

Madokara Mieru
(Through The Window I See)

JAPANESE

Within every traditional Japanese haiku is a ‘kigo’—a word associating the poem with a particular season. **Madokara Mieru** is an adaptation of five such haiku in rondo form; corresponding to spring, summer, autumn, winter and the return of spring. Each refrain is sung by a vocalist in a different stage of life—a child for spring, a young woman for summer, a middle-aged man for autumn, and an elderly man for winter. Following an extended instrumental ‘transfiguration,’ the return of the child’s voice at the end signifies the return of spring, thus completing the cycle of life, death and rebirth as reflected through the changing of the seasons.

SPRING (Solo Girl)

madokara mieru
(kagayaku) ume ichirin
ichirin hodo no
(sono) atatakasa

Hattori Ransetsu:

Through the window I see
one shining plum blossom
that warmth of
one blossom

SUMMER (Solo Woman)

madokara mieru
(mabushii) me ni wa aoba
yama hototogisu
(aa) hatsugatsuo

Yamaguchi Sodo:

Through the window, I see
Radiant greenery for the eyes
A mountain cuckoo
Ah, the first bonito

AUTUMN (Mixed Chorus)

madokara mieru
(sawayaka) akikaze no
yama o mawaru ya
(ano) kane no koe

Kaga no Chiyo:

Through the window, I see
The refreshing autumn wind
Churns in the mountains
And that over there – a bell’s voice

BRIDGE (Solo Woman)

yomei
ikubaku ka aru
koyoi hakanashi
inochi mijikashi

Masaoka Shiki:

My remaining days
How much more is there to live?
Tonight is meaningless
Life is short

WINTER (Bass Chorus)

madokara mieru
(hietā) yuki no ie ni
nete iru to omou
(nete) bakari nite

Masaoka Shiki:

Through the window, I see
Cold snow all around the house
In bed I think
Only of this

SPRING (Solo Girl)

madokara mieru
(tanoshi) ichihatsu no
ichirin shiroshi
(kono) haru no kure

Masaoka Shiki:

Through the window, I see
This cheerful iris
A lone, white flower
In this springtime dusk