



Christmas 2017

I just got back from skating, a rare pleasure that helps keep me from becoming too decrepit. And a good thing too, because 2017 was a year full of happy times. I start in Japan last December with a dream fulfilled, a pilgrimage to Nara and Kyoto where I saw the Kinkakuji – the Golden Temple. I celebrated New Year with my godson Diyang and his family in Taichung, Taiwan, and was hosted and feasted like a visiting potentate by my old friend Kiku, the mayor of Kaohsiung.

Back in Toronto I enjoyed Gotterdammerung at the COC with a dear friend from Tamsui, Louise. That was the first of 18 operas and concerts this year, all wonderful, but Jan Lisiecki and Angela Hewitt playing with the TSO stand out. In the summer I had three special guests: my Puyuma grandson Weiyl, here for an ESL camp; Japanese student Riku on his way to Princeton, and Halinuz, son of one of my students from 1980 at the Mountain Student Centre. And our family had a special visitor on February 23 with the arrival of Karen's first grandchild – Elowen.

I seem to be president for life of the Taiwanese Human Rights Association of Canada, which organized a visit of lawyer Stephen Lee from Taiwan to receive our Human Rights Award in November. I took him to visit MP's and diplomats in Ottawa. So Taiwan, its future and the future of my 6 godsons and 10 (11?) grandchildren there continue to be the centre of my life, but time marches on, and they now call me grandpa.

Wishing you Christmas joy and as many blessings in 2018 as I have had in 2017.

Michael



Weiyl (with best friend George) Riku at Niagara Falls

Halinuz in Algonquin Park

Michael Stainton * 45 Fontainebleau Drive Toronto Canada M2M 1P1 * michaelpayas@gmail.com