



NANCY NETHERCOTT

The Rev. Dr. Nancy Nethercott lived over 30 years in Japan as a church-planting missionary and co-founded Christians in the Arts Network (CAN) to encourage and pastor artists. Nancy continues missionary activities while also serving as an Anglican priest in Indiana and Chaplain of the Robert Webber Institute for Worship Studies (IWS) in FL. Nancy holds an MA in Linguistics and a Doctorate of Worship Studies from IWS, as well as an advanced certificate in Spiritual Formation.

Roger W. Lowther is the founder and director of Community Arts Tokyo (CAT), director of faith and art at Grace City Church Tokyo, and coordinator for the MAKE Collective, a global network of artists. He received degrees from The Juilliard School and Columbia University and is currently studying at Reformed Theological Seminary.

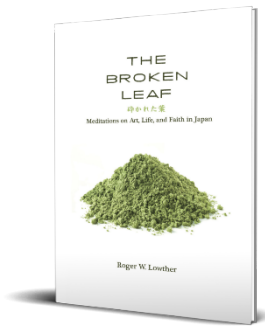
I first met Roger while he was in language school, shortly after he and his family moved to Japan in 2005. Our mutual interest in arts and missions, Japanese culture and language, caring for and encouraging artists, and bridging the Japanese church and artists formed the basis of our now twenty-year friendship and collaboration in ministry.

While Roger's emerging corpus of writing didn't begin during his time in Japan, it was spurred on by the 2011 triple earthquake, tsunami, and nuclear disaster in Japan. God had prepared Roger "for such a time as this" by giving him a vision and plan for having a portable organ built for his ministry use. The organ was created and arrived just in time for Roger, along with a number of other artists, to travel to evacuation shelters in the disaster zones to bring comfort and peace to traumatized survivors through music and other art forms. This involvement in witnessing the power of the arts to heal and build community was an impetus for Roger to start CAT, which hosts conferences, festivals, artist gatherings, performance parties, book and movie discussions, art exhibits, talks, panel discussions, and many other events.

Roger's books, podcasts, and blog reflect his deep love for the Japanese people, culture, and art of all genres, including food. His writing style invites readers into a "taste and see" of Japanese culture through stories, meditations, a children's story that came out of the redemption of a tsunami-ruined piano, and mouth-watering (at least for me!) reflections on food culture.

Appropriate for his context and audience, all of Roger's books reviewed here can be found in both English and Japanese.

Lowther, Roger W. *The Broken Leaf: Meditations on Art, Life, and Faith in Japan*. Resource Publications, 2019. 64 pp.



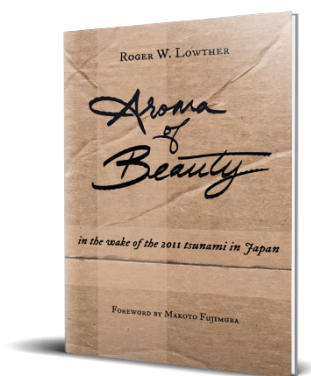
Missionaries often desire to find the “redemptive analogy” (Don Richardson’s concept from *Peace Child* and *Eternity in Their Hearts*)¹ that will unlock the gospel for a particular culture and people. While missionaries in Japan have yet to find that key analogy, *The Broken Leaf* invites readers to explore the gospel images found in the beauty of Japanese art and culture. Through his ten short meditations, Roger challenges us to discover how God might be revealing his story in the everyday objects of life.

Lowther, Roger W. *Pippy the Piano and the Very Big Wave*. Community Arts Media, 2020. 44 pp.



On March 11, 2011, an earthquake-induced tsunami devastated the northeastern coast of Japan. The losses were great—lives, property, and items of value. *Pippy the Piano and the Very Big Wave* tells a true story of redemption through the eyes of a water-soaked piano belonging to New Life Kamaishi Church. The broken piano was not thrown out with all the other debris but rather cherished by the congregation and repaired. Roger beautifully weaves the gospel message into Pippy’s redemptive story, inviting readers into the hope we have in Christ, who brings “beauty from ashes” (Isaiah 61). Appropriate for children of all ages.

Lowther, Roger W. *Aroma of Beauty*. Community Arts Media, 2021. 174 pp.



The devastating earthquake and tsunami in March of 2011 and the continued uncertainties due to the nuclear plant failure afforded Christians in Japan the opportunity to step into disaster relief through creative ministries. Roger’s training in organ and passion for engaging artists and the arts in missional endeavors uniquely positioned him to bring hope and healing through music brought to evacuation shelters and temporary housing facilities. Through stories and biblical meditations, *Aroma of Beauty* emphasizes that hope, enabling readers to see how God is present even in the darkest and most terrifying situations.

1 Richardson, Don. 1974. *Peace Child*. Regal Books; Richardson, Don. 1984. *Eternity in Their Hearts*. Regal Books.

Lowther, Roger W. *A Taste of Grace*. Community Arts Media, 2024. 140 pp.



God’s gift of food to each culture exemplifies his creativity and love. For those who have spent time in Japan, eating in humble homes and country inns or fine restaurants and specialty cafés, Japanese cuisine is often embraced as one of the most artful, subtle, and delicious in the world. In *A Taste of Grace*, Roger acts as a creative docent introducing readers to unique Japanese foods that hint at Christ’s love and care for us every day. Taste and savor God’s grace and beauty in this array of Japanese culinary traditions and cultures.

For those who, like me, are looking forward to Roger’s next book, I bring you good news. *Hidden Beauty* will be released this year. From the introduction:

“Beauty in Japanese art is often ‘hidden’ in the silent space between the placement of objects, brush strokes, and sound. Another deeper beauty is hidden as well, the beauty of the Christian gospel. . . . As we discover together the hidden beauty of God in the things in Japan, may we draw closer to and be led in worship of him.”

Whether or not you have an interest in the country and culture of Japan, through Roger’s books you will both delight in and be awed by the Gospel of Christ in the far nations of the world.