

Ambassador Report

Name: Mr. Matthew Meyer

Nationality: America

Inducted: July 2012

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I moved back to the US (New Jersey, on the east coast) in the end of August after five years of living in Echizen city. I was expecting a lot of reverse culture shock, and while there was a little bit, it wasn't as bad as I thought it would be. Mostly getting used to using forks and knives instead of chopsticks, and other small things like that. It's certainly helped me understand things about my own culture that I'd never noticed before. It reminded me of my first time coming to Japan and thinking, "Wow! So THIS is what Japan is like!" Only now, I was coming back to the US and thinking, "Wow! So THIS is what the US is like!" It's been very educational.

The weeks of feeling like a foreigner in my own country have passed, although now that winter is coming up, I feel the desire to sit under my kotatsu and have a nabe party. Soon the echizen-gani will be in season, and I'll be missing my yearly trip to Tojimbo, where the sights and smells of the winter catch defined a big part of my experience in Fukui. But while I miss Fukui, I am happy to experience the wonderful things here. Thanksgiving is coming up, and I am looking forward to turkey, stuffing, and mashed potatoes covered in gravy and cranberry sauce. This year instead of watching Kouhaku Uta Gassen and doing

hatsumoude, I'll be singing Christmas carols and counting down New Year's with my friends at a big party.

Since I'm an illustrator, that part of my life hasn't changed much, and I spent this fall painting as usual. During October, I continued my A-Yokai-A-Day series, translating and introducing stories from old Japan on my website. Here are a few of the illustrations I painted this year.



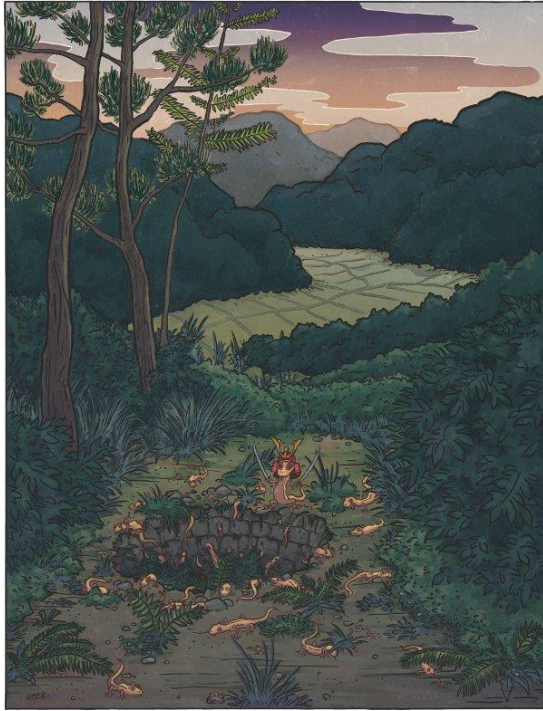
- Momiji, a famous demoness from kabuki



- Nurikabe, a mysterious wall that blocks your way at night



- Inugami, a dog spirit that serves its master loyally



I also translated and illustrated an old legend from Minamichizen-cho about Imori: geckos possessed by the spirit of dead samurai.

Painting new pictures every day has kept me very busy, but it has also helped me to keep in touch with Japan and Fukui, so I am very happy to do it.

- Matt