

2020 THE HANS CHRISTIAN ANDERSEN AWARDS NOMINEE FROM KOREA



ILLUSTRATOR

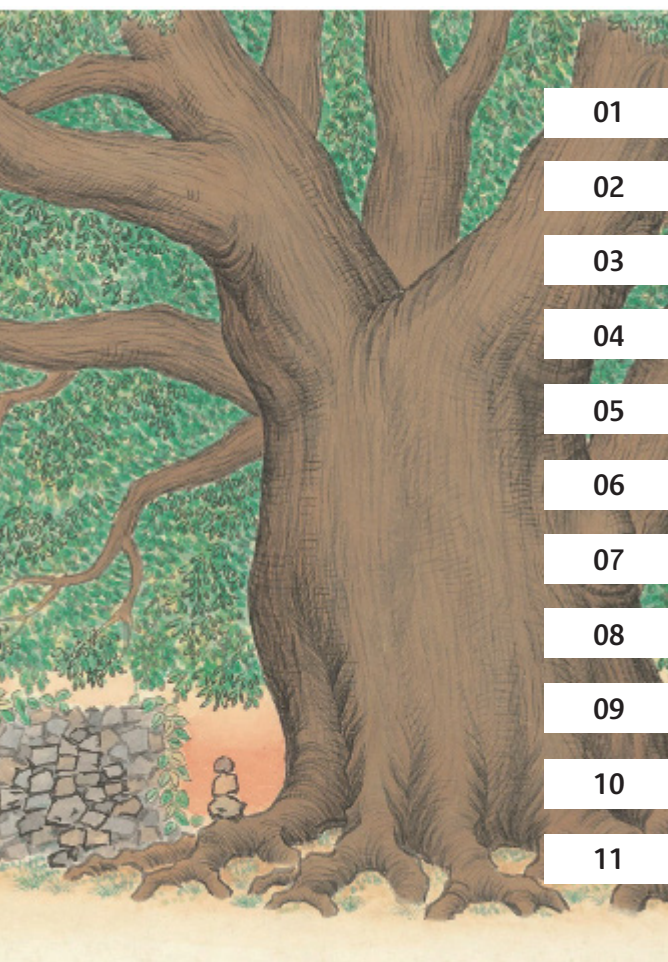
LEE
UK-BAE

KOREA





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01 Biographical information



The illustrator Lee Uk-bae was born in Yongin in 1960. Nature in the countryside became the source of inspiration for him over time while he spent a happy childhood as a playful boy. One day, his father brought a blackboard home, which offered enough space to satisfy his desire to draw. He used to copy the artist Shin Dong-woo's work, *Cartoon Hong Gildong*.

He later majored in sculpture in college, and the early 1980s saw heated democratic protests throughout the society and all around the campus. It was when peoples art emerged as progressive artists got together and started to ponder over

artist's role in society. When Lee Uk-bae watched professors tear down senior students' works of art that addressed the Gwangju Democratic Uprising, he developed a covenant with joint signatures and contributed a piece of writing to his university's newspaper. This event marked a beginning of the artist's reflection on art for social changes, departing from art for art's sake. The questions he made at that time were "What does an artist do in a society?" "What is the freedom of expression in art?" and "How can art participate in social changes?" Such interests of his have led to his picture books about ideal changes of society such as *The mosquito and the Yellow Bull and When Spring Comes to the DMZ*.



Self-portrait,
1998

When he returned to college after completing his military service, he joined the club for folk painting. He engaged in the study of traditional Korean culture and peoples art movement. This activity made a critical influence on his painting styles and his world view, which later led to his efforts to reinterpret traditional art in modern terms and deliver it to the next generation.

After graduating from college, Lee Uk-bae initiated peoples culture movement with a group of people in Anyang. During that time, he was active as a member of art groups ('Du-reong,' 'Ahyang Paintings,' and 'Our Land'). He contributed editorial cartoons to the books for laborers until the early 1990s while teaching laborers to work with engravings and to make hanging pictures, posters as well as creating art for the press and working on engravings.

When the Cold War ended and a civilian government started in the early 1990s, peoples art changed into art for environment, mural art and art for communities. Some of the artists pursued art for art's sake. It was a time of mental and physical hardships to Lee Uk-bae who wandered about seeking for a new artist's role through such social upheavals. In 1993, however, he took on a new career as an illustrator when he drew illustrations for *Development of Tools*, one of the books in the series titled *The World Is My Friend*. For the following two years, he devoted himself to the illustrations for *Sori's Harvest moon day*, which was published in 1995 and marked a total change into an illustrator.

Reviving Korean traditional paintings in today's picture books

“ Tradition is not automatically passed down to the next generation like DNA; instead, it is delivered by a conscious effort. I want to reinterpret traditional paintings in a modern sense and deliver them to the next generation. ”

/Lee Uk-bae

These days children can access and share information from all around the world with the development of the Internet and social media. They are growing up, exposed to picture books from their infant days. They can learn to respect and embrace children from different cultures. However, generation after generation, cultural boundaries between areas are becoming ambiguous while they are having fewer opportunities to meet picture books with local colors.

Lee Uk-bae reproduced uniquely Korean colored painting. These can be traced back to the mural paintings of the Goguryeo dynasty more than 1,500 years ago. He devoted himself to inheriting the expressional styles of folk paintings and genre paintings and put them into picture books. Korean traditional colored paintings almost disappeared during the Japanese Colonial Period, but they were revived with peoples art movement in the 1980s. Lee Uk-bae, who had been active in peoples art movement, reproduced the styles and spirits of the traditional paintings. He was now able to take painting as his calling with the experience.

In his picture books, he adopted traditional coloring techniques. He used traditional brushes, paper and paints. His colors are clear and transparent with all different chromas. In his book, *The Strongest Rooster in the world*, the mountains and the sky are expressed in dim dark colors reflecting the inner world of the rooster. These paintings by Lee Uk-bae successfully expressed the beauty of Korean traditional paintings not just to the next generation but also to his peer adults.



The elements of Korean folk paintings are distinctive in Lee Uk-bae's paintings. The illustrations of different animals from **Generous Grandma's Dumpling Making**, the bookshelves and stationaries in the groom's room from **A Tale of Tales**, and peonies from **The Strongest Rooster in the world** are all Lee's representation of folk paintings. The clouds, mountains, rocks and trees from other illustrations of Lee Uk-bae's show the same traits.



Traditional genre paintings meet the modern times

“ I found a striking connection between the spirits of traditional Chosun's genre paintings and modern picture books and tried to embrace them..... I have had this desire of inheriting the traditions of Chosun's genre paintings and reviving them in the form of modern genre paintings. ”

/Lee Uk-bae

His wish to create modern genre paintings is well reflected in his illustrations in *Sori's Harvest moon day*. From his democratic movement experience, he had learned how important communication is and had seen how traditional Korean paintings reflected peoples' stories with humor and wit. Thus, it is a natural outcome that his illustrations in *Sori's Harvest moon day* contains so many narratives. He added a narrative even to a small part of his paintings, and it creates a great joy to the readers. His approach is serious, but he never loses a sense of humor with a bit dramatic expression. Readers can truly communicate with the picture book with a good laugh and free imagination.

Sori's Harvest moon day has a scene with a large guardian tree of the town. It shows Korea's totem culture in the past, which has been present deep down inside Koreans. Lee Uk-bae's reproduction of the past life in contemporary picture books brings memories back to adults, hands down culture to the next generation and introduces unique Korean culture to international readers. The reproduced culture is mainly images of daily life including a variety of community functions, wedding, sixtieth birthday party, or holiday customs, which were once easily found in the alleys or the squares of villages.

The artist stresses that tradition inheritance is not just about inheriting traditional coloring techniques or forms; it is more about inheriting the essence of life integral to in the tradition. "They refer to a mindset one has in their life and what attitude one has toward nature; they are like big windows through which one looks out at life."



Seeds of peace picture books planted

“Barriers in reality are enhanced when resignation and despair within us get together and become rigid; Reversely, to tear down the barriers in reality, we have to tear down those inside us.”

/Lee Uk-bae

Korea has been divided into two since 1945 due to conflicting ideologies. This division is a barrier to tear down to Koreans. One of their principal wishes is to overcome the division and gain peace on the peninsular.

History proves that small wishes get together and change the seemingly-unbreakable reality. Lee Uk-bae has long thought that we should tear down the barriers inside of us first in order to tear down the actual barriers. The picture book titled *When Spring Comes to the DMZ* is centered on such a belief. Though pursuing peace looks like a long shot, it becomes possible when small wishes get together to tear down the actual barriers.

In addition, Lee Uk-bae sees children as those with agency who can perceive and understand reality and join the drive for changes. That is why he started to unfold stories about a divided Korea and wishes for peace in his picture books. Whenever he completes the illustration for a picture book, he falls ill since the work weighs down on his health hard. He has a reason why he cannot stop trying to pursue peace. A child he met at his lecture said to him, "I don't like reunification because we have to feed those hungry North Koreans." It shocked him so much that he reached a determination that we cannot delay or give up making books asserting peace. The artist thought such picture books are necessary, and he successfully made his readers dream of 'Spring in DMZ.'

The message of peace in his picture books are spreading throughout Korea and making inroads to Japan and China.

When Spring Comes to DMZ – peace message for Korea



When Spring Comes to DMZ is read to children.



Children are told to draw a painting about peace as they like.



Children are opening a tightly-sealed DMZ's iron gate on their own. The inscriptions over the gate read "Gate of Peace" and "Gate of Reunification."



When the gates are open, the pictures about peace are all on display inside.

03 | Appreciative essay

People are standing in line. Some are chatting, leaving their suitcases and shopping bags on the floor, some are reading books or magazine, some are comforting a child, and some are yawning. They must have been waiting in line for a long time. Just a simple look at the illustration reveals that people are waiting to board a bus or a train. Who are a family among the people in line? Their hairstyle and the balloons children are holding suggest that it is a scene from the 1980s. Those wearing thin long-sleeved clothes and a young mother and her child wearing Korean traditional costumes reveal that they are travelling to their hometowns during Chuseok holidays.

Watching 'the huge migration' to visit hometowns across the country on TV on the Chuseok holiday, Lee Uk-bae had a lump in his throat. The scene left a strong impression, reminding him of the parades on the Goguryeo's mural paintings or those in the Chosun paintings. It looked like a massive undertaking of ants just before it begins to rain, circus parade in town from childhood days, or columns of soldiers doing their winter drills. Lee Uk-bae had long wished to make a picture book about beautiful Korean holidays as an effort to pass on traditional folk paintings and genre paintings. With the long lines of people on TV as a strong motif for his paintings, Lee Uk-bae worked two years to complete *Sori's Harvest moon day*.

Lee's picture books are based on the questions of 'What is true Korean esthetic tradition?' and 'What esthetic values should we inherit?' The books also start from his sense of calling to show Korean children Korean picture books better than Western picture books which have longer history. It was not easy for the artist who had majored in sculpture to learn to paint. He needed to learn to draw on traditional paper with a traditional brush and to work on traditional woodcuttings. No matter the attraction he felt to Chosun's folk paintings and genre paintings as well as Goguryeo's mural paintings, Buddhist ritual paintings, shamanistic paintings, traditional clay dolls and traditional totem poles, the learning curve must have been very steep indeed.

The Strongest Rooster in The World (Written by Lee Ho-baek) is a story about an old rooster, once the strongest in the world, who is beaten by a younger one. He is first greatly depressed, but he seeks comfort from his family including his wife, children and grandchildren. He wins his confidence back with his family's love, though not the strongest any more. When Lee Uk-bae first met this story, he began to wonder how to show Korean traditional beauty in his illustrations. To represent a Korean native rooster which is hard to find nowadays, he wandered around chicken farms all around the country as well as researched old painting materials in museums. When he finally came across an image that suits the protagonist rooster, he painted it with a traditional brush and traditional paints on traditional paper to make it look natural and traditional.

Children enjoy Lee Uk-bae's humor which is present throughout the illustrations and read the book until it gets worn out. They heartily laugh at the rooster with blue eyes after a battle, one of his opponents trembling all over in an arm wrestling, drunken roosters sprawling all over, grandbaby chicks playing and throwing away their school bags, and a chick running and panting as it is late for family photo.

Generous Grandma's Dumpling Making (Written by Chae In-sun) reveals how Lee Uk-bae starts working with a book and how to proceed with it. The story is about a generous grandmother who habitually makes a large portion of food. She makes dumplings with animals in the woods before New Year's Day. After seven days of preparation, all the animals are completely worn out and refuse to work anymore. Then, the grandmother wraps all the remaining ingredients inside dumpling dough, to make one large dumpling. Then she cooks it to share with all the animals. Where did Lee Uk-bae get the image of this generous grandmother? After failing to find the perfect model, he took a trip to China. In a remote town of ethnic Koreans in Yenben, he met an old Korean woman who was running a small diner. Looking at this woman, poor and lonely, who was still generous to others, he created his version of a generous grandmother who makes dumplings with all the animals though she has no children who will visit her on New Year's Day.

Like other illustrations in most picture books, his illustrations are recordings traditional customs. These represent now long-gone or disappearing scenes of Korean life such as having instant noodles on the shoulder of a highway when trapped in a huge traffic jam during the holiday migration, worshipping ancestors at the head family's house, lines of people visiting their ancestral tombs, and scenes from traditional farmers' music performances, someone's sixtieth birthday party, and traditional wedding. Everything that should be there is. Even the smallest details are included. For *The Mosquito and the Yellow Bull*, a story by Hyun Dong-yeom which appeared in a magazine *Children* in 1949, he drew the fight between a mosquito and a bull so realistically that the viewer can even count each hair and see how they tremble, allowing the onlooker to fully appreciate what the subjects are doing. It also successfully depicts Korea's traditional fields and cowsheds which are disappearing slowly over time.

Lee Uk-bae thinks that the picture books enjoyed by both children and adults are 'peoples art' when they are faithful to old stories and the traditional traits of an ethnic group. In this sense, he is truly a specialist in turning stories told for people, by people and about people into picture books. He successfully revives those nameless people, simple but truthful, in his illustrations. We can also see how he thinks about people from his images in *Simpleton* (Written by Lee Mi-ae). In this story, a simpleton wins victory. How delightful and hilarious it is to see a simpleton winning! Even in *A Tale of Tales*, which Lee Uk-bae collected from a folk tale and painted for, he drew the aristocrat man's eye small while the servant's eyes big. The aristocratic man collects stories but refuses to share them with others while the servant listens to stories and saves his mater's life. This way, Lee highlights the servant as a hero.

The Korean tradition and beauty of Lee Uk-bea's creation are shown to children and adults all over the world *Sori's Harvest moon day* is published in the US, Japan, Taiwan, Switzerland, France and China while *The Strongest Rooster in The World* in Japan and China, *The Mosquito and the Yellow Bull* in Japan.

Interview with Lee Eun-jeong of KBBY Writer Research Group, 2018

"We sometimes think of the times of our grandmother's as old-fashioned and even stale. However, when we can see something beautiful from the times, we can re-discover our own life. These are so valuable; I mean, things like what attitude we have toward nature and how we life in front of it. In other words, the bigger perspective toward life truly matters."

"Paintings harmonize the things that are visible and invisible. So does literature. When you read a picture book, you can find true pleasure, reading in the boundaries of texts and illustrations like walking on a rope. Don't get swept up by a story. Don't apply a single standard to a book. When such reading is possible, I think the book is excellent. Such books really touch your heart."

Lee Uk-bae on picture books from Now, I Am (1999)

"I think it is important to describe the background and the underlying cultural structure as well as the main features of the story. To do this, I research a lot, looking for the right subjects to put in my pictures and paintings. I spend a lot of time on dictionaries, academic articles, poems and novels. Just like heart inside a man matters as much as his looks, the things that are hidden are just as important as things visible in paintings in paintings."

Let your Paintings Speak (2009)

"During the Japanese Colonial Period, Korean artists imitated Western art and pursued Western modernism passionately. It led to an artist's failure to develop a perspective to look at Korean traditional art..... I felt so thrilled by traditional folk paintings at a later age, and I almost cried once when I looked at Danwon Kim Hongdo's, Hyewon Shin Yoonbok's and Gyeongjae Jeong Sun's paintings. Since these precious encounters, I have learned to paint with traditional brushes on traditional paper, practicing painting and copying old paintings. Sometimes I learned from Buddhist monks and struggled over traditional woodcuttings. I'm not a great artist yet. Traditional styles are still very difficult for me."

Illustrator's note on Sori's Harvest moon day

"Let's make such paintings so each line can reveal the artist. Let's make books I can show to my own children. When adults are more considerate, taking things seriously, children can accept and embrace any kind of issues in the world. They are good enough and they have enough talents. Children's pure attitude toward life is the very world adults have lost and what adults should glean from them."

Illustrator's note on A Family of Five Generations

"I thought about what six-year-old Tenjin sees who lives in the wild. Feeling thrilled at a lamb's birth, looking up at the stars in the night sky, communicating with the universe, and learning about all the wonders with modesty. All the while roaming for grass to feed his sheep – these are one of the precious assets we have lost. I want to pass on this feeling from the wild."

"Picture books create a fantastic and wonderful world of imagination with their texts and paintings. The power of imagination, buried deep down within a child's subconsciousness, will be a starlight that guide them through the rough journey of life."

List of awards and other distinctions

TITLE	Awards/Distinctions
<i>The Strongest Rooster in The World</i> (Jaemimaju)	Selected for Biennial of Illustrations Bratislava (BIB) 1997
<i>Generous Grandma's Dumpling Making</i> (Jaemimaju)	Awarded Best Culture Work for Children 1998
<i>The Strongest Rooster in The World</i> (Jaemimaju)	Shortlisted for Good Books for Special Exhibitions at Bologna Children's Book Fair 1999
<i>The Mosquito and the Yellow Bull</i>	Selected as one of 100 Korean Books at Frankfurt Book Fair 2005
<i>A Tale of Tales</i> (Borim, 2008)	Made IBBY Honor List 2010
<i>Sori's Harvest moon day</i>	Made the list of recommended books by Japanese Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology

Complete bibliography

Story & Illustration

NO.	TITLE	PUBLISHER	YEAR	NOTE
1	<i>Sori's Harvest moon day</i>	Gilbut Children	1995	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sount Prints US purchased copyright - Copyright exported to Japan - Copyright exported to China - Copyright exported to Taiwan - Copyright exported to France - Copyright exported to Switzerland - Made the list of recommended books by Japanese Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology - Made the list of recommended books by Children's Book Research Group
2	<i>Naughty Child's</i> ㄱㄴㅇ	Sakyejul	2005	
3	<i>Jal-jal-jal 123</i>	Sakyejul	2006	- Made the list of recommended books by Children's Book Research Group
4	<i>A Tale of Tales</i>	Borim	Aug. 2008	- Made IBBY Honor list 2010
5	<i>Jal-jal-jal 123</i> (Board book)	Sakyejul	2009	
6	<i>When Spring Comes to the DMZ</i>	Sakyejul	2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Copyright exported to Japan - Copyright exported to China - Copyright exported to the US
7	<i>Naughty Child's</i> ㄱㄴㅇ (Board book)	Sakyejul	2011	- Made the list of recommended books by Children's Book Research Group

Illustration

NO.	TITLE	WRITER	PUBLISHER	YEAR	NOTE
1	Development of Tools (a volume in The World Is My Friend)	Doosong Media Editors	Dooson Media	1993	
2	A Greedy Man Pinned under Gold (A Collection of Stories on Mt. Baekdu)	Woori Education Editors	Woori Education	1996	
3	A Boy on Tiger's Back	Woori Education Editors	Woori Education	1996	
4	Brother Sun, Sister Moon	Bae Myung-hee	Dooson Media	1996	
5	The Strongest Rooster in The World	Lee Ho-baek	Jaemimaju	1997	- Selected for Biennial of Illustrations Bratislava (BIB) 1997 - Copyright exported to Japan - Shortlisted for Good Books for Special Exhibitions at Bologna Children's Book Fair 1999
6	Half a Loaf	Lee Mi-ae	Borim	1997	
7	Eating Rice Cake Rolling Over and Over	Seo Jeong-oh	Bori	1997	
8	Who Are You	Eom Hye-sook	Daseossure	1998	
9	Generous Grandma's Dumpling Making	Chae In-sun	Jaemimaju	1998	- Awarded Best Art Prize of Children's Culture Works 1998 - Made the list of recommended books by Children's Book Research Group
10	An Ox with Three Legs	Ahn Hoi-nam	Bori	1999	
11	The Story of a Seagull and the Cat Who Taught her to Fly	Luis Sepúlveda	Bada	2000	
12	Heroes Who Opened the New Sky	Jung Ha-seop	Changbi	2000	
13	Five-inch-long Tail, Five-inch-long Lips	Jung Hae-wang	Kyowon	2000	
14	Princess Sunwha and Yam Seller	Han Ji-yeon	Kyowon	2002	
15	The Mosquito and the Yellow Bull	Hyun Dong-yeom	Gilbut Children	2003	- Selected as one of 100 Korean Books at Frankfurt Book Fair 2005 - Copyright exported to Japan - Made the list of recommended books by Children's Book Research Group
16	Charyeong's Kiss (Poems for Children)	Go Eun	Bawusol	2011	
17	A Family of Five Generation	Go Eun	Bawusol	2014	
18	The Story of the Sewol	65 writers	ByeolSup	2014	

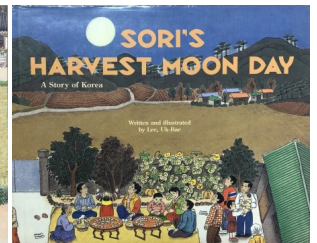
Sori's Harvest moon day



/ 솔이의 추석이야기, 1995, Korea, Gilbut



/ 小莉的中秋, 2005, Taiwan, Hsin Yi



/ SORI'S HARVEST MOON DAY, 1999, U.S.A, Sound prints



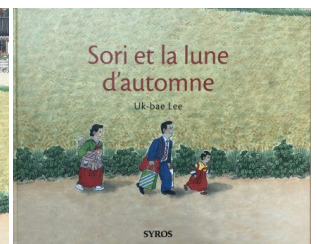
/ Sori feiert Tschusok, 2005, Switzerland, Atlantis



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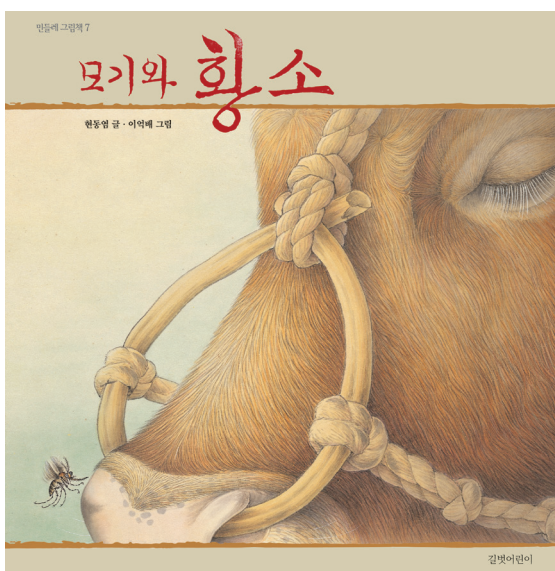


/ 小莉的中秋, 2011, China, 21st Century



/ Sori et la lune d'automne, 2007, France, Syros

The Mosquito and the Yellow Bull



/ 모기와 황소, 2003, Korea, Gilbut

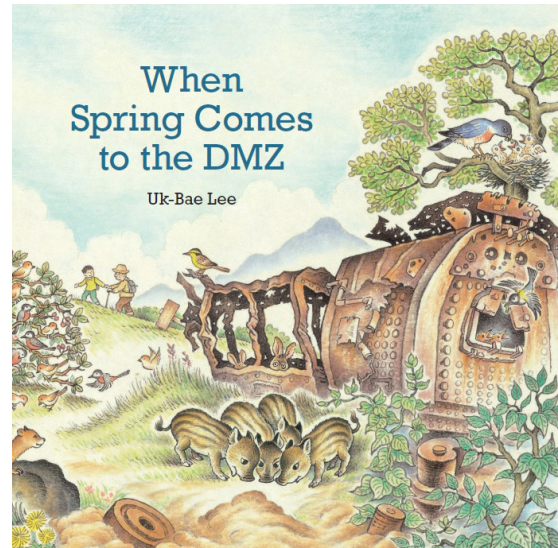


/ 蚊とうし, 2004, Japan, ARTONE

When Spring Comes to the DMZ



/ 비무장지대에 봄이 오면, 2010, Korea, Sakyejul



/ When Spring comes to the DMZ, 2019, USA, Plough, Coming soon

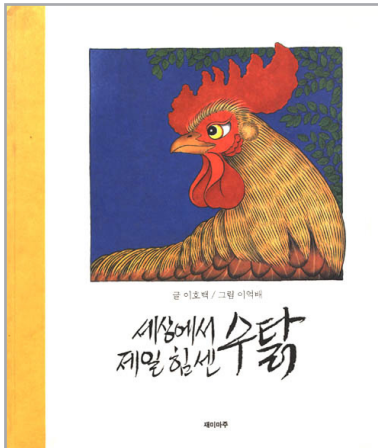


/ 非武装地帯に春がくると, 2011, Japan, Doshinsha



/ 非武装地帯的春天, 2010, china, Yilin

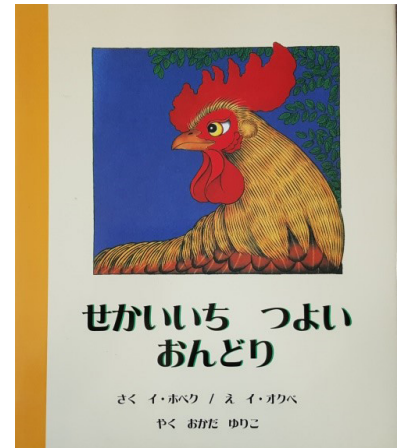
The Strongest Rooster in The World



/ 세상에서 제일 힘센 수탉, 1997, Korea, Jaemimaju

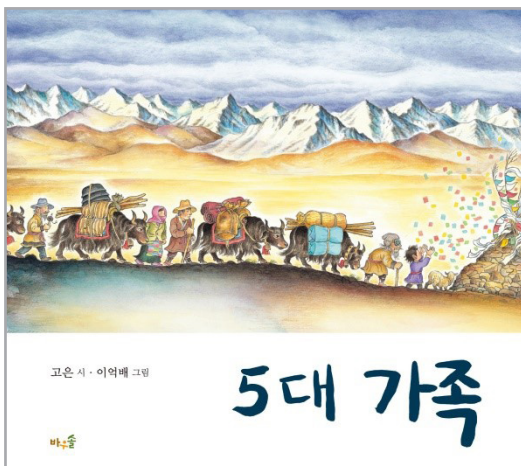


/ 世界上力气最大的公鸡, 2010, China, 连环画出版社



/ せかいいち つよいおんどり, 2001, Japan, 新世研(しんせけん)

A Family of Five Generations

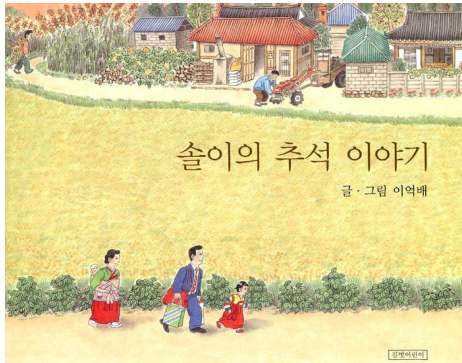


/ 5대가족, 2014, Korea, Bawoosol



/ 5代家族, 2014, China, 语文出版社

Sori's Harvest moon day



Written & illustrated by Lee Uk-bae

- Publication Date: Nov. 15, 1995
- Publisher: Gilbut Children

"...children in new clothes are running about excitedly. Their parents are all smiles while their hands are full of gifts. The long lines of people travelling to visit their hometown at the terminals and stations...." Lee Uk-bae created these familiar scenes from Chuseok holiday to pass on the vivid memories.

Early in the morning Sol's family set on a trip to visit their hometown. The book follows the journey from the way to the hometown to get together with their relatives to the way back home. Readers can get a taste of Korean Chuseok holiday and warm family love in the 1980s.

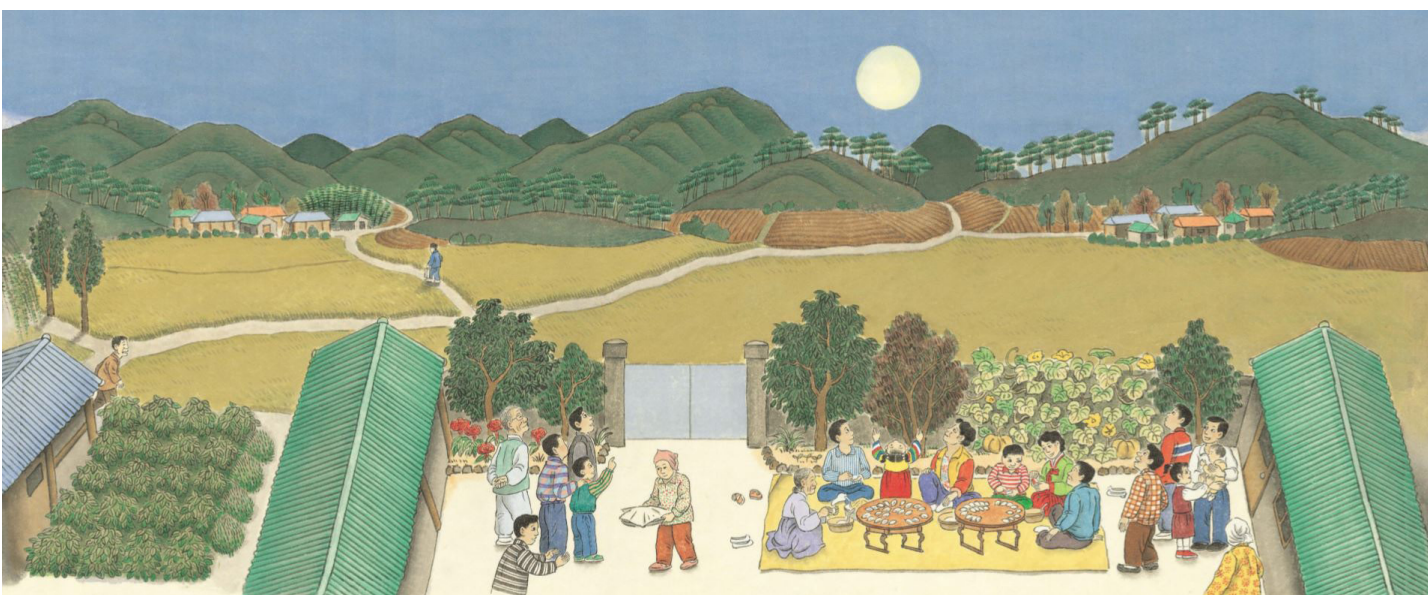
Lee Uk-bae wanted to create a modern version of folk paintings. That is why we can feel the same reality, narrativity and humor as those of Danwon Kim Hong-do, master of folk paintings. The scenes of the streets and hometown villages where Lee Uk-bae lived are represented in the picture book as they were. His illustrations are also valuable as recording of common people's daily life.

At the same time, the illustrations have more messages to convey than the story. Thus, it takes long to turn each page. Even the background figures have a lot of narratives to be unfolded. Each and every part of the illustrations has its own story in the stores like in the scene with the long line to board buses and the highway with a huge traffic jam. For example, while adults are busy preparing for the holiday party, a boy was crying out of anxiety, in his waiting line for dentist's examination. Next to him, a younger boy is copying his elder brother's crying, not knowing why. We laugh over the innocent brothers, feeling sorry for them. This image of people who respectively make just a small part of the illustration seems to fit in the bigger development of the whole story.

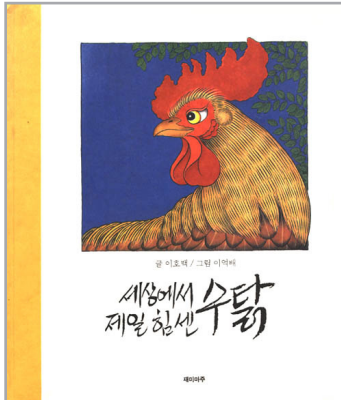


It's two more nights until Chu-sok, Harvest Moon Day.

Everyone in the city is busy getting ready to visit their hometowns.



The Strongest Rooster in The World



Written by Lee Hobaek & illustrated by Lee Uk-bae

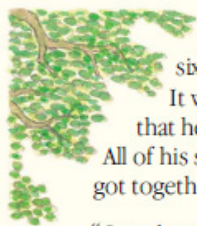
- Publication Date Feb. 15, 1997
- Publisher: Jaemimaju

The world's strongest rooster comes to face a stronger rooster. He feels sad that he is getting weak with age. Now he becomes an old drunken rooster who keeps talking about his past glories over and over. One day, the rooster learns a lesson from a wise hen about how to see the world with a different perspective. Like the hen said, he looks at his grandchildren, strong and healthy, and accepts the way of the world in which one gets older. The story winds up with the rooster's happy sixtieth birthday party. In fact, the story is about fathers of our time.

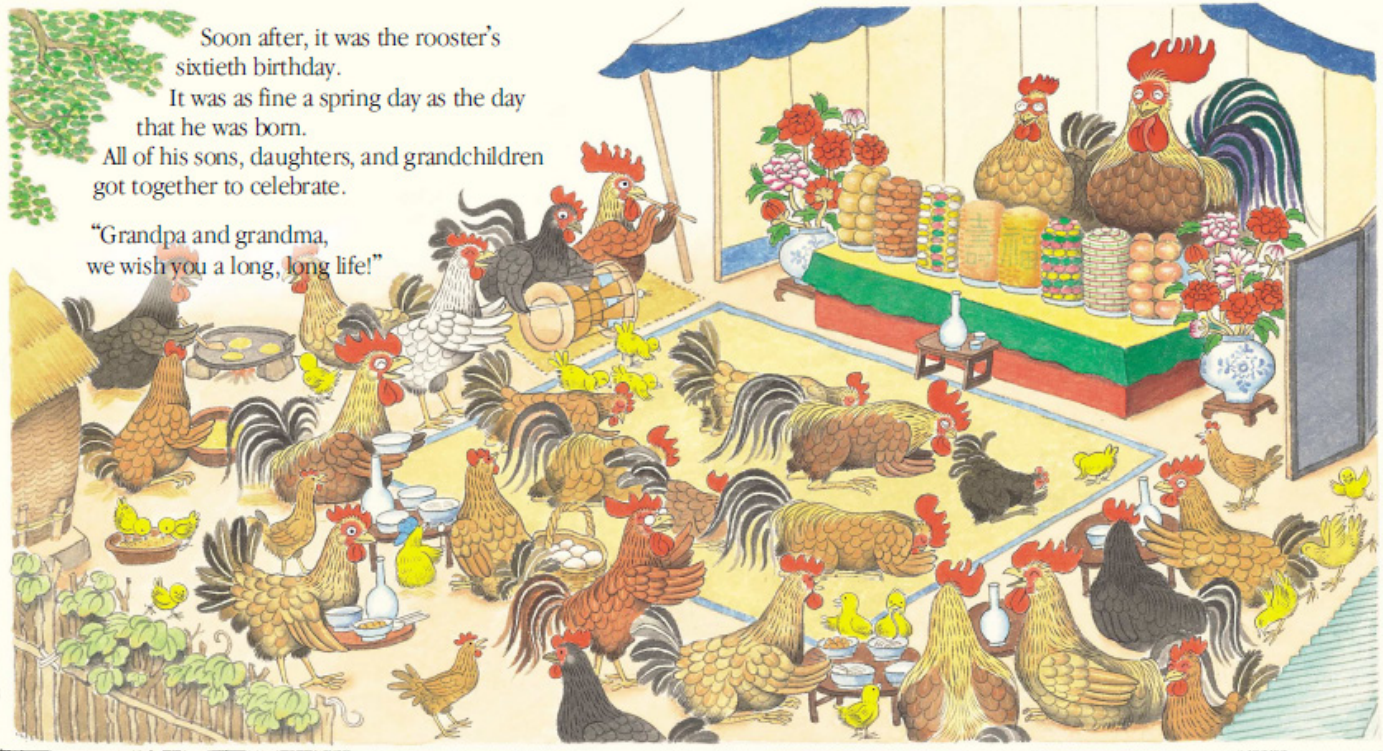
The book offers the joy of appreciating traditional folk paintings with its description of peonies, pine trees and roosters. They are expressed in clear and in-depth colors in traditional coloring techniques. It fully reveals the effort of Lee Uk-bae who has long devoted himself to passing on Korean traditional beauty. The scene with the rooster, where the rooster takes up the most space on the right page, shows the rooster's imposing appearance and power as well as the artist's bold composition with his mastery of space. In the scene where the rooster becomes the strongest in the world, the artist adopted a perspective of looking up from the ground so that readers can fully feel the rooster's imposing appearance.

Ryu Jae-soo, the artist of *Yellow Umbrella*, comments, "In the book industry where unfamiliar imported sentiments are dominant, *The Strongest Rooster in the world* is an excellent example and a sheer joy as it conveys authentic Korean sentiment."





Soon after, it was the rooster's
sixtieth birthday.
It was as fine a spring day as the day
that he was born.
All of his sons, daughters, and grandchildren
got together to celebrate.
"Grandpa and grandma,
we wish you a long, long life!"



When Spring Comes to the DMZ



Written & illustrated by Lee Uk-bae

- Publication Date: June 25, 2010

- Publisher: Sakyejul

“...DMZ is the point where Koreans' tragedy started, and it is a future holy land which should be transformed into the space with harmony and peace when all the hatred and spites are gone.”

/Lee Uk-bae

When Spring Comes to the DMZ is the outcome of a joint project of Picture Books for Peace by Korea, Japan and China. It talks about the present pain resulted from a country's division and expresses a wish for DMZ to open, for separated families to reunite and for a new era to come.

Children readers are guided to the DMZ, a landmark of Korea's division. It talks about an old man to look out at DMZ where people cannot freely travel inside due to long barbed-wire fences, but animals can freely roam around. In Spring, green sprouts come out throughout DMZ, which one cannot enter due to the fences. In spring, spotted seals from China swims freely across the fences. In spring, soldiers fix rusty barbed-wire fences. In spring, an old man visits the observatory and looks out into the northern sky..... It tells us that reunification should come and the fences should be lifted so that separated families can reunite, and everyone can live in peace in the land of peace and life.

DMZ refers to the area between the fences respectively set up in North and South, 2 kilometers apart from the Military Demarcation Line. It is a restricted military area, so civilians cannot move around freely. Lee Eok-bae looked out at the land in the north with the heart of the protagonist old man. When the telescope switched off after 2- or 3-minutes' operation and the view turned black, he felt the despair those displaced from North Korea would feel and described it vividly in the book.

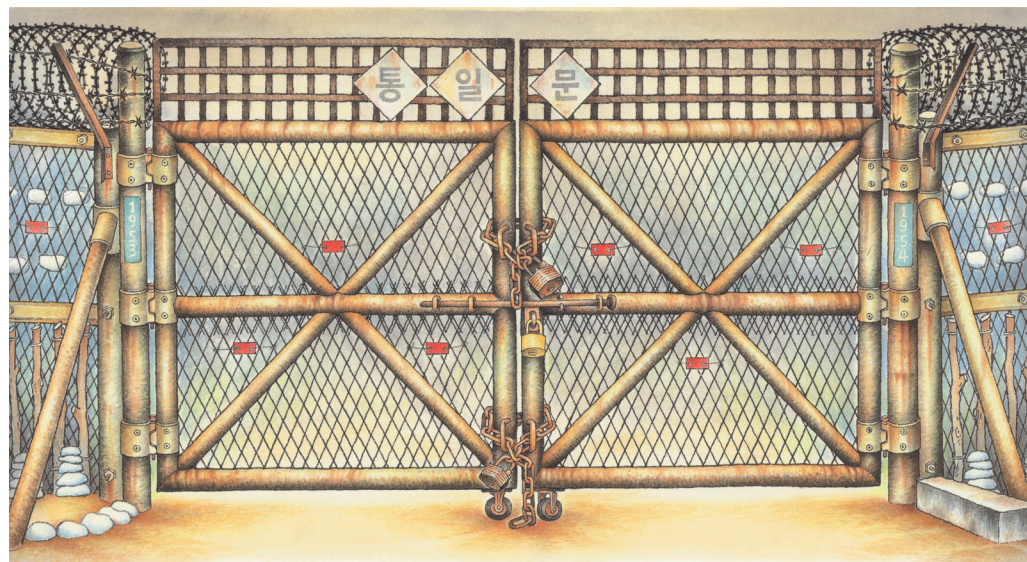
The joint project has a slogan “Let's go to the peaceful future, recording wars and sympathizing with present pain.” The book is a superb representation of the value. It has been translated into Chinese and Japanese to plant seeds for peace and harmony throughout generations and across countries.

REVIEW : Kirkus Review (U.S.A. 2019)

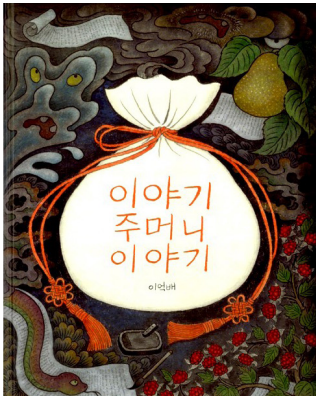
This bittersweet picture book walks through the four seasons at Korea's heavily weaponized demilitarized zone, celebrating the nature that thrives there while mourning the human cost of this border wall.

Although the story does not even define or discuss the DMZ or the Korean War, colorful illustrations reveal to young readers the long fences of razor wire hugging a beautiful mountainside. But because no humans are allowed in this 2.5-mile-wide, 150-mile-long buffer zone, the area has unintentionally become a nature sanctuary. The water deer, striped salmon, and mountain goats know no limitations to their habitat, crossing borders, swimming under barbed wire, and nesting near land mines. Their freedom, together with many references to home and family, stand in stark contrast to the military exercises that have continued through the cease-fire since 1953. Lee views this irony through the character of elderly Grandfather, who makes his way to the wall every season, gazing longingly upon his inaccessible former homeland. A foldout reveal at book's end is symbolic of the hope of a reunified Korea, with a simple reunion embrace representing the dreams of families separated since the 1950s. The endnote provides needed background along with a plea for peace and freedom.

The cupboard is nearly bare of children's books about the DMZ, making this an excellent introduction to the crises on the Korean Peninsula as well as a great choice for social justice collections, peace promoters, and animal lovers. (Picture book. 4-12)



A Tale of Tales



Written & illustrated by Lee Uk-bae

- Publication Date: Aug. 27, 2008

- Publisher: Borim

“ A storyteller used to tell stories under an old zelkova tree in the village or by the lantern in a thatched house. Nowadays, storytellers are gone, and picture books have taken their place. ”

A young man collects stories from under old zelkova tree at the village entrance and around marketplaces. He seals them in a bag though 'stories' want to be spread and shared. They are too precious to the young man, so he wants 'stories' to himself. However, 'stories' get mad at him and plan to take revenge on him. Fortunately, a servant prevents 'stories' from taking an action. The young man finally learns of what could have happened to him, understand what stories want and releases them. Stories fly away to reach the wider world as they wish.

In this work, Lee Uk-bae uses more curved lines than straight ones. Curves give the feeling of smoothness and richness so the readers can feel stability. "story-turned-spring looks like small and round clouds. Its eyes are like a monster's, but its teeth are all round with no fangs. It is not threatening at all. The gapped teeth are even humorous. Lee Uk-bae's illustrations correspond to the story, but they are contradictory, too. The non-threatening but still thrilling illustrations give life to 'stories.'





Jal-jal-jal 123



Written & illustrated by Lee Uk-bae

- Publication Date: Sep.27, 2006

- Publisher: Sakyejul

“ I started to work on the story, thinking about my son who loves numbers. He counted the number of passing cars on the street and drew numbers on the walls, on the floor, in my notebook and even on the bed spread. I was like him as a child. My house was close to a train station. I used to count the number of the cars of a steam engine passing by or the number of my steps, walking around. I painted the steam engine in this book, thinking about my own childhood. ”

/Lee Uk-bae

Jal-jal-jal 123 is a book about numbers. It borrows rules of letter sequences and rhythm of pronunciations from a traditional children's song, "Jal-jal-jal." Each number from one to ten is given a new story about an old woman with bent back, a goat-herding old man, a fishmonger, kite-running and yut-playing etc. These are all familiar scenes we used to see often in everyday life. "Jal-jal-jal" is the refrain so it is repeated over and over. Once engaging in reading, the rhythm makes you read like singing a song. This way, a book to read has become a book to sing.

There are ten short stories in this book – Mother Goose's Melody song in Korean version on the left side and each story of ten subjects on the right side. Those ten stories well express the Korean culture and social sentiment by showing various characters such as a friendly old lady, an old shepherd, a barber in neighborhood, a fish dealer, a boy flying a kite, kids playing games, etc. The book vividly and humorously shows ordinary people's daily life ranging from a traditional gathering having fun together to friendly barbers' shops, ending with the last scene where every character in ten stories in the book gather together for road trip having joyful festival. The book ends with the scene of beginning of the journey, but the story is continued by you with your own imagination. You will naturally repeat the lines of the song, the Korean Mother Goose's Melody, even after you finish reading the whole book. Actually, the book is not just to read but to sing a song all together. You will have so much fun by enjoying the book with your children while singing the lines of the song.

This book is like a gift to very young children. It conveys the warm sentiment common in the public from 1960s to the 1980s.



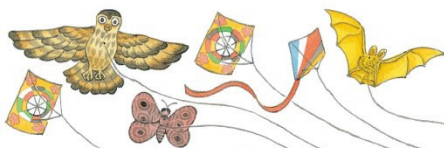
7 일곱 하면 이발사가
머리를 깎는다고 잘잘잘

Seven, a barber is cutting the customer's hair, lol lol lol.



9 아홉 하면 아이들이
윷놀이를 한다고 잘잘잘

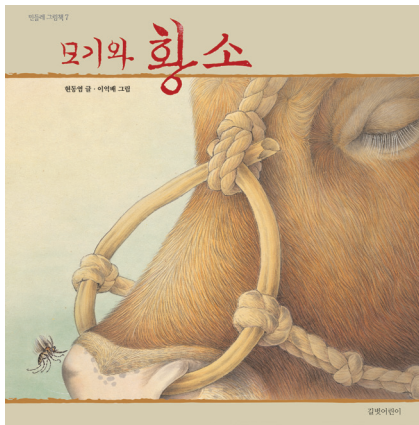
Nine, the children are playing Yut, lol lol lol.



여행을 한다고 잘잘잘



The Mosquito and the Yellow Bull



Written by Hyun Dong-yeom & illustrated by Lee Uk-bae

- Publication Date: Feb. 5, 2003

- Publisher: Gilbut Children

It is a satire of all different types of human beings. It describes an honest hard-working bull and a free rider mosquito who lives on the bull's blood.

To the idling Mosquito and Fly, naive yellow Bull is not much of a threat. Angered by the arrogant Mosquito, who makes light of sucking his blood, the Bull plans to strike back by knocking it down... The amusing expressions and lively illustrations is a plus to this fun and inspirational reading.





Generous Grandma's Dumpling Making



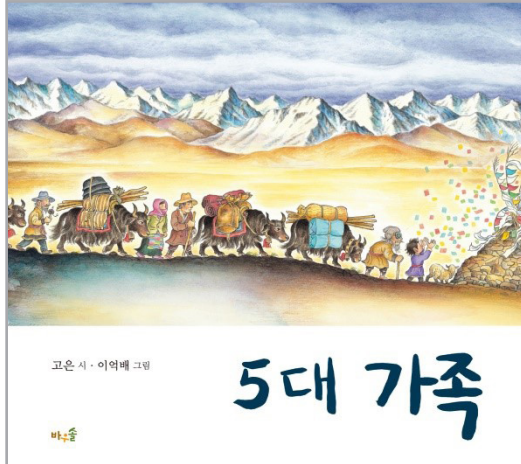
Written by Chae In-sun

1998, Jaemimaju

It is a work about a generous grandma with a big heart and her friend animals in the wood. They have quality time on New Year's Day, cooking and eating together.



Family of Five Generation

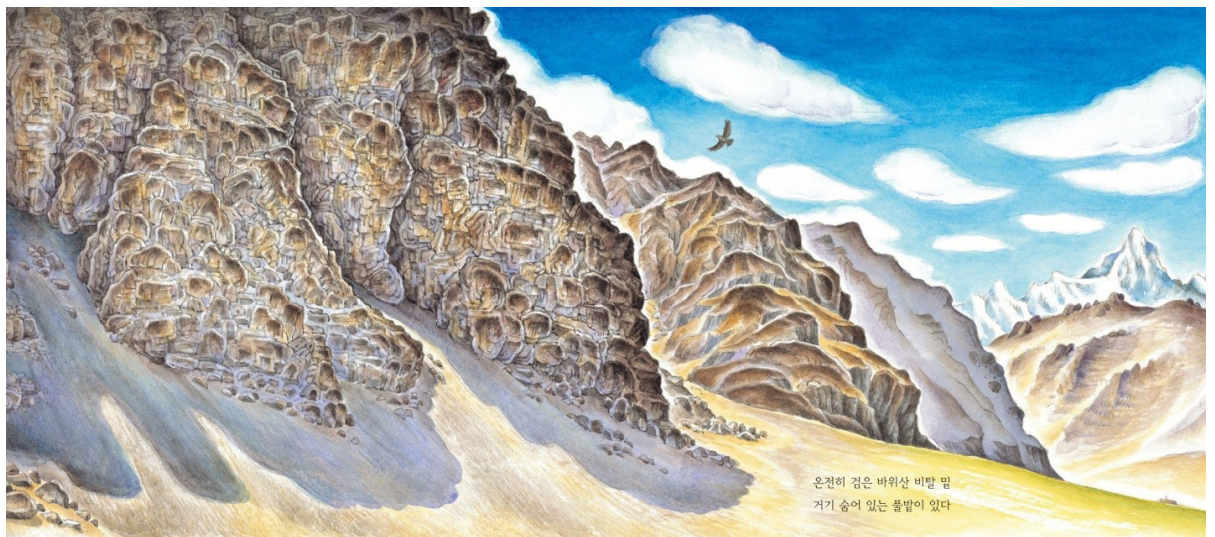


Written by Ko Un

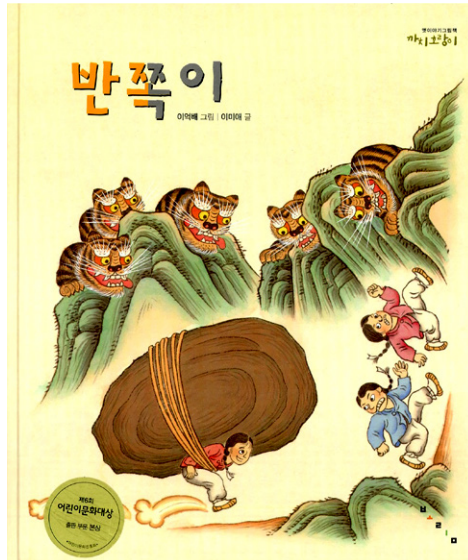
2014, Korea, Bawusol
: Translated in 2 countries

It is a touching work about nature and human. Its story unfolds around a Tibetan family of five generations and their daily lives. Ko Un, today's world- famous poet, wrote these poems for all the world's children. This picture book is captured in the daily life of the Tibetan nomad family. We can think about love, life, and death throughout this picture book.

These great poems come to life with the help of the fabulous paintings by Lee Uk-Bae. Illustrator Lee Uk-Bae actively participates in international exhibitions. He put his heart and soul into this work.



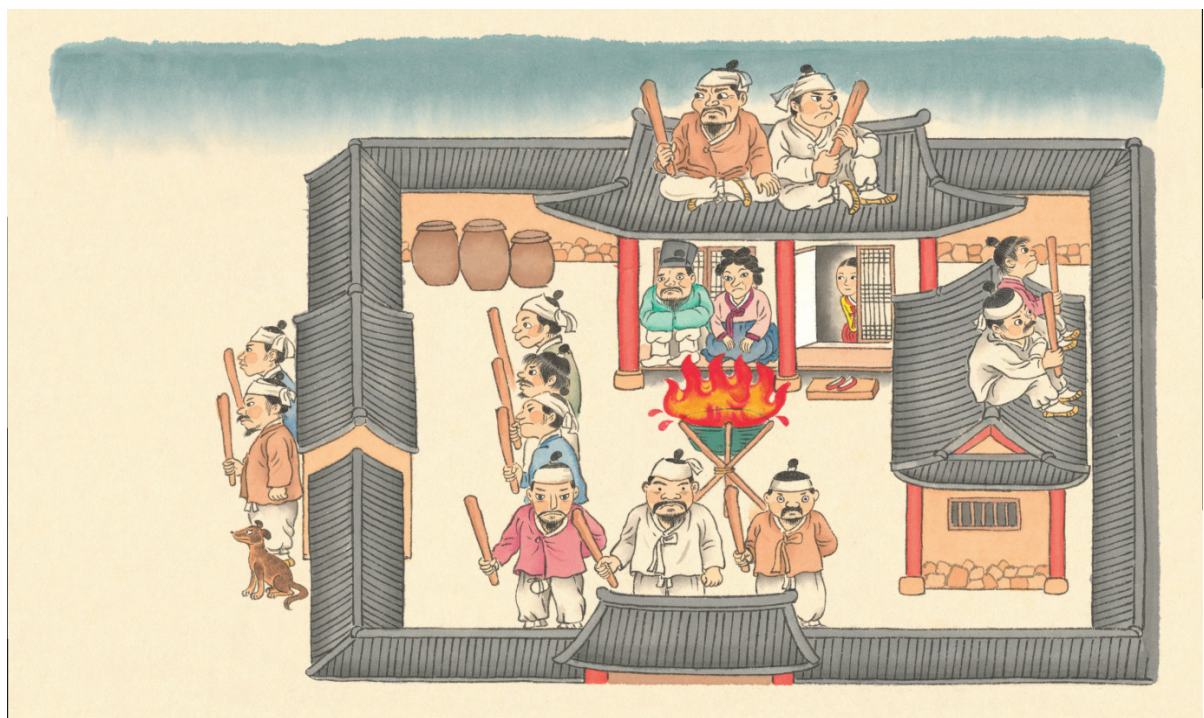
Half a Leaf



Written by Lee Mi-ae

1997, Korea, Borim

This book conveys a message that the true power of a human comes not from their appearance but from their person within. It is about a wise and courageous simpleton with one arm, one leg, one eye, half nose, and half mouth.



Sister Moon and Brother Sun



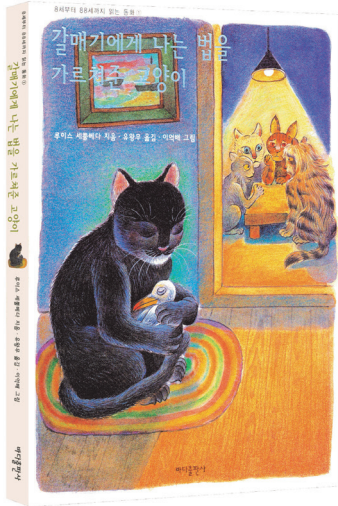
Written by Bae Myung-hee

1996, Korea, Dooson Media

The story deals with a folklore in the oral tradition about where the sun and the moon originated



The Story of a Seagull and the Cat Who Taught her to Fly



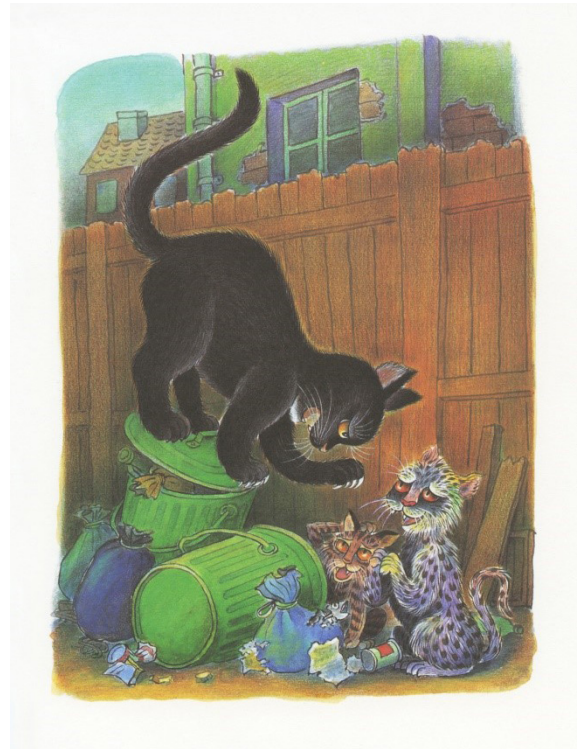
Written by Luis Sepúlveda
Translation by Yu Wang-mu

2003, Korea, Bada

It is about a cat who teaches a young seagull to fly, following the will of its mother seagull who was killed an oil spill. It makes readers reflect on the sense of responsibility over the environment and attitude toward life. It's migration time and as a mother gull dives into the water to catch a herring she's caught in an oil slick! Thinking of the egg she is about to lay she manages to extract herself and fly to the nearest port.

Exhausted, she lands on a balcony where Zorba the cat is sunning himself. Zorba wants to get help, but the gull knows it's too late and she extracts three promises from him. First, That he won't eat the egg, second, that he'll take care of the chick until it hatches, and third, that he'll teach it to fly.

Well the first two are hard enough, but the third one is surely impossible. Isn't it?



10 | Picture book exhibitions

Solo Exhibition

- Original Illustrations of Lee Uk-bae (2004. Chobang, Seoul)
- Lee Uk-bae's Imagination Workshop (2012. Project Gallery, Gyeonggi-do Art Museum)
- Lee Uk-bae's Picture Books (2016. Suncheon Picture Book Library)
- Original Illustrations of Lee Uk-bae: A Tale of Tales (2016. I'Park Art Museum of the Suwon City)



Group Exhibition

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- Gyeonggi Archive – Now (2018, Special Exhibition at Gyeonggi Sangsang Campus of Gyeonggi-do Art Gallery)
-
- Korean Picture Book Stories (2018, Yunseul Art Gallery of Gimhae Arts and Sports Center)
-
- Stories of Animals from Myths (2016, Children's Museum of the National Folk Museum of Korea)
-
- Seven Primal Emotions Expressed in 130 Korean Picture Books (2016, Paris Book Fair, France)
-
- Resisting Oblivion (2015, Ansan Culture & Arts Center)
-
- 51 Korean Picture Books (2014, London Book Fair, UK)
-
- Peace Is Warm (2014, Special Exhibition of the Paju Book City's Children's Book Festival)
-
- Winter Winter Winter Spring (2012, Gyeonggi-do Art Gallery)
-
- Picture Book – Visit to Haenggung (2011, Suwon Hwasung PR Center)
-
- Korea's Folk Paintings & Picture Books (2010, Nashinimia Art Museum, Osaka, Japan)
-
- CJ Picture Book Festival (2010, Seoul Hoam Art Gallery)
-
- Let's Play with Picture Books (2010, Gwangju City Art Museum)
-
- Korean Picture Book Illustration Invitational Exhibition (2010, Andersen Hall, Namyi Island)
-
- Picture Book Artist Holds up a Candle (2009, Yongsan Disaster, Candlelight Media Center)
-
- Guest of Honor Country's Exhibition at Bologna Children's Book Fair
-
- Original Illustrations of Korean Picture Books (2006, Chihiro Museum, Japan)
-
- Picture Book Illustrations of Lee Uk-bae & Jung Yu-jeong (2006, Democracy Park, Busan)
-
- Original Illustrations of Korean Picture Books (2005, Kijo Picture Book Village, Japan)
-
- 20 BIB KOREA (2005, Andersen Hall, Namyi Island)
-
- What Sounds Are from Picture Books? (2004, Gyeonggi Cultural Foundation, Suwon)
-
- Original Illustrations of Korean Picture Books (2000, Tokyo International Children's Museum, Japan)
-
- Word's Picture Books, Our Picture Books (1995, The Centre Pompidou, France/ 1996 Yonsei University's Museum)
-
- Three People's Picture Books (1995, Chobang, Seoul)
-



Major Lectures & Activities inside Korea

30 Years of Korean Picture Books – Stories Go on: Picture Book Forum (2018)

Special Lecture (1999- 2017, HILLS)

Symposium of Gunpo Reading Festival at the Picture Book Museum Park (2017)

Picture Books Talks about Peace (2016, Seoul Library)

Symposium on Korean Picture Books' Present & Future (2015, The Korea Association of Literature for Children and Young Adults)

Seminar for Bookcity Festival for Children (2014, Paju Bookcity Foundation)

Special Lecture at the Korea, Japan & Chinese Children's Story Exchange (2012, Asia-Pacific Centre of Education for International Understanding)

Book Talk on Korean, Chinese & Japanese Picture Books on Peace (2012, Literature House Seoul)

Three Year's Anniversary Seminar, Changbi Children (2006, Sejong Center)

Activities outside Korea

2010	Lee Uk-bae was invited to give a lecture at the 60th Anniversary Conference of Japanese Pen Club (Waseda University, Japan)
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2006	Twelve picture books artists along with three publishers from Korea, Japan and China have been active with publication, exchange, exhibitions, lectures and book talks with the slogan, "Let's pass down peaceful world without wars to children" since 2006.
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June 2005	The third of Bookend Magazine Japanese Picture Book Conference published a feature story, "Korean picture books are hot!" in its third issue. It includes Lee Uk-bae's "Traditional Culture and My Picture Books" and Lee Ho-baek's "New Graphic Attempts to Revive Traditions."
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Aug. 2004	Lee gave a presentation, "Traditional Culture & My Picture Books," about deep reflection & passion which are required to make picture books in the context of Korean society and history at the 7th Conference Asia Children's Literature. (Nagoya and Toyama, Japan)
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