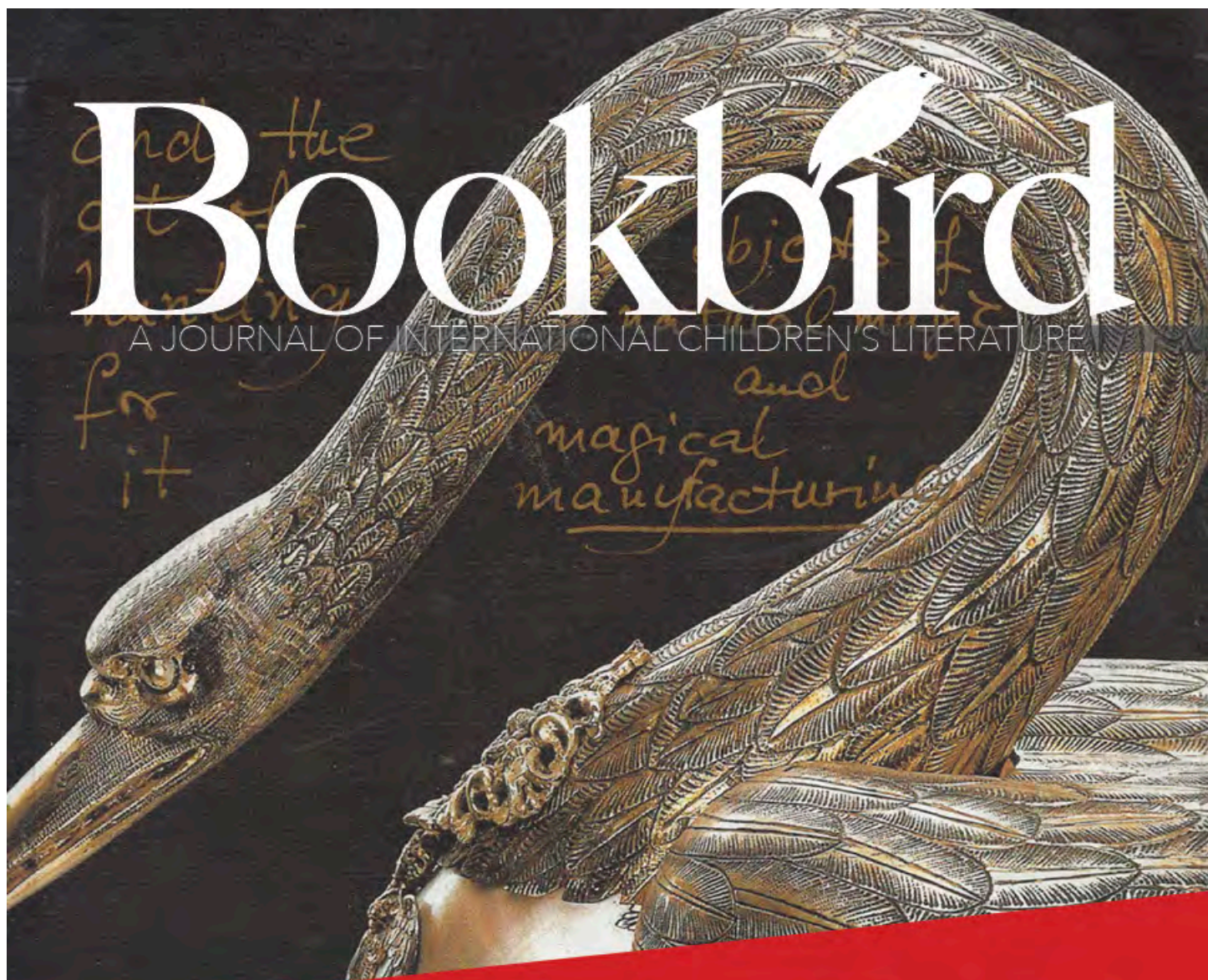


# Bookbird

A JOURNAL OF INTERNATIONAL CHILDREN'S LITERATURE



**Special Issue:**  
Hans Christian Andersen  
Award Nominees 2016

2016, VOL. 54, NO. 2

INTERNATIONAL BOARD ON BOOKS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE



## The Hans Christian Andersen Awards 2016

### Hans Christian Andersen Award Nominees 2016

The Hans Christian Andersen Awards are presented every two years by IBBY (International Board on Books for Young People) to an author and an illustrator whose complete works have made an important and lasting contribution to children's literature.

IBBY National Sections from 34 countries submitted the following 28 authors and 29 illustrators as candidates for the 2016 Hans Christian Andersen Awards:

#### Author Nominees

Argentina: María Laura Devetach  
Australia: Ursula Dubosarsky  
Austria: Renate Welsh  
Belgium: Bart Moeyaert  
Brazil: Marina Colasanti  
Canada: Kenneth Oppel  
China: Cao Wenxuan  
Croatia: Miro Gavran  
Denmark: Louis Jensen  
Egypt: Affaf Tobbala  
Estonia: Piret Raud  
France: Timothée De Fombelle  
Germany: Mirjam Pressler  
Greece: Eleni Dikaiou  
Italy: Chiara Carminati  
Japan: Eiko Kadono  
Netherlands: Ted van Lieshout  
New Zealand: Joy Cowley  
Norway: Tor Åge Bringsværd  
Palestine: Sonia Nimr  
Russia: Andrey Usachev  
Slovakia: Daniel Hevier  
Slovenia: Svetlana Makarovič  
Spain: Agustín Fernández Paz  
Switzerland: Franz Hohler  
Turkey: Gülçin Alpöge  
UK: Elizabeth Laird  
USA: Lois Lowry

#### Illustrator Nominees

Argentina: Diego Bianki  
Australia: Bronwyn Bancroft  
Austria: Linda Wolfsgruber  
Belgium: Rascal (Pascal Nottet)  
Brazil: Ciça Fittipaldi  
Canada: Pierre Pratt  
China: Zhu Chengliang  
Colombia: Claudia Rueda  
Denmark: Lilian Brøgger  
France: François Place  
Germany: Rotraut Susanne Berner  
Greece: Lida Varvarousi  
Iran: Pejman Rahimizadeh  
Italy: Alessandro Sanna  
Japan: Ken Katayama  
Korea, Republic of: Suzy Lee  
Latvia: Anita Paegle  
Mexico: Gabriel Pacheco  
Netherlands: Marit Törnqvist  
Norway: Lisa Aisato  
Russia: Mikhail Fedorov  
Slovakia: Peter Uchnár  
Slovenia: Marjan Manček  
Spain: Miguelanxo Prado  
Sweden: Eva Lindström  
Switzerland: Etienne Delessert  
Turkey: Feret Avcı  
UK: Chris Riddell  
USA: Chris Raschka



**The Hans Christian Andersen Awards** are the highest international awards given for children’s literature. The International Board on Books for Young People (IBBY) presents the awards biennially in recognition of a “lasting contribution to children’s literature.” The awards are given in two categories: authors (presented since 1956), and illustrators (presented since 1966) and the nominees are judged using the following criteria as a guide:

- The aesthetic and literary qualities of writing and illustrating
- The ability to see things from a child’s point of view
- The ability to stretch the child’s curiosity as well as the child’s literary and creative imagination
- Cultural differences in literary aesthetics are taken into account and appreciated
- Freshness and innovation are a great advantage
- The complete works of the author or illustrator, to date, are taken into consideration.

The National Sections of IBBY have the privilege of nominating one candidate for each award. The nominating section is responsible for presenting an informative dossier that reveals the breadth of the candidate’s work and shows the impact of her/his contributions. In addition to a selection of representative books, the following documentation is used to appraise each candidate:

- Biographical information on the candidate
- A statement on the candidate’s contribution to literature for young people
- Selected appreciative essays, interviews or articles
- A list of awards and other distinctions
- Complete bibliography of the books for children by the candidate
- List of translated editions, and their languages
- Five of the most important titles by the candidate (even if out of print)
- (Published) reviews of the books submitted to the Jury

**The Hans Christian Andersen Award Jury** selects the award recipients and comprises ten members who are nominated by the IBBY National Sections and selected by the IBBY Executive Committee. The members of IBBY elect the Jury President at its biennial General Assembly. Patricia Aldana was elected as President of the Jury in Mexico City, September 2014. She was born and brought up in Guatemala and attended school in the United States. In 1971 she moved to Canada and has been there ever since. She founded the publishing house Groundwood Books in 1978 and remained its publisher until 2012. She served as an EC member from 1996 to 2002 and again from 2004 to 2006 as vice president. Patsy was elected IBBY president in 2006 and served until 2010. As Jury President she presides over the following members of the 2016 international Jury:

*Kirsten Bystrup* – Librarian, Frederiksværk, Denmark.

*Reina Duarte* – Director of Publishing, EDEBE, Barcelona, Spain.

*Andrej Ilc* – Editor and Head of the fiction department, Mladinska knjiga, Ljubljana, Slovenia.

*Yasmine Motawey* – Senior instructor at the Department of Rhetoric and Composition of the American University of Cairo, Egypt.

*María Beatriz Medina* – Executive Director of Banco del Libro, Caracas, Venezuela.

*María Dolores Paredes* – Publisher and consultant for children's literature, São Paulo, Brazil.

*Lola Rubio* – Editor and librarian, Buenos Aires, Argentina.

*Susan M. Stan* – Professor Emerita at the Central Michigan University, USA.

*Qing Wu* – former professor at the Foreign Studies University in Beijing, China.

*Shohreh Yousefi* – preschool education manager and children's literature expert, Tehran, Iran.

The Jury President presided over the jury meeting held 15-17 January 2016 in Basel Switzerland. The shortlist was immediately disseminated worldwide. The winners are traditionally announced at the IBBY Press Conference on the opening day of the Bologna International Children's Book Fair: Monday, 4 April 2016.

# Editorial

MY GRANDMOTHER GERDA used to read H. C. Andersen's stories to me. She read about The Ugly Duckling and The Red Shoes; she read about The Steadfast Tinsoldier and The Wild Swans. Sometimes her throat would get dry, or the story would make her sad (or both). That was my cue to fetch her a glass of water. After a little pause, she would continue to read. Her voice was old and comforting, and a bit hoarse. A few years later, when I was too big to sit in her lap, she gave me her six big blue Andersen books – “to Björn,” it says, in her shaky-old handwriting.

Therefore, when editing this issue of *Bookbird*, I have been reminded of Andersen's stories, hearing them in my grandmother's voice, and seeing Andersen's name and his work connected, again and again, to the 57 nominees and to their work – thousands of stories. Yes, it has been wonderful to see the books submitted from IBBY sections from all over the world, books by authors and illustrators nominated to the Andersen award. It is often said that the winner takes it all, but to my mind, what is most remarkable is the range and quality of the nominees, and that the books have come from all over the world. They are all winners to my mind; and we, the readers, are all privileged as long as there are such outstanding authors, illustrators and storytellers in our midst.

Andersen and my grandmother would agree, I am sure.

In this special issue of *Bookbird* all of the nominees are presented on one page each: a short text, a photo and illustration, and the titles of five important works. This means that there is little room left to make an ordinary *Bookbird*, with articles, reviews, and essays. However, to make this Nominees' issue into something more than a catalogue I wanted to provide something more. That is why you will also find two author interviews, one with David Almond (Andersen Award winner 2010) and one with Cornelia Funke. If the 57 presentation texts are the distilled commentaries and assessments about the work of 57 outstanding authors and illustrators, interviews aim for something else. They allow writers and illustrators to speak in their own words and on their own terms about their work.

Interestingly, both writers (who I interviewed on two consecutive

days during the Litteralund conference 16-17 April 2015), keep extensive notebooks, where they draft their work, and where the creative process becomes visible and almost tangible. Often the notes, scribbles and sketches are suggestive and beautiful on their own. Cornelia Funke (who started out as an illustrator, although she is now better known as an author) has for instance made some astounding illustrations and covers for her own notebooks, such as the cover illustration on this *Bookbird*. The image is strangely suggestive with its image of a swan/egg/artefact and strange words. To my mind, and in the context of this *Bookbird*, it conjures up Andersen's wild swans, of his ugly duckling; I think of how things are animated in his stories, how animals are transformed, how words become images and how images become words.

The Andersen Awards are supported by Nami Island Inc. (since 2009). Publication of this special issue has also been made possible through a gift from Nami Island Inc., in the Republic of Korea. IBBY gratefully acknowledges their support of the Hans Christian Andersen Awards.

*Björn Sundmark*



**BJÖRN SUNDMARK** is Professor of English Literature in the Faculty of Education, Malmö University, Sweden. He has published numerous articles on children's literature, and is the author of the study *Alice in the Oral-Literary Continuum* (1999) and co-editor of *The Nation in Children's Literature* (Routledge 2013). He is editor of *Bookbird—Journal of International Children's Literature*.



# 57

Nominees 2016



# Diego Bianki

## Illustrator- Argentina

*Although we are so many and we appear to be so different, there is something common to all of us: we are all different from each other. And although perhaps there is no number in which we all fit, there is indeed a word in which we can all meet: we.*

D. Bianki

DIEGO ARIEL BIANCHI (Bianki) was born in La Plata in 1963 in a family who supported his artistic passions from early on. At 17, Bianki finished secondary school as an art teacher, and started with design and visual communications at university. He published his first illustration in the children's supplement of the local newspaper at the age of 19 while still attending college. This was in 1984 when Bianki left his hometown for Buenos Aires and just started his job in *Billiken*, a well-known children's magazine in Argentina. Bianki received his first Illustration Award in children's literature for his work on the book *El trompo de palo santo* (The Palo Santo Top) and became a sought-after artist among publishers in Argentina. In 1990, Bianki took the first step in his career change and founded his own experimental, cooperative book-magazine that dealt with the topics of design, comics, illustration and journalistic research into his preferred artistic subjects.

2001 was a year of economic and social crisis

for Argentina. Although these were difficult times for the publishing environment as well, Bianki considered the situation as an opportunity, and, along with his wife, he founded Pequeño Editor, the publishing house of illustrated books in Buenos Aires. This project, later on, earned the support by government institutions as well as the publishing industry, and received several national and international awards.

Since 2010 Bianki has been invited to provide illustration workshops for socially marginalized children in Latin America. The workshops are mainly based on the stories written by Bianki and his experiences of linking reading, writing, visual arts to the particular social and cultural aspects of the host countries. *El arte desarma tu cabeza* (Art Plays with Your Head) is one of his interdisciplinary projects, performed in his workshops with the aim of gathering illustrators and children to work with the themes of inclusion and empowerment through visual art. Using recycled boxes in *Rompecabezas* (Puzzles), and taking more than 3000 photographs of the sky for *Con la cabeza en las nubes* (Head in the Clouds) – Bianki has proven again and again to be an illustrator who pushes back the frontiers of art and illustration.

*Talieh Mirsalehi*

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*Con la cabeza en las nubes* [Head in the Clouds]. Buenos Aires: Pequeño editor, 2009. Print.  
*Candombe, fiebre de carnaval* [Candombe: Carnival Fever]. Buenos Aires: Pequeño editor, 2004. Print.





# María Laura Devetach

Author – Argentina

*I always “read” and absorbed life through my senses. I think every little thing that exists has its word, a name, a voice.*

M. L. Devetach.

BORN IN 1936 in Reconquista, Santa Fe, Laura Devetach is a household name in Argentinian children’s literature. Devetach earned a degree in Modern Literature in Córdoba in 1950 and started her career as a teacher in the rural area of north Santa Fe in 1956. Storytelling was her main teaching method to draw the students’ attention from cotton fields and sugarcanes to school and the world of tales. In 1976 and while affected by the tumultuous political climate of the time, Devetach and her husband, the writer Gustavo Roldán, moved to Buenos Aires. Despite the political suppression and censorship of cultural and literary works, Devetach dedicated her time to journalism, writing, creating, and directing the collections with a focus on children’s literature. On the side, she worked as a promoter of reading culture and collaborated with different media on the topic of writing and culture. Through her participation in national and international workshops and through her short stories, poems, essays, and her works for children’s television programs, Devetach has been an indefatigable champion of children’s literature. Although she references Argentina’s recent troubled history as well

as the challenges of everyday life, Devetach resists a didacticism. In *The Tower of Cubes* and *The Ant that Sings*, to name but a few, her poetic language and metaphoric voice evoke voices, sounds, music, and create images in the reader’s mind while it challenges the social and cultural conflicts of the time. Devetach has earned numerous national and international awards and literary distinctions since the beginning her career. In 2008, she received a Doctor Honoris Causa from the UNC in Córdoba and in 2010 she won the Premio Iberoamericano SM de Literatura Infantil y Juvenil.

*Talieh Mirsalehi*

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- Diablos y Mariposas* [Devils and Butterflies]. Buenos Aires: Ediciones del Eclipse, 2005. Print.
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# Bronwyn Bancroft

## Illustrator- Australia

BRONWYN BANCROFT was born in Tenterfield, New South Wales, in 1958. After training in both Canberra and Sydney, Bancroft has had a long and very productive career. She is an Aboriginal artist and a descendant of the Djanbun clan of the Bundjalung nation. She has worked as a fashion designer, an artist, a book illustrator, and an arts administrator. As a fashion designer, she was part of a group who were the first Australian fashion designers to show their work in Paris.

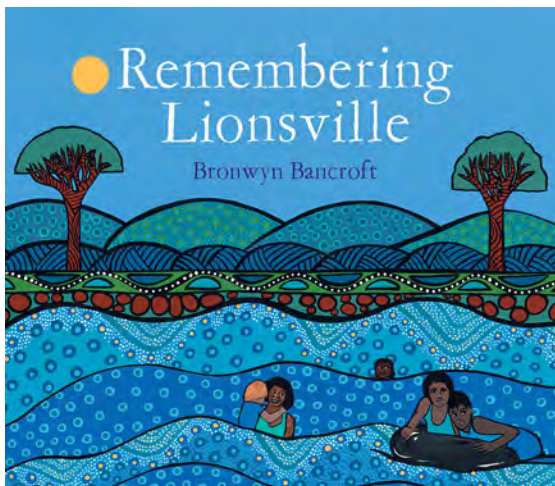
In 1993, Bancroft began to illustrate children's books. The first book she illustrated was Diana Kidd's *The Fat and Juicy Place* which was shortlisted for the children's Book Council of Australia's Book of the Year and also won the Australian Multicultural Children's Book Award. Bancroft has since then contributed with artwork for over twenty children's books. Bancroft has also created a number of children's books on her own, such as *An Australian 123 of*

*Animals* and *An Australian ABC of Animals*.

As an illustrator, Bancroft has a unique style, influenced by her aboriginal heritage, as well as by her work with fabrics and the other artistic media she has worked with. As well as being an illustrator, she has also worked with, jewelry design, painting, sculpturing, creating collages, and interior design. Bronwyn Bancroft has always had an interest in community activism. In 1992, her painting *Prevention of AIDS* was used in a campaign to raise awareness of HIV/AIDS in Australia. In 2004, Bancroft was hired to do a mural covering the exterior of a sports arena in Marrickville. The mural depicts a snake, a man, and a woman, representing both biblical and Indigenous Australian creation stories. It also includes the goanna, the ancestral totem of the Marrickville area's original inhabitants, the Wagal people.

In 1994 Bancroft was the Australian candidate for the UNICEF Ezra Jack Keats International Award for Excellence in Children's Book Illustration, and in 2009, she received the Dromkeen Medal for her contribution to children's literature. She has been nominated for many other Australian as well as international awards throughout her career.

*Katarina Svenning*



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*Big Rain Coming*. By Katrina Gemein. Sydney: Puffin, 2013. Print.



# Ursula Dubosarsky

Author – Australia

*What did it mean? ... For a while I asked myself that. But meanings, purposes—I learnt to give up on such things. The story meant everything and nothing at all. And both notions, I found to my surprise, sat comfortably together inside my head.*

U. Dubosarsky, *Black Sails* 128

URSULA DUBOSARSKY was born into a family of writers in Sydney in 1961. She graduated in classical languages and literature at Sydney University in 1982. After travel and a year on a kibbutz in Israel, she returned to Australia where she published her first picture book for children, *Maisie and the Pinny Gig* (1989). Her travel has inspired her to write more books—such as *The First Book of Samuel* (1995), based on the life story of her Hebrew teacher on the kibbutz, and *Bruno and the Crumhorn* (1996), inspired by an encounter with an Early Music Society. Her other important publications include *Abyssinia* (2001), *The Red Shoes* (2006), and *The Golden Day* (2011). Other than novels, Dubosarsky has also produced a great range of illustrated books such as *The Terrible Plop* (2012) and *Too Many Elephants in This House* (2012).

Dubosarsky’s writing is characterized by word-play. She herself has said that “playing with words is perhaps like being born musical or visual, being born with a love of language.” An example of this is when she describes Frances’ mechanical reading in *Red Shoes* with “a low humming sort of voice, like a quiet lawnmower.”

In terms of characterization, Dubosarsky demonstrates real empathy with her child readers. Her child characters are always frustrated by the

oddities of adult characters. They tend to be loners with intense imaginations, oddballs with the tendency of living in their own worlds free from adult’s ruling and common sense. In some cases, their imagination can even disrupt a perfectly ordered society—like in *The Terrible Plop* (2009), where a “plopping” voice transforms into a horrible monster. Over her career as a writer, Dubosarsky has been awarded nine national literary prizes, including five New South Wales Premier’s Literary Awards. Dubosarsky also has an impressive international profile, with books translated into Italian, German, Spanish, Catalan, Portuguese, Russian, Estonian, Slovenian, Korean, Chinese, Japanese, and Hebrew.

*Chrysogonus Malilang*

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*The Terrible Plop*. Illus. Andrew Joyner. Sydney: Penguin, 2012. Print  
*The Word Spy*. Illus. Tohby Riddle. Sydney: Viking, 2011. Print



# Renate Welsh

Author– Austria

*Any historical narrative should not only look back but can also be a signal from the past for the presence: the help to understand the presence in more detail and with greater awareness, to become more sharply aware of the things that have come to be and to see their contours better*

R. Welsh

RENATE WELSH, born in Vienna in 1937, belongs to a generation of writers who grew up during World War II and the post-war era. The memories and experiences of that time forms the basis of an oeuvre which continuously uncovers mechanisms of power and suppression—demanding independent thinking and acting, the responsibility of individuals, moral courage, and integrity as well as the intention not to forget the past. With narratives such as *Johanna*, *In die Waagschale geworfen* (Put Your Thumb on the Scales), *Besuch aus der Vergangenheit* (A Visit from the Past), and *Dieda oder Das fremde Kind* (That Girl or The Strange Child), Renate Welsh has made contemporary history—which she has either experienced herself or researched meticulously—something the reader can experience as well.

Welsh focuses on children’s social reality: family crises and social injustice, illnesses, social exclusion, violence at home and at school, isolation, and identity conflicts are depicted with remarkable honesty. Her books are highly ethical while making do without any preaching qualities. Her greatest



strength is possibly the literary transformation of authentic experiences. An excellent example of this is *Johanna*, which is based on conversations she had with the real person over a number of years.

The story is set in the Austria of the thirties (1931 through 1936), the time between the

wars, which was characterized by political instability, poverty, unemployment, and the rise of National Socialism.

Renate Welsh sees the inner development of a young person as a “hurdle race into the future,” which is one of the key ideas in her literary conception of youth. One of the greatest hurdles in an individual’s search for his or her identity is, needless to say, the individual itself. In ever fresh variants, Welsh describes the “Homelessness” of her main characters who, feeling useless and isolated, withdraw into themselves.

A final characteristic feature of Welsh’s style is the enormous wealth of detail making up the reality that she describes. In conveying moods and statements, Welsh does not rely on explicit descriptions but focuses instead on items of seemingly secondary importance which are joined together to create an even more effective picture. It is a style that is somehow reminiscent of film settings in which much remains unspoken but everything is said.

*Björn Sundmark*

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# Linda Wolfsgruber

Illustrator – Austria

*I love being able to invent something truly special for all my books. The process begins with the choice of painting or graphics technique and concludes with the typography layout.*

L. Wolfsgruber

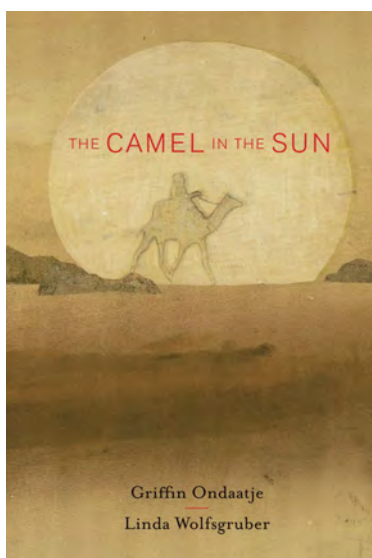
LINDA WOLFSGRUBER was born in 1961 in Bruneck in South Tyrol. Besides attending the art college in St. Ulrich in Gröden (Italy), she studied typesetting and graphic design. Since 1996, she has been a lecturer at the Scuola d'illustrazione di Sarned. During her thirty years as an illustrator and author, she created over sixty books in which she experimented with a variety of genres, narrative concepts, and painting techniques.

Critics emphasize the evolution of style that characterizes her output. At the same time, they point out several constant elements, one of which is humor based on anarchy against the fixed order (*Princess Snotty Nose, King and Fool*) while another one is a metaphysical reflection on the world. Particularly in the recent years, Wolfsgruber has been exploring religious and mythical motifs. In the picture book *Ark*, she outlined an expressionist vision

of Noah's ark, a gloomy shape filled with countless pairs of glowing eyes. In the story *How Was It in the Beginning* she used abstract illustrations to render the chaotic time of the world's birth, searching for answers about man's identity. The motif of identity was also explored in *A Daisy is a Daisy is a Daisy—Except When it's a Girl's Name*, where she created fantastic portraits of half-girls, half-flowers, inspired by the custom (common to many cultures) of assigning floral names.

Linda Wolfsgruber has been awarded many prizes, both in Austria and abroad, including the Golden Apple of the Biennale of Illustration in Bratislava in 1997. She has won some awards multiple times—for example, the Austrian Children's and Juvenile Book Award (eight times; most recently in 2014 for *Ark*), and the Children's and Juvenile Book Award of the City of Vienna (nine times; most recently in 2010 for the illustrations for *How Was It in the Beginning*). Wolfsgruber's works have been presented at more than forty exhibitions, including seven individual ones. Her books have been translated into seventeen languages.

*Anna Maria Czernow*



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*Daisy ist ein Gänseblümchen* [A Daisy is a Daisy is a Daisy—Except When it's a Girl's Name]. Vienna: Jungbrunnen, 2009. Print.



# Bart Moeyaert

Author- Belgium

*If children's literature is to take itself seriously, it will have to acknowledge that it is part of culture, and therefore has to be as broad as it can be.*

B. Moeyaert

BART MOEYAERT was born in Bruges in 1964. He was the seventh son, and by tradition, he could claim the King of Belgium as one of his godfathers. In such a large family, it was easy for Moeyaert to get lost and disappear. He enjoyed drawing, cutting, and pasting, and he liked to build things such as tree houses. He was also well read across many literary genres.

When he was ten years old, Moeyaert wrote his first story, and he started his first book when he was eleven years old. However, Moeyaert's father discouraged him from writing because he believed that it was not a profession. This did not stop Moeyaert from writing, and in 1995, writing became his profession. However, this was not without its own problems. While he was writing *De Melkweg* (The Milky Way, 2011), Moeyaert was also serving as Poet Laureate of Antwerp (2006). This proved to be difficult and made him quite cynical. It took him a year and a half to be able to believe again that people were fundamentally good and beautiful.

Literary genre is not that important to Moeyaert because he does not write within just one specific genre; instead, he writes texts that cover almost all of the literary genres. This includes not only novels, short stories, and poetry but also theater, audio books, and song texts. Many of his books bring together his writing and music, such as *De Hemel* (Heaven), 2015) and *De Schepping* (The Creation, 2003) where CDs come with the books. In connec-

tion with music, Moeyaert believes that the tone of a piece is very important; it is something that must be maintained throughout the piece.

As a writer, Moeyaert practices the technique of "show, don't tell" masterfully. For example, in *Blote handen* (Bare Hands, 1995), we as readers are in the field with Ward when his dog is killed, and together we mourn and vow revenge. We are also guests in the dining room when Betjeman suddenly finds his Christmas dinner in his lap instead of on the table.

Moeyaert has received numerous awards for his diverse works. This includes several nominations for both the Hans Christian Andersen Award and the Astrid Lindgren Memorial Award. In 2014, the Frankfurter Buchmesse appointed Moeyaert their artistic director for the guest of honor program in 2016.

*Björn Sundmark*

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- De Schepping* [The Creation]. Illus. Wolf Erlbruch. Amsterdam: Em. Querido Kinderboeken Uitgeverij, 2003. Print.



# Rascal (Pascal Nottet)

Illustrator – Belgium

*I consider the child as a complete being, in construction, but complete. Like me.*

Rascal

RASCAL WAS BORN 1959 in Namur. His given name is Pascal Nottet, but he has published most of his work under the pseudonym Rascal. Rascal's interest in illustration started at a young age. He was only twelve years old when his parents enrolled him in the art school l'Institut Saint-Luc de Tournai. The school opened up a new world of drawing, helping Rascal develop his talent for illustration. After graduation, Rascal created posters for the theatre where he had to collaborate and develop different styles of drawing depending on the play he was advertising. But after being mesmerized by the work of Tomi Ungerer, his idea of working with children's literature was born.

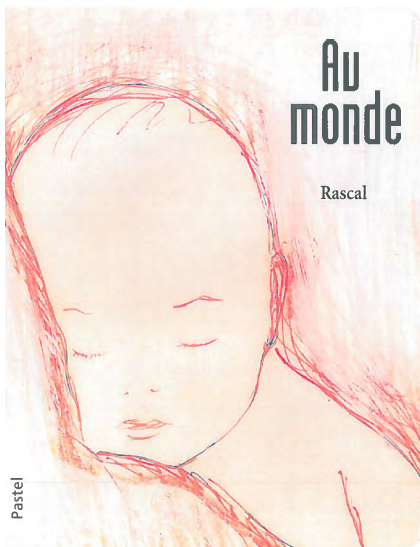
Rascal worked alone on his first three books, published in 1992, but has now collaborated with over twenty illustrators on different projects. His style is diverse, not keeping to one distinct style or

age. This can be witnessed in his over 100 books. Rascal creates children's literature not by drawing pictures to text but through collaboration and discussion with other creators.

Rascal does not always employ a standard dramaturgy but favors the disorderly and the unexpected, and his work often balances between darkness and light. Believing that children are aware of the complexity and harshness of the world, Rascal presents stories in a straightforward manner and garnishes them with elements of poetry. Mostly drawing by hand, his work is intuitive, stemming from the joy of creating.

Rascal has won several awards for his work, the first being the Graphic Prize of the Bologna Fair in 1993. He was also awarded the Prix Escapages in 2009 for *The tasks' calendar* and named Winner of the Grand Triennial Award in Children's Literature of the French Community of Belgium 2009. He was on IBBY's Honour List 2012 for *In 2000 Too Far* and awarded the Prix Libbylit Album for *The Three Little Pigs* in 2013. Rascal has also been translated into several different languages.

*Bea Gustavsson*



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# Marina Colasanti

Author – Brazil

*True fairy tales—their content rich in meanings and multiple levels of interpretation – are meant for any age.*

M. Colasanti

PRODUCTIVE AND VERSATILE author Marina Colasanti was born in Asmara, Eritrea, in 1937 and moved to Italy at the beginning of World War II. After the war in 1948, her family moved to Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. Even during the war, she had been surrounded by art: fictional stories, a collection of classic tales given to her by her parents as a substitute for friends and toys. When she later on went to college, Colasanti chose the National School of Fine Arts, specializing in etching. However, she had wide interests and soon turned to journalism, writing for the cultural section of the Brazilian newspaper, *Jornal do Brasil*. She was active in various magazines and worked in advertising and television as an interviewer and TV host. In the same period, she also translated the works of other authors such as Jerzy Kosinski and Carlo Collodi. Colasanti has also been active in defending women's and children's rights on an international level and was, in 1985, appointed to a four-year term in the National Women's Rights Council. Still committed to journalism, in 1991, during the coup d'état against Gorbachev in Moscow, she joined the resistance and reported the events to her newspaper.

Regarding her work as an author, she wrote her first book, *Eu Sozinha* (I Alone), in 1968 and has since then published more than fifty books covering multiple genres and topics, for both adults and children—her first book for children being *Uma Ideia Toda Azul* (The Blue Idea, 1978). Her work in children's literature is characterized by its poetic language, and in one interview, Colasanti bestowed

upon herself the title “manufacturer of metaphors” to describe her passion for creating metaphors and symbols; this passion is particularly evident in her fairy tales. Her protagonists are classic fairy tale characters, her motifs include the quest, and verbal images are ever-present. Colasanti incorporates many themes in her stories, one prominent being loneliness; she derives inspiration from various triggers in her surroundings, such as female laborers in Brazil. Drawing on her artistic background, she has created many illustrations for her collections of fairy tales. Her work has granted her a number of distinctions, including The Best Fiction for Young People (FNLIJ) in 1979 for *Uma Ideia Toda Azul* (The Blue Idea) and in 2001 for *Breve História de um Pequeno Amor* (Short Story of a Tiny Love), as well as a mention in the IBBY Honour List for translation of *The Adventures of Pinocchio* in 2004.

*Michelle Stavroulaki*

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# Cica Fittipaldi

## Illustrator – Brazil

*I was faced with a world that is at the same time beautiful and terrifying. But then, I thought, this is also the imaginary world of children, that doesn't conveniently exclude monstrosity, fear, uncertainty, and magic.... My intention was to build bridges between indigenous and non-indigenous cultures through art.*

C. Fittipaldi

THE WORLD'S INDIGENOUS CULTURES and their histories provide a wealth of stories for the young imagination, many of which are yet to be told. Cica Fittipaldi's authored books and illustrations bring the myths and folklore of remote communities into richly animated life, transporting readers into vibrant visual worlds that access the magical and affective qualities of tribal art from Africa to Australia to the Americas. Painted in primary colors and patterned with bold outlines, dots, and an array of symbolic creatures, Fittipaldi's work is invested with an energy and rhythm that makes the reading experience stimulating for the senses.

Born in Sao Paulo in 1952, Fittipaldi has been drawing since she was a child, but she describes this experience as one that happened in and with nature: organizing twigs and stones and handfuls of sand. A passionate dancer since those early days, she maintains that art is "something to be lived." Fittipaldi studied architecture at university, where she honed her skills as a graphic artist and rediscovered Brazil's diverse cultural and spiritual heritage by travelling to remote regions and reading the work of historians and anthropologists. Her first book *João Lampião* (1984), which she both wrote and illustrated, explored the little known traditions of Goiás, the state where she had worked as a newspaper illustrator and told children's stories on local television.

Fittipaldi is constantly inspired by her environment and by the stories of people living off the beaten track. The time she spent amongst the Amazonian Nambiquara tribe, in particular, has strongly influenced the thematic direction of her

book projects, concerned with reclaiming untold stories. Her illustrations for children's books describing ancient animal ancestors (*Naro, the Polecat*, 1987), familial sagas in Kenya (*The Twins of the Drum*, 2006), or supernatural rites of passage (*Olivia and the indigenous People*, 2014) all provide a field of intuitive and empathetic interaction, aiming to articulate the delicate relationship between man, nature, and the cosmos. Fittipaldi's work naturally touches on wider political and cultural concerns surrounding the recognition of marginalized voices, the documentation of intangible heritage, and indigenous communities at risk. As such, she also participates in educational initiatives and has designed non-fiction texts of social importance, such as the *Guidebook for Indigenous Rights* and the *Yanomami Health Handbook* (1980).

*Temí Odumosu*

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- Olivia E Os Índios.* By Betty Mindlin. São Paulo: Editora Scipione, 2014. Print.



# Kenneth Oppel

Author – Canada

*The kind of fantasies that I like to read and write often usually contain one fantastical assumption or object or phenomenon. And I like those kinds of books as opposed to a hard-out, sword-and-sorcery fantasy where the world's simply teeming with magic.*

K. Oppel

CANADIAN WRITER Kenneth Oppel has for thirty years captured the imaginations of children and young adults across the world. Born in 1967 in British Columbia, Oppel's first novel, *Colin's Fantastic Video Adventure* (1985), was published before he finished secondary school, aged just seventeen. Having produced successful and engaging books ever since, Oppel is now a staple of Canada's children's literature scene and is renowned the world over.

Many of Oppel's works fit the bildungsroman mold: Young protagonists are faced with challenges that lead them onto a journey of adventure, self-discovery, and eventual maturity. But it is his meticulous attention to detail that makes his work so unique; he seamlessly blends fantasy and reality to create believable worlds that have captured his readers' imaginations for decades. His extensive research results in faithful social, cultural, and historical representations—from technological change (through the construction of the trans-continental Canadian Pacific Railroad in the nineteenth century) in *The Boundless* to the social concerns of 1970s Canada in *Half Brother*.

Like his primarily teen-aged audience, Oppel's characters confront moral and ethical questions; their values and feelings are tested in the challenging situations they face, and—without exception, they learn—their choices have consequences. The protagonist in Oppel's award-winning Silverwing series, which to date has sold over one million copies

worldwide, is Shade, a young Silverwing bat whose decision to disobey the rules of his colony forces him to undertake a journey of epic proportions. The series of events and encounters Shade faces produces an action-packed, suspense-driven adventure that Oppel maintains throughout the series. His Airborn trilogy, which follows the journey of a cabin boy in an alternate reality where airships are the primary mode of transportation, is another career highlight. It includes his most famous work, *Skybreaker*, which made the *New York Times* bestseller list and was named Children's Novel of the Year in 2005 by the *London Times*. Indeed, Oppel has won dozens of literary and children's choice awards. To date, he has published twenty-eight novels, and his works have been translated into over twenty languages. Oppel lives in Toronto with his wife and three children.

*Sean Kerns*

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# Pierre Pratt

Illustrator – Canada

*I think about stories with images in mind. Text comes closing bit by bit the possibilities of various meanings. An illustrator is a storyteller in some ways.*

P. Pratt

PIERRE PRATT was born in Montreal, Quebec, in 1962. As a child, he loved observing and drawing his surroundings. His education in graphic design at Ahuntsic College in Montreal was a starting point for his formal entry into the world of illustration, comic strips, cartoons, editorial illustration, and children's books since the early 1980s. Since 1990, he has illustrated and written over fifty children's books.

With his choice of colors, shapes, and perspectives, Pierre Pratt creates self-contained images which allow children to interpret his imaginary worlds. In his illustrations, Pratt regularly plays with perspective and uses cinematographic techniques to give his reader an understanding of how a child perceives the adult world. In his humorous illustrations, characters have unusual features and even objects have their own distinct personalities. Pratt's illustrations are simple, varied in technique yet recognizable, and allow children to imagine freely. He tries to create moods and convey different emotions in each story.

His illustrations have been exhibited in different countries, from Canada to Slovakia, Japan, France,



and the USA. Since 1989, Pratt has won several national prestigious awards such as two times Governor General's Literary Award and Mr. Christie Book Award for his illustration for *Les Fantaisies de l'oncle Henri* as well as IBBY Canada Elizabeth Mrazik-Cleaver Canadian Picture Book Awards for *Where's Pub*. In 2015, his illustration for *Doors in the Air* won the TD Grade One Giveaway Program in which over 500,000 books were distributed to every first grade English and French speaking student in Canada. Pratt has also won many international awards such as the Golden Apple and Golden Plaque in Bratislava, Totem at the Montreuil Salon du Livre in France, the UNICEF Prize in Bologna, and the Boston Globe-Horn Book Award to name but a few. Today, Pierre Pratt lives both in Montreal and Lisbon.

*Talieh Mirsalehi*

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# Cao Wenxuan

Author – China

*Those who can go through suffering gracefully grow into strong men.*

Cao W.

FOR THE PAST THIRTY YEARS, children's literature in China has been closely associated with the name Cao Wenxuan. Born in a small village in Jiangsu Province in 1954, Cao experienced the three years of nationwide great famine during his childhood. Since then, he has turned his childhood memories of abject poverty and hunger into his greatest literary asset. After his graduation from Peking University in the mid-1970s, he first became a lecturer and then a professor in Chinese literature and children's literature. Above all, however, Cao is a prolific children's writer. Since his first novel *Old Enclosing Wall* was published in 1985, he has written more than one hundred works, three of which have already been adapted into films. His most well-known work, *The Straw House* (1997), remains something of a miracle in Chinese publishing history, with over 300 reprints.

Cao's contribution to Chinese children's literature includes both his literary work and his academic achievement in the field. Previously, Chinese children's literature primarily served as an ideological tool and was loaded with didactic messages. Cao, by contrast, makes every attempt to combine classical aesthetical principles and spirit of humanism with modern sensibilities in his stories, rather than simply indoctrinating or preaching to children. He advocates "coming-of-age" novels, which are characterized by uniting poetic landscape and compassion for tragic beauty with the growth of children. Reading Cao's works, readers often find themselves meandering through "great landscape of human nature and nature itself," to feel with all the attendant beauty and inevitable suffering. His quest novels present many tough but kind-hearted teenagers—for example, Sangsang in *The Straw House*

and Dingding and Dangdang in the novel of same name; they are all capable of smiling in the face of life's ebbs and flows. Through these characters, Cao hopes to help millions of children grow up undaunted and unspoiled into adulthood.

Cao's stories not only influence Chinese children's quest for identity but also those of children around the world. Over the years, his books have been translated into a number of languages, including English, Swedish, French, and German. Over the course of his thirty-year career, Cao Wenxuan has garnered a number of awards and distinctions, including Chinese National Book Prize, Song Chingling Children's Literature Awards, and Bingxin Children's Literature Awards. His series of novels *Dingding and Dangdang* were selected as one of the 2015 IBBY Outstanding Books for Young People with Disabilities. In recent years, Cao is dedicated to the collaboration in picture books with various artists. For example, *A Feather* (2015) is an exquisite collaboration with Roger Mello. All these literary, research and pedagogical efforts make him a shining star in contemporary children's literature.

*You Chengcheng*

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# Zhu Chengliang

## Illustrator – China

*I strive for the best quality and illustrate a picture book like making a movie. I want to draw the soul of the story and hope that young readers can understand the deeper meaning buried in the words and improve their artistic appreciation.*

Zhu C.

ZHU CHENGLIANG was born in Shanghai in 1948 with an innate talent and interest in painting. Later in his life, he was enrolled in Nanjing University of the Arts, majoring in oil painting. Over forty years of creation and illustration, Zhu has provided the children in China with more than fifty excellent picture books.

His painting style tends to be simple and full of the fun of childhood. Zhu incorporates Chinese characteristics into his illustrations—such as traditional New Year painting and wood-engraving style in *The Story of the Kitchen God*, clay figures in *All in a Day*, water color in *Flame*. Zhu's chameleon-like visual style as such can conjure up an immediate response in young readers. To him, it is very important to blend a good story with varied painting skills so as to delight young children aesthetically and ethically. Currently, he is still chasing innovative



ideas of a picture book. His latest illustration in *Mr. and Mrs. Candy's Trip* witnesses his transformation from traditional Chinese painting and his further exploration of art. In this picture book, he uses pencils to sketch realistic details, but with restrained and dreamlike qualities. Overall, these creative practices are born from the aesthetic emotion and the relentless artistic pursuit of the painter.

Zhu's meticulousness in painting illustrated books has brought him both national and international awards. In fact, back in 1984, Zhu had already been mentioned honourably by UNESCO's Noma Concours for his illustrations in *Flashing Rabbit-Shaped Lamp*. In 1985, he was selected as the Chinese representative to illustrate *All in a Day*, which was published by Japan. In 2010, *A New Year's Reunion* was awarded first prize in the Feng Zikai Children's Picture Book Award, the most prestigious picture book award in China. Through his oeuvre, he is dedicated to enhancing the visual appreciation of young children worldwide. Filling the pictures in the book with traditional Chinese culture and distinct local colors, Zhu Chengliang's illustration will continue to emotionally resonate with audiences from different cultures.

*You Chengcheng*

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*The Old Tyre*. Nanjing: The Oriental Doll, 2014. Print.



# Claudia Rueda

Illustrator – Colombia

*To write and illustrate for children is a challenge that makes us better as human beings.*

C. Rueda

CURIOSITY AND PLAYFULNESS—this is how Claudia Rueda, a Colombian illustrator and picture-book author, defines childhood. No wonder critics claim that these features dominate in her works for children. Before Rueda turned to books for young readers, she was known as an author of political cartoons, published in Colombian press in the period of drug and guerilla wars. In order to obtain a Master's degree from a law school, which she attended concurrently with an art school at National University of Colombia, she submitted an illustrated thesis titled *Graphic History of the Roman Law*. When studying computer graphics at the University of California, Berkeley, she attended a children's books illustration course and ever since has found fulfilment as an artist creating for young readers.

Claudia Rueda has authored over twenty children's books, both fiction and non-fiction—for

example, *No*, a compendium about black bears. In her artistic work, she uses a variety of techniques, such as charcoal and ink drawing or computer graphics, but her favorite is colored pencil drawing. Rueda is particularly interested in the interpretative tension between illustration and text, which she often uses to add another dimension to the narrative. In her picture book *Anaconda*, a tale about a mouse which questions the existence of the snake in the title, the text tells a different story from that shown in the illustrations. Another characteristic feature of Rueda's creative output is open endings, inspired by Eastern philosophy.

Claudia Rueda has been awarded many prizes, among them the Bank Street College Best Children's Books for *Here Comes the Easter Cat* and *Here Comes Santa Cat* (2015), the Nati per Leggere Award for the Italian edition of *No* (2012), and the Oppenheim Platinum Award for *My Little Polar Bear* (2009). In 2008, *Let's Play in the Forest While the Wolf is Not Around* was nominated for the IBBY Honour List. Rueda's books have been translated into more than ten languages including English, French, Chinese, Japanese, German, and Danish.

*Anna Maria Czernow*

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# Miro Gavran

Author – Croatia

*I really am convinced that literature for children and young people should not keep silent on any theme that is a component part of life.*

M. Gavran

Miro Gavran is a world-renowned dramatist—the only living playwright to have an international theatre festival organized in his honor. Born in 1961 in a small Croatian village called Gornja Trava, he went on to study dramaturgy at the Academy of Theatre, Film, and Television in Zagreb and had his first theatre play published already at the age of twenty-two.

He made his debut as a prose writer in 1999 with the book *Forgotten Son*, nominated for the IBBY Honour List 2002 and translated into English, German, and Spanish, among other languages. The novel tells the story of a mentally retarded young man of twenty who returns to his family house he had been sent away from years ago. Critics hesitate whether the novel is meant for the adult or the young reader, which is often the case with Gavran's

prose. Another characteristic feature of his writing is discussing difficult subjects, such as parental divorce (*How Dad Won Mum*), illness (*All Sorts of Things in My Head*), alcoholism in the family (*Head Over Heels in Love*), and war and rape (*Try to Forget*).

Gavran tries to be as close as possible to the child protagonists and gives them a voice, often using his favorite epistolary form. He stays close to the child reader as well, does not avoid humorous motifs, and inscribes into his novels a message of hope for the future, regardless of the difficulty of the subject discussed.

Miro Gavran has received many prestigious theatre and literary awards. In the area of children's and young adult literature, he was awarded, among others, The Ivana Brlić Mažuranić Prize for *All Sorts of Things in My Head* (1992), The Mato Lovrak Prize for the best novel for children for *Happy Days* (1995), and a Special Prize at the International Festival of Literature for Children and Young People in Sofia, Bulgaria for *The Teacher of My Dreams* (2007). His books for young readers have been translated into several languages including English, German, Spanish, and Chinese.

*Anna Maria Czernow*



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# Lilian Brøgger

Illustrator – Denmark

BORN ON THE DANISH ISLAND of Fanø in 1950, Lilian Brøgger knew from the beginning that she wanted to draw. Studying at the School of Design in Copenhagen 1967-1972, she was the first student to graduate as an illustrator. She has since then illustrated over a hundred works.

After graduating, Brøgger has worked with different styles and techniques. Her earlier work in the 1970s can be characterized by the current social and realist style, whereas her style in the 1980s changed to a less realistic and more poetic one. Since then Brøgger's style has continued to develop throughout the decades, following the trend of post-modernism and deconstruction through the 1990s and the early 2000s. Her openness to new styles and themes has contributed to her popularity.

Although Lilian Brøgger has explored several techniques and styles, her work has since the 1980s remained within the frame of surrealism. Inspired by illustrators such as Slovakian Dusan Kallay, Brøgger has published works such as *Alice in Wonderland*—where her drawings take a step away from the conventional, letting go of traditional figures in favor of the surreal and poetic. While surreal and emotional, Brøgger's illustrations often have a light-heartedness that carries a certain sense of harmony one can easily get lost in.

Besides working as an illustrator, Lilian Brøgger has also worked as a teacher at the School of Design in Kolding where she has taught her craft to new illustrators. Brøgger has held posts in the Danish Writers Association's group of illustrators

and on the board of IBBY Denmark. She has also worked as a juror at exhibitions as well as conducting workshops around the world.

Working as an illustrator for over thirty years, Lilian Brøgger has received many awards—among them the Association of Children's Librarians' Cultural Award in 1982, The Ministry of Culture's Award for Initiative 1986, a Golden Apple at the Bratislava Biennale (BiB) in 2005, and the Grand Prix at the Tallinn Triennale (TiT) in 2006. Brøgger has also been nominated for the Hans Christian Andersen Award several times before and most recently won The Association for Book Craft's Award of Honour for Best Book Design of the Year for *The Hole in the Sky* (2012).

*Bea Gustavsson*

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# Louis Jensen

Author – Denmark

*We are forever inspired by longing and we continually look for it in the stories we read, both as children and as adults.*

L. Jensen

LOUIS JENSEN WAS BORN in northern Jutland, in 1943. His family moved south when he was twelve years old, but he never lost his connection to the fjords and seabirds that dominated the landscape; they are present in all his books. Until a few years ago, Jensen earned his living as an architect and city planner for the city of Aarhus. Today, Jensen is so successful that he can support himself and his family with his writing income alone.

As a child, Jensen was a prolific reader and quickly advanced his way through the small local library beginning with fairy tales and eventually venturing into the adult section. He read Hans Christian Andersen along with Jung and Steiner, and his favorite book is Lewis Carroll's *Alice in Wonderland*. For Jensen, the fairy tale was one of the most important genres, and many of his stories carry themes similar to those found in Andersen's "The Snow Queen"—such as travelling away, discovering oneself, finding love, and returning home.

Like an architect would design a building, Jensen's stories are carefully constructed. In his ongoing collection called *Hundrede firkantede historier* (A Hundred Square Stories, 1992), even the layout of the story on the page is manipulated into a square or rectangle. Another skill exhibited in Jensen's carefully constructed writing is his ability to convince his readers that not only humans and animals can have feelings and motives but so can gigantic letters, detached body parts, and even slices of bread.

In addition, the subtle messages in his stories

are naturally appealing to children without pandering or feeling like educational texts. For example, *2 kroner og 25 øre* (2 Crowns and 25 Øre, 2010) highlights the evils of starvation and compels the fourteen-year-old protagonist to become a modern-day Robin Hood and collect money—both legally and illegally—to fight this evil.

Jensen has received many awards for his books. He has been nominated for the Astrid Lindgren Memorial Award eight times (2004–2010 and 2014), and this is his third nomination for the Hans Christian Andersen Award (2000, 2010, and 2016). In addition, he has received working grants from the Danish Ministry of Culture seven times between 1990 and 2001.

*Monica Hagnevik*

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# Affaf Tobbala

Author – Egypt

*I think we should accustom our children to the habit of reading early on, and we should give a lot of attention to the Arabic language and teach children to express themselves in a correct way. We need a revolution in education...*

A. Tobbala

SHE WAS INSPIRED BY HER grandchildren to tell stories and later prompted by them to put her stories to paper—this is how Affaf Tobbala’s career as a children’s book author came to be. Having retired from a long, successful career in television, she published her first book, *Al-samaka Al-faddia* (The Silver Fish), in 2005 at the age of sixty-four.

Affaf Tobbala was born in Cairo in 1941. She married and had children at a young age but, nevertheless, continued her education at the University of Cairo, receiving a BA in French Literature followed by an MA and PhD in Mass Communication. Tobbala worked as a director, screenplay writer, and producer in Egyptian Television between 1966 and 2001—holding several managerial positions throughout her career. She also took on the role of educator from 1987 onward, teaching several undergrad courses on television and documentary production at the University of Cairo, the Television Institute, and other academic institutions.

After the publication and positive reception of *The Silver Fish*—which received Egypt’s Award for Children’s Literature and was awarded mention in the New Horizons category of the Bologna Ragazzi Awards in 2006—Tobbala proceeded to write and publish twelve more books with two underway. Tobbala has written in a variety of forms, from children’s stories and picture books to short stories and novels for young adults. She has also collaborated with several artists who used different techniques

and styles to produce illustrations that complement her writing and fit her audience.

Many of Tobbala’s works are translated into English. Some have been chosen for distribution to primary and middle school libraries (such as *A New Dream* and *Old Papers*) and for curricular reading in high school (*The House and the Palm Tree*). The Anna Lindh Foundation included *Old Papers* in the Honor List for Children’s Books in the Arab World in 2010 and awarded *The Eye* the Arab Children’s Literature Award in 2011. Along with the aforementioned and many other awards her works were given, Dr. Tobbala herself was honored by The Cairo Festival of Children’s Cinema in 2015 for her contribution to art for children.

*Jasmin Salih*

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# Piret Raud

Author – Estonia

*In picture books, both the text and the images must speak to the reader – they must have an effect together, and not only for the smallest reader there is, but for adults, too.*

P. Raud

ESTONIAN AUTHOR-ILLUSTRATOR Piret Raud's works incorporate the surreal, the absurd, and the everyday in an effortless and engaging manner. After initially publishing children's literature anonymously for fear of being associated with her parents, whom are among Estonia's most-loved children's literature authors, Piret Raud soon emerged from their shadow to herself become a much-lauded author and illustrator.

Raud's characters are a joy to discover for readers of all ages, even if her ideal readers are children up to the age of ten. In *Princess Lulu and Mr. Bony*, Princess Lulu is falsely chastised by her mother for using too much toothpaste; Lulu is determined to find the culprit. Much to Lulu's surprise, the offender is a skeleton who uses the toothpaste to clean his bones. She asks the skeleton if he is a ghost:

"Nonsense!" the skeleton replied. "Ghosts don't exist. I am a skeleton. A skeleton of flesh and bone. Well, actually just of bone. My friends just call me Mr. Bony."

So begins their friendship and adventure. Raud's characters and illustrations are filled with idiosyncrasies; for instance, the image of Princess Lulu, Mr. Bony (dressed in Lulu's clothes), and Cerberus (a perch skeleton, held on a leash by Mr. Bony) on the book's cover is typical of Raud's untypical—and unpredictable—storylines.

Raud's short-story collections are filled with humor and surprise. She says of her writing, "I do love this halfway house between the realistic and the absurd, this sliding from one into the other,

which often arises from spontaneous word or image associations." The thirty-two tales in *Slightly Silly Stories* (Natuke napakad lood) include a shy mobile phone, a princess who lies compulsively, a wicked snowman, and an overly obedient soldier—Raud's ability to make us empathize with her characters and her memorable turns of phrase make for addictive reading.

On first impression, some of Raud's stories may be thought too brief, but they guarantee to engage even the most resistant young reader, while keen readers will revisit the stories to discover new detail in the illustrations and to further explore the tales' twists and turns. Not a word is wasted in Raud's stories, which allow children to be open to possibility by breaking pre-conceived notions about what is and what can be, and which are supported by underlying values of positivity, of openness, and of hope.

*Sean Kearns*

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# Timothée De Fombelle

Author – France

*Children’s literature is the place where I found my freedom.... A novel for children allows me to “make literature” by surprise, without realizing it.*

T. de Fombelle

TIMOTHÉE DE FOMBELLE was born in 1973 in Paris. He spent most of his childhood in the countryside in the west of France, where he and his four siblings created imaginary worlds while playing in the woods and building huts in the trees. Most of his evenings in that countryside were dedicated to reading books in the library and performing theatre with his brothers and sisters for their parents, as an old family tradition. In his adult life and before choosing the bohemian life of theatre, de Fombelle worked as a literature teacher in Paris and Vietnam. He received several awards later on in his career as a playwright, such as the Prix du Souffleur for his play *Le phare* (the Lighthouse) in 2002 which became translated and produced in Canada, Lithuania, Poland, and Russia.

De Fombelle’s most successful children’s story, *Tobie Lolness* (Toby Alone), which is about a one-and-a-half-millimeter-tall teenager who lives in the trees, was published in 2006. It has won several national and international awards and has been translated to twenty-eight languages. After *Tobie Lolness*, de Fombelle has released the successful books of *Vango 1 and 2*, *Victoria Rêve* (Victoria Dreams), and *Le Livre de Perle* (The Book of Perle)—published in 2010, 2011, and 2014 respectively.

Timothée de Fombelle is an outstanding storyteller. His fluent, beautiful, and elegant yet accessible style has made reading his novels a thrilling experience among his readers. His multi-layered characters are real humans who battle against injustice, struggle for freedom, resist tyranny, and evolve throughout the story. His characters have

a “lost paradise” but also a quest: they look for an opening when life fences them off. De Fombelle is not only a great constructor of character but a master of creating unique and original universes, too. His visual descriptions and playful choices of words help the readers visualize the stories. He has faith in his readers’ capacity to grasp the message of his books, and therefore, he leaves it to the readers to navigate through the story and develop their own understanding of his characters’ personalities.

Since 2006, Timothée de Fombelle has won several national and international awards such as Prix des Mordus du polar in 2011 and *Vango 1* was selected for the IBBY Honour list in 2012. The same as his main characters, Timothée de Fombelle continues his quest for re-discovering his lost paradise, his childhood, through creating new worlds.

*Talieh Mirsalehi*

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# François Place

Illustrator – France

*I am at ease working with liquid mediums, ink, watercolour, aquarelle [...] I look for a sort of writing of the image, a sort of written image [...] Then I start again and again, in order to reach this quality of the free line, as if I were writing. The line has to be precise but with great freedom. The thing with drawing is to find a gesture that is consistent everywhere. Each separate element and the whole must have the same quality, the same rhythm, the same freedom. This is why I rework so often.* F.Place

ACROSS SPRAWLING LANDSCAPES and inside remote communities, François Place takes his readers on adventures that bring them closer to the awe-inspiring diversity of the world. Drawing with the precision of a technical illustrator, in full color and immense detail, Place produces elaborate atlases that facilitate the kind of cross-cultural contact reminiscent of history's major anthropological explorations. Part ethnographer, part magician, part dramatist, Place sets the stage for the imagination to travel far and wide whilst stretching the children's book as a form to its material limits, through large and encyclopedic volumes.

Place was born in Ezanville, just outside Paris, in 1957 and charts his fascination with travel stories back to early childhood, where by the age of twelve he was already absorbed by classic literary adventures in books such as *Moby Dick*, the Tintin series and the works of Jules Verne. He eventually studied graphic arts at L'École supérieure des arts et industries graphiques (ESAIG) Estienne in Paris before entering advertising, where he started illustrating commercially. His first illustrations for children's books were published in 1983 (a new edition of



nineteenth century stories by the Countess of Ségur). However, the style for which Place is renowned evolved through his work in non-fiction publications

such as *The Book of World Discovery* (1985) by Bernard Planche. In 1992, he finally put words to his images in the award-winning fictional picture book *The Last Giants*.

François Place often gives his readers a generous birds-eye view, so that they can see the breadth of terrain they are travelling but also have an opportunity to get lost. That said, there are strong individual characters that emerge, making connections to accessible and intimate experiences—for example, Archibald Leopold Ruthmore, the tiny man in a top hat who finds himself alone in vast rocky terrains and forests and then finally ensconced by a community of peaceful tattooed giants he has been searching for. The visual contrasts in human scale seem to belie the friendship that evolves, and which unfortunately is later destroyed. Similarly, *The Battles' Daughter* (2007) reveals how a mute brown-skinned girl, Garance, navigates her isolation and attempts to forge relationships in seventeenth century France after surviving a shipwreck. Her fate is uncertain. At times, her visible difference is the center of attention, and in other moments, she hides struggling to find her way.

*Temí Odumosu*

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# Rotraut Susanne Berner

## Illustrator – Germany

ROTRAUT SUSANNE BERNER was born in Stuttgart in 1948. She studied graphic design at the Munich University of Applied Sciences. Before she became an illustrator, she worked in advertising for several years. Today, Rotraut Susanne Berner is considered to be one of the most successful illustrators in Germany, and she has illustrated over 80 books for children. She has also designed approximately 800 book covers.

Berner's main interest is to illustrate picture books which tell children's stories without words. An example is her *Wimmelbook* series. Her aim is that words and illustrations should be equally important in a book, and she tries to push the borders between the two so that words become pictures and pictures become words. She also combines fantasy with realistic depiction in the same pictures, again, to transcend borders. In her illustrations figures dance, houses float, and fish fly. Different techniques are combined in Berner's work. She mixes delicate pen and ink drawings with brush drawings, linocut, and stamped images. She also uses flat screen printing, where drawing is done directly on the film, yielding the original only after printing.

Berner is very active in promoting illustrating and illustrators. In the 1990s, she co-founded and organized the "Illustratoren treffpunkt" (Illustrator's meeting place) at the Frankfurt Book Fair. In 2005, she was involved in the creation of the "Stiftung Illustration" (Illustration foundation), which was founded by the cities of Troisdorf and Siegburg. The foundation organizes workshops and exhibitions and publishes the *Lexikon der Illustration* (Illustration encyclopedia), where illustrators from the German speaking world are presented annually.

Berner is also the editor of the series *Tolle Hefte*, a limited edition magazine illustrated by well-known international artists.

Even though she mainly illustrates children's books, Berner has also illustrated books by Charles Bukowski and the novel *Die Zauberlaterne* (The Magic Lantern) by Wolfheinrich von der Mülbe. When she illustrated the *Geschichte der deutschen Literatur* (History of German Literatur) by Manfred Mai, she drew very realistic portraits by using pen and second color.

Rotraut Susanne Berner has been active as an illustrator since 1977 and has been nominated for several different awards throughout the years. In 2006, she received the German Children's Literature Special Award for her complete work, and in 2009, she was awarded the Schwabinger Kunstpreis for her complete work.

*Katarina Svenning*

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# Mirjam Pressler

Author – Germany

*What I wish for is that the child's world—the inner and the outer one—with all the difficulties that come with it, be taken seriously.*

M. Pressler

WHEN MIRJAM PRESSLER was awarded the Oldenburg Children's and Youth Literature Prize in 1980 for her debut novel *Bitterschokolade* (Bitter Chocolate), she became a central voice in the German literature scene. Over the years, Pressler has developed a wide body of work with a range from picture books to fictional books which appeal to all age groups. In the beginning of the 1990s, Pressler developed a special interest for Jewish children and their childhood during the Holocaust in Europe. She was especially interested in Anne Frank—her written work as well as her life. As an editor, Mirjam Pressler published a set of letters, which had been sent between the Frank family members and their friends.

Mirjam Pressler was born as an illegitimate child of Jewish descent and was raised in a foster family. She was born in Darmstadt in 1942. After leaving school she attended the Frankfurt Academy of Fine Arts, and she also studied languages in Munich. After her studies, she went to live in a Kibbutz in Israel. When she returned to Germany in 1965, she had different jobs in order to support her family. When she wrote her first novel, she had turned forty and had been working as a translator for several years. The translation of a revised edition of Anne Frank's diary led to her writing her first nonfictional book, *Ich sehne mich so, die Lebensgeschichte der Anne Frank* (I Yearn So Much: The Life Story of Anne Frank).

Loneliness, violence, and lack of self-confidence amongst children and adolescents are popular topics in Mirjam Pressler's novels. Throughout the years, she has been awarded many prizes for her work. In 2001, she received the Carl Zuckmayer Medal for her "contributions to the German lan-

guage." She is also the only one who has won the special award of the German Children's Literature Prize twice, once for her literary work and once for her achievements as a translator. In 2004, Pressler received the German Book Award for her complete works. With her books, Mirjam Pressler wants to give her readers the opportunity to learn how to live in a world they cannot change. Her second aim is for her readers to learn survival skills through literary heroes

*Katarina Svenning*

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# Eleni Dikaiou

Author – Greece

*Magic is what you see in children's eyes when you show them your love.*

E. Dikaiou

ELENI DIKAIYOU was born in 1953 in New Ionia, near Volos to a family of Greek refugees from the shores of Asia Minor. As a child, she loved to read and dreamt of becoming an archaeologist and a writer. Her favorite stories were those of Homer, as well as the ancient Greek myths; these were stories that took place not in anonymous towns and villages but close to her, and with heroes not merely princes and princesses but with names similar to hers and those of her surroundings.

Dikaiou's first story was published when she was fourteen in the popular Greek magazine, *Diaplasis ton Paidon*. When she graduated from high school, she received a scholarship to study in the United States, but family circumstances prevented her from pursuing such an endeavor; instead, she moved to Athens and began working for a Greek telephone company with public relations. The spark for writing children's literature came with a contest in the young readers-young adults' genre, with the theme of Asia Minor, its refugees, and their life before and after the forced migration of 1922. This led her to write her first novel for children, *The Girls in the Sailors' Suits*, based on the life of Dikaiou's mother and her mother's twin sister in Smyrna, as well as in the refugee settlement of New Ionia. The novel received the literary award of the Smyrna and Asia Minor Cultural Organization in 1991, was translated, and has been included in the mandatory reading list by both public and private schools and in the curriculum of the Sorbonne Institut National de Langues et de Cultures Orientales (National Institute of Oriental Languages and Cultures).

Since then, Dikaiou has published twenty-eight books for children, and many of her stories are

featured in anthologies and other collective works. For her writing, she draws inspiration from her childhood's reading of ancient Greek fiction and mythology as well as Greek history, both ancient and recent, something which can be seen in works such as *The Gods Do Not Die in Pella*, which narrates the life of Alexander the Great; *Under The Walls Of Troy*, which surrounds the myth of the Trojan war; and *Looking for Lost Heroes*, which relates the stories of young children during World War II in Athens. Dikaiou also creates stories from simple observations of her surroundings, such as finding a white cat in the forest, or from intricate social issues such as young people with disabilities. She writes for a wide range of ages, and employs diverse genres, from fairy tales with anthropomorphic animals to realistic stories depicting themes such as civil war, conflicts, and love.

*Michelle Stavroulaki*

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# Lida Varvarousi

Illustrator – Greece

*I want the children to get in contact with their talents and their feelings. I want them to laugh, to search, to have interests, to feel, to love!*

L. Varvarousi

ILLUSTRATOR AND AUTHOR Lida Varvarousi was born in Athens in 1961. She was introduced to art, and particularly painting, early on by her mother, who, a painter herself, brought her along to her atelier, as well as to museums and art galleries. She was thus from a very young age acquainted with painters such as Degas, Matisse and Schiele. Drawing and sketching became one of her favorite occupations, taking inspiration from the view of Acropolis from their Athens flat and trying to capture motion and light. She graduated from the Vakalo College of Art and Design in Athens and proceeded to work as an illustrator for an animated film company and, later on, in advertising as an art and creative director. From there, she entered the world of children's literature and has since 1993 written fifteen books and illustrated around two hundred books.

Varvarousi has expressed how important children's books can be for young children and has actively worked to promote reading. In 2006, she was commissioned by the National Pedagogic Institute to illustrate schoolbooks and teaching material for the first, second, and third grade in Greece's primary school. She also collaborated with the Representation of the European Commission in Greece in 2009 to create the book *A Group of Friends with Heart* to promote values such as peaceful coexistence, cooperation, and solidarity for the achievement of common goals by depicting the story of a young boy travelling through Europe. Furthermore, in 2010, she created the mascot "Hope" for the Children's Hospital of Oncology in Athens. Varvarousi collaborated yet again, in 2013, with the European Commission to illustrate the book *The*

*Stars of Europe.*

Her work as an illustrator for children's books is characterized by vividness; she uses a great variation of bright colors, often to create contrast, but she also makes frequent use of the pair black-white to create the effect of light versus darkness. Her images are created with an audience of young children in mind, mostly depicting animals. Her illustrations are characterized by the use of bold curves, sharp corners and hints of movement, and there is often a surreal quality to them. Since 2001, Varvarousi has run an educational program called "Ζωγραφηγήσεις," or "Paintelling," in which she uses theatrical methods to narrate or sing a story while simultaneously drawing it. The process is interactive, so the children in the audience can interrupt the story and insert their own ideas and thoughts. This project is another attempt to promote reading amongst children, and she has in this effort collaborated with schools, kindergartens, libraries, and municipalities.

*Michelle Stavroulaki*

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# Pejman Rahimizadeh

Illustrator – Iran

*Creating a picture is a means by which I am able to collect my dreams, beliefs, thoughts and feelings and whatever I have inside and present it to another.*

P. Rahimizadeh

BORN IN 1970 IN TEHRAN, Rahimizadeh is one of the most recognized Iranian illustrators, painters, and graphic designers. Already as a child, Rahimizadeh showed a great passion for painting; it was due to this great interest that he discovered from early on the works of some of the most renowned national and international artists in children's illustration, such as Farshid Mesghali and the French artist Alain Bailhache. As an adult, he decided to choose art as his field of study, although his father expected him to follow in his footsteps as a doctor. He graduated with a Master of Arts and Visual Communication from the Department of Art and Architecture of Azad University in Tehran in 1995. Since then and before formally entering the field of children's illustration, Rahimizadeh worked as a freelance graphic designer and illustrator in the advertising, publishing, and printing business for several years. On the side, he began his career as a university lecturer in 1999 and has nurtured enthusiastic young artists ever since.

Rahimizadeh's illustrations take children beyond the illustrations and as far as the imagination allows, to worlds full of mystery, creativity, and beauty. Each of his books, although distinctly marked with his signature style, is unique in technique and mood. His use of rhythm in lines and dots, symbolic elements, traditional Persian motifs, and various angles, together with experimentation with proportion and size give his illustrations a dynamic and innovative touch, something particular to his style. By refraining to use true-to-life proportions and perspective, he creates a work reminiscent of Iranian traditional painting. Imaginative stories with surreal narratives happening in mythical lands are some of his core interests; his work on the books

*Arash, Mah Pishani of Our Story, Rostam and Esfandiyar, Sultan and the Deer, and A Friend is Never Lost nor is an Enemy* attests to this interest.

Pejman Rahimizadeh has illustrated over sixty children's and young adult books as well as approximately 500 book covers. He is a versatile artist with vast theoretical knowledge and practical experience who makes his works consonant with the demands of today's young generation. Rahimizadeh is true to his roots and adheres to the traditions of Iranian children's books illustration. He has made a significant contribution to the advancement of children's illustration both within Iran and on an international level. He has graced the walls of well-known national and international galleries with his illustrations and has been the recipient of numerous prestigious awards including being selected for the 2004 IBBY Honour List.

*Talieh Mirsalehi*

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# Chiara Carminati

Author – Italy

*The language of poetry is characterized by the attention and motivation of the signifier: sounds, rhythm, repetitions are endowed with expressive intentions as well as the meaning of the words.*

C. Carminati

CHIARA CARMINATI was born in Udine in 1971. After she graduated from the University of Trieste where she majored in Italian literature, Carminati specialized in linguistics and text analysis at the University of Aix-en-Provence, France. She has since her debut in 1999 written nearly thirty children's books, as well as two essays on poetry.

A large portion of Carminati's work is dedicated to encouraging children to read. In her work to promote reading, she has involved several schools, universities, and libraries. She uses poetry as a tool for developing and using language in workshops together with both children and teachers. She displays the diversity of language through collaborations with other art forms, and she believes that reading aloud is necessary when you aim to engage young children and showcase the enchantment of reading. Besides writing children's literature and poetry, Carminati has also created several plays for children in collaboration with actors, illustrators, and musicians. Mixing different art forms to create a world where children's minds are engaged on several creative levels, Carminati showcases the many ways language can be used and mixed to be transformed into something novel. Notably, Carminati has collaborated with the Linea Armonica ensemble; together with them, she has produced plays based on her most popular books. She also has a long established artistic partnership with illustrator Pia Valentinis, who has illustrated most of Chiara Carminati's work.

Carminati's written work speaks on a personal level. Both engaging and refined, her language is characterized by amusing rhymes and clever poetic games. Carminati's original and evocative approach to poetry has not been developed to turn children

into poets but to help them to discover the wonder of it and to read, write, and memorize poetry, to happily experiment the expressive potentialities of language.

For her work as a writer of children's literature, Chiara Carminati in 2009 won the Citti di Bella prize for the book *Diario in corsa* and then, for the same book, won the Terre del Magnifio award in 2010. For her passion and her method of mixing different art forms, as well as her theoretical research, Carminati was in 2012 awarded the Italian award Premio Andersen—Il mondo dell'infanzia as best author of the year. Her work has also been translated into French, Korean, Chinese, and Greek.

*Temi Odumosu*

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# Alessandro Sanna

Illustrator – Italy

*The painter overfills the time of the observer's mind, while the illustrator makes them guess a sequencing, therefore a movement. Painting freezes time, illustration composes it.*

*A good image is the one that can give dignity to the represented subject and creates its archetype, at the same time. It is difficult to plan it because it is only with dedication, patience and hard work that you can obtain the right sign, the right colour and the right energy.* A. Sanna

ALESSANDRO SANNA (born in 1975) is a prolific, award-winning Italian author and illustrator who, along with creating his own stories, has worked with authors such as David Grossman, Anne Noisier, Roberto Piumini, Gianni Rodari, Vivian Lamarque, to name a few. With over seventy works, Sanna is widely recognized in his home country and across Europe for illustrating books that cater both to children and adult readers.

Sanna's works have been displayed in many exhibitions in Italy and abroad—for instance, the exhibition "Il Fiume Lento" was open during October 2015 in Prague. His works have also appeared in many national and international magazines—such as *Corriere della Sera*, *Il Sole24Ore*, *The New York Times Book Review*, and *The New Yorker*. In 2015, Sanna's collaboration with the Italian publisher Einaudo resulted in the publication of an anthology titled *L'anima degli animali* (The Soul of Animals), which contains a collection of texts by Plutarch, Aristotle, and Porfirius that are accompanied by twelve watercolor illustrations by Sanna.

*Fiume Lento* (The River, 2013), Sanna's latest



masterpiece, was awarded the Italian Super Premio Andersen 2014 as best book of the year and was also included in the White Ravens 2014 selection. Translated into English, Spanish, German, and Simplified Chinese, *The River* is a splendid book that pays tribute to the river Po (in Northern Italy) and wordlessly conveys time, movement, and experience through minimalist watercolor imagery.

In 2006, Alessandro Sanna's book *Hai mai visto Mondrian?* (Have You Ever Seen Mondrian?) won the Premio Andersen for best art book. Again, in 2009, Sanna was awarded the Premio Andersen, this time as best illustrator of the year; he was also awarded the Premio Rigamonti, a national prize named after the late Paolo Rigamonti promoting innovative young visual artists, that same year.

Sanna currently lives and works in Mantua, Italy. Since 2013 he has been teaching illustration at the Academy of Fine Arts in Bologna; he is also working for Vanity Fair France.

*Jasmin Salih*

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# Eiko Kadono

Author – Japan

*– To start reading a book is like opening a door to a different world. It doesn't close at the end of the story, another door is always waiting there to be opened. People will start to look at the world in a different way after reading a story, and it's the beginning in a sense. And I think that is the true pleasure of reading. I do hope everyone will start building their own new story from here and now.* E. Kadono

EIKO KADONO was born in Tokyo in 1935. Her mother died when she was five, and Kadono later revisited her memories of that time in her autobiographical fantasy *Rasuto ran* (Last Run), published in 2011. The Pacific War started in December 1941, and Kadono's father went off to war. In the autumn of 1944, as attacks on the Japanese mainland intensified, Eiko was in the fourth grade of elementary school when she was evacuated to the deep-snow country of Yamagata prefecture. The experience of war as a child is at the root of Kadono's deep commitment to peace.

Eiko Kadono is one of Japan's most active writers in many different areas of the world of children's literature today. Not only has she published nearly 250 original works in all areas of the genre—picture books, books for preschoolers, fantasy, and young-

adult—but she has also translated into Japanese more than 100 works by overseas picture-book authors like Raymond Briggs and Dick Bruna. One of Japan's leading children's book authors, she is one who is familiar and popular among a broad spectrum of readers from very young children to teenagers and across a variety of genres. Her *Majo no takkyubin* (Kiki's Delivery Service) was produced as an animation film by Studio Ghibli under the direction of Hayao Miyazaki in 1989. The book became a series of six volumes that has been highly praised not only in Japan but overseas as well. The same series was made into a live-action Japanese film in 2014, featuring Kadono herself as the voice of the narrator.

The worlds depicted in Kadono's stories open up scenes sometimes grand in scale and vividly fleshed out from the author's bountiful imagination and experience. Her characters are distinctive and rich with the virtues and foibles of human beings everywhere.

*Björn Sundmark*



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# Ken Katayama

Illustrator – Japan

ONE OF JAPANESE ILLUSTRATOR and author Ken Katayama's most famous works, *Tange-kun* [*Tange, My Dear Cat*], features a tomcat protagonist with a scar over its left eye as evidence of unknown past deeds. In many ways, Tange's scar conveys the main themes of Katayama's characters: Their desire to interact with the natural world and their impulsive energy to experience life's adventures.

Born in Tokyo in 1940, Katayama self-published his first picture-book, *Matti no tori* (*A Match Bird*), in 1966. He went on to produce several works in the late 1960s before taking a break from children's literature to focus on an advertising career. In 1979, the birth of Katayama's first child served as a catalyst for his artistic renaissance; his son's vitality and sense of wonder inspired Katayama to resume and fully commit to his art. Since then, he has never looked back, consistently producing works that appeal to children across the world.

A recurring theme in much of Katayama's art is the energy we can draw from the world around us (see *Onaka nu suku sanpo* [*Walking with the Animals*] and *Mori no Tegami* [*Letters to Friends in the Grove*]), giving his publications a timeless quality. In today's computer-driven digital age, Katayama's art reminds us that real human interaction comes from embracing our senses. The child's everyday is described so vividly yet so simply—his work is both personal and universal. It could be said that Katayama's art is so popular because it encourages nostalgia from when times were more simple, when humans respected and connected with the natural world around us in ways we no longer do. But Katayama's works still resonate with twenty-first century children—his appeal endures.

Katayama's illustrations for other children's

authors also warrant mention. In his work with other famous authors of children's literature, he both studied and adopted other artistic styles to best suit the respective project's subject matter; *Boko kara miruto* (*When I Look at It*) and *Denden daiko Inochi* (*A Toy Drum*) are among his best illustrative works, with the latter being awarded the Shogakukan Award for Illustrations in 1996. Indeed, Katayama has won a host of awards in his career, and his works have been translated into many languages.

Like Tange the tomcat, as adults we have our own scars—both real and imagined—from our (mis-)adventures. Ken Katayama's works encourage children to use their abundance of energy to embrace the unknown and to create their own scars. And that, we must encourage.

*Sean Kerns*

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*Mukashi mukashi* [Once upon a time]. Text Shuntaro Tanikawa. Tokyo: East Press, 2010. Print.



# Suzy Lee

Illustrator – Republic of Korea

*If you can hear something, it's just the sounds of waves and seagulls and the voice of the inner child of your mind splashing in the sea. Every detail of the story comes from your mind, not from outside. The author starts the story, but it's you who fill the gap and complete the story.*

S. Lee

TRAVELLING ACROSS the soft borders between fantasy and reality invests reading with a distinctive pleasure, and it is also the adventure from which many stories are told. Suzy Lee's illustrations and wordless picture books carry her readers into imaginative worlds made possible by curious little girls, animated shadows with a mind of their own, and rabbits out for revenge. Often working with a limited color palate but in evocative materials such as charcoal and watercolor, Lee uses the physical form of the book itself as a material landscape that enables unexpected encounters between its pages and along its folds.

Lee was born in Seoul in 1974, and enjoyed drawing from a very early age. She credits her encounters as a child with an eccentric local artist in his studio as influencing her decision to become an artist. These memories would later inhabit her book *My Bright Atelier* (2008). Lee studied painting at

Seoul National University, but she turned to books as an artistic specialism during an MA in Book Arts at Camberwell College of Arts in London. Her earliest solo book from 2002 returned to the classic story of *Alice in Wonderland*, using a monochrome montage technique that combined drawing with photography and fragments of Western artworks to produce uncanny and theatrical scenes of make believe.

Lee makes her books with all kinds of readers in mind, seeing the picture book as a space of interpretive possibility that both children and adults can enjoy. This is particularly the case with her Border trilogy of rectangular shaped books called *Mirror* (2003), *Wave* (2008), and *Shadow* (2010). In each, a young girl follows her curiosity to find company for her playtime—in the shadows of the house when the lights go out, on the beach by the water's edge, and looking at her own reflection. By literally crossing the central gutter (or fold) of the book, the characters find another way to experience their solitude, and their vivid imaginations unfold by turn of the page in ways that are unexpected. Lee describes her own work as mysterious and sometimes a little strange but always focused on crafting a reading experience that is possible because it “takes the form of the book.”

*Temí Odumosu*

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# Anita Paegle

Illustrator – Latvia

*The sense of miracle has to be present all the time.*

A. Paegle

ANITA PAEGLE'S (1956) wonderful book illustrations have been captivating children's attention for more than thirty years. She is a graduate from the Janis Rozentals Art School of Riga and the Graphic Art Department of the Latvian Academy of Arts. She has been illustrating solely children's books. Ever since 1981, when Paegle began to collaborate with the publishers Liesma and later with the publishers Sprīdītis, she has consistently developed her special, inimitable style of illustration. She has illustrated over thirty-five books, among them many original works by outstanding Latvian writers. One of the main indicators of quality in children's books is the harmony of text and illustration, and Anita Paegle can certainly be called a co-author of Jānis Baltvilks', Māra Cielēna's, and Juris Zvirgzdiņš' books. She has regularly contributes illustrations to the children's magazines *Zilite* (Titmouse; since 1986) and *Ezīis* (Hedgehog; since 1990).

Paegle only works in watercolor, layering the paintings to obtain great color saturation and brilliance. Reminiscent of ancient miniatures, her illustrations of plants and animals, antique objects and musical instruments, architecture and history embody a style that can be characterized as hyperrealistic romanticism. She usually depicts the characteristic architecture of Riga as the backdrop for the events of the fairytales. Attention to detail evokes childhood memories, a time when things were seen in a different light and perspective from what they seem when living in the world of the grownups. She is an artist-observer who knows how to stop a child dragged along by the frantic pace of

the contemporary lifestyle, drawing their attention to subtle nuances. In Paegle's pictures, everything is tiny and small; even the background is special and important. She says, "I only work with especially tiny brushes, just a zero, number 1 and number 2. These are special, very important brushes! I like it if the color is not flat. For example, the blue background is made up of tiny brushstrokes, and it becomes vibrant, it comes alive and moves."

This artist has received much recognition in Latvia and abroad, and her artwork has been featured in several national and international group and solo exhibitions. She has taken part in the International Artist's Book Triennial in Vilnius, Lithuania (1987, 1990); the Biennial of Illustrations in Bratislava, Slovakia (1999, 2001, 2015); and Tallinn (Estonia) Illustration Triennial "The Power of Pictures."

*Björn Sundmark*

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# Gabriel Pacheco

Illustrator – Mexico

*Illustration comes together in a space of silence, like an ink blot that finds form. It's true, the shape that we see appearing in the stone roof, the crinkles of the paper, the stain left by the ink, the trail of a brush on paper, or the shape of the clouds...we have already seen it within ourselves, but we have just forgotten it over time, and picture books give that back to us.*

G. Pacheco

WHATEVER ABSTRACT MOMENTS we might remember from our dreams or from fairytales, Gabriel Pacheco recalls them back in his surreal scenes and compositions: A woman bound to a horse with a feather on her head, surrounded by a cascade of umbrellas. A solitary stag wounded by an arrow looking back to us from the doorway of a room indoors. A ghostly ship squeezing its way through a quiet city. Using a restrained palate of grey shades, accented by azure blue and poppy red, Pacheco softly transports readers to spaces that are both magical and uncanny, visions that give symbolic form to the words of writers he chooses to collaborate with. In this sense, he is a literary illustrator. Born in Mexico City in 1973, Pacheco began his creative journey as a set designer, studying scenography at the Instituto Nacional de Bellas Artes. He also took classes in illustration and life drawing at the Escuela Nacional de Artes Plásticas, later completing a Diploma in Children's Literature in Barcelona. However, he attests that the focus towards illustrating books came by chance following a request by his sister to illustrate a book called *The Enchanted Frog* (1997). This experience created an opening for his thinking and practice, building a desire for storytelling through images that has been with him ever since. Even so, he maintains that, holistically, it is the writings of Octavio Paz, the vision of filmmaker Theo Angelopoulos, and the dramaturgy of choreographer Pina Bauch that taught him how to look.

Pacheco's work travels between different realities reflecting his philosophical approach to making visual poetry. He conceives of the fragment (of

time, space, memory) as a window onto story but also a means of articulating what is forever lost. It is, for example, the fragments of old book pages embedded in the trees and plants of his illustrations for *The Jungle Book* (2012) which remind the reader that the book they are holding is a long gone story that has already been told. Similarly, the illustrations for *12 Illustrated Poems by Lorca* (2013) are composed like the poet's fragments of verse: How does Pacheco depict a child who insists he wants to be silver and water? By giving him his own special rain cloud that drenches him thoroughly, with a silver lining draped around his wrist.

*Temí Odumosu*

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# Ted van Lieshout

Author – Netherlands

*I put as much as possible of myself into my work. If you describe a person, you have to do this in as lifelike a manner as possible. You can only realize that by borrowing from yourself, by looking at yourself*

T. van Lieshout

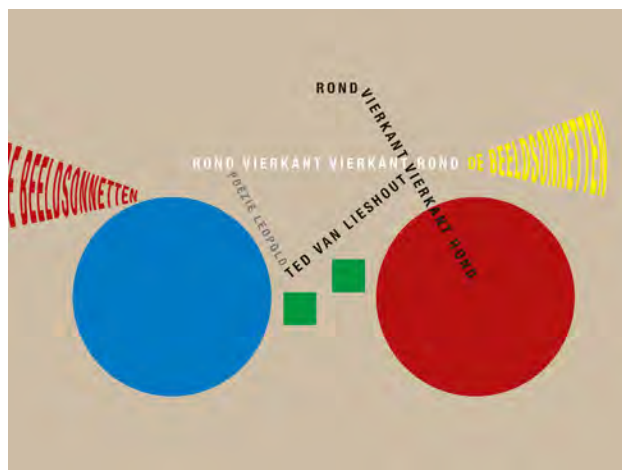
FOR THE PAST THREE DECADES, Ted van Lieshout has dedicated himself to practicing a great diversity of genres for all age groups and particularly young readers, including picture books, poetry, fiction, radio plays, song lyrics, and scripts for children's television. Born in Eindhoven in December 1955 into a family of twelve children, van Lieshout set his mind on becoming a writer at an early age. After his graduation in Rietveld Academy in Amsterdam in 1980, he worked for various publishers as an illustrator and book designer. In 1984, he made his debut as a children's writer with his first poem in *De Blauw Geruite Kiel*, the famous children's newspaper of a Dutch Weekly magazine. Since then, he has made tireless efforts in publishing quality works for children and adolescents.

A distinctive trait of van Lieshout's works is that his stories and poems, partly semi-autobiographical, deal with compelling cross-generational themes, such as death and sexuality. Writing about these sensitive topics has enabled him to come

to terms with the death of his father and young. At the same time, these themes also connect him to children, who share his quest for belonging and security. In a voice that is both personal and collective, van Lieshout tries to unearth private feelings and create a healing effect with his sense of "melancholy humor" that can resonate with children. Besides these characteristics, van Lieshout tends to approach ordinary subjects in novel ways, experimenting with words and images and sounds and rhythms. With such language effects he aspires to open up children's literature.

Van Lieshout's influence in children's literature is considerable; his works have been translated into Danish, English, Estonian, French, German, Italian, Norwegian, Spanish, and Swedish. A case in point is that the German edition of his novel *Gebr* (Brothers) won Deutscher Jugendliteraturpreis (German Youth Literature Prize) in 1999. Over the course of his career, his unique contribution to children's literature has brought him a number of awards, including the Charlotte Köhler Stipendium, Gouden Griffel award, and the Theo Thijssen Prize.

*You Chengcheng*



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# Marit Törnqvist

## Illustrator – Netherlands

*I am continuously searching for archetypes of the things I imagine. For example, when I'm painting an apartment building, I try to shape it in such a way that it could be an apartment building of all times, it has to have a timeless appearance.*

M. Törnqvist

MARIT TÖRNQVIST'S illustrations seem an anachronism in an age in which everything has to be hip, shiny, and streamlined, although such a presumption would be rather untrue; her work would be an anachronism in every age because Törnqvist creates images that relate to neither past nor present. This does not mean that her illustrations are distant or impersonal; the majority of Törnqvist's work breathes a warm and comforting atmosphere. Her illustrations offer just the kind of protection she was yearning for as a student. It was not until her life became less hectic and she had settled with her family in both Amsterdam and in Småland, having her second house in the area in which she had grown up, that she dared to allow more grimness into her illustrations. This more grim side of her work is equally illustrative of her oeuvre as the Arcadian feeling of happiness in *Jij bent de liefste*, although its full potential was not reached until publisher Querido teamed Törnqvist with Toon Tellegen and his ominous telling of *Pikkuhenki*. The unpredictable and frugal illustrations, the majority of them being very subdued although some of them containing surprisingly happy colors, earned her the Gouden Penseel (Golden Pencil) in the Netherlands. Playfulness, humor, adventure, and nostalgia—these are all keywords that closely relate to Törnqvist's oeuvre. However, nothing is more important in Törnqvist's approach than the child itself.

A child reaching for the clouds with a fishing rod, standing on the Westertoren; blossoming cherry trees in a landscape from the south of Sweden; a toddler, cozily resting on an old-fashioned settee; hollow-eyed prisoners standing in their striped tunics; a disorderly crowd, moving through the city

with haste—these are just some typical examples of illustrations by Marit Törnqvist (1964): writer, illustrator, and designer of a wayward oeuvre, with a personal background consisting of a fair amount of opposites. Born in Sweden and raised in The Netherlands, her oeuvre is characterized by a geographical dichotomy: There is the part that consists of Swedish books, with illustrations of farmsteads made of redwood, glazed tiled stoves, and dark ancient forests. Street scenes from Stockholm during past times, with old-fashioned street lights, moss-covered roofing tiles, and rattling little old trams also illustrate the Swedish side of Törnqvist's works. These views form a clear contrast with the illustrations of her Dutch picture books, which are characterized by the view from Törnqvist's home and atelier in Amsterdam.

*Björn Sundmark*

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# Joy Cowley

Author – New Zealand

*Writing for children is a very satisfying adventure.*

J. Cowley

JOY COWLEY was born in Levin in 1936. Initially struggling with reading and writing in school, she grew to love stories—a love that has remained with her for the entirety of her life. At the age of twenty, she married farmer Ted Cowley, and while her life soon seemed to steer in the direction of wife and mother of four, she continued to write short stories. Some of these were published in magazines, and after being approached by an editor at Doubleday, five of her adult novels were published between 1967 and 1978. During that time, Cowley also wrote stories for her young son, who was a reluctant reader; these stories soon reached other children via teachers that found them to be valuable tools in their teaching. Then, in 1978, she co-wrote a children’s reading program and began her lifelong commitment to writing for children.

Motivated by her own early experience, Cowley maintains that learning to read should be an enjoyable and meaningful experience. In her own writing, she draws inspiration from the rich natural environment of her homeland, New Zealand, and from its fauna and special charm; this is easily recognized in stories such as *The Silent One* and *The Red-Eyed Tree Frog*, where animals and nature play a great part. Cowley has also explored a variety of topics in her writing, always in a way that will convey meaning and often some deeper didactic message. In *The Duck in the Gun*, a novel that was inspired by the Vietnam War, she communicates an anti-war message. In *Brodie*, she discusses and explores sentiments of loss and grief while providing the young reader with the tools to handle such feelings.

Cowley has been widely recognized for her contributions and has earned both local and international awards, including the OBE (Order of the British Empire) for services to children’s literature in 1992, the Margaret Mahy award in 1993, and the Roberta Long medal for multicultural writing in 2002; the same year, 2002, Storylines: Children’s Literature Foundation of New Zealand established an award in her name, the Joy Cowley Award, which is awarded annually. Cowley herself continues to write for children and share her methods to help others enjoy the craft, and as she puts it, “let the child within you grow wings to fly with the child out there.”

*Michelle Stavroulaki*

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# Lisa Aisato

Illustrator – Norway

LISA AISATO was born in 1981 and grew up in Oppegård, just outside of Oslo. She works as an illustrator, author, and artist. Having started as an illustrator of children's books, she now writes her own books as well as illustrating for other authors. She made her debut as an author in 2008 with the picture book *My Two Great Grandmothers*, inspired by her own heritage with a Norwegian mother and a Gambian father. Her background makes her understand otherness from a different perspective—a feeling that is important to convey through children's books, regardless of cultural background. In her own books, she also lifts strangeness or otherness from a cultural context up to a more general and symbolic level. "Odd" is a common Norwegian name for boys, but it is no coincidence that she chose that for her egg-boy in *Odd Is an Egg*. She manages to maintain high artistic quality as well as appeal to children; this makes her fans range from scholars and critics to small children.

Aisato mixes many different techniques in her

illustrations; she uses chalk, pencil, watercolor, ink, and gouache painting to capture the expressions of the different characters in her illustrations. She is considered as having a unique ability to capture the moods in texts by other authors at the same time as having the literary imagination to expand on the empty spaces in a text. The images in *Odd Is an Egg* are made with the distinctive technique that Aisato has developed which combines the best parts of the hand-drawn and the digital. She works with ink and gouache painting on a stretched and unprimed cotton canvas that soaks up the paint and the ink. She then takes a picture of the canvas and keeps working on it in Photoshop. Even after processing the canvas the structure is visible, giving the images a tactile and sensitive quality.

Although Lisa Aisato has only been working as an illustrator for seven years, she has developed her own unique technique that distinguishes her from other illustrators. She has been nominated for several prizes, such as the Critics prize for best children's book for *A fish Called Luna* in 2015 and for *Odd Is an Egg* in 2010. Aisato has also been awarded the Bookstores' scholarship for children's literature in 2011. In 2010, 2012, and 2014, she was nominated for the Brage prize.

*Katarina Svenning*

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# Tor Åge Bringsværd

Author – Norway

*I write for children because I like an intelligent audience that doesn't need to be spoon-fed, but that is playful and with the imagination to follow even if a table should lift and fly out of the window.*

T. Å. Bringsværd

TOR ÅGE BRINGSVÆRD, born in 1939, made his debut in 1967. Since then he has written more than 102 books for children, making him one of the most productive children's writers in Norway and also one of the most versatile. His interests are wide ranging: from folklore, old religions, and myths to space travel and the future. But no matter what he writes about, the reader can be assured a kind and understanding eye on human nature and a love for the near and the small.

Early in his career, Bringsværd turned from the realistic style of writing which dominated in the seventies and instead started using fantastic themes and elements to make complex subjects more understandable for young readers. Bringsværd has, through his interest in folklore and science fiction, continued to write about current issues in a way that simplifies, but does not disrespect, the competence and intelligence of children. While writing about complex matters, Bringsværd never fails to showcase his optimistic view of human nature. Bringsværd is one of the first modern Norwegian children's authors to incorporate traditional Norwegian folklore into a modern urban setting. His debut as children's author was in 1969 with *T-banetrollet Knerten Gundersen* (The Subway-troll Knerten Gundersen), which combines the traditional Norwegian folk tale troll with the modern urban setting of subways and cities.

In 1985, Tor Åge Bringsværd started one of his biggest literary projects: adapting Norse myths into a series of illustrated books. This work has resulted in twelve successful books, each illustrated by different artists, giving the reader an opportunity to see how folklore and myths can be visualized in various

ways. After the success of the series, Bringsværd has continued to write about myths from other religions. Throughout he has used the same format, with myths and legends being summed up in a way which makes the material exciting and creates an opportunity for young readers to learn about both their own heritage as well as that of others.

*Bea Gustavsson*

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# Sonia Nimr

Author – Palestine

SONIA NIMR IS A PROMINENT Palestinian author and storyteller, writing for children and youth both in Arabic and English. She was born in 1955 in a small town of Palestine where she finished her elementary and high school education. In her second year at Birzeit University in 1975, she was sentenced to three years in an Israeli prison for political reasons. During those three years, she developed a strong interest in writing children's books. Still, she did not start writing children's books until she worked as an education officer at the Museum of Mankind in 1989. In 1990, she received her PhD in Oral History from Exeter University. Currently, she teaches at the Department of Cultural Studies, Birzeit University. Aside from writing fiction, she is also passionate about translating children books from English into Arabic.

Sonia Nimr's preoccupation with oral history motivates her to collect traditional tales from around the world. She is masterful in weaving familiar ingredients of "rich imagery, patterned language and repeated action" into her telling and retelling of stories against the backdrop of Arabian land, culture, and folklore. Nimr hopes that these stories will challenge stereotypes and stimulate the sharing and valuing of folktales from diverse groups of people. Instilling humor and humanistic concerns in the traditional stories, Nimr tries to make each tale attractive to children. By the same

token, she resists conservative teaching methods and encourages teachers to meet the children on more open and flexible premises, answering their needs with fantasy and folktales.

Throughout her career as a children's writer, Nimr has published a large number of books for children and young adults and accumulated several awards. She is the recipient of the 2014 Etisalat Award for Arabic Children's Literature, one of the most important and prestigious awards for children's literature in the Arab world, for her young adults book *Rihlat Ajeeba Fi Al Bilad Al Ghareeba [Wondrous Journeys in Strange Lands]*. This novel and *Qisah Awalha khayal wa Akherha Khyal [Story that Begins and Ends with Lies]* made the IBBY Honor List in 2014 and 2004. Viewing her writings as a mission meant for Palestinian children in particular and also for children that live in zones of conflict and war in general, Nimr is committed to exercising their imagination and keeping them in touch with their cultural heritage. A humanistic perspective emanates from her stories for children.

*You Chengcheng*



token, she resists conservative teaching methods and encourages teachers to meet the children on more open and flexible premises, answering their needs with fantasy and folktales.

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# Mikhail Fedorov

## Illustrator – Russia

OVER THE COURSE OF his career as an illustrator, Mikhail Fedorov has been responsible in transporting young readers to different corners of the world and of the imagination. Born in Moscow, in 1941, he showed early promise for art. In 1958, he enrolled in the Moscow Academy of Textile to become a stylist of clothes and designer. At the same time, Fedorov also became a pupil of Mikhail Schwarzman, a Russian avant-garde painter. All of these experiences lead him into the fashion industry, painting and designing posters for theater and circus in 1964. His journey into book illustration was started in 1974, when he drew illustrations for children, young people and grownups. He has since provided illustrations for different kinds of book – ranging from original stories, anthologies of fairy tales and poetry anthologies.

Working with a variety of texts has led Fedorov

to be inventive in his illustrations. He employs different illustration styles and is very attentive to the details in the texts that he works with. His works are so rich in details that one can spend more time enjoying them than reading the texts. He carefully works to make the setting an authentic socio-cultural environment for the readers to enjoy. In this way, Fedorov tries to show children the life of different countries and epochs, cultures and histories. Instead of stopping at merely including noticeable cultural items in the drawing, Fedorov also adapts his style to the the setting evoked by the text. This kind of diversity is very apparent in his illustrations to fairy tales and legends. However, despite his versatility as an artist, there is a striking resemblance in all his works in terms of composition. Similar to pre-Renaissance art style, Fedorov's illustrations combine rich, inventive and colorful backgrounds, with static, doll-like characters.

In the time of the *Perestroika* in 1988, different publishing houses all over the world started to publish books illustrated by Fedorov. This brought him international recognition, which means that children in Europe, USA, and Korea are now able to enjoy his illustrations.

*Chrysogonus Malilang*



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# Andrey Usachev

Author – Russia

A RENAISSANCE MAN—this is how one may describe Andrey Usachev, considering all fields of his thirty-year-long artistic activity. Born in 1958 in Moscow, he has been working as a poet; prose writer; playwright; educator; and writer of songs, musicals, and scripts for both the radio and television and is now one of the most popular personages in the area of children’s culture in Russia.

A turning point for his future career was his fourth year at the Moscow Institute of Electronics, when he decided to change his field of study for the Philological Faculty of Tver State University. In his master’s thesis he focused on Daniel Harm’s poetry for children. He started his own career writing poetry in 1985. In interviews, he states that it is poetry that he considers the most valuable artistic form in Russian children’s literature. Usachev’s poems focus to a large extent on words—their shape, multiple meanings, and the way they function in tradition and culture. Exploiting the “teaching through play” rule, he uses humor to introduce the child reader to the fascinating world of language in his books of poems. In *ABC for Santa Claus* or *The Great Mighty Russian Language*, readers are acquainted with Russian “winged words.” Already the title of the latter is a quote from Ivan Turgenev, a classic of nineteenth-century Russian literature.

As a prose writer, Usachev most frequently chooses the conventions of fantasy, creating both humorous works—such as tales about the merry Ded Moroz and his adult, serious, and principled granddaughter Snegurochka (*All about Dedmorozovka*)—as well as serious, even philosophical stories, such as *Little Ant*, *Big Thinker* or *Where Does the Ocean End?*

Usachev has won many prizes and awards, including Russian “The Book of the Year” prize in 2005 for the poetry collection *333 Cats*. In the same year, he received The Golden Ostap Prize for his songs for children. In 2012, *The Great Mighty Russian Language* was nominated for the IBBY Honour List. Usachev’s books have been translated into a number of languages, including French, German, English, Chinese, Hebrew, and Polish.

*Anna Maria Czernow*

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# Daniel Hevier

Author – Slovakia

DANIEL HEVIER is regarded as one of the foremost writers for children and adults in Slovakia, as well as in the former Czechoslovakia in general. A most prolific writer, he has published hundreds of works in a wide array of genres. Many of his books have been translated into other languages. They can, for example, be read in Czech, Hungarian, German, Norwegian, Polish, Serbo-Croatian, and Finnish.

Hevier was born in 1955 in Bratislava. After receiving his degree from the Department of Arts in Language, Literature, and Aesthetics at Comenius University, he worked as an editor of literary programs in Czechoslovak radio. In the late 1980s, he became Chief Editor of *Mladé letá* Publishing, the main publishing house for children and young adults in Slovakia, before starting his own publishing house—HEVI. During that time, Hevier was also writing. He published his first book at the age of eighteen—a collection of poetry—and has since written poetry, prose, essays, and plays, as well as television and film scripts.

Hevier is noted not only for his literary achievements but also for what they meant for the literary movement in Slovakia. This is connected to the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968, which triggered a certain stagnation in Slovak literature, and many writers were under pressure to publish works that would be approved by the Communist regime. Hevier was part of a generation that sought to liberate itself from the type of literature that had been published during the 1970s and early 1980s, because it was heavily influenced by the “official” or state approved Communist ideology. Hevier’s generation claimed more creative freedom in their writing and revived the Slovak literary production.

One notable feature of the new literary movement was that there were more elements of playfulness in Slovak literature, and in fact, “playful” is a useful word in describing Hevier’s literary production for children—which consists of, for example, poetry, fairy tales, and comics. His stories span from symbolic to Andersenian to nonsense, parody, word games, sci-fi stories, parables, and moral stories. He believes that both author and reader are vital to the creative process of a text, and he endeavors to attract his readers with colorful stories that can stimulate the child’s natural ability to use their own imagination to expand the story or create an image of the real world.

Hevier has received a number of national and international awards. Several of his books have been on the IBBY Honour list. In 2012, he received a prestigious prize from the Secretary of Culture of The Slovak Republic for his achievements as an author of literature for children and young adults.

*Milena Milutinovic*

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# Peter Uchnár

Illustrator – Slovakia

REGARDED AS ONE OF THE MOST prominent and distinctive artists of the Slovak book illustration school, Peter Uchnár has illustrated a vast number of books both in Slovakia and abroad. He is devoted to book illustration, printmaking, and painting.

Uchnár was born in 1970 in Sobrance in Eastern Slovakia. His artistic career began at High School of Arts and Crafts in Košice, followed by studies at the Academy of Fine Arts and Design in Bratislava. Uchnár was a student at the Department of Graphics and Book Illustration, with the renowned Professor Dušan Kállay as his supervising teacher. After his graduation in 1998, he stayed at the Department for four years as an assistant professor. During this time, Uchnár illustrated his first children's book, an edition of *Gulliver's Travels*, for which he was awarded the prestigious Biennial of Illustration Bratislava award—the 1999 BIB Golden Apple. Since then, he has won a number of both Slovak and international awards.



Uchnár's art production is characterized by subdued pastel colors and soft contours. Darker, richer, and more vivid colors are however also frequently used, and the combination of these palettes, as well as Uchnár's attention to detail, create a surrealistic, dream-like atmosphere. As many of the books

that Uchnár has illustrated are fairy tales, the lyrical mood of his illustrations enhance the sense of fantasy and mystery inherent in those stories.

According to Uchnár, it is very important for artists to be familiar with the story of the book that they intend to illustrate in order to do it justice. At the same time, however, he maintains that illustrators should not impose their own imaginations on the readers; rather, they should softly navigate them to visually perceive the text in combination with the illustration—guiding, for example, young readers with illustrations that are concrete and descriptive, while allowing for more abstraction when the readers are older children or adults.

That an artist should be mindful of the story that is to be told and attempt to have some awareness of the audience is a view that seems to have served Uchnár well in his art production. Apart from the numerous awards he has won, he has also had collective and solo exhibitions throughout Europe and Asia, and he continues to be a prolific illustrator.

*Milena Milutinovic*

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# Svetlana Makarovič

Author – Slovenia

*In truth, I don't recognize the category of "children's" or "young adult" literature. I write a story that charms me, that makes me happy and whoever wants to read it should. Probably with this writing, I'm nourishing the child within me.*

S. Makarovič

SVETLANA MAKAROVIČ is one of the most well-known adult and youth authors in Slovenia, and she has won several awards for her work. She is a writer of prose, poetry, children's books, and picture books, as well as a trained actress and illustrator. Her bibliography consists of over 300 titles, and her works have been translated into English, German, Croatian, Italian, and Slovakian.

Makarovič was born in 1939 in Maribor. Following her graduation from the Academy of Performing Arts, she pursued a career on the stage for several years before devoting herself to writing. Her first book of poetry was published in 1964, and a few years later, her first children's book was published. Her literary production for children is largely comprised of fairy tales, poetry, and picture books.

Whereas Makarovič's adult poetry is characterized by its dark and oppressive themes, her fairy tales and poetry for children are imaginative and witty and have a much lighter and playful tone. Makarovič frequently draws upon the mythological sources of ancient Slovenian folk traditions in her literary production for children. This is especially noticeable in her fairy tales, which are composed mostly of animal stories where both real animals and imaginary creatures with peculiar names are found in abundance.

However, despite the differences in mood and tone between Makarovič's adult poetry and her literature for children, both categories focus on how the vulnerable individual suffers from the violence caused by institutionalized society. A recurring theme in her works for children is the protagonist being forced to leave their home and embark on a

journey towards adulthood. Though this is a conventional fairy tale trope, the often frightened and fragile little animal or child in Makarovič's works has to navigate through a world that is far from idealized. They encounter cruelty and selfishness, adults who attempt to limit their playfulness, and magical creatures that unlike the traditional, benevolent fairy godmothers are unreliable and unpredictable. Yet, these stories also encourage the individual to be true to their values and believe in themselves. Makarovič advises her readers to think and dream for themselves and not for others and to be proud and of their uniqueness.

*Milena Milutinovic*

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# Marjan Manček

Illustrator – Slovenia

*When you're drawing, the word comes, the line comes, the figures come, you add to them, repair them and then something emerges from this, a story develops.*

M. Manček

MARJAN MANČEK is one of Slovenia's most recognizable illustrators due to his unique style. He has illustrated more than 200 books, written and illustrated comics and children's picture books, and made several short animated films. He has received a number of awards in Slovenia and abroad for his work.

Manček was born in 1948 in Novo Mesto in Slovenia. During his years as a student of English and History at the University of Ljubljana, he earned money publishing cartoons, particularly caricatures. After having worked briefly as a teacher, and later as an editor in a publishing house, he started working full time as a freelance artist.

Manček's artistic style is informed by his experience as a caricaturist. His drawings seem to be designed to express the content as clearly as possible, while using the smallest possible number of lines. Yet, this does not mean that Manček does not pay attention to detail. Movement, for example, is an

important feature of his illustrations, and he makes use of his experience from working with animated film when depicting, for example, laughter or crying.

Manček's early work on caricatures and cartoons has also influenced his style in terms of the comedic elements

and humor present in his illustrations. There is a sense of playfulness in his drawings and he expresses humor in a number of ways. Sometimes it is by exaggerating and contrasting certain parts, sometimes it is by facial expressions, and other times it is by the sheer oddity of his drawings.

Though Manček puts a lot of effort in the detail of each individual illustration, the overall design of each book is equally important. For instance, he is guided by both aesthetic deliberation and educational aims when illustrating a book. Accordingly, he may for example decide to link the text with his drawings, hoping that the connection between text and illustration will lead the child towards reading through play. In fact, the most important factor for Manček when making his creative decisions is the readers. "In creating for children and young people, I am aware for whom the work is intended, and when it comes onto paper, in some way, I feel whether it is right," he says. In other words, Manček always takes his readers into account when illustrating, considering them a starting point for his drawings.

*Milena Milutinovic*

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# Agustín Fernández Paz

Author – Spain

*If I had to define myself in few words, I would say I am a person who delights in making up stories and telling them in writing. A storyteller, although this should always take second place because what I really like is to read what others write. And reading and writing, as we know, are two sides of the same coin. Stories, books: the invisible thread which unites us to everybody on the planet. A. F. Paz*

A CHAMPION OF Galician Literature, Agustín Fernández Paz has contributed more than forty-five titles to the field, mainly for children and young adults. His books, written in Galician, are regularly translated into the other Spanish languages (Castilian, Catalan, and Basque), and some have also been translated into Portuguese, French, Korean, English, and Arabic. Paz' works tend to be colored by fantastical-realism, intertextuality, and dichotomies. His stories are about memory and understanding and forgiving rather than forgetting; they are about mystery, history, and identity; they also tend to have female characters as heroines.

Paz was born in Vilalba, Galicia, in 1947. His early field of studies was Industrial Expertise; however, his passion for culture and literature found an outlet in teaching, and he developed a great interest in education. Paz' conviction that the world could be changed through schools led him to take an active part in the educational reform movements in the post-Franco era. His teaching career spanned over thirty years, and it was his work as an educator and his exposure to children's and young adults' literature that eventually was the catalyst for him becoming a writer: After the introduction of the Galician language into teaching, the need arose for reading literature written in Galician; thus, Paz started writing stories and didactic material for his classes and eventually went on to becoming a published author. The positive reception of his early works encouraged him to continue his writing, and over the years, his focus shifted from theoretical and didactic material to writing more fiction.

Agustín Fernández Paz's works have received numerous prizes, on both national and international

levels. For instance, his classroom book, *Canles 5*, received the Emilia Pardo Bazán National Award for non-sexist textbooks. During the first Language and Literature Congress for children and adolescents, held in Santiago, Chile in 2010, a panel of experts deemed Agustín Fernández Paz' collection of short stories *Contos por palabras* (Stories for Words, 1991) one of the eleven essential titles in children's and young adults' literature of the twentieth century. This collection also made the IBBY Honour List in 1992, as did *Aire Negro* in 2002 and *O único que queda é o amor* in 2010. Paz has also been nominated for the Astrid Lindgren Memorial Award in 2008, 2009, 2010 and 2013.

Now that he has retired from teaching, Paz continues to weave the threads of life into words; he believes his best work is yet to come.

*Jasmin Salih*

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# Miguelanxo Prado

Illustrator – Spain

*Life enriches, and the more you live, the more you know about your sentiments, about society, about yourself... And your own language, logically, should also refine. ... The more you master the techniques of language, the more freely you can effectively tell any idea. Because art isn't just a medium for expression; it should be indefeasibly a medium for communication.*

M. Prado

BORN IN A CORUÑA (Galicia) in 1958, Miguelanxo Prado is an internationally acclaimed, award-winning comic-book creator whose versatility makes him one of the most comprehensive and influential illustrators in the field. Although he is mostly recognized for his work in comic books, Prado's artistry knows no boundaries—from graphic novels, children's illustrations, and posters to character design and illustration for television and film animation.

Prado found his passion, comics, at the age of twenty and decided to drop out of architecture school to pursue illustration professionally. During the 1980s, Prado contributed to magazines such as *Creepy*, *Comix Internacional*, *Zona 84*, and *El Jueves*. The Spanish weekly comic magazine *El Jueves* published a series of stories that were later assembled under the title *Quotidiania Delirious*, for which Prado won the award for best work in the Barcelona International Comics Convention in 1989.

In the 1990s, Prado turned his attention to other artistic media. He was the lead character designer for the popular American animated *Men in Black: The Series* which aired from 1997 to 2002. Prado has

illustrated many children's books for his friend and fellow Galician, Agustín Fernández Paz, such as *As flores radioactivas* (Radioactive Flowers, 1990) and *Cos pés no aire* (With Feet in the Air, 1999). He also illustrated books for authors such as the Mexican novelist Laura Esquivel (*The Law of Love*, 1996), Gonzalo Torrente Ballester, and David Aceituno. In 2003, Prado worked with Neil Gaiman on *The Sandman: Endless Nights*, providing art for "Dream: The Heart of a Star." The animated feature film, *De Profundis*—a poetic homage to the sea that Prado wrote, drew, and directed—was released in 2007. That same year, Prado was the recipient of the Gran Premi del Saló, the grand prize of the Barcelona International Comics Convention. In 2012, he published the graphic novel *Ardalén*, which earned him another best-work award at the Barcelona Comics Convention of 2013 as well as the National Comic Award that same year.

Miguelanxo Prado has also served as director of "Bullets from the Atlantic," the A Coruna comic festival held every summer since 1998. In 2009, he became a member of the Galician Royal Academy of Fine Arts.

*Milena Milutinović*

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# Eva Lindström

Illustrator – Sweden

*All of the pictures are in my head while writing. The colors, the personalities, the landscapes: everything is there, pointing out a possible way to tell a specific story. And the stories often circle around subjects, such as lost things, lost people, friendship and no friendship, longing...I really try to tell stories about other things too, but I seldom succeed*

E. Lindström

WITH WATERCOLOR, GOUACHE, and graphite on paper, Eva Lindström has created simple but enticing visual spaces in which to tell stories about connection: the forging of new friendships, the loss of old ones, and the fluid relations between people, animals, and nature. Lindström composes hybrid scenes and characters that are both familiar and unfamiliar, abstract in their flattened perspective and yet accented by recognizable details. In her world, translucent landscapes and floating objects without shadows add another interpretive dimension to the written words.

Lindström was born in 1952, in the ancient Swedish city of Västerås. Here she studied for a year at the recently founded art school, in 1968, before moving to the academy in Stockholm (Konstfack) where she specialized in painting. Finding her creative niche took some time, but she had been inspired by the comics of Oskar “OA” Andersson and soon produced her own comics, enjoying the interplay between words and images. Her first book,

*Cat Hat*, was published in 1988 and drew heavily on this influence, using strong colors and bold black outlines. Lindström’s visual style would eventually change, becoming more free and painterly through her use of different materials.

Establishing a strong setting or environment where the story will take place is important for Lindström’s process. It provides the foundation from which she begins to write and sketch. Like her prose, the rooms and landscapes she represents are often sparse, and it is this sense of space that invites readers to find a special spot for themselves on the page. This can be experienced, for example, in the opening scenes from *Olli and Mo* (2012), where Mo has decided to take Olli on a Sunday excursion. As they prepare to leave, an empty sofa set marks the living room, and again, two empty chairs are on the decking outside the house. Should we take a seat? Olli does not want to go out and perhaps we do not either? Similarly, in *The Monkey and I* (2011), when “I” sits alone at the table after having made a special banana meal for his lost friend, the second plate faces us. Should we have taken Monkey’s place? In one way or another there is always space for the reader.

*Temi Odumosu*

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# Etienne Delessert

Illustrator – Switzerland

ETIENNE DELESSERT emerged as a key figure in the children's book renewal across Europe and the United States in the 1960s and 1970s. His conviction that there are few limitations to a child's perceptions has given new life into the world of children's picture books.

Delessert's introduction to picture books started early. Born in Lausanne in January 1941, he took refuge in the works of Arthur Rackham, Beatrix Potter, Samivel, Béatrice Appia, and Feodor Rojankovsky. On a different level, young Delessert was also fascinated by the works of Walt Disney, Hergé, and Pellos. These artists greatly influenced Delessert and provided the essential aesthetic nourishment of his childhood.

After gaining some experience as a graphic artist in Lausanne, Delessert departed to Paris to work as the art director of two Parisian magazines: *Formidable* and *Mademoiselle*. This opportunity taught him the ways and means to address a large public audience, how to communicate ideas, how to visualize concepts, and how to tell a story through images. In 1962, Delessert joined the American and French avant-garde artists in the attempt to reinvent the picture book—an endeavor which until then had been neglected by the literary and artistic community. In 1967, *The Endless Party* was published. It was Delessert's first picture book, and it has since then become classic and been translated into numerous languages.

Delessert's picture books are among the earliest works to create a distance (as in film) between text and images. This strategy allows children to play with concepts that go beyond objective truth and allow children to grasp other aspects of reality. His

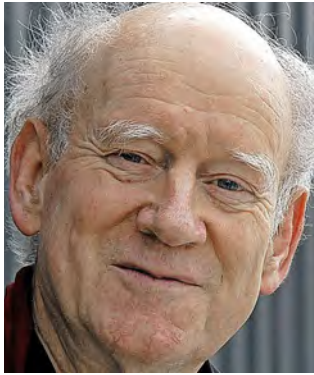
use of soft color palette creates a warm and welcoming space for child readers, presenting various complex concepts in a non-threatening manner. In his latest works, Delessert has become even more personal and intimate in his story telling—serious yet humorous, questioning yet playful. One such example is *A Glass* (2012), a moving story of his stepmother. In this book, soft and mute color palette is used to present complex feelings and experiences in childish, sometimes comedic, portrayal. Etienne Delessert's works really demonstrate his understanding of children's emotions and perspectives.

*Chrysogonus Malilang*

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# Franz Hohler

Author – Switzerland

FRANZ HOHLER is not an ordinary storyteller. He tells his stories in the form of songs, poems, narratives, micro-stories, novels, plays, and a wide range of hybrids, and he presents them to his audience—both adults and children—as books, variety programs, radio and television shows, readings, and even films.

Telling stories just seems to be Hohler's vocation, a calling that manifested itself early on in the life of the author, who was born in 1943. Before he had even entered school, reading was a central occupation; Hohler was inspired by what was read to him, and what he read himself, to create his own stories. As a seven-year-old, Hohler wrote stories in the style of Wilhelm Busch, which he gave his parents as Christmas gifts. In 1963, he began studies in German and Romance languages at the University of Zurich, but the power of stories and his urge to "tell" them to an audience were stronger. Following a first and highly successful solo variety show, Hohler left the university to concentrate entirely on storytelling, as an author and cabaret performer. Since then, in addition to writing and performing a total of fourteen solo variety programs, Hohler has published an impressive number of books (mainly short and micro-stories, some of which have also appeared as audiobooks), plays (produced in various theatres in Switzerland and Germany), and much more besides (television shows, a film, recordings, essays and radio plays, among other things).

The unmistakable quality of Franz Hohler's texts has its origins both in their fictional approach and in their linguistic execution. Both are marked by a profound confidence in human fantasy in general, and in that of children in particular. Hohler's

books for children are like keys to another reality, and their readers not only enter the author's poetic worlds but they also find themselves unexpectedly confronted by their own fantasy. But Hohler never loses sight of the circumstances of his readers' present-day lives. On the contrary, his radical focus on fundamental problems of society allows him to provide his fictional worlds with a compelling social level and, thus, create a striking mixture of virtuoso diction, fantasy, and social critique that is probably unique in children's and young people's literature in the German-speaking world.

*Björn Sundmark*

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# Gülçin Alpöge

Author - Turkey

GÜLÇİN ALPÖGE was born in Istanbul, Turkey, in 1935. She graduated from the American College in Istanbul, gained a certificate of Pedagogy from the University of Istanbul, went to the US as a Full-bright student, and received her Master's Degree in education from New York University. In 1983, she received her PhD in psycholinguistics from the University of Istanbul where she also became a professor in 2002.

However, before she started working at the University, Alpöge worked in different schools both as a preschool teacher and as a director. From her work with children she became familiar with the type of questions children ask, which inspired her to write children's books. Alpöge's first book is called *Dripsy and Dropsy* and is about water. *Ash Is Waiting for Sunday* is about the concept of time, and *I Miss My Grandpa* is about the death of a loved one. Alpöge both writes her own stories and rewrites folk- and fairy tales for children. As well as her children's books, she has also published six academic books and several articles in both Turkish and international journals.

When Alpöge was still a student, she was part of a theatre group which organized a theatre, music, and culture festival called the Erdek Festival. The festival took place in Istanbul and was the first of its kind in Turkey. Alpöge was responsible for the children's activities at the festival. Amongst other activities, she guided the children to perform a play for other visitors at the festival.

Gülçin Alpöge has also taken part in the work of the Mother Child Education Foundation, which has researched parenting on different levels. One of their discoveries is that parent education is very

important, especially for those children who are not in nursery schools. Alpöge wrote the initial program for how the foundation wants to teach parents how to help their children develop. One aim for the foundation is to introduce children to books and to have parents read to their children. Alpöge has written eleven books for the foundation.

Alpöge has been a member of IBBY since 1990. She has served four years on the executive committee of IBBY, and in addition to that, she was the president of IBBY Turkey for six years.

The most recent work published by Gülçin Alpöge is *Teaching Values to Preschool Children*, in which she has chosen ten different values that she tries to make as concrete as possible in order for the children to really grasp their meaning. The book was sponsored by the Borusan foundation and has been distributed to all nursery schools in Istanbul.

*Katarina Svenning*

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# Ferit Avcı

Illustrator – Turkey

*I observe the way my cat plays with the mice in the garden. I witness their world and their struggle for survival. These are like a great treasure. When the time is right, new stories come out of these moments.*

F. Avcı

FERIT AVCI was born on June 23, 1954 in Murgul, a mining town of Artvin. After graduating from university in 1976, he worked as a cartoonist. Within a few years, he became an established cartoonist with works published in various journals, newspapers, and books. He started to work for various media in the 1980s, including leading children's magazines; this led him to illustrating children's books. After his first illustrated book, *New Wild Riddles* (1991), he developed a passion for illustrating for children. So far, he has illustrated more than seventy children's books. Currently, he is retired and resides in a village by Feithiye-Kaş, where he continues to create inspiring artworks.

Using watercolors as his main medium, Ferit Avcı illustrates with stylishly bright colors and clearly defined outlines to stimulate visual perception. He is deft in adopting a simplified and humorous approach to the subject matters of relationships, children, family, and environment. His sense of humor in picture books, which partly originates from his experience as a cartoonist, is visible in his illustrated book *Have you Seen the Red Elephant* (1996). Appreciated by adults and children alike, critics agree that the appealing images are compatible with the children's developmental psychology while subtly giving them "a sense of differentiation." Moreover, Avcı's illustrations often tap into the issues of life and nature, and many of the books he has illustrated convey ecological concerns.

As a well-known illustrator and cartoonist in Turkey, Avcı has won thirty-two awards in his career. His picture book *Kırmızı Fil'i gördünüz mü?* (Have you seen the red elephant?) has won the first place of Eflatun Güney Children's Books Competition in

1996. Besides working as cartoonist and illustrator, Avcı is also engaged in many art-related jobs such as chief editor in children's magazines, art director in exhibitions, and supervisor at the Turkish Association of Cartoonists. His cross-art and cross-disciplinary experiences enrich his work in diverse ways.

*You Chengcheng*

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# Elizabeth Laird

Author – United Kingdom

*I think we should encourage children to look at the difficult stuff.*

E. Laird

ELIZABETH LAIRD grew up in Britain after moving from New Zealand as a child. She later lived in the Middle East, Africa, and India before settling down with her husband in Britain. She has worked in education, first as a teacher's aide in Malaysia and later as a trained teacher in both Ethiopia and Britain. However, she has been a writer since she was a child, and today, she is a full-time writer of mainly children's books.

It was her time in Ethiopia that would lead her to write specifically for children. She fell in love with Ethiopia while teaching, and some of her first publications were collections of Ethiopian stories. She wrote them for her Ethiopian students because there were few reading materials available to them. Thirty years later, this love affair with Ethiopia would lead Laird to head the Ethiopian Story Project from 1997 to 2001. Through the project, she helped collect, translate, and publish folk stories from each of the different ethnic groups living in Ethiopia.

Many of Laird's stories tackle hard or controversial subjects that many feel should not be included in books written for children. Some of these subjects include disability, poverty, war, and oppression. Her first critically acclaimed book, *Red Sky in the Morning* (1988), deals with Laird's personal experiences growing up with a severely disabled younger brother. *The Garbage King* (2003) relates the lives of two runaways who must learn to survive on the streets of Addis Ababa. In *Kiss the Dust* (1991), she tells the story of a Kurdish family's flight from Saddam Hussein's Iraq. And, in probably her most controversial book, *A Little Piece of Land* (2003),

Laird offers an insight into the conflict between Israel and Palestine through the eyes of a twelve-year-old Palestinian boy. Laird believes that her stories have the ability to instill compassion and understanding in children towards others who are subject to prejudice because of ignorance.

Despite writing about children in controversial situations, Elizabeth Laird's books have won critical acclaim. She has also accumulated many literary awards and honors including being shortlisted for the Carnegie Medal five times (1996, 2001, 2003, 2007, and 2014).

*Monica Hagnevik*

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# Chris Riddell

Illustrator – United Kingdom

*I became an illustrator because I love words. As a child I loved words and I loved the idea of making drawings to accompany them.*

C. Riddell

BRITISH ILLUSTRATOR AND WRITER Chris Riddell ranks among the foremost illustrators of children's literature in the twenty-first century. Riddell's work as a political cartoonist (he has worked at *The Observer* for over twenty years) infuses his illustrations with subtlety and humor. His attention to even the minutest of details is evidenced in his illustrations for Martin Jenkins' adaptation of *Gulliver's Travels*, in which he also demonstrates his range of capabilities. He varies use of pen-and-ink drawings with full-color pictures to excellent effect. His depictions breathe fresh life into Gulliver's oft told tale, at times beautiful, scary, and comical—much like Gulliver's adventure itself.

In 2001, Riddell won his first major award, a Kate Greenaway medal, for *Pirate Diary*, which recounts a fictional diary of a cabin boy on-board a pirate ship during the early eighteenth century. Riddell supports Richard Platt's text through intricately detailed drawings in which the sufferings of individuals on-board the ship are unmistakably clear, and these are supported by historically accurate representations of sea vessels and of life at that time.

Riddell chooses not to coddle his young reader audience. For instance, one illustration in Richard Platt's *Pirate Diary* displays a crew-member who is forced to flog his friend; the former holds a blood-drenched whip, his t-shirt sprayed crimson, while the recipient's anguish is shown through his tightly bound wrists and the outline of blood along his torso, hinting at the cuts the whip's strokes have made. The widespread acclaim Riddell has received—both from critics and young readers—testifies to the quality of work he produces; his accolades include

a number of Nestlé Smarties awards. He manages to support stories faithfully and playfully without becoming overly sentimental. To date, Riddell has collaborated with Neil Gaiman (*The Graveyard Book; The Sleeper and the Spindle*) and Paul Stewart (*Hugo Pepper; The Edge Chronicles*), among others, on over 100 titles.

*Sean Kerns*

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# Lois Lowry

Author – United States

*Each time a child opens a book, he pushes open the gate that separates him from Elsewhere. It gives him choices. It gives him freedom. Those are magnificent, wonderfully unsafe things.*

L. Lowry

THERE IS PERHAPS NO OTHER AUTHOR in the past few decades who has changed children’s literature in the United States more profoundly than Lois Lowry. Like the wise character in her groundbreaking novel, *The Giver*, Lowry has passed along “knowledge, history, memories, color, pain, laughter, love, and truth” in award-winning books in a variety of genres. Her work brings her readers to tears and to laughter and—always—to a more vivid understanding of life and memory.

In writing her books, Lowry deals, essentially, with the same general theme: the importance of human connections. Her first novel, *A Summer to Die* (1977), was inspired by her memories and childhood—particularly the death of her older sister. True to the general theme of her writing, Lowry presents the story of young Meg’s acceptance to the unthinkable, inevitable death of her older sister. Perhaps influenced by her divorce, Lowry also expressed her view on marriage in this novel. Moving on to lighter and humorous tones, Lowry wrote *Anastasia Krupnik* in 1979. In this book, she portrays the world as seen through the glasses of Anastasia, an individualistic and spunky fourth grader. As opposed to the heavy and grim theme in her first novel, Lowry brought the readers into Anastasia’s mind and how she grapples with events in her life. Despite the lighthearted tone of the book, this novel manages to tackle several complex concepts such as death, memory, identity, and religion.

Lowry’s first Newbery Medal came along with the publication of her historical fiction novel, *Number the Stars*. Living in occupied Denmark during World War II, ten-year-old Annemarie and her family help their Jewish friends escape from the

Nazis. Lowry’s narrative introduces young readers to this dramatic and horrifying time through the identifiable perspective of a child character.

Lowry’s attempt to broaden the covering in her writing—dealing more with community construction—has earned her a second Newbery Medal for *The Giver* (1993). This book is considered as the harbinger for the new age in literature for young people, as the pioneer of dystopian genre and remains one of the most challenged books in the United States. The recent movie adaptation of *The Giver* (2014) further testifies the book’s universal appeal and timelessness.

*Chrysogonus Malilang*

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# Chris Raschka

## Illustrator – United States

*The task of a picture book illustrator...is to remember a particular emotion, heighten it, and then capture it in some painted vocabulary, so that the same emotion is evoked in the child.*

C. Raschka

BORN IN PENNSYLVANIA in 1959, Chris Raschka did not set out to be an illustrator. Even though he enjoyed drawing, his first love was science which led to a biology degree and an application to medical school. However, Raschka met his wife, and instead, they decided to join the Peace Corps. Raschka's natural talent for drawing blossomed during their time as cottage parents at a children's home in St. Croix, US Virgin Islands. Raschka and his wife spent most of their free time drawing and painting.

They were able to exhibit and sell many of their paintings before completing their two year stint. Their success caused Raschka to scrap his plans for medical school and try to make a living from drawing. A chance encounter with a children's book called *A Pup Grows Up* illustrated by Vladimir Radunsky planted the idea of creating children's books into Raschka's head.

Watercolors are Raschka's medium of choice, and while many of his drawings are simple, they are capable of conveying complex meanings. For example, in *A Ball for Daisy* (2011) the colors on the page slowly change as Daisy's emotions change. In the beginning of the book, there is a happy yellow undertone that changes to shades of gray reflecting Daisy's sadness after her ball breaks. In addition to the color changes, the expressions on Daisy's face also change—from happy and perky to confused and sad.

Many of Raschka's illustrations also exhibit a childishness and playfulness that appeals to all readers no matter how old. In *The Hello, Goodbye Window* (2005), the drawing of Nanna and Poppy's house at the beginning of the book is a riot of blues and greens with blobs of gold. These colors come to-

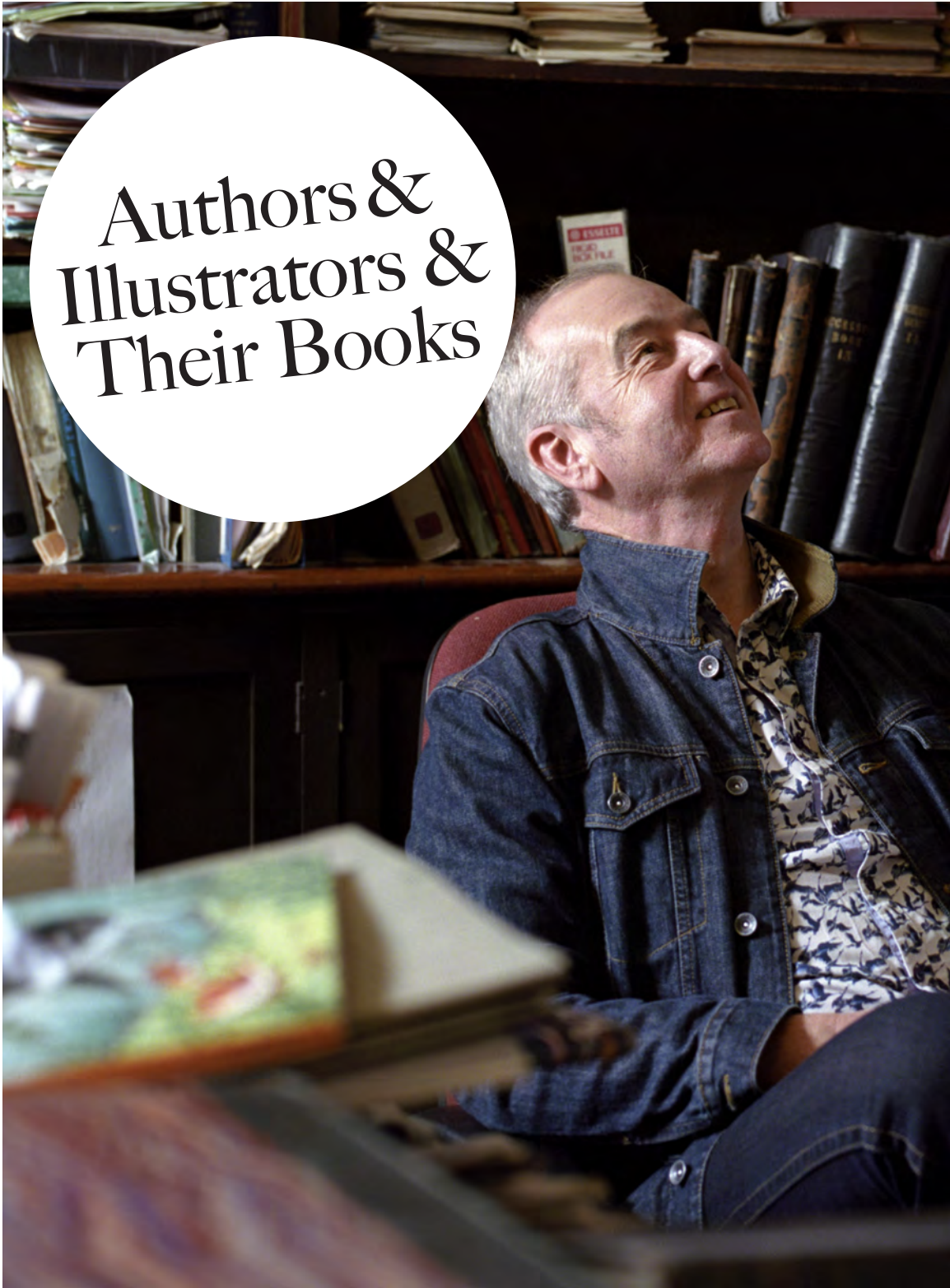
gether in a painting that looks like it came straight from the mind of a child. Raschka gives the reader a view of the house through the eyes of a child. The illustrations of the people on the following pages are a little more sophisticated and complex but still carry that same child-like quality.

Raschka has earned many awards with his charming illustrations. Among them are two Caldecott Medals (2006 and 2011) and one Caldecott Honor (1994), four Charlotte Zolotow Awards—Highly Commended (2006, 2011, 2012, and 2015), and one previous nomination for the Hans Christian Andersen Award (2012).

*Monica Hagnevik*

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Authors &  
Illustrators &  
Their Books

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# **“Language is about becoming in the world”**

## Interview with David Almond

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by Björn Sundmark

*What is the meaning of place and belonging in your work?*

For a long time I did not want to write about “that place,” I wanted to go over the horizon, but I only began to discover my voice when I turned my imagination back and began to use that place. It was the sense of drawing on a whole culture: the language, the landscape, the people. It was in a sense a way of finding my limitations, but also discovering the freedom. So, now all of that landscape, the north-east, Tyneside, has become the geography of my imagination. It’s a real place, but it’s not the real place. I have reimagined it. Now when I make a new story, it just finds its home there. And I can draw on so many things that for me enrich the way I write.

*Your place is also very much about layers of time.*

Yes, I always seem to be writing about going further down, layers. It is like an archeology. I find the roots of the world as it is now, as well as the roots of my imagination and my language.

*How do the stories and songs you heard as a child influence your writing?*

If literature is any good, it is about voice and it is about things being passed down generations. So, that’s another thing about going through the layers. I am going back to people telling stories. *Kit’s Wilderness* draws on that. It is a kind of exploration of what it means to write, what stories are. Stories are not just books on shelves. They resonate in our minds and in our bodies.

*Several characters in your books are writers and storytellers themselves. What does it mean to write for you—to be an author, to be a storyteller?*

I am fascinated by what it means to be a writer, and especially coming from an area which is not traditionally seen as a very literary place. I come from an area that some people would say is underprivileged and uncultured area. So, what does it mean to be a writer in that kind of area? But it seems to me that

it means the same thing as it means to be a writer anywhere: you can decorate the world, or you can do a magical thing and change the world.

It has to do with myth as well. I have been haunted by the Orpheus story since I first heard it. Orpheus sings and actually changes the world. With *A Song for Ella Grey*, I thought it was time to do it properly. While working on an earlier book, I could sense the story assembling itself. I had used bits of the Orpheus myth in *My Name is Mina*, and I thought it's time to do it properly this time. So it is the same story but set in Tyneside with schoolchildren, six-formers, and they have ordinary teenage lives. And Orpheus appears in the midst of them. He is a wandering musician. Every time you tell an ancient myth, it is told for the first time. So in this story, it is like the first time that Eurydice dies. It is the first time Orpheus goes into the underworld. And that's also one of the joys of writing for young people. When you are writing for young people, the world is brand new; every time someone falls in love, it is the first time anyone has fallen in love, and every time someone dies, it is the first time someone dies. That's the great thing about writing for young people. You are constantly on the edge of total newness.

*You have Orpheus moments in some of the earlier books, as in Kit's Wilderness.*

When I was writing the underground section in *A Song for Ella Grey*, I noticed it and thought, yes, Kit did this, too.

*When Lak battles the polar bear in Kit's Wilderness, you write, "He rushed out, facing what every teenage boy must face." What is it that he has to face?*

Growing up takes a lot of courage: To become an adult as well as retaining something of your own childhood. Who am I going to be as a person? For boys, it's a lot about the choice between being feminine or tough and masculine.

*But Lak is also very nurturing—first he kills the bear, but then he takes care of the little baby.*

I guess that is a kind of metaphorical solution. Girls and boys don't have the same challenges as someone living a thousand years ago, but the challenges are still there. The axe, but also the knife in *Jackdaw Summer*, point to another thing that we have to face: our own potential for being violent or even to be a

killer. It's a theme that keeps coming up during my stories. What do you do? You could do anything: I got a knife; I can do damage.

*They have the freedom to choose...*

I faced that choice several times growing up: do I do the terrible thing or do I choose not to? You swing between those poles, especially when you are a teenager.

*The danger of violence, but also the thrill of it...*

There is something about growing up, maybe especially for boys, where fighting is a way of proving your manhood. When I grew up in the fifties, it was also a way of reenacting World War II, playing at fighting Germans or the Japanese. Stories are a way of playing with things that scare us, taming them. Stories can civilize us. All play is a form of civilizing. And also when I wrote *Jackdaw Summer*, it was in a period when the world was at war. I wrote some of the chapters around the time George Bush was bombing Iraq. So, violence is very much part of the contemporary world, too. Violence never seems to go away. So, maybe that is why my boys try to find ways to "civilize themselves" by play. *The Savage* is such a story, where telling the story actually civilizes the Savage. This book has been used a lot in prisons, and the best bit of literary criticism was given by a prisoner: he said if I read the Savage then I don't have to be the savage.

*Has your writing changed over time?*

I try out different forms now. I write some books that are lighter, funnier, and for a younger audience, which gives me a different kind of feeling when I am writing. I think they have become braver in some ways. Allegory was a big jump for me, something that had been waiting for me to do. It was time to do it with *A Song for Ella Grey*. When I wrote *Skellig*, it was in some ways a very innocent book. It just happened; I thought, what is this? And then I wrote *Kit's Wilderness*, which was very much an act of writing. You know it was much more conscious than *Skellig* was. I think *The Tighrope Walkers* was a culmination in many ways. So, yes, I do have the feeling that I am moving forward and exploring new things. But they do all come from a central fount which has to do with the language, and to do with the north.

*Can you say something about what language play means to you?*

I think that's one of the things that have developed. One of the reasons that you write at all is because you love everything to do with words. You just love these things. I love punctuation. I love the shapes of paragraphs. It is just such a beautiful thing to explore, and it is a way also of breaking through to something. You know, if the language is very tightly woven, almost perfect, it can become a wall, but by playing with language, you can give the feeling that there is something beyond language. When Mina is writing her nonsense, she is doing something she couldn't have done in any other way. The wordplay is about breaking down the sense of things, giving it a different kind of sense, and going to somewhere where there is a new kind of experience.

*Why do you use dialect in your writing?*

I just love words; I love language. And I want to see what you can do with language. If I write phonetically or use dialect, using ancient forms, it feels rooted. I like to feel that the language that I use goes right back through time, to the beginning of all language. And I think that connects as well to why I write for young people. When children are learning the language, they write phonetically. If you elevate literature too much, you lose the roots of the language—the body, the screaming and dancing and singing. I think it is really important to retain that.

As soon as an Englishman opens his mouth, another Englishman finds a reason to detest him because of the way he speaks. Accent and dialect in England is a sign of where you are supposed to be. But in America, there is none of that. There is a great classlessness about language.

*Your books are so much about class!*

My background is working-class. I grew up in a council estate on Tyneside, and in some ways, you are not supposed to do that. You are not supposed to be a published writer if you grew up in a council house, or if you talk like me.

*In My Name is Mina and A Song for Ella Grey and the graphic novels you have made with Dave McKean (The Savage) you experiment with form. Why?*

I love experimenting with form and asking what is a book? I love to discover the connections between

visual arts and the page and music. I do a lot of stage work, and it feels quite natural to me. A lot of *Ella Grey* felt like poetry: Playing with the shape of the page, the music of the language, the visualization. It is just different forms of storytelling.

*Do you have the feeling that some minor characters in one book ask to be given a story of their own?*

There is Mina, of course. She is really the only one. When I wrote her notebook, it was if she was looking over my shoulder saying "it's about time." Mina was a lovely book to write. She was a fragment of me. I don't know where she came from. But I often also think about Janry in *Heaven Eyes*. Some of the characters from my previous books are perhaps descendants of the earlier ones. The characters that are important to me kind of filter down.

*Orphans seem to be important to you. Why is that?*

I am not sure, really. It says something that I recognize and keep bringing back children who have lost everything. I came from a rather big family; I had four sisters and a brother, so I came from what seemed to be a rather tight family. But my father died when I was quite young, and one of my sisters died when I was really young, so I think the sense of loss is something that has come into my work. So maybe it comes from that, especially losing a father when I was a teenager—the sense of everything beginning to fall apart. I am interested in what we are. And, in a sense, we are all orphans. We are thrown into this world. We find ourselves in this world. How do you make your way through it? Even if you have parents, there is a sense of "this is brand new, what is this place I find myself in?" And I suppose with orphans, like the ones in *Jackdaw Summer* or *Heaven Eyes*, it is just there in the extreme; they have lost everything. What does it mean to be someone in the world when you have nothing around you?

*One can also be lost in language...*

Mina has lost her father, and it does something to her relationship to language. Language is about becoming in the world. *Heaven Eyes* has to create her own language; Mina creates her own language in order to exist, in order to create herself.

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# **“I am endlessly enchanted by this world”**

## An interview with Cornelia Funke

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by Björn Sundmark

*What are you working on right now?*

I have just finished a first draft of a new adventure of the *Dragon Rider* characters, a book that I wrote more than fifteen years ago. I have often been asked “when is there a sequel?” but there isn’t automatically a sequel. There are some books that should not have a sequel. With *Dragon Rider*, I tried once or twice but ended up feeling “this isn’t ready.”

*Did you feel that it was a stand-alone book?*

No, that was the interesting thing. I have always felt that there should be more, but every time, I felt that I was repeating myself and that it wasn’t there yet. Then I started working on a book where artists were providing their impressions of different characters and places in *Dragonrider*, and that was very inspiring. I became greedy to come back to that world. Meeting those artists working on *Dragonrider* I wanted to do it myself again.

*So, these illustrations by other artists inspired you, but you have also started illustrating more and in the pre-writing of your new novels. In what way is this different from how you worked before?*

I was shocked by the difference. I was used to doing illustrations afterwards. Already in *Mirrorworld* I worked very intensively with picture materials, so I had my walls covered with paintings and illustrations and photographs from archives. Images trigger things. I would look at faces of people long dead, and I would ask “who are you?” and make that person into a new character.

*You used to write on computers, but now...*

Yes, now I write by hand. I write a first draft by hand on the right side, and I sketch my characters on the left side. Then I do notes and changes. I get closer to my characters by drawing them. Now I have all of these notebooks. Before, I wrote the

text and then did the illustrations, but now I do it this way. So now I have all these notebooks. With complex books like the Mirrorworld-books, I make ten to fifteen drafts.

*It seems very physical.*

Yes, it's very physical. When you show it to young authors or book people in general, you notice how much we all yearn for this—for the tactile, for the touch. I also glue things into my notebooks, photos etc.

*Does this way of working affect the actual language, the way of structuring? What happens?*

When I did it the first time, I was surprised by the quality of the first draft. When you do it by hand, it is more like playing. On the computer, you get the strange feeling that what you see is finished print already, almost done. It fools us. This way it is more playful, but you trust yourself more because you have no pressure that it must be final. It sometimes becomes more original, and... yes, free. So now my first advice to young authors is "write by hand"!

*What you say about visualization and storytelling reminds me of what C. S. Lewis said once about the genesis of *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*: "it started with an image of a faun standing in snow by a lamppost."*

Very many of my stories start with images, too, but at that point I don't understand them yet. It is often hard to draw them. They are more like moving pictures. It's about place and about tasting and touching the world. You want that to be so real that you can sense it. To feel the story on your skin, that is what you want.

*Can you say something about how you work with setting?*

I think of setting as one of my characters. When I wrote *Thief Lord*, Venice is an important character in that book, just like the children. Or, when I wrote *Inkheart*, I could not have written that without living for three months in Liguria and without Liguria becoming a character.

*Speaking of *Thief Lord*, you have written somewhere that it can be seen as an inversion of *Peter Pan*, "the boy who did not want to grow up."*

As a child, I did not understand *Peter Pan*. I wanted to grow up. So I wondered: does anyone write about those children, those who really want to grow

up? What if a child makes others believe he is a grown up? Next morning I sat up in bed remembering how, as a child, I wanted to be a grown up. What if I write this about a boy who projects that he is an adult? But the book actually started with the place. I was in Venice and stood on the balcony of the Doge Palace. And the railing went up to my chest, and I am quite tall, and I thought the Doge was probably a small man—after all, at that time, people were usually much smaller, so he must barely have looked over that railing. This brought me to the theme of how we make and stage our own appearance.

*In a way, the street children of course also have to "grow up" to survive on the street..*

Yes, and it was also because I had been doing social work with children in that situation. It was my love song to those children. It had to be on the page at some point. They took care of each other. The tenderness they had for each other. Many were too grown up already. I saw ten year-olds who took care of their four or five year old brothers. I wanted to show their strength. It all came together in Venice. Venice is a children's city. No traffic, they can move around. I love it when I get letters from children saying "I went to Venice, Cornelia, and you didn't lie about anything."

*The fantasy element in *Thief Lord* is rather discreet. It is a book that wavers between realistic and fantastic modes of writing, it seems to me. Still, one message that at least I read into it is that we can find magic in the world around us.*

It is true. I am endlessly enchanted by this world. And it is a misunderstanding that fantasy authors want to "escape" from this world. There is a wonderful Tolkien quote, "who is against escape except the prison guard?" Maybe the escape is about escaping to get a better view, to see and be in the world properly. That's why I think readers of fantasy are more politically active than others, because they question our so-called reality.

*You research your books meticulously—for instance, in the *Mirrorworld*-books, where you use the history and mythologies of different countries as a background.*

Yes, I go through the mirror, which means into my fictional world, which is very much like the 1860s in this world. But then all your fabulous creatures

are also there, all your fairy tales are true. I am very much in Scandinavia right now with trolls and Thumbietot.

With this series, the Mirrorworld-books, the reason why they are so close to my heart, when you are in 1860 in a fictional world, you can see our world hatching. And what we did to nature in the nineteenth century was that we reinvented the world. In 1860 we said "God is dead; we are God." Now we know about the consequences. Writing about that is very relevant.

The other thing I was thinking was that because I am living in America now, it has brought me closer to my roots. When you live in a culture like that of California—and that's also very different from the East Coast—it's like living on a different planet. It has been such a cultural clash, even after ten years. But at the same time that makes me very aware. I am more European since I moved there.

*What is it that you need in California?*

There are no boundaries anymore. When I meet children in different places in the world, they make me realize that I am a storyteller for the world. It does not matter where I was born. When I came to New Zealand and there were 2000 children listening to me, it was like my stories had already become rooted in a place I had never been before. You cannot even describe the happiness I felt. I feel that I want to honor all the nations in my stories. That impulse gave me the idea to travel around the world in fairy tales and take them very seriously. For instance, I got the suggestion to put in trolls in a book that was set in Germany, but I said no, trolls belong to Scandinavia, so if there are trolls in Germany they will have to be immigrants; they'll have to have a reason for being there. And the Baba Yaga is Russian, so if she comes to Germany, she too will have to have a reason. So I started to take the local traditions very seriously because so often in fantasy authors say "let's put in some dwarfs or let's put in some fairies," but that's not right because the supernatural looks different and is different in different places. And to look at different countries through their fairy tales makes you realize how rich this world is.

*Are the fairy tales getting lost in this age of globalization?*

That is the question. How can we create a truly

universal human community without losing our heritage? I think it is the greatest task.

*You use fairy tales and the imagination to mirror our world.*

Yes, for the historical context I use the 1860s, but the fairy tales are of course much older than that. And in them you don't just find the magic but the hardship of the Middle Ages, the fear of the dark. Putting that in a nineteenth century world is almost like taking a very dark past, and it's still alive, and the nineteenth century and seeing how it works together.

*How many Mirrorworld books will there be? There are three now.*

Maybe six, if I want to travel around the world—and I have made it to Kazakhstan so far. Now, in the fourth, I am travelling through Asia. In the fifth book, I am going through the Americas. In the sixth, through Africa, back to Barcelona. I always wanted to end there. A story is a labyrinth. You walk in and the further in the more elaborate it gets. And you just have to try to find the heart. But on the way, the story will try to lure you in different directions, lie to you, creatures hiding behind hedges, jumping at you. And they say CORNEELIAAA, over here!

One young writer asked me, "what about writer's block," and I said there is no writers block. You hit your head and took the wrong turn. And then you go back and start over.

*You seem so happy to be exploring new worlds.*

For me, it is the greatest bliss. It's for me like chocolate and coffee. I have my notebooks with me wherever I go. I write on the plane. I can't stop doing it.

*Do you ever have the feeling that you are writing the same book over again?*

Yes partly, especially as you get older, but what is more dangerous is language patterns. Stories can be varied, but when it comes to descriptions of love, or a forest, you have your patterns, and to break them consciously is difficult. Storytellers are eager to tell a story, so maybe you repeat a romantic pattern or even a turn of phrase. Of course, editors usually pick up on those things—for example, "Cornelia you use the word 'whisper' too often."

*You do write very different books. You have written realistic books. Why, when you write such fantastic fantasy books?*

That was because my editor asked me, "Cornelia can you write a book that has no gnomes or fairies?" I said, "but that will be so boring." And he said, "can you just try?" So I tried to put in all my experience as a social worker. And I used the stories I had heard from my mother about how my grandmother made her go out and work hard in the field and work with the vegetables. So I had a story about a girl with a terrible grandmother that everyone loves (*Die Wilden Hühner* [The Wild Chicks]). And I thought, done. But it was a phenomenal success in Germany, so in the end, I wrote six books. I even had a father come and complain and say that thanks to me he had had to put up a chicken coop in his garden. They are different to write. I wrote them very quickly; each book took me about three to four months. Usually, a book takes two to three years because I have to do so much research. But here I described what I already knew, life as we all know. In fantasy, on the other hand, you can make these fabulous quests and talk about human nature and death and life in a mythical form. And you give the reader images just like the fairy tale does. I miss those tools when I write in a realistic mode. Realism is shallower. It only portrays a certain historical moment. And it is also very serious. But think of it, we are at this moment sitting on a planet as round as a football and races around a fireball. That is our reality, right? People say to me fantasy is not very realistic, but I say to them it is more realistic. Fantasy does not even come close to the bizarreness of our world.

*Have you ever been tempted to write dystopian fantasy?*

Yes, but I would never write something where there is no hope at the end. When you write for children or young adults or for the child in the adult, you are the one who holds out hope and light, and you cannot tell a story without it.

*You use the myths as a way of creating a past in your fantasy novels.*

Myth is our memory of the past. You feel the hunger, you feel the cold, you feel the knowledge that we may not survive this winter because the harvest was bad. The fairy tales still have that inside.

*But fairy tales are also a way of constructing the future.*

Yes, to bring the magical treasure.

*A recurring theme in your books is that you have to work together. Many YA books are about identity, but you tend to focus on cooperation.*

Yes, I believe in friendship, I believe in teams, I believe in cooperation. I don't believe in the single hero for one moment.

*What has changed and what is the same in your books over time?*

I think I think much wider. My world has become much bigger. I am more curious. I hope one can see that in my books. Getting older, I know more about human nature. I know more about children, and about grown-ups.

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