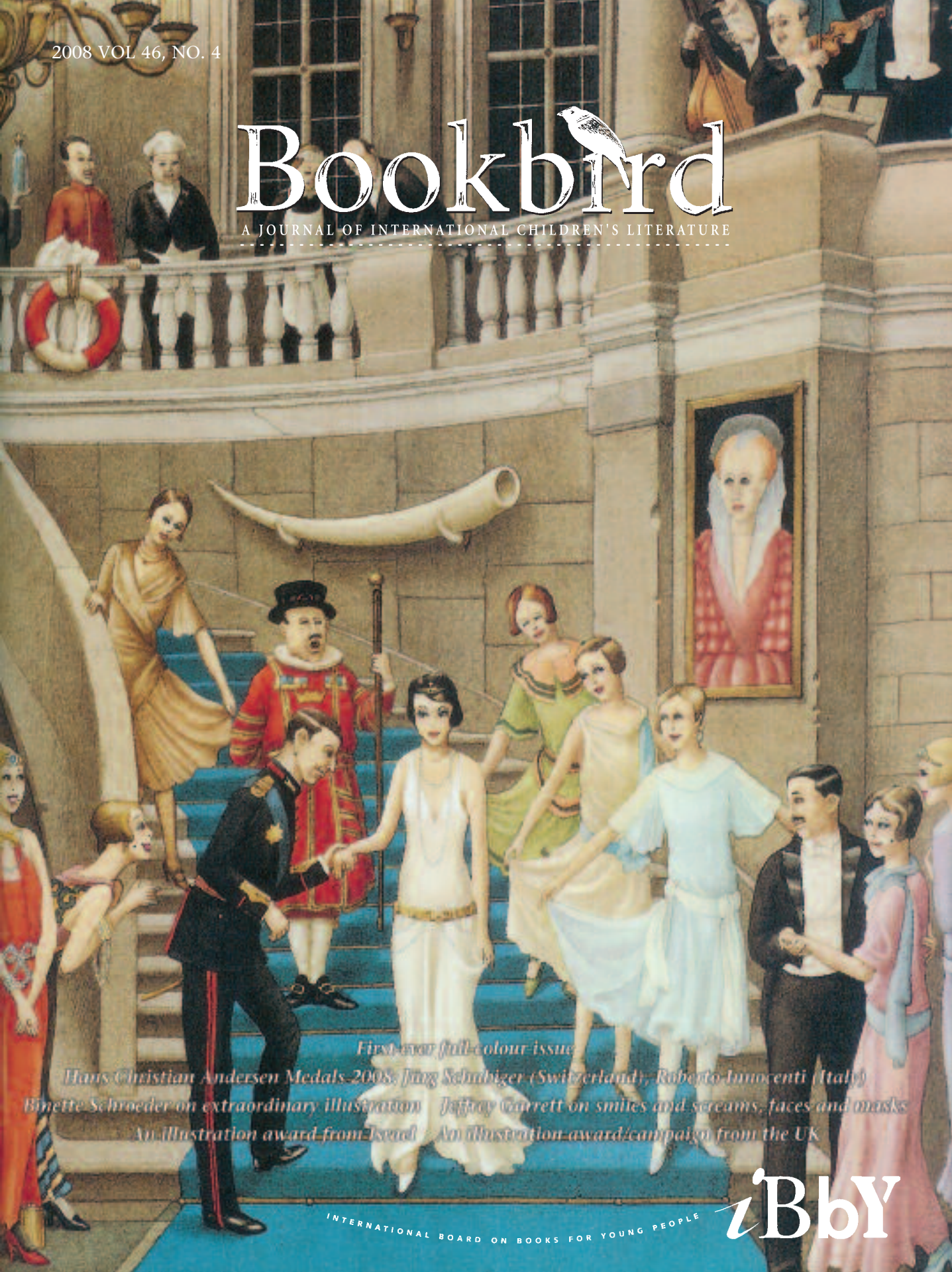


2008 VOL 46, NO. 4

Bookbird

A JOURNAL OF INTERNATIONAL CHILDREN'S LITERATURE



First ever full-colour issue

Hans Christian Andersen Medals 2008: Jürg Schubiger (Switzerland); Roberto Innocenti (Italy)

Binette Schroeder on extraordinary illustration Jaffrey Garrett on smiles and screams, faces and masks

An illustration award from Israel An illustration award/campaign from the UK

INTERNATIONAL BOARD ON BOOKS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

iBbY

The Journal of IBBY, the International Board on Books for Young People

Editors: Valerie Coghlan and Siobhán Parkinson

Address for submissions and other editorial correspondence:

bookbirdsp@oldtown.ie and bookbirdvc@oldtown.ie

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*I said it in Hebrew – I said it in Dutch –
I said it in German and Greek:
But I wholly forgot (and it vexes me much)
That English is what you speak!*

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Editorial

Welcome to the first ever full-colour issue of *Bookbird*. This is an experiment that has been a long-time dream. When the opportunity came to publish a single issue in colour, we decided to concentrate mainly on articles that would benefit from colour, which is to say articles about illustration. Illustration is, of course, enormously important in children’s literature, and one of the defining characteristics that distinguishes children’s literature from literature for adults. On the other hand, contrary to the general cultural assumption about picturebooks, they are emphatically not only for the youngest children, and the illustrations discussed in this issue – those by the inimitable German illustrator Binette Schroeder, for example – appeal to the widest audience. The widest audience, however, as in so many areas of literature, tends not to include Anglophone readers, and many of the artists discussed in this issue will doubtless be new to readers, since so many wonderful European, South American and Asian illustrators remain unknown in the English-speaking world, which is notoriously resistant to works in translation.

The picturebooks discussed in this issue are works of art as well as literature, but in spite of their excellence, picturebooks have been a source of concern to children’s literature professionals, especially in the Anglophone world, where the market for picturebooks has been experiencing severe commercial problems. In an effort to combat these problems and to rekindle interest in picturebooks in the trade

and among the book-buying public, a major publicity campaign is under way in Britain. Other countries experiencing problems in the picturebook market might do well to consider the UK model described in the article on *The Big Picture*.

In addition to several fascinating and beautifully illustrated articles on picturebooks and illustration, we also bring you, in this issue, an article on each of the winners of this year’s Hans Christian Andersen Awards – the medal for illustration and the medal for writing. The list of finalists for the HCA award is included, together with a frank article on the judging process by the chair of the jury.

So many delights – happy reading!

Bookbird editors



VALERIE COGHLAN is the librarian at the Church of Ireland College of Education in Dublin, Ireland. She lectures on and writes about children’s books and has a particular interest in picturebooks.

SIOBHÁN PARKINSON is a writer of fiction for children and adults (young and otherwise) and a professional editor.

Erratum

In the Hans Christian Andersen issue (April 2008), in the article on the Irish illustrator Marie-Louise Fitzpatrick, a comment was wrongly attributed to Marian Keyes. The comment was in fact made by Ciara Ní Bhroin.

Illustration beyond the Ordinary



• This article takes the reader on a rollercoaster
• ride of glee, amusement, astonishment and
• awe through the colourful (in both senses)
• career of one of Germany's most acclaimed
• illustrators of children's books, and possibly
• that country's most imaginative and original
• illustrator in the field. As if this is not
• enough, she then goes on to introduce us to
• her favourite international illustrators...

This article is based on a talk that was delivered at the Children's Books Ireland summer conference in Dublin in 2007, where Binette Schroeder was a guest of IBBY Ireland and the Goethe-Institut, Dublin

My first publisher, Dimitrij Sidjanskij of the Swiss publishing house Nord-Süd, and one of the dreamers among German-language publishers, became a kind of pioneer when he started to co-produce picturebooks with international publishers. Truth to tell, he just didn't have the funds to finance a first edition all by himself. In co-production the books could appear, cost-effectively, in several languages at the same time. This lack of money was actually a stroke of luck for me and many other authors and illustrators, because it brought us immediate international recognition.

by BINETTE SCHROEDER

(translated by Siobhán Parkinson)



Binette Schroeder is one of Germany's leading illustrators for children



Claas Claasen the farmer eating his lunch (from Florian und Traktor Max)

For German publishers at that time the idea of co-operation with foreign publishers was quite shocking. Mrs Spangenberg, the publisher at Ellermann, raised her eyebrows when she heard about this arrangement, and said condescendingly, ‘But Frau Schroeder, that’s not a publisher. That’s an agent!’

This lady published my book *Archibald und sein kleines Rot* [Archibald and his little red] at around the same time as Nord-Süd published my first book, *Lupinchen*, in 1969. *Archibald*, a book of which I am very fond, had only a short shelf life with Ellermann, whereas *Lupinchen* was my most successful book ever. It won several prizes: Prix Loisirs Jeunes in Paris, the silver medal at the International Bookart Exhibition in Leipzig, and a Golden Apple at the Biennial of Illustration Bratislava (BIB). Then in 1971, Nord-Süd also published *Florian und Traktor Max* [Florian and Traktor Max], a homage to my north-German homeplace.

***The problem was that :
these books of mine were :
simply not of their time :***

The difficulties I had at that time were grotesque. The problem was that these books of mine were simply not of their time. There was no demand among the 1968 generation, as they were called, for fantasy. Children’s books were supposed to be critical of society. They had to have realistic themes. The debate about *Florian und Traktor Max* was lively, at times even aggressive. I was told, ‘An old nag like that doesn’t get put out to pasture these days – he gets sent to the slaughterhouse. You have to explain this to children!’

Lupinchen begins with a story that my grandfather used to tell me. ‘Weeping willows,’ he said, ‘let their branches hang down like that because they were planted with their roots pointing upwards.’ There was quite a to-do when Christa Spangenberg read this nonsense. She was a passionate and extremely professional gardener, and couldn’t bear the idea of misinforming children in this way!

I really can’t think where I can have got the self-confidence to follow my own path, ignoring accusations like this, and uncompromisingly



Lupinchen with the baby weeping willow (that was planted upside down)



Fruit harvest (from Florian und Traktor Max)

refusing to allow changes of any sort in my books. Possibly the publishers would have worn me down eventually, if I hadn't met Dimitrij Sidjanskij quite by chance and just at the right time.

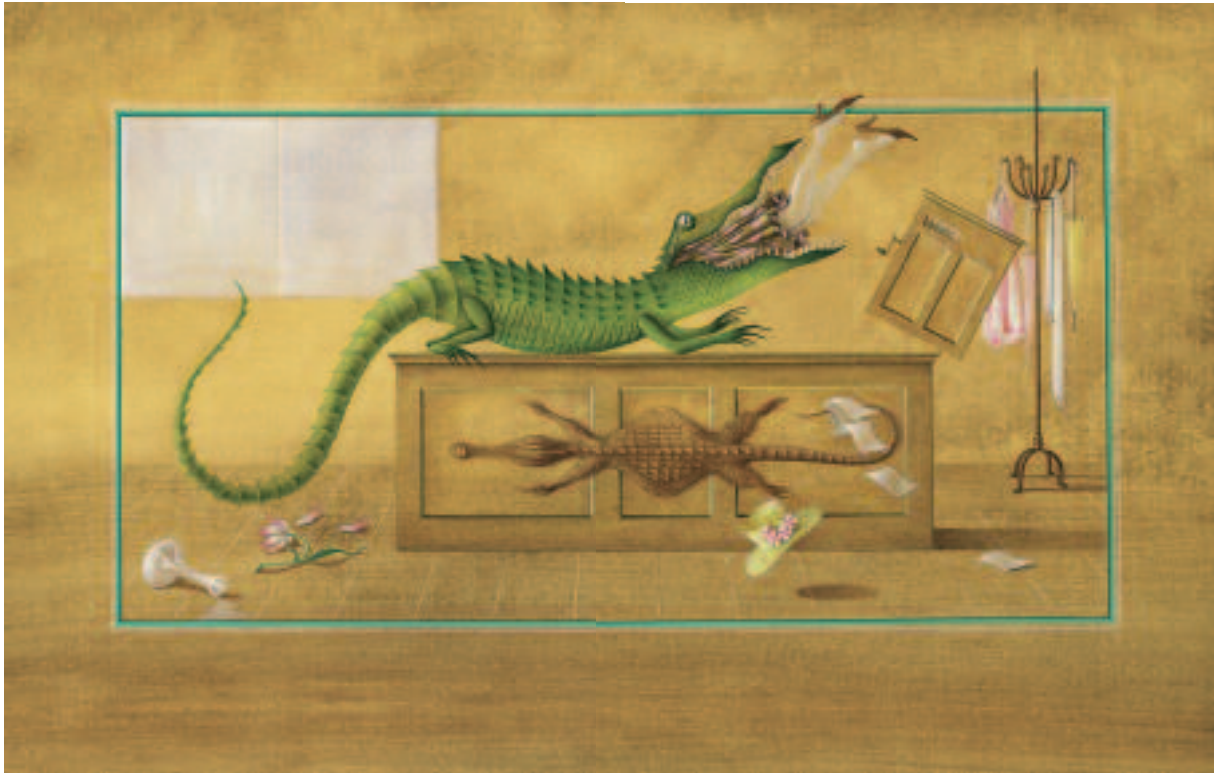
He was nuttier than all his authors and illustrators put together! He kept up a very unusual sport from his youth in Yugoslavia: he kept high-flier pigeons. On lovely summer afternoons, he would throw them up into the air from his large hands, and he would take a child-like delight in the way they appeared, as he put it, at a height of two to three thousand metres like flowers in the sky. (Though perhaps it was only two to three *hundred* metres in reality.) The thing that really interrupted our business

***Dimitrij Sidjanskij was
nuttier than all his authors
and illustrators put together!*** :

discussions and played havoc with the business atmosphere was the panic-stricken cries he would give when a thunderstorm blew up. Sometimes we would search until it had got quite dark in the villages round about, to see if maybe a little pigeon had fallen out of the sky. Naturally, a person like that understood my weeping-willow poetry!

I have to admit that I can't refrain from giving a little smirk when, of all people, the children of that legendary socially critical 1968 generation come to me and ask, 'Are your books really still in print? We grew up on them!'

Lupinchen and *Florian und Traktor Max* really have become children's classics. Thanks to Nord-Süd, they have been on the market for more than 35 years. And we could put *Krokodil Krokodil* [Crocodile, crocodile], which appeared in 1975, in the same category. This crocodile breaks a taboo



The crocodile gobbles up Miss Sophie (from Krokodil Krokodil)

by angrily eating a shop assistant in a crocodile shop and gets his own back by taking possession of her clothes. In spite of this murderous gobbling-up, or perhaps because of it, this croc goes down very well with children, and especially with children who have speech problems.

I think I am in many ways an outsider. I have never dealt with social or political themes in my books, and I have never gone the fashionable route. I have never had a style that is typical of the times in which I have lived. Perhaps this has something to do with my very – in the best sense – academic education, of which I am proud. The reason is that I have also experienced the opposite. After I had attended a private art school in Munich for three years, I wanted to spend a summer ‘perfecting’ my art, and so I went to Basel, to the Allgemeine Gewerbeschule (General Business School), as it was called at the time. The director took one look at my work and his judgement was merci-

less: ‘What you are doing – it’s just run-of-the-mill stuff. If you want to learn something here, you’ll have to go back to foundation level.’ And so, rather late in the day, I started all over again, and studied for more than five years in Basel – and to this day I have never regretted it. The Basel concept of education was influenced by the Bauhaus and by the teaching methods that Johannes Itten had developed.

The Basel school – nowadays, it is styled the ‘Design University’ – is and remains the solid foundation on which my work rests, even if its influence is not quite so obvious today. Critics say that my style is distinguished by its dreamy atmosphere, a certain affinity with surrealism and a kind of stageyness. What I really want to do is to entice children into worlds in which a mysterious atmosphere reigns and in which a strange light shines. I would like to show them mysterious landscapes and places where there is something to be discovered, and which have something of the

***I want to entice children
into worlds in which a
mysterious atmosphere
reigns and in which a
strange light shines*** :

eerie and the adventurous about them. And I am very conscious of addressing feelings such as fear, loneliness or sadness. Children's books don't have to be all fun and games.

When I received the German youth literature prize for my corpus of work in 1997, the judges' citation stated that, in spite of my traditional working methods, I had always tried, with every book, to find a new style and had set a priority on innovation. That is true. I never wanted to repeat myself stylistically in any of my books. I always sought new forms of expression. Because you can't just get things like this at the supermarket, it takes a long time between books.

My *Froschkönig* [The frog prince] – where I was interested in the idea of the filmic and wanted to show dramatic progressive movement in pictures – appeared in 1989. Michael Ende's *Die Vollmondlegende* [The legend of the full moon], which I illustrated, came out in 1993, and *Laura* in 1999. Since then, I haven't published a new book, but I have been working for the last four years with ever-increasing enthusiasm on a new

project. It was a great liberation to break away, with *Laura*, from my complicated and time-consuming gouache mix technique and to throw myself joyfully into drawing using pencils, chalks and pastels on black photo-album card.

With *Laura*, I also tried to find how radically a text can be shortened. That only works, of course, when you've written the story yourself. From the original five pages of the manuscript, there were only about two pages left by the end. An illustrator should push things to the limit like this at least once, because it is very exciting to find out exactly which part of the story can be told exclusively in pictures.

I want to tell you a couple of anecdotes now about the very different responses my books have had abroad – and this will lead us neatly on to the theme of the country-specific characteristics of children's book illustration, which is the central theme of this article.

Sebastian Walker, the ingenious English children's book publisher, who sadly died far too young, was a very good friend of ours. He really wanted to make some picturebooks with me immediately after he had founded his publishing house. With my Zebby and Tuffa books (two series of little board-books, consisting of five books each, for very small children), I tried very hard to be sophisticated in the English way. When I laid out my original artwork in the



The transformation (1) (from The Frog Prince)

***It is very exciting to find
out exactly which part of
the story can be told
exclusively in pictures*** :

London publishing house, the wonderful Helen Craig appeared, by chance. She bent briefly over my work and said, 'Oh, how VERY continental!' As soon as she said that, I knew the game was up, and I was right. In spite of being published with very successful publishers, all my books that have been published in

England and in America were complete flops.

And shortly after that, another English publisher friend, Peter Usborne, went one further. He told me about an American picture-book congress, at which a speaker tried to describe to the auditorium what is typical of European picturebooks, by saying, 'Oh, you know, these gloomy European books, just like those of Binette Schroeder'.

The arrogance with which Americans and British people sometimes regard the 'continent' can be very amusing to us continental Europeans. But of course I did wonder what the hell it was that didn't fit in with this Anglo-American way of seeing. Is it the wide, north-German-influenced landscapes that very often appear in my books? Or the restrained, dullish light? Or the rather monochrome, attenuated colour? Or is it my finicky – some people call it old-masterly – craft?

In the end, it was Brian Alderson who shed light on the matter. One evening at a book fair, he shot me these words: 'You are NOT a good illustrator, you don't know how to draw!' So THAT was it! For the

English market, my books lacked that very specific element of witty draughtsmanship that distinguishes English picturebooks. This criticism naturally irritated me. Especially considering that at that time I was enjoying triumphs in the not exactly culturally insignificant countries of France and Japan. In France, little plays had been made out of my books, and in Japan a very distinguished journal of youth culture had devoted a whole issue to me. Be that as it may, a leopard doesn't change its spots – you just have to stick to your guns and put up with the critics.

Illustrators react – and they absolutely must do so – to social, political, economic and cultural conditions. But what is of burning interest to me, and has been for years, is where, how and why stylistic innovations come about.

At the beginning of the 1970s, I discovered, on my forays to the Frankfurt Book Fair, on the East German stand, beautiful, exciting and completely differently illustrated picturebooks, and I managed again and

*Laura rescues Humpty Dumpty as
he falls out of a tree (from Laura)*





Klaus Ensikat illustrates 'Red Riding Hood' in a style reminiscent of 19th-century drawings

again, in a cloak-and-dagger sort of way, to exchange my hard currency deutschmarks for these wonderful books – as I did also with the books on the little Polish and Bohemian stands. Today, these books constitute the precious core of my picturebook collection, which in the meantime has grown to almost three thousand titles, and which has, since 2005, been housed in the Binette-Schroeder-Kabinett in the International Youth Library in Munich.

I still very much admire these books from the former German Democratic Republic (GDR). The illustrators deftly side-stepped the poor-

For the English market, my books lacked that element of witty draughtsmanship that distinguishes English picturebooks

I discovered, on the East German stand, beautiful, exciting and completely differently illustrated picturebooks

quality printing of antiquated presses by developing a high culture of pen-and-ink drawing. I often think, if the captivatingly fresh and at times very hard and expressive line of the great German drawing culture of the end of the 19th and especially the beginning of the 20th century can be traced in some form in our time, then it is through these ingenious draughtsmen of the GDR.

Of particular note are **Klaus Ensikat**, winner of the Hans Christian Andersen prize, whose illustrations are reminiscent of 19th-century drawings, and are full of subtleties und ironic allusions; **Volker Pfüller**; **Hans Ticha**; **Henning Wagenbreth**, who is well known for his political posters and comics; and **Franz Zauleck**, the youngest of this group, who is unfortunately far too underestimated. In almost all of them, I see a clear connection to German Expressionism and to the classics of Modernism.

What had the German-speaking 'west', as it



From Vater ist der beste by Volker Pfüller

***Erlbruch is astonishing
to a point beyond
astonishment in his palette*** :

was at the time, to put alongside these picturebook artists? Can one describe the idiosyncrasy and artistic handiwork of a single illustrator as an innovation? If so, then we can include the books of **Nikolaus Heidelberg**. His child characters are unusual little

everyday monsters, a refreshingly tart contrast to the representation of picturebook children that was fashionable at the time. For me, his daring ugliness was almost shocking at first.



Left: *From Der Ball oder Ein Nachmittag mit Berti* by Nikolaus Heidelberg

Right: *Die Menschenfresserin* by Wolfgang Erlbruch



Wolf Erlbruch, also a Hans-Christian-Andersen prizewinner, sets unusual priorities with unusual themes. In his second book, *Vom kleinen Maulwurf, der wissen wollte, wer ihm auf den Kopf gemacht hat* (*The Story of the Little Mole Who Knew It Was None of His Business*) is about the differences in animal excrement. You can just imagine what the reaction was when this book appeared in Germany! *Die Menschenfresserin* [The man-eating ogress] who eats her own little boy out of pure greed was another shocker! But there are also wonderfully peaceful books. He is astonishing to a point beyond astonishment in his palette. A regular Erlbruch movement has spawned a whole new collage style. There are lots of imitators, but nobody else comes anywhere near his ingenious prowess.

Country-specific colour is definitely a feature of some countries. *Baby Bilby, Where Do You Sleep?*, illustrated by **Narelle Oliver**, could only come from Australia. This continent, with its very particular brown, red and yellow tones, obviously has such a strong colour character that it would be difficult for artists to escape its spell.

This is particularly clear in the case of the Aboriginal artist **Raymond Meeks** and his *Pheasant and Kingfisher*.



From *Revontulilumi* by Kristiina Louhi: observe the wonderful northern light

There is also a very specific colour atmosphere in the far north, a winter light that backlights the tones with a magic glow. Such light colours are characteristic of a whole raft of Scandinavian picturebooks. This is nowhere more obvious than in *Revontulilumi* by the Finnish artist **Kristiina Louhi**.

In the 1990s, oil-rich Norway opened up an opportunity for experimentation among its illustrators, and with great success. The Norwegian state has for years quite deliberately supported experimental publishers. It buys up most or all of the first edition of the books, and distributes them to the state libraries. In this way, illustrators get paid to work in peace on particular projects. The result could well be that a whole new and impressive style could develop in Norway. My two favourites are the ingenious self-taught **Iben Sandemose** (*Englepels* [Angel



Fam Ekman

: *There is a very specific
: colour atmosphere in the
: far north, a winter light
: that backlights the tones
: with a magic glow*

fur]) and the great artist **Fam Ekman**, who always seems to come second in the Hans Christian Andersen prize

I would like to end with France, the great nation of culture. The children's book landscape of this country is uniquely varied. In no other country is there so much understanding of and openness to the daft and the *avant garde*. I am constantly astounded by the worlds of images through which French parents lead their children.

Pierre Mornet deals, in *Puce* [Flea], with the problem of a depressive mother; **Christophe Merlin**, in *J'ai*, with the theme of child labour; and **Georges Lemoine** has set 'The Little Match Girl' in war-torn Sarajevo. In *Riche et Pauvre* [Rich and poor] (published by Le Seuil), **Piotr**, shows the schizophrenic nature of our society, in which it is impossible to live a truly humane life. **Emmanuelle Houdart** in *Les Monstres sont malade* [The monsters are sick] shows us the monsters that children are so fond of in a most amusing state of sickness. **Martin Jarrie** in *Toc Toc Monsieur Crac Crac* [Tick tock Mr Crack Crack] tells, with French charm, a love story that melts the obstinacy of a misfit who lives alone. What is much more important, however, is that he demonstrates in an entrancing way an explosive fantasy of a magnitude only matched by recycling materials set alight.

: *Only in France is there so
: much understanding of
: and openness to the daft
: and the avant garde*

Unfortunately most publishers have given up their former fiery pioneering spirit

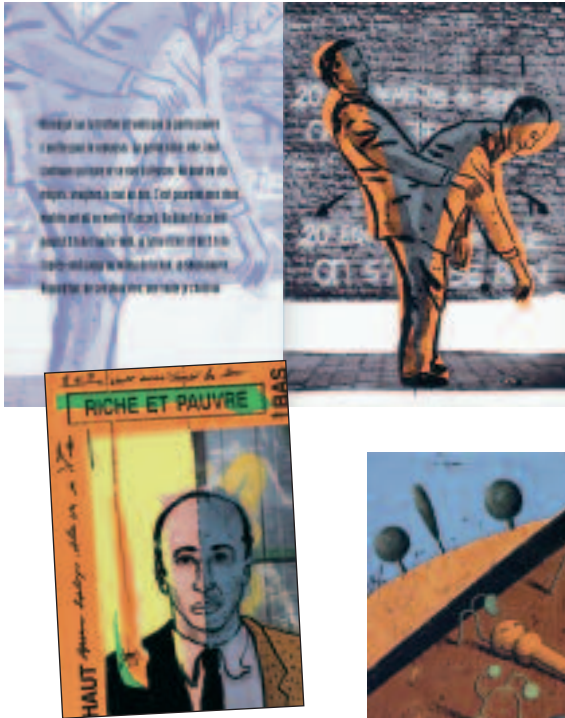
Almost all these books come from the great French publishers. Unfortunately, however, most of them have given up their former fiery pioneering spirit. Today it is almost exclusively small publishers, with their mainly small-format series, that enliven the *avant garde* scene.

Most of these illustrators work way beyond the boundaries of the ordinary children's picturebook. I would be interested to know how children really relate to these books, and to know whether such high art really has something to say to children. I am – for professional reasons – quite optimistic. I know from personal experience how children react to art. When I was very young, my grandfather used to sit me on his knee and show me art books – especially a book of the paintings of Hieronymus Bosch. It was war time, and there were hardly any picture-

books. I don't know what would have become of my painterly imagination if this lasting impression had not been made on it at such a young age. Moreover, I have been invited to many events in France with schoolchildren, and I have often noticed how carefully and sensitively but also how purposefully and systematically French teachers approach new visual territory with their pupils.

And finally, I trust children's imagination, which sees and understands much more than we adults can begin to suspect. If this is the case, then what rich potential for future understanding of art and culture is already there in very young children!

From Riche et pauvre – one of the few books to use the computer in artistically interesting ways



From Toc Toc Monsieur Crac Crac by Martin Jarric

This visionary book, in English and Arabic, demonstrates the necessity of learning to 'listen with another's ears' in order to communicate across cultures and peacefully resolve conflict.

In a remote village, black cats and blonde cats live in ongoing conflict until a grey cat is born. He is wise and impartial, so they ask him to be their ruler. He instructs all the cats to take off their ears. He gives the blonde ears to the black cats and the black ears to the blonde cats. Only when they learn to truly listen will they have peace.

This book is an essential tool for discussing communication across any cultural, racial or class divide. The unresolved ending leaves room for speculation about what these cats will be able to say to one another now that they are listening with other ears.

Dedwase's colourful illustrations are lively and engaging and complement the text admirably.

Tanja Nathanael



Khaled Jumm'a and Foutinie Dedwase

BLACK EAR ... BLONDE EAR

Ramallah, Palestine:

Tamer Institute for Community Education 2002

Free e-book (no ISBN) from www.childrenslibrary.org
(e-picturebook, 5-9)

For the young who learn from ABC books and for older book lovers who relish the artistry and invention often found in them, here is a uniquely delightful example of this venerable genre. Weill, who teaches bilingual teachers at Columbia University's Teachers College in New York City, also works to promote the craftwork of artisans from developing countries. After seeing the magnificent animals carved from wood by the Jimenéz brothers of Oaxaca, Mexico, she chose the ABC book format to introduce others to their extraordinary work.

KB Basseches, who has served as a photographer for the National Portrait Gallery of the Smithsonian Institution in Washington DC, demonstrates her skill in the vivid images she has made of the eye-catching colourful animals created by the Jimenéz brothers with the help of their families. The result of this collaboration is a book of unusual beauty for an educational purpose.

Glenna Sloan



Cynthia Weill and KB Basseches
(featuring wood sculptures by Moisés and Armondo Jimenéz)

**ABECEDARIOS: MEXICAN FOLK ART
ABCS IN ENGLISH AND SPANISH**

El Paso, TX: Cinco Puntos Press 2007
32pp ISBN 9781933693132
(picturebook, 3-7)

Screams and Smiles

On Some Possible Human Universals
in Children's Book Illustration

by JEFFREY GARRETT



Jeffrey Garrett is a librarian at Northwestern University in Evanston, Illinois, a former president of the Hans Christian Andersen jury and a former editor of Bookbird



• *International children's illustration shows, Jeffrey Garrett suggests here, a substrate of universal human expression – and a universal tendency to mask that expression. Then there are culture-specific elements that may or may not cross the communications divide. When they don't, they are replaced by meanings provided by our native storytelling ability – and children remake and transform stories differently from how adults do it*

This article is based on a paper delivered at the May 2007 Children's Books Ireland conference in Dublin, at which Jeffrey Garrett was a guest of IBBY Ireland

The portrait of Pope Innocent X, which hangs in the Galleria Doria Pamphilj in Rome, painted by Diego Velázquez around 1650, is regarded as one of the great paintings of all time. It is manifestly not a work for children. The projection of power it conveys to the viewer, the enormous affective control of the man on the throne, his vague impatience with the painter, the

gaze which also threatens: these are the perceptions of an adult viewer skilled in perceiving subtle messages in images and human faces. For an adult, the painting might also evoke the entire power of the papacy in 17th-century Europe. For a child, by contrast, the picture is probably rather dull.

In Francis Bacon's *Study after Velázquez's Portrait of Pope Innocent X*, painted some 300 years later, in 1953, the painter looks beneath the placid surface of Velázquez's painting, reaches inside it, calling forth and making visible the raw emotions lying hidden there. We sense the terror of a man trapped within his role, almost as if he were strapped to an electric chair. But at the same time, we sense the presence of the very opposite: the exultation and triumph of a man at the pinnacle of power. The shocking openness of the emotional display reminds us that we are all primates, apes.

Like Velázquez's painting, Bacon's portrait is also not a work for children – but I think we might agree that it is closer to being one, because for children, a vivid display of emotions is revealing and meaningful.

For children, the usually subdued facial expressions of adults are like a mask, hiding real thoughts. Growing up means learning to see behind the mask to detect love and kindness, but also evil intent, anger, or looming violence. As they grow up, children must also learn to mask or at least modulate their *own* emotions. Psychologists and sociologists call this ability 'affective control' or, in the language of the American sociologist Erving Goffman (1959), 'maintaining face'.

Within certain broad limits and subject to cultural variations, the two basic human expressions of screams and smiles exist in all cultures and may qualify as universals of human behaviour. A big part of the transferability of children's book illustration from one country to another hinges upon the way face and the masking of face are rendered by artists in one country and understood by children in another.

Much of the work of the Norwegian illustrator Svein Nyhus is based, like Francis Bacon's, on the role of the face as mask, on the enormity of the emotions which lie beneath face and, from time to time, break out explosively. Consider his powerful book *Sinna Mann* [Angry man], with a text by Gro Dahle. It is an unsettling story of domestic violence. The mask on this father, whose posture and throne-like chair are remarkably similar to that of

• ***For children, the usually***
 • ***subdued facial expressions***
 • ***of adults are like a mask,***
 • ***hiding real thoughts***





Velázquez's and Bacon's popes, reminds us that 'pope' and 'papa' are really the same word. The inscrutable eyes and the red skin colour, extending also to the giant, tensed, weapon-like hands and fingers, convey anger and violence only barely concealed and also only barely controlled. In the course of this book, the latent violence explodes, and the little boy hides in pathetic childlike ways, including a flight into fantasy.

In other books, Nyhus shows us the masks that children wear in their day-to-day lives and how these masks, too, break open in flashes of raw emotion. In *Snill* [Nice], a little girl with an exemplary disposition gradually cracks and rebels in a Momo-like way against the grey world of numbers, rules and adults oppressing her. Based on the universality of the situation and the facial expressions of all participants, these books by Dahle and Nyhus should be internationally transparent: children everywhere will probably understand what is happening here – and perhaps relate to the message, even if for cultural reasons the book could never be published in some countries.

Screaming begs to be exaggerated in the way it is rendered by artists, because it is itself such an extreme form of behaviour. Argentinean artist Isol's mother in *El globo* [The balloon] is an Aeolus of a screamer in her tantrum, blowing away every living

thing from her presence with an almost physical force. Her expression, physical size and facial colour have all been grotesquely exaggerated.

A big part of the transferability of children's illustration hinges upon the way face and the masking of face are rendered in one country and understood in another :



The universality of the expression of emotions, as well as the masking or veiling of emotions, is clear from the diversity of masks in so many cultures – funeral masks, for example, such as the famous Mycenaean death mask (in the Thessalonika Museum in Greece), supposedly that of Agamemnon. The eyes of ancestor masks are often



reduced to slits, allowing the projective imagination of anyone regarding them to see in the visage of a dead ancestor a whole range of emotions, from benevolence to brooding anger, as the viewer's mood, conscience, future hopes, fears or expectations suggest them.

In *Mon corps et moi* [My body and me] (text by the poet Jorge Luján), Isol regards the entire body as a mask behind which the soul or mind of an individual is active – and protected. The book emphasises in text and in image how different body and soul are from one another. Very similar is another collaboration between Luján and Isol, entitled *Ser y parecer* [Being and seeming], an effort on the part of author and illustrator to show children that seeming is a way of protecting themselves from the outside world. By using our face as a mask, we learn to protect ourselves much as an umbrella can protect us from the rain.

∴ *Very widely open eyes can*
∴ *serve to mask true feelings*





Masks do not always have to have narrow eyes to veil emotions. Very widely open eyes can serve to mask true feelings too. Look at the disturbing colour illustration on the cover of Isol's book on piñatas. It is a strangely emotionless smile, masking ... who knows what? Children read friendliness from faces – yet this appears to be a deceitful smile, as children might readily perceive. It is comparable to the famous smiling monsters of Maurice Sendak's *Where the Wild Things Are*, also a case book on how things, and especially adult smiles, are not always what they seem. They can instead deceive and hide hostile intent.

In *Piñatas*, we also see a child terrified of attending a birthday party putting on exactly



the same exaggerated and therefore blank smile as the piñata. On the very next page, however, when his true emotions come out, we see that he is anything but relaxed and happy inside.

There is a trend today among some children's book illustrators to remove expression from faces, creating a mask-like face, as in the Slovak master Dušan Kállay's prize-winning *Alica v krajine zázrakov*, an interpretation of *Alice in Wonderland*. The work of his student, Iku Dekune, winner of the top prize at the Biennale of Illustrations Bratislava in 2003 for *Amefurashi* [The sea-hare], based on a Grimm brothers' story, is also characterised by the same mask-like expressionlessness. And these are not just isolated instances: many submissions to the illustrators exhibition at the Bologna Children's Book Fair show the same tendency, for example, Elisa Nanni's interpretation of *Alice in Wonderland* in 2007 (not yet published) and the well-known fairy figures of Nicoletta Ceccoli.

There can be no doubt that human universals of expression play a role in the cross-cultural comprehension and appeal of children's books.

***Smiles and happy or
crying eyes are universal,
but individuals weight
them differently in
different cultures*** ::
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***There is information
encoded in illustrations that
is culturally so specific that
it cannot be understood
outside the boundaries of a
cultural group***

Because illustrations are rarely free-standing works of art, children may also be able to rely on the texts which accompany the images to better deal with ambiguities in the images. Young readers of *Cena de rua* [Street scene] by the Brazilian artist Angela Lago might find her image of an enormous mother or grandmother enveloping a small child initially quite frightening, but the text tells them that it is a warm embrace and not an ogress's next meal.

Certain universals of expression allow children's books from one culture to be readily understood by children of another; but there are nuances which vary from culture to culture. Research by Masaki Yuki, a social psychologist at Hokkaido University in Japan, has suggested recently (Wenner 2007) that cultures read faces differently. Yuki has sought to show that in Japan people tend to look to the eyes for emotional cues, whereas Americans tend to look to the mouth. He suggests that Japanese more actively seek to mask their emotions, so Japanese train their attention on the eyes, which are more difficult to control than the mouth, and therefore probably provide better clues about a person's emotional state even if he or she is trying to hide it. As a child growing up in Japan, Yuki was fascinated by pictures of American celebrities. 'Their smiles looked strange to me,' he says. 'They opened their mouths too widely, and raised the corners of their mouths in an exaggerated way.' This is reflected in the different emoticons used in Japan and the United States. In America, we use :-) and :-(respectively to make smiley/sad faces. The eyes are emotionless dots

and it is the mouth that carries the message. In Japan, the corresponding emoticons are ^_^ and ;_;. Here the eyes are the carriers of happiness and sadness (with the semicolons as tears), while the mouth is demoted to a simple line. Smiles and happy or crying eyes are universal, but individuals weight them differently in different cultures. Americans find it very difficult to 'read' smiles and eyes in Japanese children's books or films – for example in Hayao Miyazaki's *My Neighbour Totoro*, where wide eyes and cryptic smiles abound among the various forest creatures and spirits.

This research gives us a hint that there is information encoded in illustrations that is culturally so specific that it cannot be understood outside the boundaries of a cultural group. This comes as no surprise, since the conventions of illustration will inevitably vary depending on the cultural network which gives rise to them. The interplay between species-specific and culture-specific expression is currently an important topic for both anthropologists and cognitive scientists. Merlin Donald (2006) suggests that mimesis, the imitation of what we see around us, is the 'original source of human culture' and therefore of all forms of art. Yet still, we understand no art without 'extensive cultural programming', which varies from culture to culture:

The cultural network introduces an entirely new element to human life: immersion in a cognitive collectivity, or community of mind. ... Human culture is based on the sharing of mental representations, and we are tethered to that network.

Consider, for example, the rich cultural information encoded in this image by the Spanish artist Jesús Gabán Bravo. Where is this extraordinary town perched next to a deep gorge? Why the gate in the front? What is the woman doing? Adult readers may see that this is a town in



Andalusian Spain, probably from before the *reconquista*. Maybe it is Ronda, six or eight hundred years ago. Based on the flimsy wrought-iron gate and the obviously harmless gatekeeper, they might understand that this is a country at peace, at a time when the only danger came from the fanatical red-haired Christian barbarians from the north. But a child, maybe in America or Japan, will probably not know this.

***Ultimately, our minds are
all structured to make
stories out of the data
around us and, by making
stories, to make sense out
of what we see*** :

In the end though, does that really matter? A child may not need to pick up on all these pictorial clues to enjoy a story which may constitute itself in his or her mind in a way quite different from the intention of the writer and artist – in much the same way, in fact, as we impute emotions to masks which show no emotions. Ultimately, our minds are all structured to make stories out of the data around us and, by making stories, to make sense out of what we see. And if the story is not clear from the information given, then we will imagine the story based on our experience or our fantasies. Cognitive scientists refer to this ability to understand-via-story as

‘narrative imagining’, which Turner (1996) calls ‘the fundamental instrument of thought’. We make sense of our world through stories, and only secondarily through facts. Which is what the poet Muriel Rukeyser (1968) meant when she said, ‘The universe is made of stories, not of atoms.’ We understand our world by story, and if the story we are given is not good enough, we’ll make our own. So-called facts play a junior role in this process. Actually, Francis Bacon referred to facts once as ‘what used to be called truth’ (quoted in Bell 2007). It’s the viewer who makes the message in the end, and children are especially irreverent viewers.

In children’s book illustration, then, there are both closed discourses, comprehensible only within a culture, and also many transculturally meaningful ones – which may have started their lives as culturally insular, but graduate to something greater. *Alice in Wonderland* began as an almost untranslatable English story, but translators, by genius and by force of will, made it transcultural. Most children, for instance, learn early, usually via Disney, about Alice falling down the rabbit hole and about the Wonderland which she finds at the bottom. And so we find the same scenes again and again in the versions of *Alice* from around the world, interpreted by illustrators through the eyes of their particular culture. Most of these interpretations, if they don’t follow slavishly in Tenniel’s footsteps, are fitted out with some cultural information typical of the country in which the book is read. The purpose of this is to isolate the story as the source of mystery, rather than compound the mystery by placing too many cultural riddles into each image.

This sort of universalisation of internal cultural discourses is happening all the time. Eight years ago, the image created by the Italian artist Nevio Delaria would have meant very little to anyone: simply an aeroplane about to fly behind a tall

building. But today we all know what the aeroplane really does. And this knowledge is not specifically American, nor is it culturally specific at all. True, on an emotional level, it is probably read differently in different places. I don't believe anyone outside the United States can appreciate the sudden realisation of vulnerability, the end of an era, that attaches to this image in the minds of American adults and children, and which explains much (though not all) of the irrational American political behaviour in the years since. And of course, in some parts of the world, this picture may also represent an image of triumph. To say it is now recognisable universally is true, but that is only part of the story. So often, and especially in great literature and in great art, as with Bacon's screaming popes, things are one thing at the same time as they are their opposites, and the exact composition of this complex matrix of meaning is different from place to place and from time to time.

Things are one thing at the same time as they are their opposites, and the exact composition of this complex matrix of meaning is different from place to place and from time to time :

There is a tendency on the part of some cultures, usually the originating ones, to regard the illustrations accompanying a story as inviolate. In the case of *Alice in Wonderland*, the illustrations by John Tenniel are sometimes regarded as an indispensable and inseparable part of the story. As one critic wrote in a 1950s article appearing in *The Junior Bookshelf*: 'Yes, It Must Be Tenniel'. An anthropologist might describe this reactionary tendency as cultural totemism. To quote a standard manual (Johnson 2000): 'Totems are



regarded with great awe and respect since it is believed that any misbehaviour in regard to a totem – such as touching it, looking upon it, or, in the case of living totems, harming or killing it – will have disastrous consequences.' The French sociologist Émile Durkheim analysed totemic behaviour, arguing that it is in fact a way in which people worship their own societies by attributing supernatural power to totems associated with that society (Johnson 2000). This would certainly apply to the way many cultures will not tolerate tamperings with their sacred classics – unless, of course, they perform the tampering themselves. Americans would react to a re-illustration of Dr Seuss in this way, just as the English have done with *outré* reinterpretations of *Alice*.

An extreme but highly interesting example of cultural appropriation of Carroll's masterpiece is the collaboration of Guy Leclercq with the French-Korean artist Jong Romano. It ostentatiously breaks with just about every convention

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associated with the tradition of *Alice* illustration, while making liberal use of European art styles of the early and mid-20th century. We find Picasso in his Cubist period along with elements of *Guernica*. There is also much George Grosz – entirely fitting for the caricatural rendering of the absurd figures that populate Wonderland. Salvador Dalí also makes an appearance, especially in the ubiquity of clocks, clocks and more clocks. Children may not grasp all the associations, but they will make things work for themselves somehow. What they do understand are the smiling monsters, the masks, the disturbing difficulty of distinguishing statues and carved figures from living beings. Some day, when and if they see the works of Dalí, Grosz and Picasso again, these artists will not be strangers, and the associations the former children have with a work of their childhood will serve as the bridge to what we can hope will be a host of new associations. For children are constantly changing. New to this world, though evidently equipped with some interpretive tools they have from birth, kids experience things for the first time, then for the second and then the third, before they begin generalising on the basis of their experience to deal competently and confidently with new things. Initially they are

fearful, yet also excited and hopeful, when they encounter their environment. And they learn quickly. They seek clarity, but they also learn to interpret ambiguity and subterfuge, and in the end, confident in their abilities, they enjoy the simultaneity of mixed and even contradictory messages – although they welcome some form of resolution in the end which confirms that they are on the right path, confirms that their perceptions are sound, confirms, in other words, that they are likely to make it, where ‘making it’ means: to succeed or often just to survive.

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MAMMOTH PIE is another delightful title from the talented British writer/illustrator team who have also given us such enjoyable tales as TADPOLE'S PROMISE, MISERY MOO and DAFT BAT.

The tale begins with a very thin, hungry caveman dreaming of dining on something more mouth-watering than his usual weeds and seeds. Atop a nearby mountain lives a fat mammoth. The caveman, Og, plots to capture the mammoth and make himself a hearty meal. One by one, he enlists the help of his fellow cavemen, promising them a piece of delicious mammoth pie in return for their assistance.

In this ideal read-aloud are rhythmic rhyming phrases which beg young listeners to join in with the reader. As the mammoth sees the overly confident cavemen approaching, he remains completely unfazed. Og has his fellow cavemen to help him, but the mammoth turns out to have much more impressive back-up. Ross's vibrant illustrations in watercolour and ink convey the humorous spirit of the story, and subtle details provide many opportunities for conversation with young listeners/readers.

Jeffrey Brewster



Jeanne Willis and Tony Ross

MAMMOTH PIE

London: Andersen Press 2008

32pp ISBN 9781842706596

(picturebook, 4-8)

This engaging debut novel is narrated in the unaffected authentic-sounding voice of the main character, Amal, a 17-year-old Australian-Palestinian Muslim. Amal makes the biggest decision of her life, to wear the hijab, the Muslim headscarf, full-time. In vain, her parents warn of the probable consequences, including ostracisation by the other students at her exclusive prep school in a suburb of Melbourne. Amal's struggle to be an observant Muslim and an ordinary teenager leads her into a variety of situations, some hilarious and many poignant.

Without enduring preaching or direct teaching, readers learn, among other things, about diversity in Muslim communities, cultural and religious mores and their variations, the misconceptions of non-Muslims about the Muslim religion and culture. They participate fully in Amal's angst-filled lows and determination-fuelled highs. And, while the story deals in specifics as to religion and culture, the universal theme of striving for an authentic personal identity, so effectively presented here, will appeal to teen minds everywhere, whatever their beliefs.

Glenna Sloan



Randa Abdel-Fattah

DOES MY HEAD LOOK BIG IN THIS?

First published in Australia by Pan

Macmillan Australia Pty Ltd 2005

First USA edition: Scholastic 2007

360pp ISBN-13: 9780439919470

ISBN-10: 0439919479 (US edn)

(fiction, 12+)

The Hans Christian Andersen July 2008 How it Worked

by ZOHREH GHAENI



Zohreh Ghaeni is director of the Institute for Research on the History of Children's Literature in Iran and co-writer of a ten-volume book on that country's history of children's literature.

She was a member of the Hans Christian Andersen jury for the 2002 and 2004 awards and president of the 2008 jury

••• *As president of the Hans Christian Andersen Awards jury, Zohreh Ghaeni was particularly concerned with how IBBY's mission 'to promote international understanding through children's books' could be fulfilled through the HCA awards process. Here she gives an account of the jury's deliberations as they considered their decisions*

The Hans Christian Andersen (HCA) Awards is an international competition and an international jury selects the winners. Every national section of IBBY has the right to nominate a candidate for each category (author and illustrator). But not all the books can be read in their original language and not all of them are translated into languages that the jury can read. Writers and illustrators from countries with less well-known languages and cultures are usually the ones that are less prominent on the international publishing scene. Books from non-Western countries have little chance to be translated and enter the international book market.

There is a paradox here. It is commonly held that translated books are outstanding works that enrich the body of children's literature. It is further held that children's literature should acquaint children with other cultures. In reality, the vast majority of texts for children that are translated come from English, and the range of foreign cultures to which children throughout the world are introduced is very limited.

In spite of this reality, and because this is an international competition, some ways must be sought to consider the works of candidates from other cultures. In nominating jury members for the 2008 competition, I encouraged national sections to focus not only on finding experts with a good knowledge of children's literature from their own part of the world, but people who also had an in-depth understanding of children's literature from other cultures.

Having been a member of the Hans Christian Andersen Awards jury for two terms, I knew the jury needed sufficient time for reading a huge quantity of books (something approaching 600). For this reason, I suggested to the IBBY Executive Committee that the period for studying the books should be increased, and so, on this occasion, the jury received the books and started reading three months earlier than in previous years. This gave the jury the time they needed to find translators for books written in languages they did not know.

While the jury was fortunate to receive examples of titles by the majority of candidates, some sections were unable to find enough copies for all the jurors because the books were unavailable, mainly as they were out of print. However, IBBY Russia managed to produce a good overview of their candidate by making images available on a CD.

Criteria

For many years, jurors have followed a couple of clear criteria:

The Hans Christian Andersen Awards are given to an author and an illustrator ... who by the outstanding value of their work are judged to have made a lasting contribution to literature for children and young people. The complete works of the author and of the illustrator will be taken into consideration...

Although very general criteria were sent to the jurors at the beginning of the selection process, they had an opportunity to discuss specific criteria through a blog set up for this purpose.

Because the criteria are very general, various interpretations should naturally be expected. But although juries change for every competition, they have had similar attitudes; moreover, there is considerable overlap between the works that are awarded the HCA medals and the Astrid Lindgren Memorial Award. The books awarded show certain tendencies. There is no doubt that they are elegantly written, aesthetically illustrated and beautifully produced, but different perspectives could also conceivably produce a different kind of winner whose work is no less valuable than those chosen previously.

Most of the works or books which are awarded international prizes have already been introduced to the international market and they are mostly books from European and North

HCA Jury

Zohreh Ghaeni (president of jury),
Alicia Salvi, Annemie Leysen, Francine Sarrasin,
Nadia El Kholi, Isabelle Nières Chevrel,
Bill Nagelkerke, Nataliya Avgustinovich,
María Jesús Gil, Helene Schaer, Junko Yokota,
Elda Nogueira (ex officio), Liz Page (ex officio)

American countries. Discovering quality books that have not been recognised by the international market is a tough and complicated responsibility for the jury.

This has been a concern shared by previous juries. Patricia Crampton (1984), one of the British judges for a number of years, wrote:

What is fair? Should we stick to excellence as the first criteria? (I think that in fairness, ultimately, to all children we should.) Or should we to some extent at least cause the award to move around as a sort of congratulation for progress or to show our sympathy for effort (not the same thing!) Should we broaden the scope of the awards?

When he served as a jury member, Jeffrey Garrett (1993), who went on to be president of the 2004 and 2006 juries, said:

We have much to gain by reading and sharing the works of international authors and illustrators. Let's begin by learning who other cultures regard as their great writers, and then approaching them with the respect they deserve. The experience may be eye-opening.

The HCA Blog

As well as giving the jury additional time to review the books, I thought it would be useful for them to become familiar with each other's opinions and thoughts about the candidates and their works before coming to the final session.

So we created a password-protected blog for jurors to post their comments about candidates' work. The jury was free to change or edit their comments whenever they liked or add new ideas after discussion with other members or studying the works in depth.

The blog was very effective, and allowed jury members to ask each other for help, especially with work in unfamiliar languages. For example, Bill Nagelkerke, the juror from New Zealand, found it difficult to assess the work of Irmelin Sandman Lilius from Finland, because of the language barrier; similarly, Junko Yokota, the American jury member, found that the English translations of Lilius's works were out of print in the US. They both asked for help through the blog and I was able to ask Niklas Bengtsson, an expert on children's literature from Finland and an IBBY EC member, to let us know more about this great Finnish writer. It didn't take long for Niklas to send us several useful and informative articles about Lilius.

***Everybody believed that
the jury should
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writer in the national
and cultural context***

A very active discussion took place about Guus Kuijer, the author from the Netherlands. Junko noted that his dossier and his books were presented in Dutch despite the fact that the working language of the committee was to be in English and few of us could read Dutch. Annemie Leysen, the juror from Belgium, wrote about Kuijer, who had received major international and national awards and his works had been widely translated. Two days later, Alicia Salvi, the juror from Argentina, announced that she had found two of Kuijer's books in Spanish and she promised to read the

Hans Christian Andersen Awards 2008

Author winner

Jürg Schubiger (Switzerland)

Author finalists

Bartolomeu Campos de Queirós (Brazil)

Brian Doyle (Canada)

Guus Kuijer (Netherlands)

David Almond (UK)

Illustrator winner

Roberto Innocenti (Italy)

Illustrator finalists

Isol Misenta (Argentina)

Svjetlan Junaković (Croatia)

Adolf Born (Czech Republic)

David Wiesner (USA)

works and let everyone know her comments about this writer. While everyone was discussing this author, the Dutch section of IBBY announced that the German versions of his books were available and could be sent to whoever wanted them. After a very short time those of us who asked for the German versions had them. We very much appreciated the co-operation of our Dutch friends.

All jury members hoped that a blog would also be available to future juries to help them to exchange ideas and opinions in this way.

Opportunities and Discussions

It was a great opportunity in October 2007 that I could travel to China, where I met several writers in Beijing and Shanghai, among them Qin Wenjun (the Chinese author nominee). I discovered that children's literature in China had started a new life since the 1970s and is experiencing different trends. I was able to share this valuable experience with other members of the jury and everybody believed



From left to right: During the judging process; HCA jury; Members of the jury with Roberto Innocenti: María Jesús Gil, Helene Schaer, Zohreh Ghaeni, Junko Yokota, Alicia Salvi

that the jury should consider the works of a writer in the national and cultural context.

The participation of Helen Schaer from Switzerland, the former chairperson of Baobab Publishing, was a terrific opportunity for all of us to draw on her valuable experience and knowledge about children's literature from other cultures including China.

More discussion about other cultures ensued when the jury started studying the works of Fatima El Maadoul from Egypt. Thanks to Bill Nagelkerke for reminding the jury about the 2002 Andersen jury chair, Jay Heale's (2002) comment:

The impact of those works, particularly in the candidate's country of origin, is more significant than the number of languages his/her books have been translated into. We need to balance the success of those who have succeeded internationally with those whose considerable contribution may be limited within a language or culture.

But the problem was how we could achieve the necessary balance. It was clear that we needed more information about the contribution of these kinds of candidates. In this case the jury needed to know more about the Egyptian candidate; and who could transfer this knowledge better than Nadia El Kholy, the juror from Egypt, who had been asked by other jury members to inform them about El Maadoul's work.

In February, after about eight months of discussion on the blog, the jurors were asked to

write their shortlists. The jurors selected fifteen names from the thirty authors and thirty illustrators, from 35 countries. Among the candidates nominated by their countries were people who have already devoted their whole lives to children's literature, people like Irmelin Sandman Lilius from Finland (born 1936), Brian Doyle from Canada (b 1935), Peter Härtling from Germany (b 1933), Shuntaro Tanikawa from Japan (b 1931), Adolf Born from the Czech Republic (b 1930) and Lloyd Alexander from the United States (b 1924), who sadly died just a few months after his nomination. These were people we could judge based on their permanent contribution to children's literature. And of course Lloyd Alexander had gained popular recognition as an author of fantasy novels for children and young adults. His contribution in inventing fantasy worlds and writing successful adventures will last in the world of children's literature.

Final Meeting in Basel

The two-day meeting at which the final decisions would be made eventually arrived. The night before the first day of the jury meeting, the jurors were invited to the home of Liz Page, IBBY director of member services, communications and new projects, in Basel, where everybody got the opportunity to know each other in person in the warm atmosphere that

Liz and her husband Malcolm had created. Although we were meeting for the first time, we felt like we were old friends because we had been ‘talking’ with one another for eight months.

In addition to the ten well-prepared jury members and me, IBBY vice-president Elda Nogueira (Rio de Janeiro, Brazil) and Liz Page accompanied the group as ex-officio members. Liz kindly prepared a copy of all jury members’ comments about candidates, which had been posted on the blog, and the jurors were very happy about this, since it served as a useful reference for our discussion.

I want to thank the jury for the many hours they devoted to this task and for their dedication. Their co-operation and willingness to help made this a truly wonderful experience. I also want to thank Liz and Elda for all their help.

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George ‘Gee’ Keane travelled the world as a photojournalist. When he died, he left his grandchildren mysterious and puzzling gifts. Maggie received a beautiful wooden box containing six seashells and a note instructing her to throw them all back. For Jason, there were autographed photographs of celebrities and a box camera. As they use their gifts, Maggie and Jason learn about Gee’s complicated life and discover how his memorable images touched the lives of many and left an enduring legacy.

Each of the novel’s ten chapters is written by an internationally acclaimed author: Linda Sue Park (USA), David Almond (UK), Eoin Colfer (Ireland), Deborah Ellis (Canada), Roddy Doyle (Ireland), Nick Hornby (UK), Tim Wynne-Jones (Canada), Ruth Ozeki (USA), Margo Lanagan (Australia), Gregory Maguire (USA). The well-crafted chapters ingeniously intertwine and play off each other, making this a fascinating story both in its form and content.

Knowing the royalties from the book will benefit Amnesty International enhances one’s appreciation of the authors’ considerable collective achievement.

Elizabeth Poe



Ten authors (listed in review)

Click

New York: Scholastic Publishing 2007

224pp ISBN-10: 0439411386;

ISBN-13: 9781439411387

(fiction, 12+)



From *The Last Resort*

Roberto Innocenti

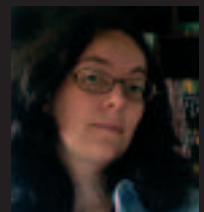
HCA Illustrator Medallist 2008

- Winner of the Hans Christian Andersen Medal
- for illustration in 2008, Roberto Innocenti is a
- favourite with children and adults worldwide.
- His wonderfully meticulous, painterly and
- often sumptuous illustrations to classic and
- more recent texts use a richly detailed visual
- language to tell the story in a different way,
- realising the magical world of the book,
- while opening the imagination of the reader

The art of illustration lies, as the painter in *The Last Resort* (illustrated by Innocenti) so eloquently states, in ‘the ability to make real what the mind only imagines’, and the Italian artist, Roberto Innocenti, is undoubtedly a master when it comes to bringing the worlds of story to life. Entering one of his picturebooks is like going through a magic door: you know you are somewhere different but the streets and the people look strangely familiar.

One of the world’s most popular illustrators, Innocenti is no stranger to award ceremonies. Since he first received the Golden Apple for *Rose Blanche*, at the Biennial of Illustration in Bratislava in 1985, he has gone on to collect a wide range of honours from institutions as diverse as the American Library Association, the British Library Association and the *New York Times*. It should come as no surprise, therefore, that this year at the prestigious Bologna Book Fair, it was announced that Innocenti had won the highest accolade that an illustrator can receive; that of the Hans Christian Andersen Illustrator Medal, and how wonderful it must have been for him to

by LINDSAY MYERS



Lindsay Myers is a lecturer in Italian and director of the BA with Children’s Studies in the National University of Ireland, Galway

have this announcement made on Italian soil! Innocenti is the first Italian to win an Andersen award since Gianni Rodari won the author award some 38 years ago.

Like so many illustrators of his generation, Innocenti did not have the luxury of a formal artistic training. Born in 1940 in the little town of Bagno a Ripoli near Florence, he had little choice but to leave school at the age of 13 to work, first in the local steel foundry and later as an assistant in a specialist art shop. By the late 1950s he had found a job in an animation studio in Rome, and it was there that he first began to learn the trade of illustration. After several years working in Italy's capital city, Innocenti moved back to Florence where he set about designing posters for the theatre and the movies. His work caught the attention of the public, and it was not long before the Florentine publisher, Salani, recognised his artistic talent and employed him to illustrate the works of two of Italy's most popular children's book authors, Giuseppe Ernesto Nuccio and Collodi Nipote.

It's like going through a magic door: you know you are somewhere different but the streets and the people look strangely familiar

The opportunities that the Italian publishing world could offer were, however, extremely limited, and it was not long before Innocenti came to realise that the only way that he would be able to develop his artistic skills would be to turn his attention abroad. The breakthrough that he needed happened in 1983 when Swiss publisher Etienne Delessert commissioned him to illustrate a version of Charles Perrault's fairy tale, 'Cinderella'. Innocenti's version, which was published in several languages, proved to be an immediate international success, and ever since

He would never have succeeded in making a career for himself as an illustrator were it not for the support of foreign publishers

the publication of this work Innocenti has worked almost exclusively for international publishing companies. While the Italian artist would have preferred to work more extensively in Italy, he readily acknowledges that he would never have succeeded in making a career for himself as an illustrator were it not for the support of foreign publishers.

A large proportion of the books that Roberto Innocenti has illustrated are children's classics: *Cinderella* (1983), *The Adventures of Pinocchio* (1988), *A Christmas Carol* (1990) and *Nutcracker* (1996). There is little doubt but that Innocenti's



From *Cinderella*

rich, narrative style is particularly well suited to the portrayal of such dramatic, universal stories. For Innocenti, magic and mystery do not belong to a far-away realm but rather form an integral part of the world in which we live, and every one of the above-mentioned tales is firmly located in a specific time and place. The most innovative with regard to its setting is undoubtedly Innocenti's *Cinderella* for, rather than set this tale in a fairy-tale kingdom, he opted to set the work in London during the Roaring Twenties, a decision which afforded him great scope when it came to the depiction of interiors, furniture, *objets d'art* and costumes. From the art-nouveau cornicing to the exquisite flapper-style clothing worn by Cinderella's two sisters, this tale is a visual delight. *The Adventures of Pinocchio*, *A Christmas Carol* and *Nutcracker* are all equally striking, and each of these works effortlessly transports the reader back in time, recreating with a delicate palette the atmosphere of 19th-century life. Before he even begins to paint, Innocenti carries out extensive research on the period in question, and the richly decorated interiors in *A Christmas Carol* and *Nutcracker* are all historically accurate, right down to the doorknobs, while the busy street scenes in *The Adventures of Pinocchio* afford an authentic insight into the frantic hustle and bustle of 19th-century Italian village life.

It is not just the realistic settings and characters that set these picture-books apart; each of these works is also intensely dramatic. The illustrations are full of action and movement, and there is an almost theatrical use of light and shade. Unlike so many versions of these classics, which tone down, or almost completely eradicate, the darker aspects of the original texts, Innocenti's illustrations purposely underline the tension between right and wrong. Pinocchio's journey towards selfhood may be a celebration of human intellect but it is also an inherently problematic voyage through 19th-century Italian society, and Innocenti's ominous and menacing moonlit streets cast a dark shadow on the puppet's newfound freedom. Innocenti's slightly unsettling illustrations for ETA Hoffman's *Nutcracker* similarly expose in a very subtle manner the horrific underside of this delightful childhood fantasy.

Nineteenth-century society has always held a particular fascination for Innocenti, but he is equally at home when it comes to portraying events from contemporary history. He grew up



From *Cinderella*

• ***The richly decorated
interiors are historically
accurate, right down to the
doorknobs***



From *The Adventures of Pinocchio*

***Innocenti's ominous
and menacing moonlit
streets cast a dark shadow
on Pinocchio's
newfound freedom***

during World War II and several of his most recent works, among which *Rose Blanche*, *Leda e il mago* [Leda and the wizard] and *Erika's Story* are set during this period. Both *Rose Blanche*, the fictional story of a young German girl who discovers a concentration camp in the woods, and *Erika's Story*, the true story of a woman who survived the Holocaust after she was thrown from a train headed for the camps, are moving tributes to the courage of individual citizens, and the principal characters in these novels stand out in more ways than one. Dressed in red and pink respectively they are the only brightly coloured figures in a world of cold greys, beiges and browns. Since their first appearance in 1985 and 2004, both of these picturebooks have won major international awards, and both have been translated into



From *Rose Blanche*

From *Erika's Story*

several different languages, including the illustrator's native Italian. *Leda e il mago*, a work which describes the Partisan struggle that took place in Italy towards the end of World War II through the eyes of 10-year-old Leda, is less well known, having been published only in Italian. Like *Rose Blanche* and *Erika's Story*, it is however an extremely emotive work, and Innocenti's beautiful colour plates of the hills of Maremma in Tuscany are a poignant tribute to the artist's love of his native land.

Telling the story of single individuals while at the same time conveying the enormity of world events is something at which Innocenti is particularly skilled, and both *Rose Blanche* and *Erika's Story* feature highly detailed double-page spreads in which the books' protagonists are but small and insignificant figures. By focusing on the worlds in which the protagonists find themselves rather than on the characters them-

: ***Innocenti underlines***
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 : ***of mankind, and the***
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 : ***fates are governed by***
 : ***national imperatives***

selves, Innocenti underlines the essential vulnerability of mankind, and the extent to which individual fates are governed by national imperatives. The private world of *Rose Blanche* has literally been invaded by the war and the cover of the novel makes this abundantly clear; the window through which the young German girl is looking contains not only her face but the reflections of the tanks and soldiers that are passing by on the outside.

Almost all of the picturebooks that Innocenti has illustrated have been categorised as children's books, and the artist himself certainly believes strongly in the power of childhood imagination. In a recent interview with the Italian newspaper, *La Stampa* (Denti 2008), he stressed that 'Imagination is beyond the bushes, beyond the shelves filled with sweets and hydrogenated fats, I hope that children will look for it; that they will tear down the walls to find it, because imagination is not about finding but about looking.' There is little doubt, however, that all of his work can be equally well appreciated by adults. Several of his picturebooks conceal details that have been specifically inserted to reward the attentive reader, and while the well-dressed coachman's rat-like moustache in *Cinderella* may well be spotted

Books illustrated by Roberto Innocenti (select list)

- Giuseppe Ernesto Nuccio (1974) *Il reuccio degli uccelli* Milan: Fabbri
 Nipote, Collodi (1975) *Sussi e Biribissi* Florence: Salani
 Charles Perrault (1983) *Cinderella* Mankato, MN: Creative Editions
 Christophe Gallaz (1985) *Rose Blanche* Neuchâtel: Editions Script
 Carlo Collodi (1988) *The Adventures of Pinocchio* New York: Knopf
 Charles Dickens (1990) *A Christmas Carol* Mankato, MN: Creative Editions/Harcourt Brace
 ETA Hoffman (1996) *Nutcracker* Mankato, MN: Creative Editions/Harcourt Brace
 Ermanno Detti (2002) *Leda e il mago* [Leda and the wizard] Florence: Fatatrac
 J Patrick Lewis (2002) *The Last Resort* Mankato, MN: Creative Editions
 Ruth Vander Zee (2003) *Erika's Story* London: Jonathan Cape

***Imagination is beyond ...
 the shelves filled with sweets
 and hydrogenated fats***

by younger and older readers alike, the name that Innocenti has given the school that Pinocchio attends (a name that alludes to another classic of post-unification Italian children's literature, Edmondo De Amicis' *Cuore* [Heart]) is an extremely subtle intertextual joke.

Innocenti's recent picturebook, entitled *The Last Resort*, is a highly complex work, which revolves around intertextual puns, symbolism and

sophisticated visual codes. The plot follows the fortunes of a painter who has lost his imagination, and the painter in question is none other than Innocenti himself. In order to recover his lost inspiration, the painter checks in at a remote seaside hotel, and while he is there he meets a whole host of fascinating characters, all of whom turn out to be well-known literary figures. Huckleberry Finn, Emily Dickinson, Long John Silver, Hans Christian Andersen's Little Mermaid, Antoine de Saint Exupéry and George Simenon's Chief Inspector Jules Maigret all appear before the painter's eyes, and each character provides him with a valuable lesson about life and art.

One of the things that Innocenti particularly enjoys is depicting the same place from a variety of different perspectives, and the cover of *The Last Resort*, which portrays the seaside hotel during different climatic conditions and at different times of day and night, is a perfect example of his skill in this area. By repeating the same scene but altering the details, mood and colour palette, Innocenti conveys in a very subtle



From *The Last Resort*

manner the transience of human life and the immense power of the natural world. Perspective and angle profoundly influence the way in which characters and events appear to the viewer, and Innocenti always uses space very carefully, interweaving double-page spreads with smaller vignettes, and alternating boxed frames with free-standing figures and scenes. Sometimes Innocenti's double-page spreads convey temporal as well as spatial movement, and individually framed pictures frequently lead the eye out of one frame and into the next.

Innocenti's favoured medium is watercolour, but he frequently makes use of pen and ink to add the final details to his plates. Tempestuous skies, darkened rooms, tranquil seascapes and shiny motorcars are no problem for this highly skilled painter, and the semi-transparent ghosts in *A Christmas Carol* appear as lifelike and realistic as do his more substantial characters.

• *Innocenti conveys in a very*
 • *subtle manner the*
 • *transience of human life*
 • *and the immense power of*
 • *the natural world*



From *The Last Resort*

A gifted interpreter of tales, Roberto Innocenti is always looking for the next challenge, and his current project, a modern-day version of Perrault's 'Little Red Riding Hood' is sure to be a bestseller. Innocenti has decided to set the fairy tale in an unspecified urban location in order to enable all his readers to identify with the characters, and by transforming Perrault's wolf into a motorbiker dressed in black, he hopes to draw the attention of his readers to the dangers of the modern city, dangers which often far exceed those of the 17th-century forrest.

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Note

All titles are published in the US by Creative Editions. Thanks to Creative Editions and the illustrator for permission to reproduce illustrations from the books.

This collection of short stories provides a valuable insight into Indian culture and postcolonial national identity. It features a colourful cast of characters such as the kind watchmaker, Buddhhan Mian, who tells enchanting tales, and the animal-loving Nandu, whose whistle can summon the noble tiger, Rajah. Gandhi himself features in one story. There are some humorous stories also, including one relating the nocturnal adventures of snoring Mamaji and, perhaps the best story of the collection, 'The Parrot Tamer'.

The quality of the writing is uneven, however, and Gopal's rise from rags to riches in 'The Number Game' is highly improbable, demonstrating the aspirational nature of the collection, undoubtedly inspired by Saxena's own commitment to postcolonial national reconstruction.

Gangopadhyas black and white illustrations are in keeping with Saxena's formal style, but the illustrations and overall typography render the collection rather like a textbook.

The book contains a useful glossary of Indian words.
Ciara Ni Bhroin



Irina Saxena (Neeta Gangopadhyas illus)

FACES IN MY CUPBOARD

New Delhi: Radical Books Pvt 2006
167pp ISBN: 8189673068
(fiction, 10+)

In 1946, as Jella Lepman was driven through the ruins of Germany in a US army jeep, she realised that the children all around her needed more than food, clothing and shelter to rebuild their lives. Lepman, the founder of the International Board on Books for Young People (IBBY), believed passionately that the children in war-ravaged Germany, as well as children everywhere in the world, needed books to heal, to grow and to dream.

At long last, children have access to Lepman's story through Pearl's carefully crafted text and Iantorno's vibrant illustrations. There is an energy reflected in text and illustration that matches well Lepman's passion for making the world a better place, a more peaceful place, 'one book at a time'.

This is a book that will be celebrated by all who care about Jella Lepman's vision, the past and present work of IBBY and all who care that the world become a better place for children.

Jeffrey Brewster



Sydelle Pearl and Danlyn Iantorno

Books for Children of the World: The Story of Jella Lepman

Gretna, LA: Pelican Publishing
Company 2007

32pp ISBN-13: 9781589804388
(picturebook, 6-10)

Jürg Schubiger

HCA Author Medallist 2008



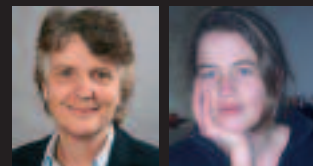
From Aller Anfang

• Winner of the 2008 Hans Christian Andersen Medal for writing, the Swiss author and psychotherapist Jürg Schubiger is not a household name outside his native Switzerland. But his work is poetic and philosophical, as well as humorous and deeply revealing of human nature

Jürg Schubiger is a subtle storyteller, one who knows a great deal more than he admits, but who does not claim at all to be omniscient. He prefers questions to answers. In this respect, the 71-year-old from Zurich is the philosopher among Swiss authors of children's books. However, he is not a philosopher who expounds and instructs, but is rather one like Socrates, who encourages his readers, young and old, to deliberate over what it is that lies behind the naturalness of appearances in the truest sense of the word: to ponder even the most unprepossessing things. In his stories for children, questions, deliberations and feelings are presented concisely on a vast stage, and the author and psychotherapist seeks in his texts to view things that are under our very noses from a slightly different angle. In doing so, he causes a mild shock in his readers that makes us sit up and take notice. A good example of this is found in his latest picturebook, *Der weisse und der schwarze Bär* [The white and the black bear] (ingeniously illustrated by Eva Muggenthaler), which offers even quite young children the opportunity to play out their night-time fears in the safety of the parent-child reading ritual.

As early as 1972, Jürg Schubiger's first book, a collection of short stories entitled *Die vorgezeigten Dinge* [The things presented] appeared; but although he has been writing for more than 35 years,

by ELISABETH STUCK
and CHRISTINE LÖTSCHER



Elisabeth Stuck is head of second level at the Paedagogical Institute of Bern, Switzerland

Christine Lötscher is editor of the Swiss children's literature journal *Buch & Maus* and a literary critic



for both adults and children, his body of work is not particularly extensive. Rather, it is a contained number of exquisitely elaborated literary treasures. Several of Schubiger's early short stories were included in collections or readers by those in the know, but it was only in 1996, when Schubiger's collection of stories *Als die Welt noch jung war* [When the world was new] was awarded the German Prize for Youth Literature and the Swiss Award for Young People's Books, that Schubiger really came to the attention of the general public. Why, we might ask, did such an interest in these children's stories suddenly arise? Many short stories in *Als die Welt noch jung war* had actually been published previously in some of Schubiger's earlier books (for example, in the collection *Dieser Hund heißt Himmel* [A dog called Sky] and *Das Löwengebrüll* [The lion's

This delight in spinning yarns is always accompanied by an interest in the philosophical

roar]), but had not given rise to anything like the same level of attention. One explanation might be that the demand for literary quality in children's literature had grown in the meantime. Schubiger's texts meet such exacting demands without being elitist; children really enjoy reading his stories.

What makes Jürg Schubiger's stories stand out is the distinctive pleasure of invention. This delight in spinning yarns is always accompanied by an interest in the philosophical. Within this rich imaginary world, Schubiger leaves room for open questions, for mysterious things and thoughts which turn on the invention of stories. For example, one of the most impressive stories tells of a cake that grows mysteriously and then collapses again suddenly. Attached to this story is (printed in italics) a long list of stories still to be told.

This trick of integrating the untold into a story leads to a stimulating, precious collection of ideas which invites both children and adults to develop further the beginnings of those stories. That the index of ideas is three times as long as the story itself makes the text even more compelling.

These stories get readers involved in the text using their own imagination

'Fairy tales have a happy ending,' Schubiger has said (in *Als die Welt noch jung war*), 'paradise stories have a happy beginning. So I'll just start all over again.' This emphasis on beginnings and the trying out of what ensues when one tells a

story and then retells it differently right away – these are the things that make Schubiger’s stories so particularly appealing, because they open up a poetic scope of development and get readers involved in the text using their own imagination.

In an interview, Jürg Schubiger explains his fondness for beginnings in the following way:

The beginning is one of my favourite moments. Morning is the time of presuppositionlessness, the time when everything is still ambiguous. We still have no names for all that surrounds us. The first things or early things are still orderless, yet near, intrusive, graspable, sensory. It is this kind of ambiguity and atmosphere that I’m continually searching for when writing.

The moment of beginning has become a poetic principle with Schubiger.

The moment I’m concerned with is recognisable by a small fright. In this, something strikes, one doesn’t know quite how or why, into the heart of a thing and into one’s own heart.

Schubiger’s fascination with all kinds of boundaries is linked directly to this fondness for early, disorderly things. In *Als die Welt noch jung war* and *Aller Anfang* [The beginning of everything] (with Franz Hohler), he returns to the origins of the world and of life and creates new worlds in a few sentences. And that is not all: he breathes new life into the creation myth with the result that children (and adults) find a pleasure of their own in discovering myths.

Jürg Schubiger encourages his readers to observe from an unusual perspective things that he has crafted into inconspicuous symbols; and he lets the words, freed from their daily constraints, interact with each other. This gives rise to his humour:

At the beginning, things had no names. And this beginning lasted a long time. The things simply stood there or lay around, hung about or walked. They grated and creaked, whooshed and belched or they remained silent. (from Quatsch [Nonsense])

• *He lets the words, freed
• from their daily constraints,
• interact with each other*



Above and opposite: from Als die Welt noch jung war

***There is a resonant,
subdued melancholy in
these polyphonic texts
arising out of the tension
between nimble-footedness
and profundity*** :

And more often than not, there is also a resonant, subdued melancholy in these polyphonic texts, arising out of the tension between nimble-footedness and profundity.

The Swiss sagas were a real discovery for Jürg Schubiger when he was invited by the Zurich publishers Nagel & Kimche to retell for children the story of William Tell, Switzerland's national hero. Jürg Schubiger manages to bring new life into well-known myths and material for today's children. The *Geschichte von Wilhelm Tell* [The story of William Tell] is given a

modern setting by means of a framework narrative: a boy living in the present comes to grips with the characters of William Tell and his son through stories told by his grandfather. On the one hand, daily life for a boy in the Middle Ages is shown, providing an insight into the living conditions of the Alpine dwellers of that time, and, on the other hand, traditional stories are brought to life by interspersing them with a number of sagas from central Switzerland. Schubiger's interest in the mountains is connected to boundaries, as the author explained in an interview:

I am interested in the fringe areas, the transition areas where alpine farming ceases to master nature and can barely hold its own. Though the area still belongs to man, it is however inhabited by the 'wild folk' of fairy tales when the humans abandon their huts for the winter.



Above and opposite: from *Das Löwengebrüll*

The Tell saga as the myth concerning the founding of early Switzerland is touched upon, but is not central to Schubiger's story. The ever-present glimmers of humour and thread of intelligent analysis throughout make the myths with their modern slant into a most pleasurable read.

In his new version of the famous picaresque novel *Don Quixote*, Schubiger has succeeded in producing a witty version of Don Quixote's most important adventures. The author has been particularly successful in his selection of the various episodes. Jürg Schubiger's refreshing retelling of the adventures is the text for a picturebook, whose masterly illustrations by Jassen Ghiuselev make their own contribution to conveying the famous knight's adventures. Schubiger's text, which is not too long for young readers, helps them to perceive the ramified network of Don Quixote's different experiences.

***The nightly plunge into
unconsciousness, into the
dangerous world of
unpredictable dreams, is a
source of fear*** :

Although Schubiger, as an enthusiast of all beginnings, is logically a morning person, he is also interested in the complex zone with all its activities covering the transition of day to the quiet and solitariness of night. *Der weiße und der schwarze Bär* appeared in 2007, a picturebook about the most natural thing in the world that, nevertheless – and not just for children – is something quite singular: falling asleep. The nightly plunge into unconsciousness, into the dangerous world of unpredictable dreams, is a source of fear for the girl in Schubiger's picturebook. 'It's possible to get lost in the dark room, she thought. As in a forest' – and so the floodgates are already opened in the minds of the readers and young observers, the dangerous forest of fairy tales comes to mind with Hansel and Gretel and Little Red Riding Hood walking about all alone. However, the girl in the picturebook finds a way to help herself in the wilderness of her own imagination: she takes comfort in the fact that the forest is also home to bears and falls asleep reassured. From that moment on, a bear sits at the girl's bedside every night – at first a white bear, he can already be seen arriving through the window in the first picture, then a black bear. The white bear is very noisy, it dances and brushes its teeth in the middle of the night; the black bear is calm and good-natured. Not a single word is spoken by either of them.

In this book, Jürg Schubiger shows in a marvellous way how he is able to perform magic with merely a few words: the simplest words suddenly cast long shadows and become



mysteries that parents and children can reflect upon with relish. In almost every sentence the reader is dazzled by the number of possibilities. For instance, the terse sentence: 'The girl and her doll sat eating breakfast with the mother.' It could not be simpler, one thinks – but nor could it be more sophisticated. The fact that the girl is sitting at the table with her doll and eating breakfast, as a matter of course, as if the doll were a person, reveals a great deal about the child, but also about the family in which the doll, brought to life by the child's imagination, is allowed its own place at the table. This is why we are not surprised to find the girl being visited by bears during the night: from the outset, reality and imagination have become interwoven. Every character, whether a human being, toy or figment of someone's imagination, co-exists with exactly the same rights. As a result of the simultaneous presence of contrasts, the remarkable in-between world of the evening is given a face – black and white, day and night – and thus loses a little of its terror.

***In almost every sentence
the reader is dazzled by the
number of possibilities*** :

Schubiger is a master at conjuring up amazement about completely ordinary things – for example, in the story *Die vorgezeigten Dinge*, where people exhibit their everyday objects like a sofa and in this way evoke admiration from the visitors. This fresh view of familiar things opens the eyes of both young and adult readers.

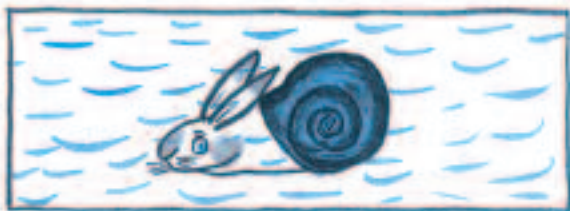
Selected books by Jürg Schubiger

- 2007 with Eva Muggenthaler (illus)
Der weisse und der schwarze Bär [The white and the black bear] Peter Hammer
- 2006 with Franz Hohler (co-author) and Jutta Bauer (illus)
Aller Anfang [The beginning of everything] Beltz & Gelberg
- 2003 *Die Geschichte von Wilhelm Tell* [The story of William Tell] Nagel & Kimche
- 2001 with Jassen Ghiuselev (illus)
Seltsame Abenteuer des Don Quijote [Curious adventures of Don Quixote] Aufbau
- 2000 with Rotraut Susanne Berner (illus) *Wo ist das Meer?* [Where is the ocean?] Beltz & Gelberg
- 1997 with Rotraut Susanne Berner (illus)
Mutter, Vater, ich und sie [Mother, father, me and her] Beltz & Gelberg
- 1995 with Rotraut Susanne Berner (illus)
Als die Welt noch jung war [When the world was new] Beltz & Gelberg
- 1988 with Edith Schindler (illus) *Das Löwengebrüll* [The lion's roar] Beltz & Gelberg
- 1978 with Klaus Steffens (illus) *Dieser Hund heißt Himmel* [A dog called Sky] Beltz & Gelberg
- 1972 *Die vorgezeigten Dinge* [The things presented] Zytglogge

In the story *Mutter, Vater, ich und sie* [Mother, father, me and her] it is the subtle psychological portrayal of the characters of the different generations that is striking. On the one hand, it is a family story in which a brother gets vexed by a little sister who was born after him and is critical of the old ones as well. On the other hand, it is a book for reflection: the child I-narrator, a boy, has stunning thoughts about his everyday life. An equally psychologically convincing story about a relationship – between father and son and also between grandfather, who is narrating a story, and grandchild, who is listening – is central to the *Geschichte von Wilhelm Tell*.

A particular quality of Schubiger's writing is evident in his sketches of complex gender roles.

His exceptional skills are shown in the literary sketch of gender roles in *Geschichte von Wilhelm Tell*. With the Tell saga, Schubiger draws on the myth that is traditionally linked to male courage and the male's will to be free. This stereotyped male gender role is put into perspective by Schubiger's constellation of characters. Thus, together with the courage shown by the male characters, fear also plays a role: the boy in the framework narrative, who is interested in the story of William Tell, is also shown coming to terms with his nocturnal fears, his homesickness and his relationships with his parents, who have separated. By contrast, Tell's son Walter is characterised as a brash, in part forward boy whose courage provokes Landberger Gessler and actually sets in motion the famous story involving the apple



Above, right and opposite: from *Wo ist das Meer?*

being shot from his head. There are also differentiated role profiles among the female characters: several display both fortitude and courage.

In current children's literature there are very few authors who master the art of addressing both children and adults at the same time. Jürg Schubiger belongs to these few lucky ones. Schubiger's relationships, for example, easily illustrate this 'multiple address'. In the story *Als die Welt noch jung war*, Eve has to almost talk Adam into giving her a kiss, but then the two forget about time completely. This episode evokes with witty charm completely different reactions in adults and young readers.

Jürg Schubiger excludes any compromise in artistic standards when he is writing for both adults and children. For him, both kinds of literature are an artistic form of writing.

Reference

Quotations from Schubiger are taken from an interview with Dominik Brun on the occasion of the awarding of the Swiss Young People's Book Award, published in *LCH-Aktuell. Informationen für die Mitglieder des Dachverbandes Schweizer Lehrerinnen und Lehrer* (1998) 17(7)

Kids Can Press is known for books that raise children's social consciousness by inspiring without preaching (see RYAN AND JIMMY, reviewed in BOOKBIRD 45 (1)). ONE HEN tells the inspirational story of Kojo, a boy from Ghana, who, after his father dies, must quit school to earn a living. When the twenty families in his village agree to save a small store of money for their neighbours to borrow in turn, Kojo's mother shares her loan money with him. Using his tiny loan, the boy buys a hen; a year later, he has built his flock to 25 and earned enough egg money to return to school.

In this appealing large-format book, accessible text combines with colourful illustrations in acrylic that evoke both life and dreams in Kojo's Ghanaian village.

At the end of Milway's fictional tale, children learn the true story of Kwabeno Darko, whose life inspired ONE HEN. Mr Darko, founder of the largest poultry operation in East Africa, sits on the board of Opportunity International, one of the world's biggest microcredit lending organisations.

Readers are referred to www.onehen.org to learn about microlending and its potential impact on the three billion people worldwide who struggle to live on less than \$2 a day.
Glenna Sloan



Katie Smith Milway
(Eugenie Fernandes illus)

**ONE HEN: HOW ONE SMALL LOAN
MADE A BIG DIFFERENCE**

Toronto, Canada: Kids Can Press 2008
32pp ISBN: 9781554530281
(picturebook, 7+)

The Big Picture

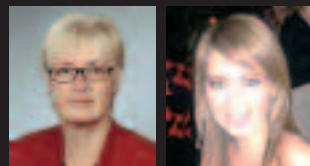


••• *The Big Picture, organised by Booktrust, the main British organisation that promotes children's books, is a campaign to promote picturebooks and picturebook artists. A central activity of the campaign is an unusual kind of award: the Ten Best New Illustrators for children (plus two highly commended illustrators) were selected by a panel of picturebook experts and enthusiasts, and the work of these selected illustrators is at the heart of the campaign*

Once upon a time, Britain was in the enviable position of being the market leader for the most beautifully produced and most commercially successful picturebooks. The rich heritage of illustration from this country continued unabated for hundreds of years, from Beatrix Potter's celebrated countryside companions to Kate Greenaway's delicate watercolours, and – more recently – Julia Donaldson and Axel Scheffler's award-winning Gruffalo books.

Despite this rich legacy of illustration, sales of picturebooks last year fell for the first time in almost a decade, by £3m, which was about 8 per cent down on the figure from 2006, according to market research firm Nielsen. Helen Mackenzie-Smith, editorial director for picturebooks at Random House Children's Books, reported that between 2003 and 2006 the value of titles fell by 60 per cent. This poses both threats and challenges to publishers as cost is positioned against perceived value. Picturebooks are expensive to produce, retailing on average at £10.99 (equivalent to about €15) for a hardback, and carry

by VIV BIRD
and KATHERINE SOLOMON



Viv Bird is director of Booktrust

Katherine Solomon is in charge of press and PR at Booktrust



**The Big Picture
Ten Best New Illustrators**

- Alexis Deacon
- Polly Dunbar
- Lisa Evans
- Emily Gravett
- Mini Grey
- Oliver Jeffers
- David Lucas
- Catherine Rayner
- Joel Stewart
- Vicky White



Alexis Deacon



Oliver Jeffers



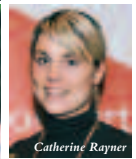
Polly Dunbar



David Lucas



Lisa Evans



Catherine Rayner

Highly commended

- Sam Lloyd
- David Roberts



Emily Gravett



Joel Stewart

For more information

- www.booktrust.org.uk
- www.bigpicture.org.uk



Mini Grey



Vicky White

2008 is UK National Year of Reading
www.yearofreading.org.uk

substantial marketing costs. Compounding the drop in value is the dramatic increase in the number of books sold at discount. Libraries are also stocking fewer picturebooks, and books for children over eight are now rarely illustrated.

Nostalgia has kept the flames of certain classics alive, such as Eric Carle's *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* and Maurice Sendak's *Where the Wild Things Are*, as adult buyers return to the old favourites of their childhood when selecting books for their children, because they do not

There is little hope of the industry producing classics of the future if contemporary illustrators do not receive the support and recognition they deserve :

have the confidence to select less mainstream titles. That is if they can find them in the shops in the first place, as major retailers increasingly rely on the established names of illustration to guarantee sales. There is little hope of the industry producing classics of the future if contemporary illustrators do not receive the support and recognition they deserve.

There tends also to be an emphasis on books as educational tools, and the importance of picturebooks as works of art is often ignored; consequently, illustrators, who should be recognised and celebrated as artists, are not getting due acclaim.

Murmurs from the publishing industry about this bleak picture of the picturebook market encouraged the independent national charity Booktrust to investigate. The Big Picture campaign was created by Booktrust in 2007 to

introduce picturebooks to new audiences, elevate their reputation and generate interest in illustration as an art form in its own right. The Big Picture committee comprises representatives from Booktrust and major children's publishing houses, including Cally Poplak from Egmont UK and Helen Mackenzie-Smith from Random House Children's Books, and independent opinion-formers such as Nicolette Jones of the *Sunday Times*.

English picturebooks were not producing anything new :

Booktrust chose to launch the first phase of the campaign at the London Book Fair in April 2007. This was the first time that the issue of picturebooks and illustration had been raised with the backing of a high-profile charity and with the support of the publishing industry. A seminar at the London Book Fair entitled 'Are Picturebooks at Risk?' facilitated comment and debate on the future of picturebooks both in the UK and overseas. The well-attended seminar, which was covered by BBC News, raised interesting questions about the status of illustrators in the UK compared to overseas. Martin Salisbury, course director of the MA programme in children's book illustration at Cambridge School of Art, Anglia Ruskin University, talked about his experience of judging the Bologna Ragazzi

Award for illustration. He highlighted the opinions that had been expressed at Bologna, namely that English picturebooks were not producing anything new, and that more exciting and original illustrations were being passed over in favour of what is safe.

The need to raise the profile of emerging talent in illustration became the chief concern of the Big Picture committee. To this end, Booktrust kicked off the campaign with a call to design students, who were asked to produce a Big Picture logo. It would go on to be an important focus for the campaign: reprinted on all the marketing and production materials including posters, stickers, best book guides and material associated with the campaign. The winning entry, designed by Erika Pal, a student at Kingston University, was the campaign's first step in encouraging and recognising new talent in this field.

With the logo in place, the first phase of the campaign was launched to find the UK's Best New Illustrators. This is how Rebecca Wilkie, Booktrust's children's books specialist, described the judging process:

The Big Picture's quest to find an exciting new generation of illustrators was launched by Michael Rosen in September 2007; the response from publishers was overwhelming with over 200 picturebooks arriving at the Booktrust offices. Entrants had to have been



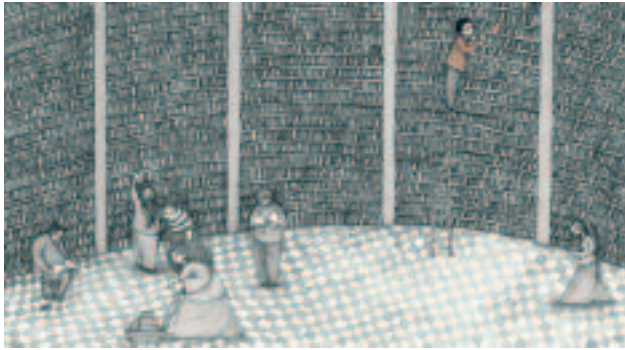
Ape by Vicky White (text by Martin Jenkins)



While You Are Sleeping by Alexis Deacon



The Robot and the Bluebird by David Lucas



The Flower by Lisa Evans
(text by John Light)

Right: Dexter Bexley and the
Big Blue Beastie by Joel Stewart

Below: Monkey and Me
by Emily Gravett



first published in the UK in or since 2000, but all illustrative styles and techniques were welcomed. A longlist of 27 names, all thought to reflect a fresh approach to the picturebook tradition, was put together by members of Booktrust's children's books team and representative books from each illustrator were duly sent out to the judging panel.

The judging panel comprised Nicolette Jones, John Huddy, founder of the Illustration Cupboard; author Malorie Blackman, author and illustrator Anthony Browne and Antonia Byatt, the Arts Council's director of literature. They were looking for illustration that could stand alone, and for books that engaged both adults and children, which showed a freshness and sense of ambition on the part of the illustrator. The final judging meeting was harmonious with great consensus from all.

One of the principal aims of the Big Picture campaign was to enhance the profile of illustrators at the beginning of their careers

The announcement of the final Ten Best New Illustrators was made by Michael Rosen, children's laureate, at the Children's Book Fair in Bologna on 31 March 2008. The final Ten Best New Illustrators represent a wealth of new talent in picturebooks. Chair of the judging panel, Nicolette Jones, commented as follows:

The final choice demonstrated skill in a variety of styles and different media, so there should be something here for readers of all tastes to enjoy. The future of children's illustration looks encouraging.

And Michael Rosen commented, at the Bologna announcement:

This is a great time for the picturebook. A new generation of artists in command of all the new technologies and with an up-to-the-minute view of the world has arrived. Every one of these makers of picturebooks deserves a place on a child's bookshelf with the inventiveness, wit and wonder they have given us.



Other celebrated authors and illustrators also lent their support to the campaign, including Shirley Hughes, who said:

The varied talents of these ten new illustrators represent the marvellous vitality of our profession. In an era in which we are bombarded by moving electronic imagery, looking at picturebooks is not only a vital part of learning to read but offers a lifelong pleasure in itself.

One of the principal aims of the Big Picture campaign was to strive to widen the appeal of picturebooks and illustration, and enhance the profile of illustrators at the beginning of their careers. John Huddy, of the judging committee and founder of the Illustration Cupboard, volunteered his gallery free of charge for an exhibition of the work of the Best New Illustrators. The gallery in St James's, London exhibited two or three works by each of the illustrators, enabling the illustrations to be seen as pieces of art in their own right, as the campaign intended. Moreover, the launch of the exhibition provided the perfect opportunity for the illustrators to meet – which, as they all concurred, doesn't happen very often.

The exhibition also provided a useful focus for the publicity campaign, which is a crucial component in raising awareness not only of Booktrust's work, but also the illustrators themselves, the state of the picturebook market in the UK today and the importance of nurturing and recognising young talent in this field. There was significant interest in the campaign, not only because of the exhibition but also because it was the first time that the field of illustration and picturebooks had been highlighted as an area of concern. The Big Picture campaign gained over £750,000 worth of coverage for the Best New Illustrators and the exhibition at the Illustration Cupboard, including feature spreads in the major British magazines and newspapers.

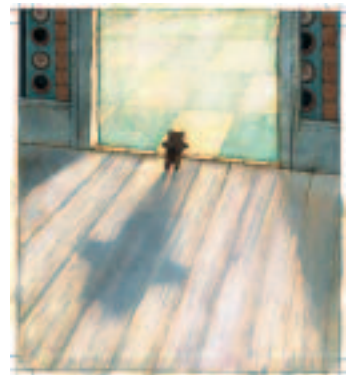
An important part of the development of the campaign lay in the need to produce marketing and promotional material in order to generate and sustain widespread interest. Booktrust, in collaboration with the publishers of the Rough Guides (a series of travel and other information books), produced *The Rough Guide to Picturebooks*, written by the children's book editor at the *Guardian*, Julia Eccleshare. The book highlights 35 of the best picturebook titles to celebrate the talented authors and illustrators who produce them. The book, along with Booktrust's own specially produced Best New Illustrators book guide, were key marketing materials to send to publishers and independent bookshops and to



The Incredible Book Eating Boy
by Oliver Jeffers

Below: Biscuit Bear by Mini Grey

• **The Rough Guide to
• Picturebooks celebrates
• talented authors and
• illustrators**





Shoe Baby by Polly Dunbar (text by Joyce Dunbar)

hand out at events. Booktrust approached larger retailers such as Waterstone's (a major bookstore chain) and Tesco (a large supermarket chain) with the aim of distributing the free Rough Guide through their stores. The offer was enthusiastically accepted and copies were distributed in branches of Waterstone's throughout April and May and through branches of Tesco throughout October. The campaign was able to reach a far wider audience by reaching out to the all-important book-buying public who might not have been aware of the campaign before but who would have been attracted by the offer of a free gift.

***The campaign recognises
the need to encourage
audiences to take risks
with their book buying*** :

The next phase of the campaign is already in place, as the Big Picture takes to the road. Events are planned at the Edinburgh International Book Fair, where some of the Best New Illustrators will appear in a panel Q&A session to discuss their work and their views on the campaign and their perception of the picturebook market both in the UK and worldwide. Other organisations including the Museum of Illustration and the British Library have approached the Big Picture campaign, keen to expand and extend the campaign's reputation and popularity by hosting

joint events. As the campaign progresses, Booktrust is hopeful that the audience and appreciation for picturebooks will continue to flourish, and that the campaign can build on the buzz and unprecedented media coverage that has already been established. Specifically, the campaign recognises the need to celebrate and highlight the tremendous artistic works of the



Augustus and His Smile by Catherine Rayner

Ten Best New Illustrators – while continuing to acknowledge and celebrate established illustrators like Shirley Hughes – and to encourage audiences to take risks with their book buying and become more familiar with the names of writers and illustrators who deserve to have widespread recognition of their talents – not only among children, but among adults too.

Relationships with external partners will be crucial to the success and development of the campaign to ensure audiences are engaged with the project. We hope to expand our relationships with the publishers to guarantee further support and funding over the next three years, and to develop the campaign's impact by pursuing the help of libraries, potential media partners, health visitors and teacher training institutions that are already aware and supportive of Booktrust's wide variety of projects, including Bookstart and Children's Book Week. Obtaining this support will enable Booktrust to continue its work of bringing more and more people to an understanding of the bigger picture for picturebooks.

The Israel Museum Ben-Yitzhak Award for Illustration

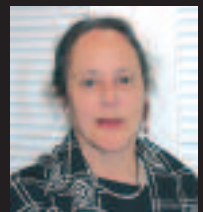


••• *The Israel Museum Award for illustration is given in memory of Rivi and Michael Ben-Yitzhak, who were killed in a terrorist attack in Jerusalem's Zion Square in the summer of 1975, leaving behind two young children. The chairperson of the jury gives a brief rundown of the award and an overview of some of the winners*

The Ben-Yitzhak award has been given biannually since 1978. Like other awards and prizes in the field, it stimulates quality and is also an indicator of quality. In the thirty years of its existence, ten illustrators have been awarded the gold medal (a few of them more than once) and 41 earned a silver medal or an honorary mention, and three have received a special mention, and in total 74 books have been singled out to date.

The award is given first and foremost for the artistic quality of the illustrator's work, while other aspects of the book are also taken into account: the quality of the text, the connection between the illustrations and the text, suitability to the age group of the intended

by NURIT SHILO-COHEN



Nurit Shilo-Cohen is senior curator-at-large for museum education and curator of illustration in the Israel Museum, Jerusalem, and chairperson of the jury of the Israel Museum Award for the Illustration of a Children's Book

reader, the design, layout, printing, binding and the craftsmanship of the book as a whole. The jury therefore comprises an expert in children's book illustration, an expert in children's literature, a publisher or a museum curator and an artist/illustrator.

Like other awards, it stimulates quality and is also an indicator of quality :

It is a tough task to choose for this short article just a few of the many talented illustrators who have received the award over the years, especially when one can best learn about them from the visuals rather than from words. I will give a few examples of illustrators from the different generations, for, although we are a young country, I think we already encompass three generations.



Mariam Bartov

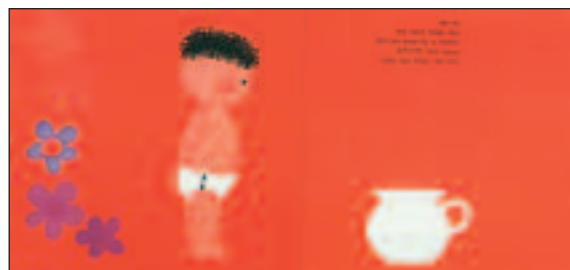
Mariam Bartov, now over 93 years old, belongs to the first generation. Her papercuts were rendered in black and white plus one colour, during a period in Israel when it was expensive to print books in full colour, and even one colour was a luxury. One example of her work is the illustration for 'Little Alikama' (1949).



Ruth Zarfati

Ruth Zarfati created many books, some of which she wrote herself in addition to illustrating them. Her style varies from book to book, but they are all very lively and freshly watercoloury. In 'Parasols in the street of the prophets' (1988), she depicts the life of the Ethiopian community in Jerusalem.

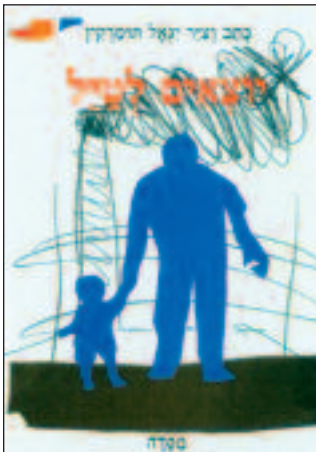
Alona Frankel is known for her little square books; the most famous is 'Once upon a potty' (1975).



Alona Frankel

Igaël Tumarkin, a sculptor and painter, began illustrating children's books for his own children. 'Going for a walk' (1987) is one of them, and on its cover the artist is shown holding the hand of his son as they walk side by side.

Ora Eitan belongs to the second generation of Israeli illustrators. She received three gold



l-r: Igaël Timarkin; Ora Eitan; Avner Katz

medals and four silver medals of the Israel Museum awards. ‘Cowboy bunnies’, which won a silver medal in 2004, was on IBBY’s honour list in 2006. Her book ‘Our Daddy was’ (1982) deals with a child’s grief at the death of his father in battle.

Avner Katz has also won the award many times. Each one of his books bears a unique style, with no two of them alike. ‘Who stole the show?’ (1997) is one example of his varied works.

Grisha Bluger won the award for his book ‘Sambuc Majadara’.

Eitan Kedmy, the youngest laureate of the second generation, is a graphic designer, a sculptor and an illustrator. In his family guide to the Israel Museum all of these talents are displayed.

The young generation includes award winners in 2006, such as **Rutu Modan**, who earned a silver medal for ‘Who drank my juice?’, a nonsense book illustrated with a comic-strip-like character.

l-r: Grisha Bluger; Eitan Kedmy





Rutu Modan

Ofra Amit received the silver medal for 'The hens and the fox', the first of several children's books she has illustrated.

Gilad Soffer also received a silver medal last year for the first book he illustrated, and has since published more. The book 'Oh, brother' describes with humour what happens when a new baby comes home. The illustrations add a lot to the text and have their own sense of humour, such as the old lady who takes her chicken for a walk.



Ofra Amit



Gilad Soffer

Awarding the medal to an illustrator for his first book is not unusual. It has happened more than once over the years with the Israel Museum Award. We are proud to note that in most cases these illustrators won it again in later years for other books. We are glad we were able to spot the talent and excellence at the beginning of the artist's career.

In 2005, the youth wing of the Israel Museum published a book that includes all the recipients of the award since its establishment, *The Big Book of Illustrators*. This book gives an introductory overview of children's book illustration in books published in Hebrew since the 1920s. It devotes a chapter to each of the illustrators who received the award. Each chapter includes a comprehensive interview with the artist, visuals from the books he/she illustrated, a childhood drawing, a photograph of the artist as a child, and a current photograph in the

***The books are catalogued :
according to illustrators :
rather than authors :***

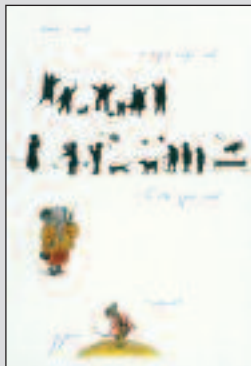
studio. In addition, there is an illustrated letter from each one. We asked the illustrators to send us a special letter, for the book, in which they tell the children about themselves in words and drawing. The letters present amazing stories about how and why they chose to become illustrators and also a variety of self-portraits.

Illustration is first and foremost a work of art ●●●●

The original letters from the award winners were exhibited in the library for illustrated children's books, which is part of the youth wing of the Israel Museum in Jerusalem. This library houses the award-winning books among some 10,000 illustrated children's books in many languages, and many of the original illustrations for the books. It is a special library, which puts the emphasis on illustration; the books are

arranged on the shelves and catalogued according to illustrators rather than authors. Although classification by illustrators makes it harder for visitors to navigate the library, their difficulty becomes a learning process. It is a well-known paradox that while we remember as clear as day the illustrations that first gripped our imagination as children, sometimes even better than we can remember the book itself, we often have no idea who the creator of these illustrations was.

The unique existence within a museum setting of a children's library focused on illustration seems completely natural to us, since illustration is first and foremost a work of art. Illustrations in books are the first works of art we encounter as children. The Israel Museum Ben-Yitzhak Award for the Illustration of a Children's Book is a museum award within the framework of this special library, which stimulates quality and excellence.



l-r: **Hilla Havkin** sees herself as different animals and her readers as silhouettes.

Gad Ullman depicts himself as a quote from Heinrich Hoffman.

Ora Ayal depicts herself flying over the words she writes about, dreaming of being an illustrator of children's books.

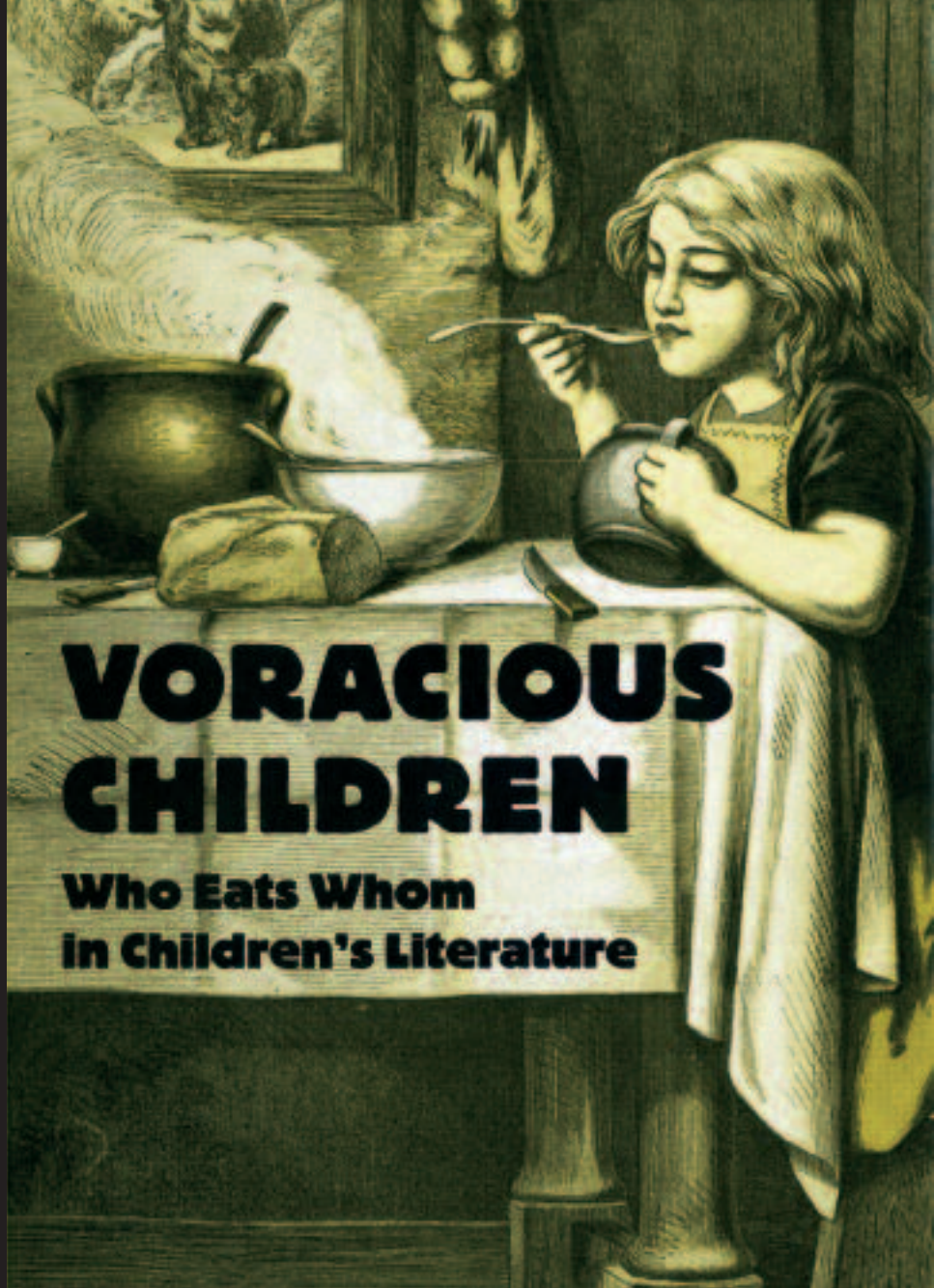


l-r: **David Polonsky** makes up his portrait from words, as in Jewish micrography; the words, he writes, are of things he likes to illustrate in his books.

Michel Kichka sends a letter picturing himself sitting at his desk, writing a letter.

Actus Group, a group of illustrators who work together, see themselves as a creature with one body and five heads.

Books on Books



VORACIOUS CHILDREN

**Who Eats Whom
in Children's Literature**

edited and compiled by

CHRISTIANE RAABE

(translations by Nikola von Merveldt)



Christiane Raabe is director of the
Internationale Jugendbibliothek
(International Youth Library) in Munich

- *A book from Cuba overviewing its prominent*
- *children's writers of the past two decades;*
- *Roald Dahl's universe explored; cowboys,*
- *girls, gnomes and detectives in Dutch old*
- *children's books; two books from Germany,*
- *one on alterity and the other on new impulses*
- *in picturebook research; an appetising look*
- *at the role of food in children's literature;*
- *and a study of juvenile biographies of women*

CUBA

ENRIQUE PÉREZ DÍAZ

El fuego sagrado. Los escritores cubanos para niños se confiesan

[The sacred fire. Cuban children's authors speak out]

Guantánamo: Ed El Mar y la Montaña 2006 155pp ISBN 9592750335

Contemporary Cuban children's and young adult literature is little known beyond the shores of the country. A few authors are published in Spanish-speaking countries, but hardly anything has been translated and thus shared with readers outside the Hispanic world. This isolation makes the present book all the more important and interesting. It presents 24 interviews with Cuban children's authors that Enrique Pérez Díaz, Cuban children's book expert and himself the author of many books for young readers, conducted over a period of two decades. The portraits, ordered chronologically by year of birth, range from Dora Alonso (1910–2000), the *grande dame* of Cuban children's literature, to Eldys Baratute Benavides, born in 1983.

Díaz's colleagues and comrades talk about their life and work and reflect on the autobiographical dimension of their creations. The various interviews, whether they explore the creative process or personal experiences and difficulties, all gravitate around the question of what it means and takes to write for children. They also shed light on current developments and trends in Cuban children's literature and allow readers to situate this isolated production within the broader international context.

Even though important names are missing, this informative and stimulating volume gives a colourful overview of Cuban literature and introduces the interested reader to some of Cuba's most prominent children's writers of the last decades.

Jochen Weber

FRANCE

LUCILE TRUNEL AND JACQUES VIDAL-NAQUET (ED)

L'univers de Roald Dahl

[Roald Dahl's universe]

Clamart: La Joie par les Livres 2007 244pp ISBN 9782354940010 €23

To mark the 90th anniversary of his birth, a group of French children's books specialists proposed to explore the literary universe of Roald Dahl (1916–90), the internationally acclaimed Norwegian-Welsh children's book author. The contributions collected in this volume, prefaced by Dahl's



wife, Felicity, approach the work of the creator of the Gremlins and many other children's book heroes from various angles.

The first five articles grant a panoramic view of Dahl's children's book production. They revisit *Charley and the Chocolate Factory* and *Matilda*, and underline Dahl's humour as well as his commitment to the child reader. The second section looks at the publication, reception and translation of his books for children, focusing on French and Taiwanese examples. The seven contributions to the third section are dedicated to the colourful biography of the pilot, scriptwriter and novelist who discovered his talent for children's literature through his own kids. Quentin Blake's look back at his prolonged collaboration with Dahl, whose books he illustrated, grants fascinating insight into Dahl's creative process. The final section, which presents various ways of using Dahl's texts in classroom settings, is followed by a summary of the conference on which the book is based. A bibliography rounds off this valuable and multifaceted volume.

Elena Kilian

NETHERLANDS

JANNEKE VAN DER VEER

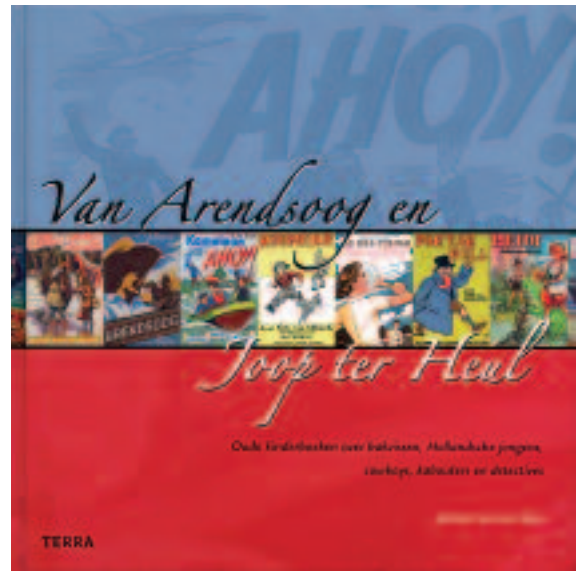
Van Arendsoog en Joop ter Heul. Oude kinderboeken over bakvissen, Hollandsche jongens, cowboys, kabouters en detectives

[Of 'Arendsoog' and 'Joop ter Heul'. Old children's books about teenage girls, real Dutch boys, cowboys, gnomes and detectives]

Arnhem: Terra Lannoo 2007 144pp

ISBN 9789058977380 €24.95

This volume features a selection of more than 450 books from the collection of The Old Children's Book Foundation, published between 1900 and 1970. They are grouped into 65 two-page



chapters, each including an introduction, quotations from representative books as well as selected illustrations. Four important authors, who have left their mark on Dutch and Frisian children's literature (Leonard Roggeveen, WG van der Hulst, Chr Van Abkoude, and Nienke van Hichtum), and two illustrators (Rie Cramer and Hans Borrebach) are showcased in separate chapters. Eight classics still enjoyed today by both children and adults alike are presented with information about the author and illustrator, the storyline and the history of their various editions. The remaining sections are devoted to different genres such as historical children's books and fairy tales or to themes like the Wild West or Holland and the fight against the sea.

Appropriate examples of well-known children's books are given for every genre or theme, complete with interesting background information. The book is beautifully and generously designed and invites readers to delight in colour reproductions of covers and characters from children's books of the last century. This volume is an excellent and useful mine of information for researchers but also a wonderful source for all those who enjoy reminiscing and want to learn more about the books they read when they were young.

Toin Duijx

GERMANY

ULRICH NASSEN (ET AL) (EDS)

Ent-Fernungen. Fremdwahrnehmung und Kulturtransfer in der deutschsprachigen Kinder- und Jugendliteratur seit 1945

[Alterity. Representations of the other and cultural transfer in German-language children's and young adult literature since 1945]

München: Iudicium 2006 1087pp + 1 CD-ROM

ISBN 9783891291726 €98

Vol. 1: GINA WEINKAUFF (ED)

Fremdwahrnehmung. Zur Thematisierung kultureller Alterität in der deutschsprachigen Kinder- und Jugendliteratur seit 1945[Representations of the other. Cultural alterity in German-language children's and young adult literature since 1945]
784pp

Vol. 2: MARTINA SEIFERT AND GINA

Kulturtransfer. Studien zur Repräsentanz einzelner Herkunftsliteraturen[Cultural transfer. Studies on the representation of individual source literatures]
789–1086pp + 1 CD-ROM

This worthwhile study on the perception and literary representation of alterity (with a focus on cultural alterity) in German children's literature and literature translated into German between 1945 and 2000 is a product of a research project at the University of Leipzig. Methodologically, it draws on studies of cross-cultural transfer and on descriptive translation studies developed during the 1990s. 'Which texts were translated, when, why, how and why in the particular way they were?' – those are the guiding questions formulated by Ulrich Nassen, director of the project, in the extensive

introduction to the two-volume study.

The first volume presents a reflection on the development of the adventure novel of the second half of the 20th century, ranging from didactic attempts at fictionalised history to fantasy worlds and modern science fiction. The practices of 'cross-writing' and 'cross-reading' are illustrated using the work of authors who adapt the same text written for adult readers to a younger audience. One chapter is dedicated to texts written about minorities in Germany or by authors belonging to these minorities. A comparison of the different translation strategies of East and West Germany is particularly illuminating. Their distinctive choices of translations from Scandinavian and Soviet literature as well as their idiosyncratic images of Italy clearly illustrate how translations help shape the literary canon as well as cultural stereotypes. The ideological nature of the book market – dominated by administrative-political control in communist Germany and by the laws of a capitalist media economy in West Germany – largely accounts for the striking differences in this cultural transfer of children's literature. The case of the German translation of *Pippi Långstrump* [Pippi Longstocking] shows that West German publishers, unlike their eastern counterparts, could risk bold ventures to develop their individual profiles.

The second volume analyses texts from Poland, the Czech Republic, Ireland and Canada translated into the German target language. It closes with a bibliography of secondary literature and an index; the complete titles of all primary texts can be consulted on the enclosed CD-ROM.

By offering a comprehensive overview of the changing practices of literary cultural transfer in postwar Germany, this voluminous work makes an important and long-desired contribution to interdisciplinary scholarship in children's literature.

Christa Stegemann

GERMANY

JENS THIELE AND ELISABETH HOHMEISTER (EDS)
Neue Impulse der Bilderbuchforschung.
Wissenschaftliche Tagung der Forschungsstelle Kinder- und
Jugendliteratur der Carl von Ossietzky Universität Oldenburg,
13.–15. September 2006

[New impulses in picturebook research. Conference of the Research Institute for Children's Literature at the Carl von Ossietzky Universität Oldenburg, 13–15 September 2006]

Baltmannsweiler: Schneider-Verlag Hohengehren 2007 185pp

ISBN 9783834002648 €18



These commendable conference proceedings bring together contributions by scholars of literature, art and media history as well as by specialists of neurology, developmental psychology and education, who all interrogate the picturebook from their own disciplinary perspectives.

Susanne Koerler and Manfred Fahle draw on cognitive and neurological theories to describe the development of emotional and cognitive competence that allows children to read images and to decode their symbolic meaning. While Burkhard Fuhs asks whether picturebooks serve primarily as a medium for nostalgic adult reconstructions of childhood, media analyst Ingrid Paus-Hasebrink presents a fact-filled empirical approach to contextualise the reading of picturebooks within the larger childhood media economy. Presenting *avant-garde* picture books, Martin Roman Deppner looks at the influence of modern art on picturebook art and points out the unique potential of artistic picturebooks for the development of a child's identity. Stefan Neuhaus compares more and less successful adaptations of classical stories to the picturebook format, while Bettina Bannusch explores the question of gender in the picturebooks genre. Summaries of current research projects on the picturebook draw the volume to a close.

As a whole, this volume reflects the diversity of approaches to the genre. At the same time, it demonstrates that the picturebook, still something of a Cinderella of scholarly inquiry, is a complex and rewarding object of study. The contributions open up new questions and make the case for an interdisciplinary approach to the picturebook. Given that the picturebook acts as a key medium in the early psychological and social development of children, there can be no doubt that it has its rightful place in research in the human, social and natural sciences.

Christiane Raabe

UNITED STATES

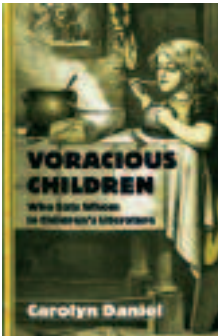
CAROLYN DANIEL

Voracious Children. Who Eats Whom in Children's Literature

(Series: Children's literature and culture; 39)

New York [et al]: Routledge 2006 IX + 265pp

ISBN 9780415976428 US\$105



In this original monograph, published in the prestigious Children's Literature and Culture series, Carolyn Daniel explores the role of food in children's literature. Drawing on recent scholarship on food, culture and society, she compellingly

argues that food – fictional or not – can be used as a powerful tool to inculcate cultural and social values in the young. What children's book characters eat and how they eat it is shown to shape not only their body but also their identity. Examples mainly from British children's classics ranging from *Alice in Wonderland* to the Harry Potter books strikingly illustrate how food determines the protagonist's place in society along the lines of nation, class, age and gender.

In eight thematically ordered chapters, Daniel decodes moralist, racist, imperialist and sexist subtexts in seemingly harmless fictional food events and analyses the didactic, ideological and therapeutic functions of tea parties, table manners and food fantasies. Among other things, she uncovers the Puritan roots of the austere British nursery diet and critically addresses timely topics such as childhood obesity and anorexia. Even if the feminist and psychoanalytic jargon may at times be difficult to digest, this highly readable study is guaranteed to provide empowering food for thought.

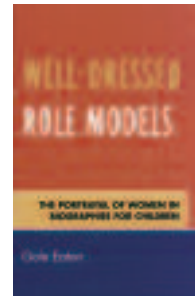
Nikola von Merveldt

GALE EATON

Well-dressed Role Models. The Portrayal of Women in Biographies for Children

Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press 2006 277pp

ISBN 0810851946 US\$35



In her study on juvenile biographies of women, Gale Eaton traces this genre's development and its changes in the past 150 years. In the first chapter, the author closely examines and compares 34 books on Queen Elizabeth I published in the United States and Britain between 1852 and 2002. The three main aspects Eaton focuses on are accuracy of facts, omission of important information and rhetorical devices.

In the following three chapters, she broadens her focus to analyse various biographies of other women. Choosing three years that (as the author explains) 'mark distinct moments in women's history', Eaton uses semantic, syntagmatic and pragmatic criteria to take a closer look at twelve books from 1946, 26 titles from 1971, and 51 biographies from 1996. As an example of the change in treatment of diversity issues such as minority groups, she then re-examines four biographies of the Native American heroine Pocahontas in chapter 5. The final chapter addresses three themes that played an important role in most of the biographies: clothes, publicity, and community.

Although Eaton's conclusion that there is a tendency in recent years towards more historical accuracy and away from the earlier openly didactic or fictionalised biographies may not be groundbreaking, the book nevertheless offers interesting insights into this genre. The bibliographies at the end of each chapter as well as in the appendix and the general index make this a useful tool for teachers and librarians.

Claudia Söffner

• *An exciting seminar in Jakarta on books for*
• *children with disabilities; donating over one*
• *million children's books to earthquake-*
• *stricken Sichuan Province; and three honorary*
• *members of IBBY conferred*

IBBY Exhibition in Jakarta

In the autumn of 2007, the IBBY Documentation Centre of Books for Disabled Young People in Norway was approached by Dr Murti Bunanta, president and founder of the Society for the Advancement of Children's Literature (SACL) and president of the Indonesian section of IBBY, to discuss the possibility of holding a seminar and workshop about books for children with disabilities.

SACL was established in 1987 with its main objective being to promote reading habits in Indonesia and to increase the quality of children's books. SACL works hand in hand with government bodies in many activities related to children's reading habits. Volunteers from SACL visit sick children in hospital and donate books to orphanages and school libraries. In 1990, SACL became the Indonesian national section of IBBY under the name of INABBY. The section was disbanded at the end of 2002, but was re-established in 2006 with new board members and now works closely with SACL.

It was agreed that Sissel Hofgaard Swensen of the Norwegian organisation Books for Everyone and myself should go to Jakarta in May 2008. All our expenses were met by the Indonesian Department of Education, care of Dr Ekodjatmiko Sukarso at the Department for Special Education.

The seminar was held in May at a large centre for disabilities at Lebak Bulus. One hundred and thirty teachers from sixty special schools in Jakarta were present. The lectures covered books for children with autism; reading/learning difficulties; augmentative and alternative communication (Braille, pictograms or PCS, Bliss, sign-supported language); as well as criteria for writing books for and/or teaching disabled young persons. The 2007 IBBY exhibition of Outstanding Books for Young People with Disabilities was displayed and discussed, both at the seminar and at a meeting at the SACL office for members and friends of the foundation.

***SACL's main objective is to promote :
reading habits in Indonesia and to
increase the quality of children's books :***

compiled and edited by

ELIZABETH PAGE



*Elizabeth Page is IBBY's
member services, communications
and new projects director*



Left: Ruth Broun's Stop Bugging Me created a lot of interest

Right: A happy SACL staff after the workshop – Murti Bunanta is fourth from right, standing next to Heidi Boiesen and Sissel Hofgaard Swensen

The next day a workshop about making tactile books for various kinds of disabilities was also held at Lebak Bulus. For inspiration we took many examples of tactile books, as well as a suitcase full of tactile elements that could be used. Many of the teachers had no earlier experience with tactile books and they were very enthusiastic. Though time did not allow for finishing a proper book, many beautiful and well-planned dummies were created. Hopefully, the workshop will instigate a whole new home industry of people making books for disabled children! SACL donated books to all sixty special schools whose teachers attended the workshop on behalf of their libraries. Each school received five titles that were published by SACL and sponsored by the IBBY Yamada Fund.

Dr Murti Bunanta and her staff worked endlessly to make the seminar and our stay memorable, and indeed we have very fond memories of colourful books and happy faces all around.

Heidi Cortner Boiesen

Director of the IBBY Documentation Centre of Books for Disabled Young People

Record Donation of Books for Earthquake-stricken Sichuan Province

Shortly before three o'clock in the afternoon of 12 May 2008 a huge earthquake of magnitude 8.0 struck the Wenchuan area of Sichuan Province, China. On the government-designated National Condolence Day, on 19 May, CBBY president Hai Fei made an appeal to the professional children's publishing houses that are members of CBBY to donate quality children's books: within 48 hours 1,050,000 books (worth RMB 1,283,000,000) had come pouring in from 22 publishing houses.

When CBBY made contact with a colleague in Sichuan, she said, choking with emotion: 'We are so

• ***Donations came pouring***
 • ***in from the employees of***
 • ***the CBBY-member***
 • ***publishing houses***

***The boxes of high quality soul
food marked as Donation
material for earthquake
relief were collected from
around the country*** :

much in need of these children's books! We are so greatly moved by your kindness. For you to do this in such an incredibly limited time is a miracle, a miracle of Chinese children's publishing. On behalf of all the children in the earthquake-stricken area, we would like to express our sincere gratitude to you all!

The boxes of high-quality soul food marked as *Donation material for earthquake relief* were collected from around the country and delivered by the Sichuan Xinhua Wenxuan Chain Company. These children's books will be like presents from heaven. They will help towards healing the wounds of the children, and light the fire of books in their hearts, teaching them how to be strong, how to study and above all how to survive. These high-quality books will bring a special and memorable International Children's Book Day to all the children whose lives have been so devastated.

Ma Weidong and Zhang Mingzhou

Chinese Board on Books for Young People

IBBY Celebrates Three New Honorary Members

The IBBY Executive Committee approved the conferment of three new honorary members at its Bologna meeting in March 2008. The three recipients are well known within the IBBY family and will be warmly celebrated across the world. **Carmen Diana Dearden** has been an important contributor to the development of IBBY. She joined Banco del Libro in 1969 and became the executive director of IBBY Venezuela in 1977. She served on the IBBY Executive Committee from 1980 to 1984 and was elected IBBY president in 1994. As an author and translator, as well as a firm believer in the power of books, she has been active in all fields of children's literature. **Tayo Shima** served as IBBY president from 2000 until the Cape Town congress in 2004. She has had a long and distinguished career in IBBY and served as a member of the Executive Committee between 1992 and 1996. She has written extensively on children's picturebooks and is co-founder and co-director of the Musée Imaginaire, which maintains and collects a large reference library of primary and secondary sources of historical picturebooks. **Katherine Paterson** needs no introduction to *Bookbird* readers. She was the recipient of the Hans Christian Andersen Award in 1998 and in 2006 she won the Astrid Lindgren Memorial Award (ALMA). She has been a loyal friend to IBBY and continues to support IBBY projects and ideals around the world. We warmly congratulate our friends!



From top: Carmen Diana Dearden, Katherine Paterson and Tayo Shima

Bookbird

A JOURNAL OF INTERNATIONAL CHILDREN'S LITERATURE

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