

Pam Muñoz Ryan

USA Nominee

2018 Hans Christian Andersen Award for Writing

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Bookbird Profile

Pam Muñoz Ryan

Author - United States

*Readers need more than one story. They need many stories
about many different families and cultures,
traditions and holidays, histories and realities.
Reading a breadth of stories nurtures the seeds of understanding.*

Pam Muñoz Ryan

As a child, Pam Muñoz Ryan grew up hearing stories from her Mexican grandmother about life in Mexico before the family immigrated to the United States. These stories would later form the core of her novel, *Esperanza Rising*, a fictionalized rendering of her family's riches-to-rags experience. Through the eyes of Esperanza, readers see what life was like for migrant farm workers in the United States during the Great Depression. The importance of persistence, hope, and family support during trying times is a major theme in the novel.

In *The Dreamer*, a fictionalized biography of Pablo Neruda, Ryan imagines the childhood of the world-renowned Chilean poet who was born Neftalí Reyes. She writes of his love of words, his fear of his domineering father, and his vivid imaginative life. His determination to write shapes his life and provides insight into the mind of a supremely creative individual. Ryan adds many creative touches of her own that inspire readers to value imagination.

Although Ryan has done much to celebrate and promote cultural understanding of the Latino community, she also writes convincingly across cultures and ethnicities. In *Echo*, a structurally innovative fairy tale/historical fiction hybrid, one of the major plot strands focuses on Mexican Americans in California during World War II. But the novel also tells the stories of Japanese Americans in California, Irish orphans in Pennsylvania, and German children in Germany. All these characters possess a deep love of music as well as an enchanted harmonica that encourages determination and optimism despite difficult situations.

Love of music is also the driving force in the life of Marian Anderson, the subject of Ryan's award-winning picture book biography *When Marian Sang*. Blessed with an extraordinary singing voice and a supportive family, African American Marian Anderson was able to overcome the roadblocks put in her path by segregation laws and customs in pre-Civil Rights America. Like the characters in *Esperanza Rising*, *The Dreamer*, and *Echo*, hope, determination, and optimism play important roles in Anderson's success. Ryan steps outside her own cultural identity to write about an African American, but the admiration and respect with which she conveys Anderson's story make it possible for readers of all ethnicities to understand the difficulties with which Marian struggled, empathize with her desire to sing, and applaud when she achieves great success.

Ryan is the author of nearly 40 books, many of which have received prestigious book awards. She is regarded as a leading author of Latin heritage as well as one of the finest children's writers in the whole of the United States. Her graceful writing, consistently fluid and compelling, is characterized by vivid descriptions and aptly-suited figurative language. The diversity within her body of work shines through as she writes in a wide array of genres and formats about a broad range of intriguing, masterfully drawn, racially and ethnically diverse characters and interesting, engaging, important topics. She is planting seeds of understanding around the globe.

Elizabeth Poe

Chair, USBBY Hans Christian Andersen Award Nominating Committee

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Biography

by Elizabeth Poe with Pam Muñoz Ryan

“My beginnings and belongings were very humble, but I was blessed with a mishmash of cultures and languages and food.”

The author was born Pamela Jeanne Banducci in Bakersfield, California, on December 25, 1951. Her mother divorced her father before she was born on the grounds of physical cruelty. Her last name was changed before she attended school to match the name of her parents, Esperanza “Hope” Bell and the man she considered her real father, her stepfather, Donald Bell, who married her mother when she was four. Her father was a delivery truck driver and her mother worked as a clerk in a high school library. Pamela Bell grew up to become the celebrated author Pam Muñoz Ryan.

Her stepfather’s parents, Tom and Grace Bell, moved from Oklahoma to California in the Dust Bowl years of the 1930s during the Great Depression. Tom died shortly after. Her grandmother Bell was an influential part of her life.

“Her Oklahoman culture became part of my culture. So many of her sensibilities and sayings were integrated into my life and, in part, into my writings.”

Her maternal grandparents, Jesús and Esperanza Ortega Muñoz, immigrated to California from Aguascalientes, Mexico in the 1930s to a farm labor camp in Arvin, California. Pam’s mother was born in the camp at Di Giorgio Farms. After Jesús died, her grandmother, Esperanza, was stranded with five young children. No longer able to stay in the camp, her grandmother moved to Bakersfield, California, where she took in laundry to support her family. Esperanza became the hub of the large extended family and Pam’s after-school caregiver. When her grandmother remarried, Pam gained a Basque grandfather who integrated the family into the Basque community.

“I am an ethnic smorgasbord.”

Pam gained an appreciation for the cultures that formed her heritage. When she was with one grandmother, she ate red mole, enchiladas, tacos, lamb stuffed with garlic, beans, and rice. She spoke Spanish, heard the Basque language, and every year attended Mexican weddings and the Basque picnic. When she was with the other grandmother, she ate fried chicken, black-eyed peas, smothered greens, fried okra, cornbread, and peach cobbler with fat dumplings. She heard country music and spent every Saturday with relatives with southern American accents, visiting over long suppers.

It is no surprise that Pam’s stories are filled with diverse characters and women who survived against societal obstacles.

“I often think of the struggles that my grandmothers and my mother had to overcome—poverty, single motherhood, divorce, starting a new life in a new land, and sometimes prejudice for the way they spoke and their ethnicity—and I have realized that my female characters, real or imagined, are often kindred spirits.”



“Before books, there were the stories of my imagination.”

Stories and dramatic play have always played a central role in the life of Pam Muñoz Ryan. Even before she started school and could read, she loved to flip through her grandmother’s set of encyclopedias. The G volume was her favorite because it contained an illustrated section of Greek myths where she could imagine the story through the illustrations. Although she did not grow up with many books in the home, she came from a rich oral language history, listening to her grandmothers’ Mexican folk tales and Oklahoman superstitions. The oldest of three sisters and twenty-three cousins on her mother’s side, she was always considered the “boss kid” or the one to come up with ideas for group play. Many of these ideas involved dramatic play as the children acted out the stories she created in the back yard. A daydreamer, she became deeply invested in the books she read.

“I was a child who suspended disbelief. And when I read a book, I was the character. I was in the story. I believed that the author wrote that story for me. That is what I hope for my readers—that they feel that same ownership.”

The summer before fifth grade, her family moved across town, and Pam found herself the new student in a school where most of the children had been together since kindergarten. Feeling a misfit, she spent much of her free time riding her bicycle to the tiny East Bakersfield branch library to borrow books and read in air conditioning. Books provided her an escape and a means for coping with the changes in her life, and she became an obsessive reader. As a student at Washington Junior High, she showed an interest in writing and became editor of the school’s newspaper. She also joined the school chorus and the all-city chorus, where she felt a sense of belonging during those insecure and awkward years of adolescence.

“Reading, writing, and music saved me.”

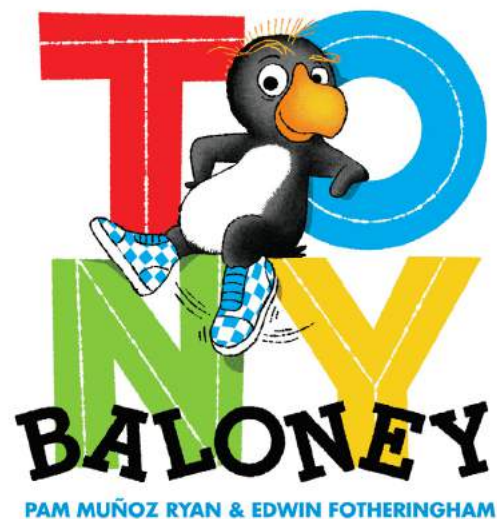
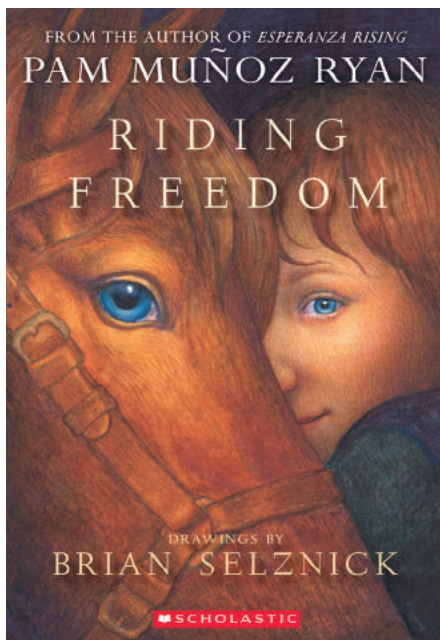
English and composition were her strongest subjects when she attended Bakersfield High School. After high school, she wanted a profession that involved books and literature. That meant attending college. Neither of her parents went to college and they were puzzled at her intense desire to go, and to travel four hours away from home. But, she was determined. She applied and was accepted to San Diego State University in southern California where she earned a bachelor’s degree in child development. In order to supplement the minimal financial assistance her parents were able to afford, Pam worked a variety of jobs: babysitter, exercise instructor, sales clerk, secretary, and teaching assistant. She was the first of her family to graduate from college.

~ ~ ~

*“I always had a sense that there was something
yet-to-be-discovered about myself. I still feel that way.”*

After college, she was first a Red Cross Coordinator for the Vietnamese and Cambodian play-schools at a U.S. Navy base relocation camp for refugees after the Viet Nam war and then a bilingual Head Start teacher in Escondido, California. Picture books were an important part of her work with the children in both these settings. She married, changing her last name from Bell to Ryan, and had four children, two girls and twin boys. When her twins started kindergarten, she took a position as director of an early childhood program and returned to school as a part-time student working on a master’s degree in post-secondary education. Her intent was to continue to connect children and books by teaching children’s literature.

As she was finishing her master’s degree, one of her professors pulled her aside and encouraged her to pursue professional writing. Intrigued by the prospect of being a writer, Ryan began to write stories for children. She submitted these to publishers, but, as is usually the case in the United States, received many letters of rejection. Eventually, she was able to contract a literary agent who helped her find a publisher. Her first book, *One Hundred is a Family*, was published in 1994. After several picture books, her editor at Scholastic, Tracy Mack, encouraged her to try a novel. The result was *Riding Freedom*, an award-winning book that broadened the range of Ryan’s endeavors significantly. Her writing repertoire eventually expanded to include novels classified as historical fiction, realistic contemporary fiction, fictionalized biographies, and original fairy tales as well as picture books identified as biographies, informational books, anthropomorphic animal stories, and re-imagined folktales. One of her picture book characters, Tony Baloney, is a macaroni penguin and the main character in an easy-to-read series.




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“I am a reader, writer, author, and pilgrim. Every book is a journey.”

Ryan considers each book she writes a confluence of ideas, experiences, research, and imagination. The ideas for some of her books are drawn from her imagination. Many books, however, require a variety of research strategies that involve perusing library resources, working with subject area experts, and traveling to locales important to the books.



*Esperanza Rising* evolved from the story Ryan’s maternal grandmother told her of her family’s privileged life in Mexico before they were forced to flee to the United States and become migrant farm workers. Ryan had not heard this complete story as a child, and when she learned of it as an adult, she decided to write a fictional account of her family’s riches-to-rags story. To do this, she extended her knowledge about life in Mexico and the United States during the early part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Via the library and archives, she steeped herself in the lives of the privileged class in Mexico and delved into the living conditions in United States during the Great Depression. Research relating to the agricultural workers’ strikes and the Deportation Act of 1929, which resulted in the return of at least 450,000 Mexicans and Mexican Americans to Mexico, was of primary importance to the story she was creating. Although she had heard much about life in the company farm camps from her grandmother

and father, she deepened her understanding of the situation by interviewing people who had lived in the same company camp as her grandmother. Her experiences as a child growing up near the agricultural fields of the San Joaquin Valley provided necessary context for the setting of *Esperanza Rising*, a novel closely related to both sides of Ryan’s family heritage.

Whereas Ryan’s research when writing *Esperanza Rising* focused primarily around personal and familial experiences, and a familiarity with Californian geography and locales, her other books required a different type of research. A fictionalized biography, like *Riding Freedom*, required thorough library research into the life of Charlotte Parkhurst, who was probably the first woman to vote in the United States, and mid-nineteenth century California history as well as stagecoaches and how to harness a team of horses.

Researching a fictionalized event like in *Amelia and Eleanor Go for a Ride* involved understanding the personalities of historical heroines Eleanor Roosevelt and Amelia Earhart and led Ryan to archival material about these two women, early aviation, and the time period of the Great Depression.

Ryan was drawn to all these intriguing female characters—Esperanza, Charlotte Parkhurst,



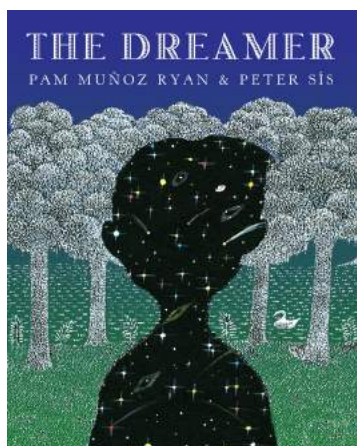


Eleanor Roosevelt, Amelia Earhart—and told their stories with accuracy and conviction. However, her biography of Marian Anderson, *When Marian Sang*, demanded even deeper levels of research.

Ryan was attracted to Marian Anderson’s story because she was another strong, courageous woman who was not limited by societal expectations. Anderson was also an uncommonly gifted musician, and as a lover of spirituals, gospel music, musicals, and opera, Ryan was intrigued by the power of her voice and her story. To

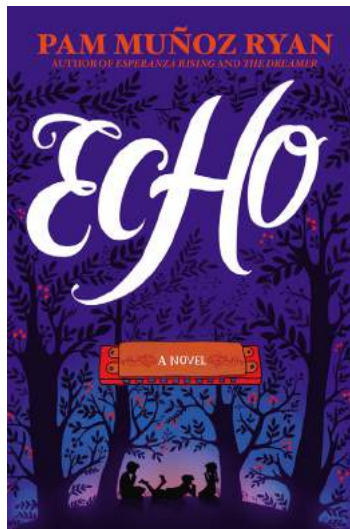
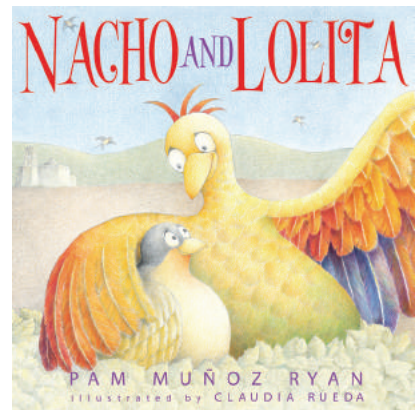
tell the story truly, Ryan extended her research to include: Philadelphia and Marian Anderson’s childhood home; Washington, D.C. and the Lincoln Memorial where Marian sang in a historical performance; and New York City to the Metropolitan Opera archives. This travel-related research which augmented Ryan’s library research on the Anderson’s life, the historical time period, and racial conflicts in the United States, significantly deepened her telling of Marian’s story.

Ryan’s subsequent novels have involved various levels of travel to the sites of her stories. When preparing to write *Paint the Wind*, a horse story set in Wyoming, Ryan, who loved horse stories as a young girl but did not know how to ride a horse, took hundreds of horseback riding lessons to prepare her for two research rides to view wild horse herds in the Western part of the United States. These wilderness rides in the eastern Sierra Mountains in California and the Red Desert near southwestern Wyoming enabled her to see the wild horses, which she had been assiduously researching for many years via the library and Internet, in their natural habitat. The research journals from these rides richly informed the story she ultimately wrote.



Research for *The Dreamer* involved delving into the life and poetry of Pablo Neruda. By immersing herself in his biographies and through countless re-readings of his poems, Ryan opened a window into the childhood experiences, philosophical thinking, and literary approach of this world-renowned poet. The Chilean Ministry of Education assisted her when she traveled to his homeland of Chile where she sought to visit sites important to Neruda and his poetry. The depth of her literary research and extent of her travels greatly enriched Ryan’s fictionalized biography of Neruda’s childhood.

*Nacho and Lolita* evolved after Ryan’s literary research for a Mexican folktale about two mythical birds, a big one and a little one, who fall in love. Unable to locate more than a scant, and somewhat different, version of this oral tale in a book of Mexican folktales, Ryan decided to create an original re-imagining of this tale. Because she set the tale at the Mission San Juan Capistrano in California, she did not have to travel far from home to view her envisioned scene for this aviary love story. All she had to do was let her imagination take flight.



On the other hand, research for Ryan’s original fairy tale, *Echo*, required extensive travel on Ryan’s part. In addition to exhaustive archival research on all aspects of harmonica making, children’s harmonica bands, music conservatories in Germany, Nazi Germany, orphan homes in Pennsylvania, and segregated schools for Mexican-American students in southern California during the 1930s, Ryan visited related locales in Germany, Pennsylvania, California, and New York. Perhaps most notably, she toured the Hohner harmonica factory and the German Harmonica and Accordion Museum in Trossingen, Germany. With *Echo*, all her research, including letters from soldiers testifying how a Hohner harmonicas had saved their lives by blocking bullets from entering their bodies and a picture of a children’s harmonica band, along with her considerable creative efforts converged in Ryan’s most complex novel to date.



*“I am not a writer. I am a rewriter.”*

When she is not traveling for research or professional purposes, Ryan writes in her home office in California. Developing her creations involves persistence. Working at a computer, she works through multiple drafts, no fewer than twelve, before submitting it to her editor. If accepted for publication, the manuscript will be revised and written up to a total of twenty times, until it is adequately polished. While she is revising one manuscript, Ryan continues to compile ideas for other stories. She is always in the process of writing another manuscript. When she was a child, she shared her stories with other children via their play sessions. Now she shares her stories with young adults and children via her books.



In addition to speaking to children through books, Pam Muñoz Ryan has visited students in every state in the U.S. and many countries. As a beloved author, she speaks to young people about her

love of reading books and her engagement in writing for them. She not only inspires them to read and write, but also to dream and challenge themselves to do their best and not worry about failure. One of her favorite sayings is *“If you’ve never failed at anything, you’re aiming too low.”* She sees failure as a challenge to try again and encourages young people to start over as many times as is necessary. Her own life and writing process serve as excellent examples.

*“No matter your profession, what magnificence might you have created—what might you have learned—had you allowed yourself to fall down and stand back up again.”*

Ryan is also a much sought after speaker for professional conferences and book festivals. Over the years she has crisscrossed the United States speaking to English teachers, reading teachers, preschool teachers, and librarians. Because many of her books are mainstays in all levels of classrooms, teachers are interested in hearing how she developed her ideas and enjoy sharing ways they use them with students. Librarians are always eager to hear what she will publish next and appreciate that she is an advocate for the We Need Diverse Books Campaign.

*“We are preparing children to meet not only their neighborhood, but a much broader existence, filled with people from all walks of life, who speak many languages, whose families originated from many different countries. We can’t just look at someone—at their countenance, their clothing, or the color of their skin—and understand him or her. We have to first hear a person’s story. And readers need more than one story. They need many stories about many different families and cultures, traditions and holidays, histories and realities. Reading a breadth of stories nurtures the seeds of understanding.”*

Ryan also inspires other children’s authors by speaking at SCBWI (Society for Children’s Book-writers and Illustrators) events. The mission of this organization is to support the creation and availability of quality children’s books around the world. In 2016, the general public had the opportunity to hear Ryan when she was invited by the U.S. Library of Congress to speak at the annual National Book Festival in Washington, D.C.

In addition to speaking as a children’s writer, Ryan’s has contributed to several professional organizations in various ways. Since 2010, she has served as a board member of The Lisa Libraries, a nonprofit organization that donates small libraries of new children’s books to organizations in the U.S. which work in poor and under-served areas, such as visiting areas for a children of incarcerated parents, pediatric wards, day-care-care centers, Native American reservations, Children’s Home Society, and more. Books from The Lisa Libraries have also helped replenish school and public libraries destroyed by hurricanes and floods. In keeping with her efforts to get books to deserving children, when Ryan received a check, to be given to the charity of her choice, from the USA Educational Book and Media Association as its Jeremiah Ludington Memorial Award recipient, she donated it to the First Book organization, earmarked for their Migrant Worker Book Distribution Program, serving children in farm working communities.



Ryan's professional involvement extends internationally. She was the USBBY author for the "Peace Story" project, commissioned for NAMOOK 2010. (Twenty-six authors and illustrators contributed stories about peace.) This project included a subsequent visit to Nami Island Children's Book Festival in South Korea. In addition, a Japanese publisher solicited her to write six books for the Japanese market about computer ethics. The project included two extended visits to Japan for concept meetings and touring. She has also had speaking engagements in American Schools in Singapore and Chile, with pending invitations in India and Malaysia.

Contracted by the U.S. State Department, Ryan attended Le Feria de los Libros as an American author representative to Guadalajara, Mexico, under the auspices of the U.S. Embassy. This visit to the largest book fair in Latin America included engagements at the ambassador's home, La Feria de los Libros events, and school visits arranged by the embassy. The success of her visit has led to pending invitations for similar visits to Kygystan and Brasil. Ryan also attended the Frankfurt Book Festival in Frankfurt, Germany where she accepted the Deutscher Jugendliteraturpreis (German Children's Literature Prize) for the German edition of *The Dreamer*.

Professional travel and public appearances are a natural outgrowth of Ryan's work as a children's writer. The high caliber of her writing and her gracious, unassuming manner make her a desirable representative of her country and her profession. Children and adults alike benefit from her message of hope and respect, her encouragement to persevere, her deep sense of social justice, and her love for the arts.

*"I want to capture the reader. When I sit down to write, my most ardent goal, my intention and my hope, is that the reader will WANT to turn the page."*

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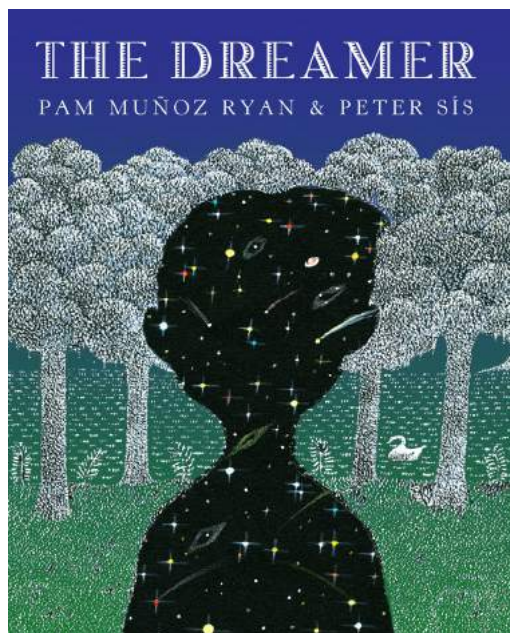
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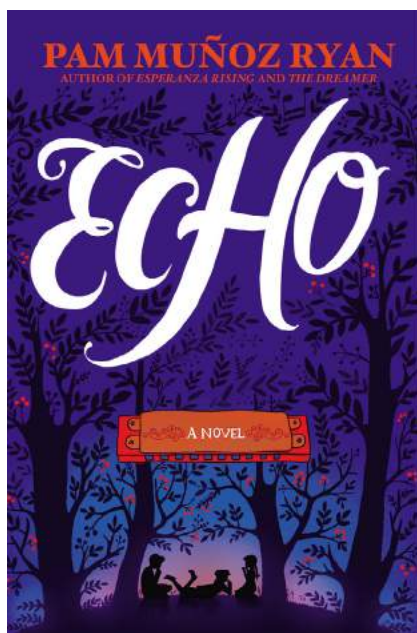
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## Five Most Significant Titles



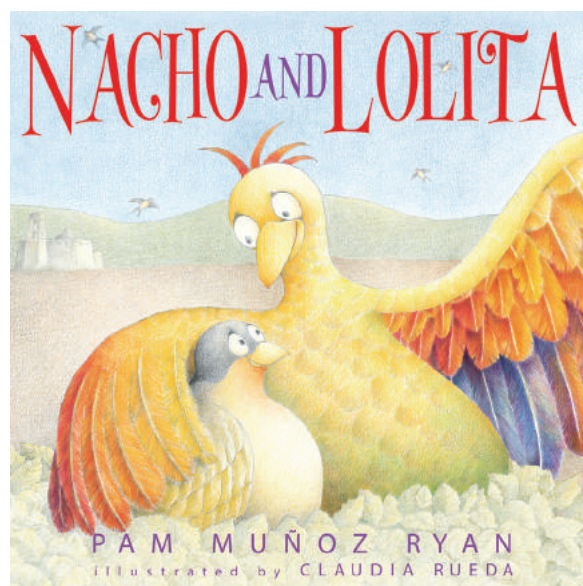
*The Dreamer.*  
Illus. by Peter Sís.  
New York: Scholastic, 2010



*Echo.*  
Illus. by Dinara Mirtalipova.  
New York: Scholastic, 2015.



*Esperanza Rising.*  
New York: Scholastic, 2000.



*Nacho and Lolita.*  
Illus. by Claudia Rueda.  
New York: Scholastic, 2005.



*When Marian Sang.*  
Illus. by Brian Selznick.  
New York: Scholastic, 2002.

These five books were submitted to the Hans Christian Andersen Awards Jurors.

# Statement of Contribution to Children's Literature

by Elizabeth Poe

*To my reader,  
This book is for you.  
Wander into that infinite space  
between soul and star.  
I am waiting for you there.*

~PMR

## General Overview

Pam Muñoz Ryan has given the world of literature for children and young people a body of work significant for its content, breadth, and writing style. The subject matter for her books ranges from stories of family life to depictions of engaging historical events to explorations of intriguing people. Her characters live in mansions, orphanages, company work camps, trailer parks, and old missions. They grapple with family tensions, political dictates, and societal prejudices. They overcome harsh living environments, cruel adults, and social limitations. They find solace in friends, siblings, extended family, art, music, and poetry. They experience love, hate, curiosity, uncertainty, prejudice, personal growth, and self-fulfillment. Through their diverse circumstances, extensive exploits, and varied experiences, Ryan's characters provide children and young people windows into many worlds and situations.

In addition to widely varying content, Ryan's body of work is characterized by breadth in format, genre, and character attributes. Most noticeably, Ryan writes in several literary formats. She began by writing picture books and still maintains a strong presence in that arena, but she has branched out to author easy readers, chapter books, and novels. Within these formats, she offers three-year-olds to teenagers in wide array of genres and sub-genres. In the fiction genre, she writes historical fiction, contemporary realistic fiction, fantasy, magical realism, anthropomorphic animal stories, re-imagined folktales, and original fairy tales. Her non-fiction offerings include informational picture books, picture book biographies, and fictionalized book-length biographies. Some of her books can be classified as cross-genre.

Characters in these broadly categorized books vary in species, race, ethnicity, gender, social status, and age. They may be human or animal, black or white, Latino or Latina, German or American, birds or horses. They may be male or female or pretend to be what they are not. They may be rich or poor, laborers or landowners, orphans or children with parents. They may be children, teenagers, or adults. They may be artists or musicians or poets. But no matter which format or genre Ryan uses to tell her stories or what character attributes she chooses to explore, the impressive breadth of her versatility enables her to reach a wide audience and offer stories that can transport them into the lives of others.

This ability to transport readers and listeners is a direct result of Ryan’s highly effective writing style. Whether writing in prose or verse, Ryan’s writing is graceful, elegant, and fluid. She consistently uses similes to convey characters’ feelings and deepen the reader’s sense of each story’s setting. She is particularly adept at adapting her style to fit a wide range of audiences and a broad variety of genres. The numerous themes she explores include hope, social injustice, family love, courage, creativity, perseverance, determination, overcoming adversity, and self-realization. Many of her books focus on the importance of the arts in shaping one’s life. Her subject matter is interesting, her characters are well-drawn, and her plots are engaging with satisfying endings, but the way she structures her works is what makes many of them particularly noteworthy.

## Close Examination of Five Representative Books

While these literary characteristics can be found throughout the body of Ryan’s works, a close examination of five representative books, *Esperanza Rising*, *When Marian Sang*, *The Dreamer*, *Nacho and Lolita*, and *Echo*, reveals the depth and breadth of Ryan’s writing.



### *Esperanza Rising*

When her wealthy father dies, Esperanza and her mother are forced to leave their life of privilege in Mexico and immigrate to the United States where they live in poverty, barely eking out an existence as agricultural laborers living in a company farm camp. Neither the physical nor the emotional journey is easy for Esperanza. A pampered child, she grows to conquer her pride and is gradually transformed into a hard-working *campesina* who takes her promise to take care of her mama seriously. She does not make her journey or create her new home alone, but rather as part of a loving, supportive extended family, a community that takes care of one another. Along the way she experiences disdain, denial, awareness, acceptance, despair, and finally hope as she adjusts to her new life and eventually triumphs. Readers take every step of Esperanza’s journey with her, feeling her pain, hope, and joy as Ryan takes us into the heart and mind of this princess turned peasant (96), this self-centered child turned empathic young woman.



Ryan's vivid descriptions enhance our sensory understanding of Esperanza's world. After the fire that destroyed her family's vineyard, we can visualize the "twisted and charred trunks, the burntout vines rolling in parallel lines toward the mountains. It looked as if someone had taken a gigantic comb, dipped it in black paint, and gently swirled it across a huge canvas" (56). When Esperanza is escaping in a false-bottomed wagon, we can smell the guavas covering the floor above her: "The guavas smelled fresh and sweet, like pears and oranges all in one" (60). During the dust storm, we can hear the sound begin "[s]oftly at first, like a gentle rain, then harder as the wind blasted the tiny grains of sand against the windows and metal roofs" (148).

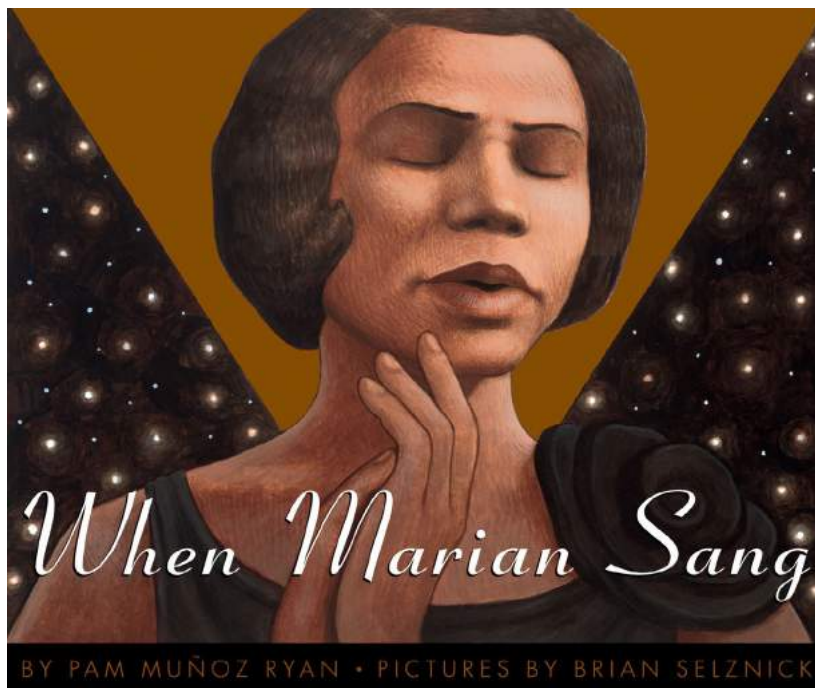
Just as Ryan's sensory descriptions frequently contain similes, figurative language is embedded into the novel as a whole. For instance, *Esperanza Rising* opens with a metaphor declaring the land to be alive with its own heartbeat (1). This concept comes from her papa, who loved the land deeply and wanted Esperanza to do so as well. Her *abuelita* also uses figurative speech to help Esperanza understand the world. When *Abuelita* tells her, "*No hay rosa sin espinas*. There is no rose without thorns" (14), Esperanza understands the proverb means there is no life without difficulties. She also understands the symbolic meaning of *Abuelita's* references to the mountains and valleys we all must experience in life when she teaches her to crochet.

Symbolic objects, such as *Abuelita's* crocheted blanket, the rose bush, the river, the railroad, and the dolls also add literary richness to the novel. The blanket, into which strands of *Abuelita* or Esperanza's hair are woven, symbolizes that "love and good wishes will be in the blanket forever" (14). The rose bush symbolizes memories, particularly of Papa who loved and cultivated this particular flower. The river represents the social divide between the economic classes, the rich and the poor, in Mexico. As Esperanza tells Miguel, she, as the ranch owner's daughter is on one side of the deep river and he, as the housekeeper's son, is on the other side "and the river could never be crossed" (18). The railroad represents Miguel's dreams to use his mechanical skills to better his lot in life. Interestingly, Miguel himself personifies hope when he delivers *Abuelita* to Esperanza and enables her to finally embody her name. The dolls symbolize compassion, first displayed by Mama when she makes a yarn doll for the peasant child Esperanza rebuffed on the train; then shown by Esperanza herself when she gives her beloved doll, the last gift from her father, to Isabel to help assuage her disappointment at not being chosen May Day Queen.

**Symbolic objects, such as *Abuelita's* crocheted blanket, the rose bush, the river, the railroad, and the dolls also add literary richness to the novel.**

These symbols are threaded throughout the novel, but due to Ryan's tight structuring of the work, they reemerge in the final chapter. The final chapter also revisits the chapter titles, named for fruit and vegetables, as they describe the season of the year according to the produce being harvested. The beating heart of the earth metaphor also recurs in the final chapter, effectively framing Esperanza's journey and causing her spirit to rise and surreally soar over the land and the people she has grown to love. Such structural constructs add a level of aesthetic enjoyment as the novel's form and content coincide and reinforce each other.

Upon publication, *Esperanza Rising* was readily embraced by the world of children’s literature. It garnered the Pura Belpré Metal, the top literary prize for writers of Latin heritage whose work best portrays, affirms, and celebrates the Latino cultural experience in an outstanding work of literature for children and youth. In addition, it received the Jane Addams Award, which is given for a book that effectively promotes the cause of peace, social justice, world community, and the equality of the sexes. It was also awarded the WILLA Literary Award, which honors outstanding literature featuring women’s stories set in the Western United States. But perhaps most significantly, for the past fifteen years, it has been incorporated into school curricula across the country. An engaging, deeply satisfying story, beautifully written and rich in thematic substance, *Esperanza Rising* is widely accepted as a critical addition to the canon of multicultural literature for children and young people. With this book alone, Ryan has made a lasting major contribution to the world of children’s literature.



### ***When Marian Sang***

Marian Anderson’s family and church recognized early on that she was born with a rare musical gift: “her voice was distinct – strong and velvety and able to climb more than twenty-four notes.” With loving support from her community, she circumvents barriers placed in her path to musical success by entities and institutions in racially segregated America. The fulfillment of her musical dreams and her public triumphs manifest themselves with her stunning singing tour of Europe, her history-making performance

on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial, and her ground-breaking debut at the Metropolitan Opera.

Pam Muñoz Ryan writes of the life of Marian Anderson with dignity, respect, and grace. She describes the racial prejudice that Marian Anderson encountered as a Negro in pre-Civil Rights America in a way that children can understand. She accomplishes this challenging task by focusing on what Marian Anderson saw, thought, and felt and the ways these experiences shaped her quest for musical training and success. When she is denied the opportunity to apply to music school, she “could not understand how anyone who was surrounded by the spirit and beauty of music could be so narrow-minded.” However, her reaction is not only intellectual; it is also deeply emotional: “She felt sick in her stomach and in her heart. Didn’t they know that her skin was different, but her feelings were the same? Couldn’t she be a professional singer if she was a

Negro?” Later, as a professional singer for enthusiastic audiences, she is forced to ride in Negro only train cars or denied hotel accommodation because of her race. But despite humiliations such as these, Ryan tells us, “Marian sang her heart with dignity.” By singing her heart, Marian Anderson brings audiences into her world and enables them to experience her feelings. “Audiences heard not only words, but feelings too: spirited worship, tender affection, and nothing short of joy.”

As she tells Marian’s story, Ryan explores the inter-relationship between Marian and her music. In an innovative structural stroke, she intersperses lines from hymns or gospel songs that Marian would have sung into the narrative of Marian’s life. For example, after the section describing the impact of Marian’s father’s death, lines from a gospel song float into the text asking, “Were you there when they laid him in the tomb?” The line “sometimes I feel like a motherless child a long ways from home” follows Marian being described as homesick upon leaving her mother to travel abroad to enhance her singing career. These musical lines not only show how music is closely connected to Marian’s life, but juxtaposing them with her life experiences shows how events she has lived through breathe emotional life into the words she sings. Ryan generously offers these musical incorporations for the reader to ponder and wisely and does not try to explain the complex relationships between life, art, and interpretation. It is all part of “finding the music within” and Ryan respectfully encourages her readers to find their own connections.

In addition to infusing musical verse into the narrative, Ryan incorporates lyrical similes and metaphors to tell Marian’s story in a poetic manner. She describes Marian’s extraordinary vocal range by saying, “With one breath she sounded like rain, sprinkling high notes in the morning sun. And with the next she was thunder, resounding deep in the dark sky.” The beauty of her contralto voice resonates as part of a duet: “As Viola sang the highest part and Marian sang the low, their harmony blended like a silk braid.” Ryan also uses figurative language to accentuate a displeasing voice—that of the girl at the counter of the music school who tells Marian, “‘We don’t take colored!’ Her voice sounded like a steel door clanking shut.” Readers feel the force of these unkind words, just as we experience the rich beauty of Marian’s voice, and our literary experience is deepened by the pitch-perfect elegance of Ryan’s writing.

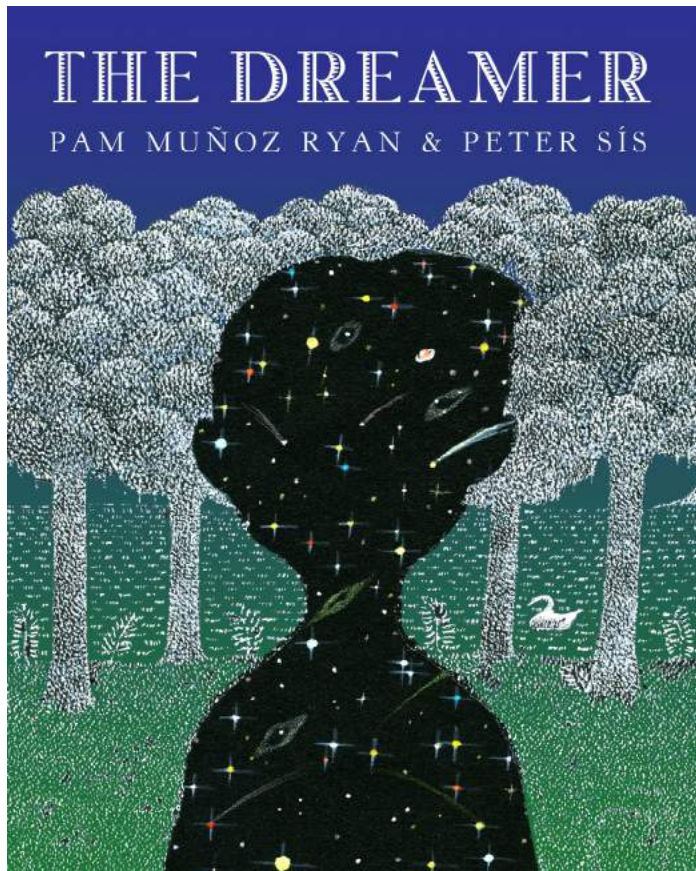
Ryan’s depiction of Marian shows sincere admiration and deep empathy for this historical figure who achieved, gave, and overcame so much. The gracefulness with which she tells Marian’s

**Empathy encourages empathy, and Ryan provides children much food for thought.**

story and the honest portrayals of her thoughts and feelings help children understand what it is like to be discriminated against because of one’s skin color and to see how one individual coped with and overcame racial prejudices. Empathy encourages empathy, and Ryan provides children much food for thought.

*When Marian Sang* was recognized with two major awards for nonfiction, the American Library Association’s Robert F. Sibert Award and the National Council of Teachers of English *Orbis Pictus* Award for Outstanding Nonfiction. It is noteworthy that Ryan was, generally speaking, not criticized for writing outside her ethnic group. In the United States, there is a raging discussion about who can tell whose stories. Pam Muñoz Ryan is not an African American, but she has the

social sensibilities and literary skill to tell the story of an African American icon in a way that fosters admiration, respect, and empathy. Like *Esperanza Rising*, *When Marian Sang* is a significant contribution to the world of literature for children and young people that will remain in libraries and school curricula for years to come.



### *The Dreamer*

This fictionalized biography begins when the poet, born Neftalí Reyes, was eight-years-old and ends when he is a young man about to enter university who changes his name to Pablo Neruda. A painfully shy, physically fragile child with a vivid imagination, Neftalí loves words, reading, and collecting natural objects. Disgusted by his introspective nature, his harsh, authoritarian father considers Neftalí a distractible dreamer and tries to force him to change. Neftalí is unable to bend to his father's will, but fortunately he has a supportive role model in his uncle Orlando along with love and understanding from his older brother, younger sister, and stepmother. Neftalí's decision to change his name enables him to work within the constraints his father places on his education without humiliating his family by his poetry or politics.

Curiosity, imagination, and determination, three prominent components of Neftalí's psychological makeup, provide thematic substance in *The Dreamer* as Ryan masterfully enables us to see the world from his point of view. As a child, he is curious to know all about the world around him and obsessed with collecting objects that signify its wonder. His room is filled with the treasures he discovers in the natural world—rocks, sticks, nests, shells, feathers, pinecones—as well as the word collection that fills his bureau drawer. His head is filled with questions: “Where are [his wind-born] mittens headed? Whose hands would they cover next? Would he ever have a friend? Or amount to anything?” (38). “Every curious detail of his life taunted him” (15); as he tells Rodolfo, “I want to see... everything” (45). And he hopes to share his found wonders with others, even ask his disapproving father for explanations about the insects he discovers. Young readers could easily find his eager curiosity infectious.

Neftalí's curiosity exists hand in mitten with his imagination. As he listens to the strumming rain with closed eyes and wonders about the sea that lies beyond the river:

The window opened. A carpet of rain swept in and carried Neftalí to the distant ocean he had only seen in books. There, he was the captain of a ship, its prow slicing through the blue. Salt water sprayed his cheeks. His clothes fluttered against his body. He gripped the mast, looking back on his country, Chile. (8)

Vivid daydreams, a common occurrence for Neftalí, afford Ryan the literary opportunity to infuse magical realism into her narrative of Neftalí's life as she imagines it. In addition, her descriptions of his daydreams enable readers to visualize the images in Neftalí's mind, thus exercising their own imaginative powers. Similarly, Ryan imagines that Neftalí hears the voice of poetry:

I am poetry  
waiting to seize the poet.  
I ask the questions  
for which all answers  
exist.

She then poses lyrical questions, inspired by Pablo Neruda's *The Book of Questions*, throughout the narrative that spark readers' imaginative responses. Thus, imagination inspires imagination on a multitude of levels.

**Thus, imagination inspires imagination on a multitude of levels.**

But according to Neftalí's father, his mother wasted away due to her daydreaming and "scribbling on bits of paper, her mind always in another world" (10). His stepmother lovingly tries to reassure him that his "mother did not die from her imagination" (12), but he is worried that perhaps she did and that he too will wither away in a daydream. Nevertheless, Neftalí cannot stop his daydreams. He loves words and is determined to write them, no matter how determined his father may be to stop him. He will not let his father deter his dream as he did his music-loving brother Rodolpho's. Others can foster his love of words and books. Augusto, the librarian who asks, "Do you love the symphony of language?" (183) supplies him with books and *un escondite*, a hideout for his secret reading adventures. Others can reinforce his determination to write. Hearing Uncle Orlando's refusal to let his adversaries silence his pen (308) and his resolve to continue to fight for those who cannot speak for themselves makes Neftalí more determined than ever to find a way to write his conscience, to tell the stories inspired by the objects he collects, to channel his daydreams. Determination incites determination. Neftalí becomes Pablo Neruda, poet of the common people.

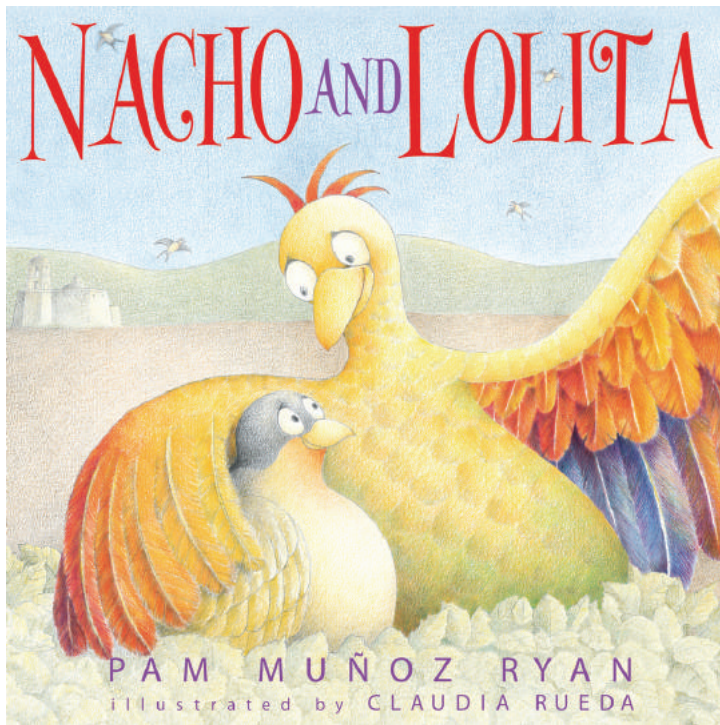
As with *Esperanza Rising* and *When Marian Sang*, *The Dreamer* is a seamless mesh of content and form. Ryan's lyrical prose and figurative language are perfectly suited to the subject matter, but now she incorporates original poetry into the mix. The one-word chapter titles she uses harken to Neftalí's love of words and encapsulate the essence of the chapter. Framing major events in Neftalí's life with the mysterious voice of poetry and provocative abstract questions is stylistically innovative. Pam

**As with *Esperanza Rising* and *When Marian Sang*, *The Dreamer* is a seamless mesh of content and form.**

Muñoz Ryan has become a poet writing about a poet. She not only tells us that the rhythms of the rain Neftalí heard so frequently beating on the tin room of his Chilean home combined with his love for words and their cadences to create his poetry, she *shows* us how the rhythms of the rain *look* in poetic form:

tin,  
tin,  
tin,  
tin,  
tin.

*The Dreamer* was awarded the Pura Belpré Medal for narrative, the Américas Award, and a Boston Globe-Horn Book Honor. International recognition includes Deutscher Jugendliteraturpreis (German Children’s Prize), the Italian Scelte di Classe Prize, Premio Letteratura Ragazzi, International Latino Book Awards, and was designated as a White Raven Outstanding International Book. *The Dreamer* is widely considered one of Ryan’s major literary achievements.



### ***Nacho and Lolita***

Nacho is a large, majestic bird with brilliant feathers that “carried the colors of the world.” Every morning and evening he heralds the beginning and end of the day with glorious song. A rare bird far from home who, sadly, travels alone, he is a *pitacocha*. Small and unremarkably colored, Lolita is a swallow who flies with a flock every year from the south Americas to California. The two seem destined to meet at the Mission San Juan Capistrano where the swallows build their nests with mud from the nearby river. Longing to belong, Nacho helps the swallows, especially Lolita.

Although they are birds of a different feather, the two fall in love. But their

different flying abilities and migrating habits spell heartache. Lolita and her fellow long-distance travelers try to devise ways Nacho can accompany them on their journey south, but to no avail. Desperate to ensure the flock’s return despite the drying up river, Nacho scatters his brilliant feathers along the river, and they miraculously become water, flowers, plants, and trees that pave a colorful path for the swallows to follow back to the mission. For each colored feather he

removes a new gray one grows in its place. His elegant plumage is gone, but the mission is now surrounded by radiant splendor. Lolita assures Nacho she will always see him as splendid.

This is a story about love, friendship, pride, sacrifice, community, and social inclusion. It is about problem solving, resourcefulness, caring for one another, giving to others, and making the world a better place. But most of all it is a charming story that children can enjoy listening to just for the sake of a good story. It is also the kind of story that may quietly resonate for years, perhaps subconsciously, whispering wisdom. It is the author's gift to children.

**Ryan wraps this re-imagined folktale in the elegant language that characterizes her writing and enhances a child's aesthetic experience.**

Ryan wraps this re-imagined folktale in the elegant language that characterizes her writing and enhances a child's aesthetic experience. She does not talk down to her audience, but offers them

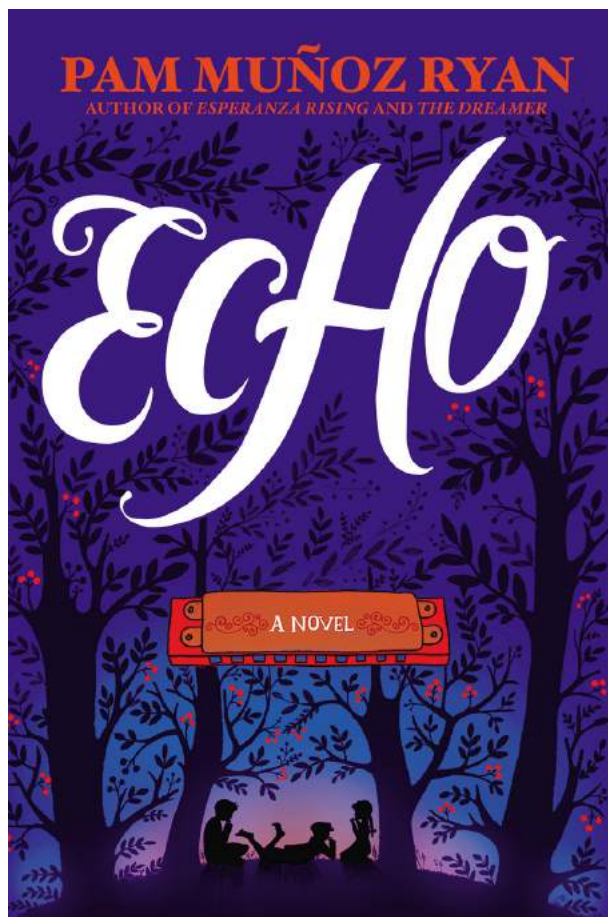
precisely chosen words that sweep them up and transport them into the world of migrating birds, mission festivals, and mysterious transformations. Nacho is "magnificent," "splendid," "rare and majestic" with "noble" "glorious features" and "regal stature." He preens, heralds, and trumpets and serenades. He panics, pleads, struggles, and aches with sadness. The swallows are fantastic; they swoop, fledge, forage, and migrate.

Ryan paints vivid visual images with her words:

[Nacho] flew to the fields, plucked his orange and yellow feathers, and as fast as he planted them, the acres bloomed with poppies and mustard. He left a trail of blue feathers in the riverbed and it overflowed, filling the small creeks and marshes. He pushed green feathers into the soil until palms danced in the breeze and orange trees flourished. He tucked feathers over arches and balconies, and draperies of bougainvillea appeared.

She also evokes visual images with pleasing personifications such as "When spring poked its head into February" and "at the moment the sun closed its eye." The magnificent glory of her words adds splendor to the life of these who read or hear them.

An exquisitely rendered picture book with universal appeal, *Nacho and Lolita* demonstrates the range of Ryan's talent and skill. She is appreciated and well received by audiences of all ages.



## *Echo*

The journey of an enchanted harmonica begins in the forest when three sisters breathe magic into it with their musical breath, hoping to break the witch's spell that binds them to the tree circle. If a messenger carries their spirits away from the forest in a woodwind instrument, like a mouth harp, and if, when the time is right, the messenger passes the instrument on to someone who enables them to save a soul on the brink of death, the sisters can finally free themselves from the witch's spell. The sister's strength, vision, and knowledge will be passed to the next musician who plays this harmonica. It will carry their "deepest hopes—to be free, to be loved, and to belong somewhere beyond a tree circle" (30).

When Otto, the harmonica's first messenger, plays the instrument, he not only sees to find his way home after being lost in the forest, but he becomes joined in spirit "by the silken thread of destiny" with the sisters, all who have played the mouth harp, and all who will play it in the future (24). Playing the har-

monica evokes a euphoric sense of well-being—of happiness and comfort. Otto never forgets he promised the three sisters, Eins, Zwei, and Drei, to pass on the harmonica and thereby enable them to continue their story, the one he read to them from the mysterious, unfinished book he believes he got from a Gypsy.

Years later in Trossingen, Germany, Friedrich Schmidt discovers the harmonica in an abandoned part of the harmonica factory where he works. Finding the harmonica is not an accident; he hears a mysterious harmonica melody when he was pretending to conduct an orchestra in the woods and is immediately enamored by its haunting, resonate, tri-leveled tone. The music draws him to the instrument. When he first plays the harmonica, Friedrich senses the air "pulse with energy" (76) and he feels "protected by the cloak of the music, as if nothing could stand in his way" (76-77).

A musical prodigy with a disfiguring birthmark, Friedrich's twelve years have been mixed with love and cruelty: love from his supportive father, uncle, sister, and men at the factory; cruelty from the other children, the townspeople, and the Hitlerites. His father is determined to protect him from Hitler's new law that would require him to "volunteer" to be sterilized because he has a genetic defect. Things go from bad to worse when his father is arrested and imprisoned for being a "Jew-lover."



**But the power of the harmonica has enabled Friedrich to overcome his severe self-consciousness about his birthmark and anxiety about other people.**

But the power of the harmonica has enabled Friedrich to overcome his severe self-consciousness about his birthmark and anxiety about other people. He is now able to act with conviction and devise a plan to free his father from prison. He is boldly carrying out this plan when he is

recognized as the “ugly son of a Jew-lover” (188). As the storm troopers accost him, confiscate his belongings, and march him away, he envisions snowy ballerinas and tiny stars dancing to the hypnotic music only he can hear. Fortunately, he has already arranged for the harmonica to be included with a shipment of other harmonicas to be sent to America.

Several years later, the harmonica is in the possession of Mike, another musical prodigy, in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. When he picks up the harmonica box in the music shop, Mike imagines he hears a “chord, erupt, like a high-pitched chime” (288). The owner of the music shop comments that the instrument chooses the musician, not the other way around. When Mike plays this harmonica, he feels a sensation of lightness and the world seems brighter with more possibilities. He even feels as if he was “riding on the shoulders of some unknown power” that makes both his piano and harmonica music “shine from the inside out” (298), creating a feeling of happiness.

**When Mike plays this harmonica, he feels a sensation of lightness and the world seems brighter with more possibilities.**

Ever since his grandmother died and he and Frankie were sent to a dreary orphanage, Mike has been weighed down with worry that the two of them will be split up. He has a hard time hoping for the best. However, the buoyancy he gains from the harmonica enables him to make his case to wealthy young widow Eunice Sturbridge. If she could adopt Frankie, even though they would be separated, Frankie would have better life. When it looks like this will not happen, Mike plans for the two of them to run away to New York City. As they try to sneak out of the house, Mike falls while climbing down from a tree. He see stars and hears ethereal music.

Seven years later, the harmonica is in Southern California, in the hands of Ivy Maria Lopez, the most talented player in her elementary school harmonica band. When she plays, she feels as though she is inside the music, the notes transporting her to faraway places. Playing the harmonica also fills her with a heretofore unknown sense of bravado, worthiness (396), and even a bit of courage and determination (449) and contentment and hope.

When her brother joins the army and her family moves to a new town, Ivy’s family is a slightly broken. Her brother has charged her with keeping the family going, fixing it. In her new community, she confronts racial segregation that makes her feel broken herself when as a Mexican American she is not allowed to attend the main elementary school; she must go to a separate, annexed school instead. However, her soulful playing of the harmonica wins her the respect of the other students and ushers her into the playing of the flute in the main school orchestra.

**Her soulful playing of the harmonica wins her the respect of the other students.**

Ivy also learns that the Yamamoto family, the owners of the farm and house where her own family lives, have been sent to a Japanese internment camp, and that they are suspected of being spies. Having gained a stronger sense of herself, Ivy helps her family save the Yamamoto's home and farm, thereby linking, and fixing, the two families' fates. Feeling a deep affinity for the Yamamoto's son Kenny, who cannot take his violin to the war with him, Ivy gives him her beloved harmonica. He promises to return it one day, and she promises him a flute concert someday.

One path leads to another and nine years later, Kenny comes to hear Ivy play in the orchestra at Carnegie Hall in New York City. He is able to do so because the harmonica Ivy gave him saved his life by stopping a bullet headed for his heart. This evening the concert will be conducted by Friedrich Schmidt; pianist Michael Flannery will be the featured soloist. The enchanted harmonica has profoundly touched the life of each of the three performers. Just as the three women singing to Kenny in the army hospital in Germany encouraged him to live, the spirits they breathed into the harmonica long ago imbued determination and optimism into the lives of Friedrich, Mike, and Ivy and drew them deeply into their music. Otto was the first messenger and others were all selected to play their parts. Connected by a silken thread of destiny, their paths harmoniously converge in this celebrated concert hall for a truly enchanted evening.

**Connected by a silken thread of destiny, their paths harmoniously converge in this celebrated concert hall for a truly enchanted evening.**

This original fairy tale, replete with a witch's spell, enchantment, prophecy and resolution, forms the core of *Echo*. But the novel is more than an elaborate fairy tale. It is also a work of historical fiction set during World War II in Germany and the United States. By reading it, children and young people can gain insight into life in Nazi Germany and understand the types of difficult, life-altering decisions people were forced to make. They can also gain a sense of how fearful Americans were to mistreat Japanese-American citizens and how the war affects the families of soldiers. In addition, they can also come to know empathic characters whose own grief sensitizes them to the pain of others, characters who express their feelings through music, and characters who make courageous sacrifices in the name of love. The novel is thematically rich, exploring the healing power of music, the universal language of music, the importance of memories, the need to belong, and the devastating effects of separation.

All this makes for a richly drawn, cross-genre novel, but it is the way Ryan has structured the novel that makes it particularly noteworthy. It is essentially the story of five unfinished stories—

**The novel is thematically rich, exploring the healing power of music, the universal language of music, the importance of memories, the need to belong, and the devastating effects of separation.**

the sisters, Otto, Friedrich, Mike, Ivy—that eventually combine, first as “The Thirteenth Harmonica of Otto Messenger” and finally as the novel *Echo*. Ryan handles this convergence masterfully. Each initially compelling cliffhanger ultimately has a satisfying ending—both in and of itself and as it contributes to the novel as a whole. While she is orchestrating all this, Ryan infuses music into every aspect of each story. Musical

talent is paramount to the plot of each story. Each of the four sections is introduced with the harmonica music and lyrics to a song that will be important to the story's plot, character, and thematic development. The type of music within each story is wide-ranging (classical, blues, folk, musical show tunes) and perfectly suited for the time period and the characters' personalities and circumstances. Quite fittingly, the novel's grand finale is a concert in which a wide variety of music is played, and the pieces performed echo the themes developed in the various stories.

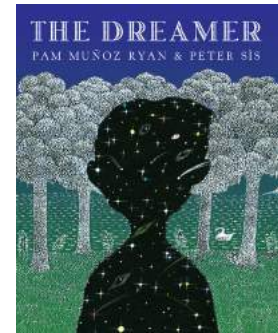
Ryan is well-known for her innovative structuring of her books, but she has outdone herself on this one, making it a remarkable contribution to the body of literature for children and young people. It received two major awards in the United States: the Américas Award and a coveted Newbery honor, given by the American Library Association's Services to Children. Although this novel is her most ambitious and highly acclaimed work to date, it will not be her grand finale as she continues to write and create for children all over the world.

These five books represent the range of literature Ryan has written and demonstrate her ability to tackle a variety of genres, formats, and topics with graceful writing within innovative literary structures. By writing engaging books of the highest literary quality such as these, she has significantly contributed to the world of literature for children and young people around the globe.

## Published Reviews

**Ryan, Pam Muñoz. *The Dreamer*. Illus. by Peter Sís. New York: Scholastic, 2010.**

**Horn Book Magazine** (March/April 2010)



*\*Starred Review\** As Neftalí Reyes enters university, his wrathful father forbids wasting time on his useless “hobby”: writing. So he fashions a pseudonym: “Pablo” from Paolo, in an Italian poem; “Neruda” after a Czech writer. The name fits like a suit: “The lapels were the width that he liked. The color was soft enough not to offend, but bright enough to be remembered. The name was not only a perfect solution, it was a perfect fit.” Perfect indeed, like the union that resulted in this novel: the subject, poet Pablo Neruda (1904-73), the Chilean Nobel Prize winner; Ryan, the author who re-creates Neruda’s spirit and sensibility; and Sís, the Czech-born illustrator whose escape from oppression (see *The Wall* rev.9/07) so hauntingly resembles Neruda’s struggle for creative freedom.

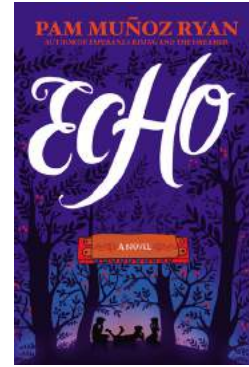
In Ryan’s perceptive reconstruction of the poet’s early years, Neftalí, at eight, is already loggerheads with an autocratic father who prohibits all creative activities, even reading. Fortunately the boy is unquenchable—a lover of words, books, and ideas; a collector of the small, lovely objects that will always figure in his imagination. The forest yields natural treasures—a pinecone he trades for a toy sheep, a lifelong talisman. At the beach (where Father forces him into the terrifying waves) are shells and a sympathetic librarian who offers him a hideaway for reading. There he feeds a pair of swans who are later shot by a hunter—a tragedy that symbolizes his own frustrations and sorrows while also bonding him more closely with his loving stepmother and sister. The passing years nourish mind and heart with telling incidents: a girl Neftalí admires recognizes his hand in the love letters a bully forces him to write; with a beloved uncle, he defends indigenous Chileans. Poetic interludes, inspired by Neruda’s *Book of Questions*, heighten each event’s significance: at the swans’ death (“Which is sharper? The hatchet that cuts down dreams? / Or the scythe that clears a path for another?”); after Father burns Neftalí’s papers (“Where is the heaven of lost stories?”); on becoming Pablo Neruda (“Does a metamorphosis / begin from the outside in? / Or from the inside out?”).

Sís’s introspective, emotion-charged drawings spring naturally from this lyrical account of a difficult childhood. Many of his quiet compositions are surreal visions: tiny, frightened children peer up from the ocean waves that dapple their implacable father’s outlined form; a child, vulnerably naked, rides a winged pen that resembles a swan in flight. Such imagery adds a dimension of magical realism to a text in which Neftalí’s imaginative inner world is so often confronted with a harsher external reality, even while it is nurtured by kindness and natural beauty. Con-

flicts, injustice, and a promised future make the story compelling; Sís deepens it with dozens of provocative images. Neatly crafted vignettes presage each chapter's events; visual imagery extends Ryan's poems on open spreads of sea and sky; paths beckon and exquisite details reflect the dreamer's maturing imagination, clothing this masterful tribute in art that fits it as ineluctably as Neruda's new name suited his purpose. An author's note and several of Neruda's poems are appended. JOANNA RUDGE LONG

**Kirkus Reviews** (March 15, 2010)

Ryan's fictional evocation of the boy who would become Pablo Neruda is rich, resonant and enchanting. Simple adventures reveal young Neftalí's painful shyness and spirited determination, his stepmother's love and his siblings' affection and his longing for connection with his formidable, disapproving father. The narrative captures as well rain falling in Temuco, the Chilean town where he was raised, and his first encounters with the forest and the ocean. Childhood moments, gracefully re-created, offer a glimpse of a poet-to-be who treasures stories hidden in objects and who recognizes the delicate mutability of the visible world, while the roots of Neruda's political beliefs are implied in the boy's encounters with struggles for social justice around him. Lines from a poem by Ryan along with Sís's art emphasize scenes and introduce chapters, perfectly conveying the young hero's dreamy questioning. The illustrator's trademark drawings deliver a feeling of boundless thought and imagination, suggesting, with whimsy and warmth, Neftalí's continual transformation of the everyday world into something transcendent. A brief selection of Neruda's poems (in translation), a bibliography and an author's note enrich an inviting and already splendid, beautifully presented work.



**Ryan, Pam Muñoz. *Echo*. New York: Scholastic, 2016.**

**Horn Book Magazine** (March/April 2015)

Lost in the forest, a boy is mesmerized by a story about three princesses trapped under a witch's spell until they save a life through a special harmonica. This story within a story is prelude to a set of three more: young Friedrich, working in a harmonica factory in 1933 Germany, watches as his sister joins the Hitler Youth and his father endangers the family by speaking out against the Nazis, sending Friedrich on a desperate plan of rescue. Two orphaned brothers with musical talent in 1935 Pennsylvania struggle to stay together, resting their hopes on a rich widow and a traveling harmonica band. In 1942 California, Ivy Lopez's family takes over the farm of an interned Japanese family, where Ivy finds herself for the first time in a segregated school. She strives to bring three families together—white, Latino, and Japanese American—who all have sons in the armed forces. Ryan fluidly builds setting, character, and drama for each story and then leaves each on a knife's edge; the expected yet compelling epilogue winds all stories together, on one splendid postwar night at Carnegie Hall. The harmonica and the love of music serve as the unifying threads for these tales of young people who save the lives and spirits of their families and neighbors, each in a time marked by bigotry and violence. It's an ambitious device, but Ryan's storytelling prowess and vivid voice lead readers expertly through a hefty tome illuminated by layers of history, adventure, and the seemingly magical but ultimately very human spirit of music. NINA LINDSAY

**Publishers Weekly** (February 2015)

The fairy tale that opens this elegant trio of interconnected stories from Ryan (*The Dreamer*) sets the tone for the rest of the book, in which a mystical harmonica brings together three children growing up before and during WWII. Friedrich, an aspiring conductor whose birthmark makes him an undesirable in Nazi Germany, must try to rescue his father after his Jewish sympathies land him in a prison camp. In Pennsylvania, piano prodigy Mike and his brother, Frankie, get a chance to escape the orphanage for good, but only if they can connect with the eccentric woman who has adopted them. In California, Ivy Maria struggles with her school's segregation as well as the accusations leveled against Japanese landowners who might finally offer her family a home of their own. Each individual story is engaging, but together they harmonize to create a thrilling whole. The book's thematic underpinnings poignantly reveal what Friedrich, Mike, and Ivy truly have in common: not just a love of music, but resourcefulness in the face of change, and a refusal to accept injustice. Ages 10-14.

**Ryan, Pam Muñoz. *Esperanza Rising*.  
New York: Scholastic, 2000.**



**Horn Book Magazine** (January/February 2001)

At times *Esperanza Rising*, although it takes place in Depression-era Mexico and the United States instead of Victorian England, seems a dead ringer for Frances Hodgson Burnett's *A Little Princess*. Both are dramatic riches-to-rags stories about girls forced to trade fancy dolls and dresses for hard work and ill-fitting hand-me-downs after their beloved fathers die. Thirteen-year-old Esperanza even possesses a touch of Sara Crewe's romantic spirit. The daughter of an affluent Mexican rancher, she had been taught by her father to believe that the "land is alive," that she could lie down beneath the arbors in her family's vineyards, press her ear to the ground, and hear a heart beat. Yet can this still hold true for Esperanza when she no longer reigns as queen of the harvest but labors in the fields of a foreign country, picking grapes on someone else's land for pennies an hour? The transition does not come easily for her, and thus her story ultimately diverges from *The Little Princess*'s fairytale script to become a poignant look at the realities of immigration. Political as well as personal history inform the sometimes florid narrative (loosely based, we are told in an afterword, on the experiences of the author's grandmother). Esperanza's struggles begin amidst class unrest in post-revolutionary Mexico and intersect with labor strikes in the United States, which serve to illustrate the time period's prevailing hostility toward people of Mexican descent. In one of the more glaring injustices she witnesses, striking workers, who were born American citizens and have never set foot on Mexican soil, are loaded onto buses for deportation. Through it all, Esperanza is transformed from a sheltered aristocrat into someone who can take care of herself and others. Although her material wealth is not restored in the end, the way it is for Sara Crewe, she is rich in family, friends, and *esperanza* — the Spanish word for hope. CHRISTINE M. HEPPELMANN

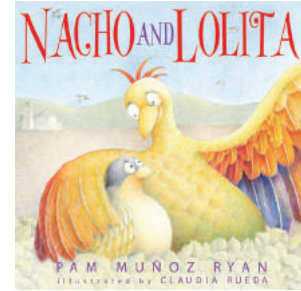
**Publishers Weekly** (October 2000)

Told in a lyrical, fairy tale-like style, Ryan's (*Riding Freedom*) robust novel set in 1930 captures a Mexican girl's fall from riches, her immigration to California and her growing awareness of class and ethnic tensions. Thirteen-year-old Esperanza Ortega and her family are part of Mexico's wealthy, land-owning class in Aguascalientes, Mexico. Her father is a generous and well-loved man who gives his servants land and housing. Early in the novel, bandits kill Esperanza's father, and her corrupt uncles threaten to usurp their home. Their servants help her and her mother flee to the United States, but they must leave Esperanza's beloved Abuelita (grandmother) behind until they can send for her. Ryan poetically conveys Esperanza's ties to the land by crafting her story to the rhythms of the seasons. Each chapter's title takes its name from the fruits Esperanza and her countrymen harvest, first in Aguascalientes, then in California's San Joa-

quin Valley. Ryan fluidly juxtaposes world events (Mexico's post-revolution tensions, the arrival of Oklahoma's Dust Bowl victims and the struggles between the U.S. government and Mexican workers trying to organize) with one family's will to survive - while introducing readers to Spanish words and Mexican customs. Readers will be swept up by vivid descriptions of California dust storms or by the police crackdown on a labor strike ("The picket signs lay on the ground, discarded, and like a mass of marbles that had already been hit, the strikers scattered?"). Ryan delivers subtle metaphors via Abuelita's pearl's of wisdom, and not until story's end will readers recognize how carefully they have been strung. Ages 9-14.



**Ryan, Pam Muñoz. *Nacho and Lolita*.  
Illus. by Claudia Rueda. New York: Scholastic, 2005.**



**Publishers Weekly** (August 22, 2005)

A sense of enchantment pervades this tender love story, which begins when a mysterious bird called a *pitacoche*, arrives in the San Juan valley. Rueda (*Going to Grandma's Farm*) depicts the gray-brown adobe town as dull in hue but elegant in its simplicity, a striking contrast to Nacho, who “carried the colors of the world in his feathers.” The bird’s magnificent appearance and “haunting” evening song, cause the villagers to speculate that the winged visitor is “a spirit from the past” or “a prophet of the future.” But Nacho, although proud of his gifts, has a lonely heart: he is “the only *pitacoche* for thousands of miles and hundreds of years.” When *las golondrinas* (the swallows) arrive on St. Joseph’s feast day, Nacho forms a strong attachment to one of them, Lolita, offering her one of his wondrous feathers (a gray feather grows back in its place) and when the swallow accepts it, “by the mystery of the ages, it became a blue hibiscus.” Throughout the ensuing months, Nacho helps all the swallows build nests and gather food, and when it comes time to migrate, Nacho tries to fly south too, without success. “That night... Nacho’s song ached with sadness. ‘Low-leeeee-tah, I loooove you.’” Nacho then makes a great sacrifice in hopes of luring the swallows (“especially Lolita”) back in the spring. Rueda’s wordless spreads pay tribute to the enormity of Nacho’s offering, which transforms the valley. Ages 4-8.

**Kirkus Reviews** (August 22, 2005)

Ryan weaves a story remembered from childhood, some folktale research and a vibrant dose of imagination into a lovely tale of magic and longing. In the valley of San Juan in California, Nacho, a *pitacoche* bird with all “the colors of the world in his feathers,” sings at sunset in the churchyard, which is dry and grey. However, he enjoys the company of the people awaiting the return of the swallows on St. Joseph’s day. When he offers a little swallow named Lolita one of his blue feathers, it becomes a hibiscus, and Nacho doesn’t even mind that a grey feather grows back in its place. But autumn comes, Lolita must fly south and Nacho is too big a bird for that much flying. Before the next St. Joseph’s feast, Nacho scatters his feathers everywhere and they turn to flowers, trees and blue rivers. The land becomes lush and Nacho learns that Lolita finds him splendid even without his colors. Rueda’s colored-pencil images are exquisitely textured, from the rough bark of a tree to the brilliance of Nacho’s feathers, as soft and richly hued as silk. A cheerful and tender paean to the transformative power of love. (author’s note) (Picture book, 4-8)

**Ryan, Pam Muñoz. *When Marian Sang*.  
Illus. by Brian Selznick. New York: Scholastic, 2002.**



**Kirkus Reviews** (September 1, 2002)

Ryan and Selznick reunite for another magical collaboration, this time presenting Marian Anderson to a young audience. Using the visual metaphor of an operatic presentation, the production opens on the Metropolitan Opera stage just before performance, followed by a spread in which the audience watches as the curtain rises and a street scene reveals a tiny figure singing in a brightly-lit window. The shape of the volume lends itself to the broad sweep of the stage and even the title page reads like the show's program. Anderson's story is perhaps not well known to younger children, but Ryan does a good job of making it accessible. In simply stated prose she acquaints young readers, who may be disbelieving, with a time of social injustice when a person of color could not pursue a professional career in concert music and it was an act of personal courage to sing before racially mixed audiences. Verses of Anderson's most famous songs are included as they have meaningful application for events. The account includes the most notable episode in her life when, denied access to Washington's Constitution Hall because of her race, Marian sang on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial before a crowd of thousands—black and white. Selznick's carefully researched, sepia-toned, acrylic illustrations dramatize Anderson's strong, handsome face on most pages. That face is faithfully and powerfully rendered, eyes closed when singing, with an intense, almost sublime engagement in her music. The work culminates with another history-making moment when she realizes her dream and becomes the first African-American to perform at the Metropolitan Opera. Selznick depicts her in this spread standing triumphantly in the spotlight, a vivid spot of color in an otherwise monochromatic treatment. A lengthy "encore" includes personal details and history from both author and illustrator; an "ovation" cites resources. Perfectly paced and perfectly pitched, this never loses sight of the fact that Marian Anderson was both a world-class musician and a powerful symbol to her people. A bravura performance.

**Publishers Weekly** (October 7, 2002)

The creative team behind *Amelia and Eleanor Go for a Ride* returns with a picture book biography as understated and graceful as its subject, singer Marian Anderson (1897-1993). Tracing the African-American diva from her beginnings as an eight-year-old church choir wonder ("the pride of South Philadelphia") through years of struggle to rise above the racism that would delay her debut with the Metropolitan Opera until she was 57, this book masterfully distills the events in the life of an extraordinary musician. Ryan's narrative smoothly integrates biographical details with lyrics from the gospel songs Anderson made famous: a passage about the budding singer's longing to perform onstage ("Opera was simply the sun and the moon—a dream that seemed too far away to reach") segues to "He's got the sun and the moon right in His hands"; "Sometimes I feel like a motherless child..." follows a 2/3 spread of the singer on the bow of a ship bound

for Europe, the sun creating a halo effect. Working with a sepia-toned palette, Selznick's paintings shimmer with emotion, his range of shading as versatile as Anderson's three-octave voice. Whether depicting her as barely visible beyond the crowds at her famous 1939 concert on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial or in a final scene of her stepping into the spotlight at the Met, the images are striking and memorable (particularly the soulful face of Marian herself as she matures from child to woman). The author's and artist's notes, timeline and discography round out this stellar effort. Ages 8-10.

## Awards & Accolades

### Lifetime Achievement Awards

**Human and Civil Rights Award** (National Education Association)  
2013

**Virginia Hamilton Literary Award for Multicultural Literature** (Kent State University)  
2010

### International Recognition

**Sakura Medal Award, Japan**  
2017, Nominee *Echo*

**Deutscher Jugendliteraturpreis, Germany**  
*The Dreamer*

**Premio Letteratura Ragazzi, Italy**  
*The Dreamer*

**Scelte di Classe Prize, Italy**  
*The Dreamer*

**White Ravens Outstanding International Book Award** (International Youth Library)  
*The Dreamer*

### National Recognition

**Américas Award** (Consortium of Latin American Studies Programs)  
2000, Honorable Mention *Esperanza Rising*  
2005, Commended Title *Becoming Naomi León*  
2011, Winner *The Dreamer*  
2016, Winner *Echo*

**Boston Globe-Horn Book Award for Excellence in Children's Literature** (*The Boston Globe*  
& *The Horn Book Magazine*)  
2010, Honor *The Dreamer*

**Flora Stieglitz Straus Award** (Bank Street College of Education)  
2003, *When Marian Sang*

**Jane Addams Children's Book Award** (Jane Addams Peace Association)

2001, Winner *Esperanza Rising*

**John Newbery Medal** (Association for Library Service to Children, American Library Association)

2016, Honor *Echo*

**Kirkus Prize for Young Readers' Literature** (*Kirkus*)

2015, *Echo*

**NAIBA Carla Cohen Free Speech Award** (New Atlantic Independent Booksellers Association)

2010, *The Dreamer*

**Odyssey Award** (Association for Library Service to Children, American Library Association)

2016, Honor *Echo*

**Orbis Pictus Award for Outstanding Nonfiction for Children** (National Council of Teachers of English)

2003, Winner *When Marian Sang*

**PEN Center USA Literary Award for Children's and Young Adult Literature** (USA branch of Pen International)

2011, *The Dreamer*

**Pura Belpré** (Association for Library Service to Children, American Library Association)

2002, Winner *Esperanza Rising*

2006, Honor *Becoming Naomi León*

2011, Winner *The Dreamer*

**Robert F. Sibert Informational Book Medal** (Association for Library Service to Children, American Library Association)

2003, Honor *When Marian Sang*

**Schneider Family Book Award** (Association for Library Service to Children, American Library Association)

2005, Winner *Becoming Naomi León*

**Tomás Rivera Mexican American Children's Book Award** (Texas State University College of Education)

2005, Winner *Becoming Naomi León*

**WILLA Literary Award** (Women Writing the West)

1999, Winner *Riding Freedom*

2001, Winner *Esperanza Rising*

## **Best Books**

### **ALA Notable Children's Books** (American Library Association)

2000, *Amelia and Eleanor go for a Ride*  
2002, *Mice and Beans*  
2003, *When Marian Sang*  
2005, *Becoming Naomi León*  
2011, *The Dreamer*  
2016, *Echo*

### **Bank Street Best Children's Books of the Year** (Bank Street Center for Children's Literature, Children's Book Committee)

2004, *Becoming Naomi León*

### **Booklist Editors' Choice: Books for Youth** (*Booklist*, American Library Association)

2010, *The Dreamer*

### **CCBC Choices** (Cooperative Children's Book Center, University of Wisconsin-Madison School of Education)

2004, *Becoming Naomi León*

### **Children's Choices Reading List** (International Literacy Association)

1998, *A Pinky is a Baby Mouse*  
1999, *Riding Freedom*  
2011, *The Dreamer*  
2016, *Echo*

### **Horn Book Fanfare** (*The Horn Book Magazine*)

2010, *The Dreamer*

### **ILA Notable Books for a Global Society** (Children's Literature and Reading Special Interest Group, International Literacy Association)

2001, *Esperanza Rising*  
2005, *Becoming Naomi León*  
2011, *The Dreamer*  
2016, *Echo*

### **Kirkus Best Children's Books** (*Kirkus Reviews*)

2010, *The Dreamer*  
2015, *Echo*

### **Kirkus Prize** (*Kirkus Reviews*)

2015, *Echo*

**Los Angeles Times Book Prize Finalist** (*The Los Angeles Times*)

2001, *Esperanza Rising*

**NCSS/CBC Notable Social Studies Trade Books for Young People** (National Council for the Social Studies /Children's Book Council)

2000, *Amelia and Eleanor go for a Ride*

2001, *Esperanza Rising*

2003, *When Marian Sang*

2011, *The Dreamer*

2016, *Echo*

**New York Public Library's 100 Notable Titles for Reading and Sharing** (The New York Public Library)

2000, *Esperanza Rising*

2015, *Echo*

**New York Times Editors' Choice** (*The New York Times*)

2015, *Echo*

**Notable Children's Books in the English Language Arts** (Children's Literature Assembly, National Council of Teachers of English)

2005, *Becoming Naomi León*

2011, *The Dreamer*

2016, *Echo*

**NPR Great Reads** (National Public Radio)

2015, *Echo*

**Parents' Choice Award** (Parents' Choice Foundation)

2004, *Becoming Naomi León* (Silver Honor)

**Publishers Weekly Best Books** (*Publishers Weekly*)

2001, *Esperanza Rising*

2015, *Echo*

**Smithsonian Best Book of the Year** (Smithsonian)

2001, *Esperanza Rising*

**Smithsonian's Notable Books for Children** (Smithsonian)

2010, *The Dreamer*

**Teachers' Choices Reading List** (International Literacy Association)

1999, *Riding Freedom*

2000, *Amelia and Eleanor go for a Ride*

2016, *Echo*

**Washington Post Best Children's Books of the Year** (*Washington Post*)  
2015, *Echo*

**YALSA Top Ten Best Books for Young Adults** (American Library Association)  
2001, *Esperanza Rising*



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- Amelia and Eleanor Go for a Ride.* Illus. by Brian Selznick. New York: Scholastic, 1999.
- Armadillos Sleep in Dugouts, and Other Places Animals Live.* Illus. by Diane De Groat. New York: Hyperion Books for Children, 1997.
- Becoming Naomi León.* New York: Scholastic, 2004.
- “Because of Shoe.” *Because of Shoe and Other Dog Stories*, edited by Ann M. Martin, New York: Henry Holt, 2012.
- A Box of Friends.* Illus. by Mary Whyte. Columbus, Ohio: Gingham Dog, 2003.
- California, Here We Come!* Illus. by Kay Salem. Watertown, MA: Charlesbridge, 1997.
- Cornelia and the Great Snake Escape.* Illus. by Julia Denos. New York: Scholastic, 2009.
- Cornelia and the Show-and-Tell Showdown.* Illus. by Julia Denos. New York: Scholastic, 2010.
- Ryan, Pam Muñoz, and Jerry Pallotta. *The Crayon Counting Book.* Illus. by Frank Mazzola. Watertown, MA: Charlesbridge, 1996.
- Disney’s Doug’s Treasure Hunt.* Created by Jim Jenkins; illus. by Jumbo Pictures. New York: Mouse Works, 1998.
- Doug Counts Down.* Illus. by Matthew C. Peters. New York: Disney Press, 1998.
- The Dreamer.* Illus. by Peter Sís. New York: Scholastic, 2010.
- Echo: A Novel.* Illus. by Dinara Mirtalipova. New York: Scholastic, 2015.
- Esperanza Rising.* New York: Scholastic, 2000.
- “First Crossing.” *First Crossing : Stories about Teen Immigrants*, edited by Donald R Gallo, Cambridge, MA: Candlewick Press, 2007.
- The Flag We Love.* Illus. by Ralph Masiello. Watertown, MA: Charlesbridge, 1996.

“The Friend who Changed My Life.” *Friends : Stories about New Friends, Old Friends, and Unexpectedly True Friends*, edited by Ann M. Martin and David Levithan, New York: Scholastic, 2005.

*Funnie Family Vacation*. Created by Jim Jinkins, illus. by William Presing and Tony Curanaj. New York: Disney Press, 1999.

*Hello, Ocean!* Illus. by Mark Astrella. Watertown, MA: Charlesbridge, 2001.

*How Do You Raise a Raisin?* Illus. by Craig McFarland Brown. Watertown, MA: Charlesbridge, 2003.

*Mice and Beans*. Illus. by Joe Cepeda. New York: Scholastic, 2001.

*Mud is Cake*. Illus. by David McPhail. New York: Hyperion Books for Children, 2002.

*Nacho and Lolita*. Illus. by Claudia Rueda. New York: Scholastic, 2005.

*One Hundred is a Family*. Illus. by Benrei Huang. New York: Hyperion Books for Children, 1994.

*Our California*. Illus. by Rafael López. Watertown, MA: Charlesbridge, 2008.

*Paint the Wind*. New York: Scholastic, 2007.

“A Plum for Peace.” *Peace Story*, edited by Rosario Aguirre; Martin Auer; Siobhán Parkinson and Valerie Coghlan, Seoul: NamiBooks, 2010.

*A Pinky is a Baby Mouse, and Other Baby Animal Names*. Illus. by Diane De Groat. New York: Hyperion Books for Children, 1997.

*Riding Freedom*. Illus. by Brian Selznick. New York: Scholastic, 1998.

*There was No Snow on Christmas Eve*. Illus. by Dennis Nolan. New York: Hyperion Books for Children, 2005.

*Tony Baloney*. Illus. by Ed Fotheringham. New York: Scholastic, 2011.

*Tony Baloney: Buddy Trouble*. Illus. by Ed Fotheringham. New York: Scholastic, 2014.

*Tony Baloney: Pen Pal*. Illus. by Ed Fotheringham. New York: Scholastic, 2015.

*Tony Baloney: School Rules*. Illus. by Ed Fotheringham. New York: Scholastic, 2013.

*Tony Baloney: Yo Ho Ho, Halloween!* Illus. by Ed Fotheringham. New York: Scholastic, 2016.

*What Makes a Family?* Orlando: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2004.

*When Marian Sang: The True Recital of Marian Anderson.* Designed by David Saylor; illus. by Brian Selznick. New York: Scholastic, 2002.

*Where's Porkchop?* Created by Jim Jenkins; illus. by Jumbo Pictures. New York: Mouse Works, 1999.

# Books in Translation

## By Language

### Chinese

- Echo*. Written by Pam Muñoz Ryan.; illus. by Dinara Mirtalipova.  
*Esperanza Rising*. Written by Pam Muñoz Ryan.  
*When Marian Sang*. Written by Pam Muñoz Ryan; illus. by Brian Selznick.

### Dutch

- Riding Freedom*. Written by Pam Muñoz Ryan; illus. by Brian Selznick.

### French

- Becoming Naomi León*. Written by Pam Muñoz Ryan.  
*The Dreamer*. Written by Pam Muñoz Ryan; illus. by Peter Sís.  
*Esperanza Rising*. Written by Pam Muñoz Ryan.  
*Paint the Wind*. Written by Pam Muñoz Ryan.  
*Riding Freedom*. Written by Pam Muñoz Ryan; illus. by Brian Selznick.

### German

- The Dreamer*. Written by Pam Muñoz Ryan; illus. by Peter Sís.

### Italian

- The Dreamer*. Written by Pam Muñoz Ryan; illus. by Peter Sís.  
*Echo*. Written by Pam Muñoz Ryan; illus. by Dinara Mirtalipova.

### Japanese

- A Box of Friends*. Written by Pam Muñoz Ryan; illus. by Mary Whyte.  
*Color of Sky*. Written by Pam Muñoz Ryan; illus. by Mary Whyte.  
*The One and Only You*. Written by Pam Muñoz Ryan; illus. by Mary Whyte.  
*Riding Freedom*. Written by Pam Muñoz Ryan; illus. by Brian Selznick.  
*When Marian Sang*. Written by Pam Muñoz Ryan; illus. by Brian Selznick.

### Korean

- Esperanza Rising*. Written by Pam Muñoz Ryan.  
*Mud is Cake*. Written by Pam Muñoz Ryan; illus. by David McPhail.

### Russian

- Esperanza Rising*. Written by Pam Muñoz Ryan.

### Spanish

- Becoming Naomi León*. Written by Pam Muñoz Ryan.  
*California, Here We Come!* Written by Pam Muñoz Ryan; illus. by Kay Salem.

*The Dreamer*. Written by Pam Muñoz Ryan; illus. by Peter Sís.  
*Esperanza Rising*. Written by Pam Muñoz Ryan.  
*The Flag We Love*. Written by Pam Muñoz Ryan; illus. by Ralph Masiello.  
*Mice and Beans*. Written by Pam Muñoz Ryan; illus. by Joe Cepeda.  
*Nacho and Lolita*. Written by Pam Muñoz Ryan; illus. by Claudia Rueda.  
*Our California*. Written by Pam Muñoz Ryan; illus. by Rafael Lopez.  
*Paint the Wind*. Written by Pam Muñoz Ryan.  
*Riding Freedom*. Written by Pam Muñoz Ryan; illus. by Brian Selznick.  
*What Makes a Family?* Written by Pam Muñoz Ryan.

### **Turkish**

*The Dreamer*. Written by Pam Muñoz Ryan; illus. by Peter Sís.

### **By Title**

*Becoming Naomi León*. Written by Pam Muñoz Ryan.  
French  
Spanish

*A Box of Friends*. Written by Pam Muñoz Ryan; illus. by Mary Whyte.  
Japanese

*California, Here We Come!* Written by Pam Muñoz Ryan; illus. by Kay Salem.  
Spanish

*Color of Sky*. Written by Pam Muñoz Ryan; illus. by Mary Whyte.  
Japanese

*The Dreamer*. Written by Pam Muñoz Ryan; illus. by Peter Sís.  
French  
German  
Italian  
Turkish  
Spanish

*Echo*. Written by Pam Muñoz Ryan; illus. by Dinara Mirtalipova.  
Chinese  
Italian

*Esperanza Rising*. Written by Pam Muñoz Ryan.  
Chinese  
French  
Korean

Russian  
Spanish

*The Flag We Love.* Written by Pam Muñoz Ryan; illus. by Ralph Masiello.  
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*Mice and Beans.* Written by Pam Muñoz Ryan; illus. by Joe Cepeda.  
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*Nacho and Lolita.* Written by Pam Muñoz Ryan; illus. by Claudia Rueda.  
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*The One and Only You.* Written by Pam Muñoz Ryan; illus. by Mary Whyte.  
Japanese

*Mud is Cake.* Written by Pam Muñoz Ryan; illus. by David McPhail.  
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*Our California.* Written by Pam Muñoz Ryan; illus. by Rafael Lopez.  
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*Riding Freedom.* Written by Pam Muñoz Ryan; illus. by Brian Selznick.  
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*What Makes a Family?* Written by Pam Muñoz Ryan.  
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Chinese  
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