**“The Golden Sieve”** (*„Zelta sietiņš”*) (1920) by Rainis

Rainis composed and arranged the collection of poetry for children “The Golden Sieve” (The Sieve (*sietiņš*) is also the Latvian name of the Pleiades constellation) back in the time when he had emigrated to Switzerland. The oldest of the poems is titled “Big Laziness” (*„Lielais Slinkums”*) and was written in 1903 while the exile in Slobodska. For the most part the poems were written in December 1919. Rainis sent the arranged collection to Riga to the chairman of the Rainis community (*Raiņa klubs*) Roberts Ivanovs. In the letter from January 20th he explained: “I am sending an attempt on “children books” to the community’s “children literature department” — please discuss if this is appropriate, if so, then it is a gift to the community”. Rainis remembered that “The poetry verses start with “The Golden Sieve” — quite accidentally and unexpected even to myself. […] The happy sounds of childhood resounded in the bleak battles of fate of an artist. But the joyous sounds couldn’t be simply repelled, the pesky thoughts just didn’t let go and I couldn’t escape them otherwise, as to only draw them.” Many poems portray animals and birds in bright scenes. Among them are such bellowed poems like “Kitty” (*„Kaķenīte”*), “Riddle” (*„Mīkla”*) and others. The book was published by the publishing house “Anša Gulbja apgāds” in 1920 with cover illustrations by Jānis Jaunsudrabiņš.

To many generations the name of “The Golden Sieve” reminds more of the animated movie. Roze Stiebra recalled: “It was the year 1975, the composer Imants Kalniņš was sitting at the piano, quietly humming to himself, he played the first song that was just now composed for the future animation movie “The Golden Sieve” (*„Zelta sietiņš”*). There was neither the ensemble “Menuets” yet, nor the great arrangement of the leader Jānis Blūms, and the same band “Menuets” that later recorded the soundtrack was just an idea at the time, but there was the music. Excellent music — fine, harmonic, fragile and a little creepy at the same time, so greatly matching Rainis’ poem, its meaning: “One, who looks through eyes of sieve, sees the world in diamonds shining.” That is how it all begins. Beautiful and powerful. Always keeping in mind the idea of a sky as the dominant position of everyone’s pace of life.”