

TAKE YOUR POET TO WORK DAY

July 17, 2013



Matsuo Basho



Yosa Buson



Kobayashi Issa

Haiku Masters

Matsuo Basho (1644-1694) is known as the father of haiku. He was a beloved teacher and the most famous of the Edo Period Japanese poets. While he lived in Edo (modern Tokyo), he was prone to wandering, especially to the northern wilderness, for inspiration for his poetry. Upon his return from travel, he published a collection titled *Account of a Weather-Beaten Skeleton*.

*Awake at night—
the sound of the water jar
cracking in the cold.*

—Matsuo Basho

Yosa Buson (1716-1783) moved to Edo in 1737 to paint, but soon fell in love with the hokku (haiku) form. Basho was a great inspiration, and Buson traveled into the northern wilderness to follow in his steps.

*Coolness—
the sound of the bell
as it leaves the bell*

—Yosa Buson

Despite a life marked by tragedy, Kobayashi Issa (1763-1827) was known for humorous, playful poems, often portraying the life of Shinsho peasants. He was sent to Edo to study poetry at the age of 14 and later became a lay Buddhist priest. He went by the pen name Issa, "a cup of tea" and wrote over 20,000 poems.

*Having slept, the cat gets up,
yawns, goes out
to make love.*

—Kobayashi Issa



Want to take your favorite poet to work
for Take Your Poet to Work Day?

Here's how:

1. Color your poet
2. Cut out your poet along dotted lines
3. Attach a popsicle stick to the back of your poet with tape or glue
4. Take your poet to work as shown



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