasted! Popoki...let's buy some for our Nyan-friends!"

"OK, now...we need to go." "So soon? That's sad...but please come back again😊"

"Of course! We'll be back." Also, you should come and visit us in Kobe. We are always ready to welcome you! THANK YOU NAMIKO KOBAYASHI-nyan and see you!!...Good bye..."

"Popoki! There should be Namiko Kobayashi-nyan's Chiffon cake shop on our campus!!

I am sure that many students would go there, it's going to be always full...and Suzanka-nyan can eat this amaaazing chiffon cake every single daaaaay!..."

"Hahaha...you want too much...Suzanka-nyan😊"



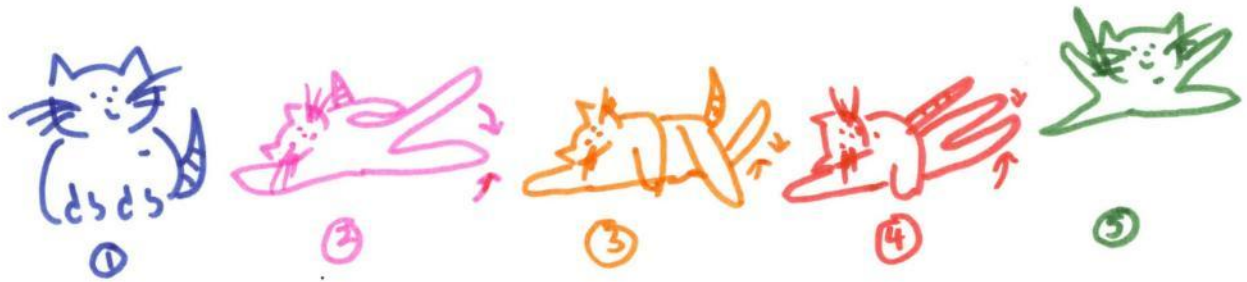
Tezukuri Koubou Chiffon". Iwate Prefecture, Kamiheigun, Otsuchi-cho, Otsuchi 239 C. 028-1131. Tel.: 080-1854-2269 Various kinds of breads, chiffon cakes, lunch set menu...everything is homemade with love! Ms. Kobayashi is welcoming old but also new customers with the so beloved and never perishing taste of Otsuchi bread.

* Please watch Kobayashi-nyan on NHK television on 4 (or perhaps 11) March 2013 at 8:00pm. She and others from Otsuchi will be featured on the program 'Tsurube no Kazoku in Kampai.' Ms. Kobayashi-nyan has been reluctant to accept requests from media, but agreed to this so her friends far away can see that she is OK.

POPOKI'S EASY POGA

Lesson 57

This month's poga is about strengthening our legs and hips. It is challenging, so please enjoy it at your own pace!



1. As always, begin with sitting up straight and making yourself look thin.
 2. First, lie on your side with your legs stretched out. Slowly raise your top leg. Repeat 20 times and then change sides.
 3. Next, bring your top leg forward and raise your bottom leg. When you've done 20 repetitions, try the other side.
 4. Finally, lying on your side, raise both legs (and your tail)! Repeat 20 times!
 5. Did it? It is time for the 'success pose.'
- Congratulations! You have successfully completed Lesson 57. Do you feel refreshed? Please remember to relax, breathe, laugh and practice for 3 minutes every day.

Please join us!

Next Po-kai: 3/7 Kobe Yukari Art Museum 17:30~



NEW

- 2013.3.3 Popoki at Rotary Hyogo Prefecture District, Portopia Hotel, Kobe
- 2013.3.7 Art Appreciation with Teshinyan and Popoki. Kobe Yukari no Bijutsukan, Rokko Island, meet at the reception at 17:30.
- 2013.3.22 Popoki at International Rotary RYLA Conference, Yoshima Island
- * **Events by Popoki's Friends**
 - 2.24-3.2 "Remember Otsuchi" Photo Exhibit Kotsu Kaikan 2F Gallery Yurakucho 2-10-1 Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo. 10:00-19:00 Admission free. 03-3212-2931
 - 3.11-14 This exhibit will move to Ritsumeikan University, Kyoto.
 - 3.8-10 "The Great Eastern Japan Earthquake Yoko Itoh Photo Exhibit" Kyoto Shi Kokusai Koryu Kaikan, 9:00-20:00 Info: Yuko Imamura 090-2701-3614
- 2013.6.15-16 9th Solidarity Network with Migrants Japan Forum – Kobe 2013, Konan University

Popoki in Print

- **'Draw inner thoughts about disaster' *Yomiuri Shimbun* 2013.2.16:4 (evening edition; Japanese)**
- **"'Safe' and 'Secure' Society is from the bottom-up", *Mainichi Shimbun* Interview with Ronni Alexander, 2012.10.29, p.1 (evening edition; Japanese)**
- R. Alexander. "Remembering Hiroshima: Bio-Politics, Popoki and Sensual Expressions of War." *International Feminist Journal of Politics*. Vol.14:2:202-222, June 2012
- "Article 9 is at the base of Peace with Popoki" *Kodomo to Mamoru 9 jono kai News*, No.66, 2012.5.12
- "Hope on 60 meters of cloth" Etsuko Akuzawa. (In Japanese) *Asahi Shimbun* 2012.1.21
- "Voice for Peace made into a book" Masashi Saito. (in Japanese) *Kobe Shimbun*, 2012.1.19
- K. Wada. "Conversations with Ronni Alexander: The Popoki Peace Project; Popoki, What Color is Peace? Popoki, What Color is Friendship?" *International Feminist Journal of Politics* Vol.13, No.2, 2011, 257-263
- S. McLaren. "The Art of Healing"(Popoki Friendship Story Project) *Kansai Scene*. Issue 133, June 2011, p.10. kansaiscene.com
- R. Alexander. (2010) "The Popoki Peace Project: Creating New Spaces for Peace in Demenchonok, E., ed. *Philosophy after Hiroshima*. Cambridge Scholars Publishing, pp.399-418
- 省窓: Column in *Kobe YMCA News*, No.606, 2011.1, p.1 (In Japanese)
- "What is Behind 'Popoki, What Color is Peace?' 1st in a series in "Tosabori Life" No.19 2010.10:4 (In Japanese)
- HORIKOSHI Takeshi. "Kokusai no mado" (article about Palestine) *Kobe YMCA News* No.604 2010.9-10, p.3
- "If we all participate, something will change! Reflecting on Palestine" *THE YMCA* No.607 June 2010, p.1 (YMCA Japan Monthly Newspaper)
- Hiroshima and the World: What Color is Hiroshima? Chugoku Shimbun Peace Media Center, http://www.hiroshimapeacemedia.jp/mediacenter/article.php?story=20100312140608602_en 2010.3.15
- FM COCOLO 76.5 'Heart Lines' 2010.1.9 Japanese Interview: Ronni on Popoki in Palestine
- "Human Rights, Popoki and Bare Life." *In Factis Pax Journal of Peace Education and Social Justice* Vol.3, No.1, 2009, pp.46-63 (<http://www.infactispax.org/journal/>)
- Nishide, Ikuyo. "Popoki, What Color is Peace? Lecture by Ronni Alexander." "PPSEAWA" (Pan-Pacific and south-East Asia Women's Association of Japan), No.63, 2009.12, p.5
- 'Friendship' No.2 2009.11 Itami City International/Peace Exchange Commission, Annual Events, p.1-2.
- 'Not for But With...' No.79, 2010.1 Notice of the Popoki Peace Challenge event. P.12
- 'Nada' notice of the Popoki Peace Challenge event, 2009.12, p.2
- 'Yujotte...Kangaeru Ehon.' *Asahi Shimbun* 2009.7.2 AKUZAWA Etsuko
- 'Yujo wo kangaete – Ningen to, Neko to, soshite Jibun to,' *RST/ALN*, No.259 2009.6.28, p.11
- 'New Books: *Popoki, What Color is Friendship? Popoki's Peace Book 2*' (Rebecca Jennison) "Cutting-Edge," Vol.35 2009.6, p.3
- 'Thinking about Peace with a Cat: Second Peace Book Published.' (SAITO Masashi) *Kobe Shimbun*, 2009.4.21
- 'Popoki, What Color is Peace?' *Kobe YMCA News*, 2009.3.1. No.593. p.2
- 'Popoki, What Color is Trash?' *Kobe YMCA News*, 2009.1.1. No.592. p.2
- 'Tomodachi ni Natte Kuremasenkai,' *RST/ALN*, 2009.2.22
- Popoki on the radio. <http://www.kizzna.fm/> Click on 6CH to hear the program and reading of Popoki in Japanese
- *Yasashii kara hito nann desu* Exhibition Organizing Committee 'Universal Declaration of Human Rights.' Hyogo Buraku Liberation and Human Rights Institute. 2008.10. ¥500. For information contact: blrhyg@osk3.3web.jp
- "KFAW College Seminar: What Color is Peace for Women? Thinking about Peace, Violence and Gender with Popoki." *Asian Breeze* No.54 October 2008, p.8 (Kitakyushu Forum on Asian Women)
- *Kobe Shimbun* "Human Rights Declaration Exhibition Panels: 6 Local Hyogo Artists Illustrate all 30 Articles" 2008.10.8. p.10
- "An Interview with Dr. Ronni Alexander." *The Newpeople*, Pittsburgh's Peace and Justice Newspaper, Vol.38 No.9, October 2008, p.5
- "Nuclear Security is In
- Human Security – Dr. Ronni Alexander speaks about Hiroshima and Nagasaki." *The Newpeople*, Pittsburgh's Peace and Justice Newspaper, Vol.38 No.9, Oct. 2008, p.4
- Popoki in Pittsburgh. Check out the Remembering Hiroshima/Imagining Peace URL: <http://www.rememberinghiroshima.org/>
- * **Back issues of Popoki News:** http://popoki.cruisejapan.com/archives_e.html





What Popoki Means to Me

*This month's column was written by Yuri Kimoto-san, whose nickname is 'Roots.' She belongs to the Kobe YMCA international volunteer group. The group conducts activities mainly for children and international students who learn Japanese at the YMCA. The keywords of the activities are "Peace" and "International."

What Popoki means to me?

Yuri Kimoto

What color is peace? For me, it is orange. It is like the color of the sunrise which brings the morning. It is like the color of delicious *mikan* (Japanese citrus). It is like the color of the light at the front door in my home. All of these images of orange make me feel easier in my mind.

I participated in Popoki's Mini Peace Film Festival at Kobe YMCA. The title was 'Think "Peace" with Popoki through films'. The films showed situations which are unimaginable for me. One of them depicted the issue of child soldiers. They had to be soldiers, whether they wanted to be or not, without having any other choice. The second film showed the issue of an HIV-infected family. I cannot experience the same situation as in the films. However, I was moved by the various approaches through which the film festival participants were trying to understand the situation, their feelings about it, and so on. I could never do that just by myself. In the course of exchanging opinions, my white canvas became very colorful.

Popoki gives me a chance to think about peace. I would like to keep on thinking peace and taking action for it through various movements.

I hope my tail will become rainbow colored, just like Popoki.



Exchange program with international students at a shrine. Everyone lined up for a picture...like a snake!?!



YMCA Charity Run. Children dressed in costumes and holding flags from around the world made an appeal.

PLEASE HELP SUPPORT THE POPOKI PEACE PROJECT!

The Popoki Peace Project is a voluntary project which uses Popoki's peace book and DVD to promote peace through various activities such as peace camps, peace workshops, seminars and other activities. Since the March 2011 earthquake, we have also worked in the disaster area and have recently published a new book about that work: *Popoki's Friendship Story - Our Peace Journey Born Out of the Great Northeastern Japan Earthquake. Popoki, What Color is Peace?* has been translated into Thai, Chinese, Korean, Khmer, Indonesian, Tetun and Bengali, Vietnamese, Arabic and Hebrew. Spanish, Farsi, Lao, Swahili, translations are underway. If you would like to translate Popoki, or have a way to have the book sold at your local bookstore, please let us know.



How to purchase Popoki's books from outside of Japan



1. Go to your local Japanese bookstore: Kinokuniya, Maruzen, etc. (or their website)
2. In the US, thanks to a very satisfied customer, *Popoki, What Color is Peace? Popoki's Peace Book 1* can be ordered from Kinokuniya Bookstore in Los Angeles. The bookstore is at www.los_angeles@kinokuniya.com and the telephone number is 213.687.4480. The price is US\$20.00 plus tax.

Some ways to purchase *Popoki, What Color is Peace? Popoki's Peace Book 1* and *Popoki, What Color is Friendship? Popoki's Peace Book 2* and *Popoki's Friendship Story* from inside Japan

From the publisher, Epic: TEL: 078-241-7561 · FAX: 078-241-1918

From Amazon.co.jp or your local bookseller

From the Popoki Peace Project ([popokipeace\(at\)gmail\(dot\)com](mailto:popokipeace(at)gmail(dot)com))

Contributions are always welcome!

Popoki Peace Project popokipeace-at-gmail.com

<http://popoki.cruisejapan.com>



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THANK YOU FROM
POPOKI!!