

South Africa

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Lunch time at the trilingual library in the village of Stanford. Photograph © 2011 Dianne Hofmeyr

EDITORIAL

It is not always appreciated by 'men of action' how powerful a political role literature potentially possesses. We may recall the inspiration given by Lord Byron's poetry for the liberation of Greece, while, nearer home, it would be difficult to overestimate the importance of the writings of Charles Dickens and Elizabeth Gaskell in raising awareness of the intolerable conditions of the Victorian poor. Tyrants have always feared the power of books, as evidenced by their banning, or, still worse, burning those that they viewed as 'seditious'.

One of the places in which this involuntary testimony to the power of books has been demonstrated in recent years is South Africa, where authors whose books were denounced by the apartheid regime made an impact on the opinion in the rest of the world. In this issue of *IBBYLink* we are particularly happy to have an article by one such author, Beverley Naidoo, whose deceptively simple *Journey to Jo'burg*

could not for many years be published in the country in which it was set, because of its indictment of the effects of an unjust society. Her article here focuses both on the progress that has been made in recent years and on the needs that remain, particularly for access to libraries and to books in their own languages for so many South African children. A similar theme is to be found in the article by another writer, Dianne Hofmeyr, accompanied by an illustration of one such rural library. Additionally we have material about some of the efforts that are being made by South Africa publishers and by IBBY South Africa to improve access to books for all children there.

Elsewhere in this issue, as well as our usual range of reviews, reports and news, we have a focus on the 2012 IBBY World Congress which is being held in London in August. If you can't get into the Olympic Stadium, you can at least come along to Imperial College for what is likely to be entertainment more long lasting in its effects.

Pat Pinsent

Attention!

***IBBYLink* 32**

All of you will know a library – either as a worker in one or as a user. The next issue of *IBBYLink* is titled 'Children and Libraries'. What was special about your library? Who used it? How has the electronic age affected its use? Do you like the changes you find? Have you worked with students on 'shadowing'? Have you any knowledge or experience of bibliotherapy? See back page for more details, and get your articles to the editor by 31 July 2011!

Annual conference of IBBY UK and NCRCL MA, November 2011

The subject is poetry. The call for papers suggested the following to help you submit your proposal for a workshop:

Is there such a thing as poetry specifically for children?

What place in the curriculum is there for the poetry of the past, whether poems written for children or those poems which are often regarded as part of our heritage?

Can a love of poetry be taught?

Is poetry written by children really poetry?

What place is there in children's poetry today for traditional features such as rhythm and rhyme?

Can poetry be translated?

What is poetry and does it matter anyway?

What kinds of link, if any, are there between poetry and performance?

Should poetry be illustrated?

How important is layout in written poetry?

But you will have many more ideas as either a poet or a lover of poetry. A short summary for a 20 minute workshop should be with Pat Pinsent by 20 July. More details on page 50.

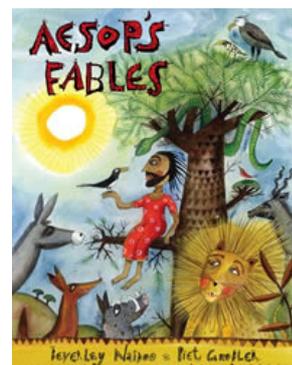
[Jennifer Harding]

Vulindlela! Open the Way!

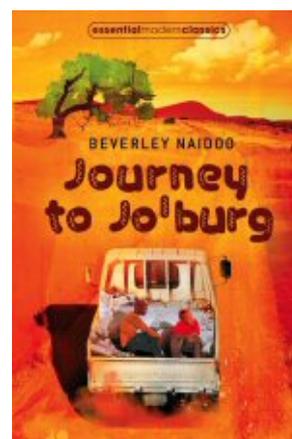
Beverley Naidoo

SOUTH AFRICA

This may seem a strange admission for a South African author, but I have recently done my first ever interview for an Afrikaans magazine. It follows South African publication of my retelling of *Aesop's Fables* (2011), with sparky illustrations by my compatriot Piet Grobler. Indeed, this publication inside the country is also a first for me, exactly 26 years after *Journey to Jo'burg* (1985) was published in the UK and banned in South Africa. Since the 'unbanning' in 1991, my books have continued to be published in the UK and copies imported into South Africa. This has made them more expensive than locally produced books. But with *Aesop*, the publisher Human & Rousseau has bought the rights from Frances Lincoln for two South African editions: English and Afrikaans. To cap my 'firsts', this is also my first translation inside South Africa.



As authors we are not in control of these things. What happens to a book after initial publication can be as frustrating as it can be fascinating, so it's not something on which I usually dwell a great deal. My job is to get on with new writing. But it certainly delighted me to be communicating at the translation stage with the South African editor and, now, to add these two editions to my shelf.



Interestingly, the issues over which the editor and I conferred were about the English edition. I learned that some English-speaking parents, teachers and librarians might regard the expressions and words that add to the book's South African flavour as 'slang'! There would be no such problem, I was told, with Afrikaans readers who would happily accept these South Africanisms. This concern over language purity threw me back some 60 years, recalling how valiantly my mother had tried to stop my pronunciation of English vowels 'deteriorating' to the sounds I heard all around me. Regardless of her own South African birth, her accent was as near to southern British standard as I imagine it is possible for someone in a land 6000 miles away from Big Ben. Before I was born, she had been 'Aunty Evelyn' for the South African Broadcasting Corporation's Children's Programme on its English channel where the presenters would all have passed BBC muster. My poor Mom didn't succeed in keeping South Africa out of my accent and I'm glad to say that, in the end, my South African editor and I agreed to a few changes while keeping most of the expressions. Eish!

I grew up thinking of Aesop as Greek but having aspired to reflect what I now believe are the African origins of *Aesop's Fables*, I'd love to see translations into other South African languages. Realistically, this can't happen without sponsorship. There's a huge need across South Africa for all children to encounter and revel in books in their mother tongue, but, with widespread poverty, there's no 'market' for them. Multilingual books should be a government priority and one that's infinitely more important than massively expensive submarines and warships. Yet it's largely up to non-profit organisations like Biblionef South Africa and the Little Hands Trust to raise funds that enable translation of a few titles into all South Africa's official languages and African minority languages.

Even where books exist, the next challenge is where to keep them safely while making them accessible to communities. Biblionef South Africa, the Little Hands Trust and the South African Mobile Library Association are among the non-governmental organisations trying to meet tremendous needs. When Prodeepta Das made his first visit to South Africa in 2009 to take photographs for *S is for South Africa* (2010) – a Frances Lincoln World Alphabet book on which we were collaborating – he was taken to meet children inside a 'container library'. This was a large metal container which must be extremely hot in summer and very cold in winter. Nevertheless, Prodeepta Das's photograph for 'L' shows a group of children absorbed in the reading of a picture book.



The accompanying text for L is:

L is for Library, lost in a story,
curled up on cushions in the corner.

'Once upon a time... Long, long ago... Yesterday...'

Sometimes, when we step inside,
we don't want to leave.

Here is a glimpse of the South African extremes of harsh reality and imagined possibilities. Trying to make those possibilities come true requires commitment and dedication. Those who visited Cape Town for the IBBY World Congress in 2004 may well have felt inspired through meeting people working at grassroots with just those qualities. I can't understand the South African government's insistence on maintaining VAT on books, just as I can't understand the British government's laissez-faire attitude as precious libraries with experienced librarians are eroded and erased in the UK.

Wherever we live, it's up to us citizens whose lives have been enriched through books to hold our governments to account in what they are offering the next generation. Many politicians pay lipservice to reading and reading promotion, yet don't vigorously defend or fight for the very public services that are needed to ensure that young children are actively engaged with books. Our starting points and challenges in each country are very different. South Africans who live in communities where schools have hardly any books would be amazed at how it is possible for some young people in Britain to spend years at schools where there are books, yet they still can't or don't read.

The Project for the Study of Alternative Education in South Africa (PRAESA) has initiated reading clubs in Cape Town called 'Vulindlela!', meaning 'open the way!' The clubs are supported by the Little Hands Trust that includes short videos on its website. Most South Africans will know the song 'Vulindlela!', made famous by the legendary late Brenda Fassie. Her song is celebratory, sung by a mother delighted to be announcing to everyone the engagement of her son. Brenda Fassie's own life was short, mercurial and tragic, rising like a star out of township poverty and ending in a struggle against the drug addiction that finally killed her. Anyone who has heard her voice will recognise its power to speak to the disenfranchised, communicating energy and the spirit of resistance to oppression and abuse. There are very few pathways out of a township, but in calling the reading clubs 'Vulindlela' the message is that reading 'opens the way' and that 'reading is power'. Perhaps using a name so closely associated with someone so talented but brought down by drugs can help open up conversations with children about the choices they themselves face. I hope so.

I have always come away from my writing and drama workshops with young South Africans – whether in cities, townships or remote rural villages – with a sense of their openness to creative learning. They are as talented as young people anywhere else in the world and they are hungry for new educational experiences. In a roomful of young multilingual people, it's my disadvantage that I am limited to English and Afrikaans, the official languages in my youth. I don't underestimate the huge need for basic literacy skills, but to regard reading as purely functional is a betrayal of democracy and the human thirst for understanding. Is it not a benefit to society that we have literate, thoughtful people? Empowering individual learners to begin personal journeys of discovery through books – especially to enter the lives of others through literature – is ultimately to empower the democratic state. But as wise, witty old Aesop knew some 2500 years ago, 'just wishing for something doesn't make it happen' and, indeed, 'work is the real treasure'. Vulindlela!

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South Africa Mobile Library Association. www.edsa.org.uk/samla.

Project for the Study of Alternative Education in South Africa (PSAESA).
www.praesa.org.za/home.

Things Have Come a Long Way ...

Dianne Hofmeyr

When I grew up in South Africa, my school had no library. I spent hours every afternoon in my local village library with its smell of plastic covers and sticky books, thirsty for stories of other worlds. (See photograph on front cover.)

Decades later there's still a dearth of libraries in hundreds of South African schools – sometimes due to lack of space and overcrowding but often because of lack of funding. Small villages and rural towns in South Africa, unlike some in the UK, have somehow managed to hold on to their libraries, and there are wonderfully stocked libraries in the cities – Cape Town Central Library being a great example of this – but school libraries are still in short supply.

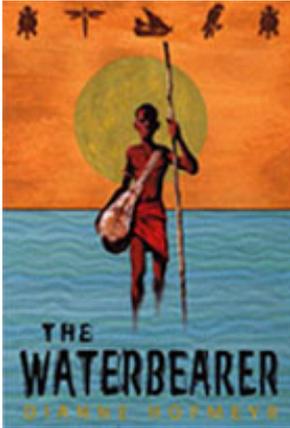
Now suddenly there's hope for all those children growing up in underprivileged areas in the sprawl of informal developments, far from city libraries or even village libraries. Brightly-painted container libraries are popping up everywhere. The first container library was put up in 1999 by Biblionef South Africa. The libraries are housed in converted second-hand shipping containers, fitted with windows, doors and carpets, that store between 5000 to 8000 books. Biblionef also supplies steel trunks filled with books to hospitals, crèches and farm schools. And this year four new container libraries will be set up by the Nelson Mandela Foundation to celebrate Nelson Mandela Day on 18 July. Many Trusts as well as local organisations are getting involved. In the small town of Knysna on the Garden Route, an annual bicycle race sponsors books for the local container library.

On a slightly more majestic scale, as recently as 14 May 2011, Rob Hart, a South African living in Singapore, reached the summit of Mount Everest over a gruelling seven weeks and raised a sponsorship of more than SA\$15000. The money will go towards the Room to Read Project in South Africa, as well as towards building a new school in Nepal. Anyone wishing to add their sponsorship is still able to do so via the Rob Hart site.

The fact that there are 11 official languages in South Africa makes the choice of books for these libraries a difficult proposition. While most children are being taught to read in English, it's essential they also learn to recognise words and read in their mother tongue. Young children seem adept at a multilingual approach, and for an insight into children learning to cope multilingually, watch two short video clips (part 1 and part 12) on the Little Hands Trust site, which give an amusing and refreshing view of children learning to read in more than one language simultaneously (three languages in the case of the first video). With multilingual books as the way forward in South Africa, I was fortunate to be involved in the Little Library Project with a story I wrote called, 'Hic Hic Hiccups'. The project developed ten stories for children using English as a second language, but were translated into all of the 11 official languages. It meant that readers in schools could follow the same story in English as well as in their particular mother tongue. The series went on to win the IBBY-Asahi Reading Promotion Award in 1996 ... phew that seems *so* long ago!

At present, a short story I wrote a while back, 'The Magic Man', has been put into an anthology alongside work by Roald Dahl, Doris Lessing, Somerset Maugham and Nadine Gordimer, amongst others. It's a controversial story set in the old South Africa about a girl who has an abortion after a relationship with a white boy. The story sets out not to question apartheid, but to question what happens to someone who is seen to be on

the edge of society. It's a story of the consequence of prejudice and takes place mostly inside the protagonist's head.



The anthology has recently become a compulsory set-work book for all South African Grade 12 students and I find it terrifying that it's included in their examination paper for the School Leaving Certificate. When I wrote 'The Magic Man' I never dreamt of where it would find a home. How or why it came about I'm not sure but it's a story that would never have been included in a compulsory set-work anthology when I was still at school.

But what interests me most is the question: would the writer in me have been able to express the same story, or would the writer in me in fact even have existed, were it not for the fact that I spent my afternoons skulking in a little village library thirsty for stories of other worlds? Would my personal response to life have been very different without such an easy access to books? Who can say? And who can say what mark having access to a library will have on so many children who have a thirst for knowledge and a need for emotional nurturing? Will they develop into sensitive and mindful adults and see the world differently?

Note

Dianne Hofmeyr books *The Waterbearer* and *Boikie You Better Believe It* were IBBY Honour Books for South Africa, *The Waterbearers* in 2004 and *Boikie You Better Believe It* in 1994. Details of these books and others are on her website, www.diannehofmeyr.com.

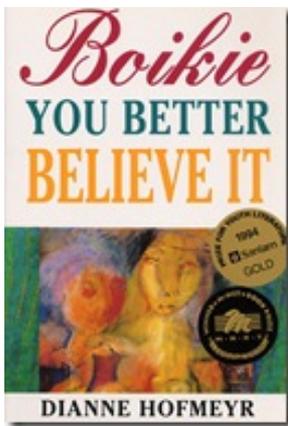
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Little Hands Trust videos – *Feeling at Home with Literacy* and *Vulindlela! Opening the Way through Stories and Books*. www.littlehandstrust.com/videos.html.

Rob Hart's Everest 2011 expedition. www.robharteverest.com/.

Room to Read. www.roomtoread.org/page.aspx?pid=281.



South African Branch of IBBY: Newsletter and Website

Pat Pinsent

Books for Africa

IBBY SA produce a newsletter, *Books for Africa*. The March 2011 (no. 63) issue includes details about the Percy Fitzgerald Prize for Youth Literature, for which seven books were shortlisted (in alphabetical order):

The Billion Dollar Soccer Ball by Michael Williams (Maskew Miller Longman, 2009)

Dance of the Freaky Green Gold by John Coetzee (Tafelberg, 2008)

Daniel Fox and the Jester's Legacy by Andy Petersen (Penguin, 2009)

Fuse by S.A. Partridge (Human & Rousseau, 2009)

Jesse's Story by Fiona MacGregor (Maskew Miller Longman, 2008)

Sharkey's Son by Gillian D'Achada (Tafelberg, 2008)

The Summer of Toffie and Grummer by Edyth Bulbring (Oxford University Press SA, 2008)

The winner was the book by Andy Petersen, and the books by Gillian D'Achada and S.A. Partridge received honourable mention. Entries for the IBBY SA Exclusive Books Award are also sought: criteria include that the winner be 'recognisably South African in character'.

Other items include notice of the IBBY Africa Region Conference at Pigg's Peak, Swaziland, 1–3 September 2011 (see <http://puku.co.za/2011/04/13/1st-biennial-ibby-africa-conference-to-be-held-in-swaziland/> or contact Thomas van der Walt, vdwaltb@unisa.ac.za, for details).

The contents also include a plea by Jay Heale advocating a Book Fair, an account of a Kid's Lit Quiz and reviews of recent books (in Afrikaans).

Website

Among a range of material, there is information about the Vivian Wilkes Award for 'an outstanding illustrated South African children's book'. There is also a report about the foundation of IBBY Zimbabwe in 2009 from Keith Munyengeterwa, who focuses on how some IBBY SA projects can provide models for his own country, notably the concept of a 'container library' bringing books in various languages to schools.

One of the most interesting items on the website is the announcement of the award of the Molteno Medal in Gold to Niki Daly, the distinguished South African illustrator. The citation read by Robin Malan suggests that Daly occupies a position in his native country comparable to that of the UK children's laureate. It goes on:

Niki tells of his childhood in the suburb: the little boy sitting on the kerb of the pavement, dreaming dreams. And he reckons that's pretty much what he's still doing, though he may have migrated, somewhat reluctantly, from the pavement to his desk and drawing-board. [Daly worked in England for some years; on returning to South Africa he headed the Graphic Design Department of Stellenbosch University, and developed the Songololo books, while becoming internationally famous as an illustrator.] ... One of the things that Niki will be remembered for is that he introduced the urban working-class black child as authentic hero in South African children's literature. One of Niki's early successes ... is *Not so fast, Songololo*, in which the hero is a small township boy. ... And, in recent years, readers the world over have grown to know and love Jamela (... a really cool kid) in the series of books *Jamela's Dress*, *Where's Jamela?*, *Yebo Jamela* and *Jamela's Birthday*.

For further information about IBBY SA: www.ibbysa.org.za.

South African Branch of IBBY: An African Story*

Robin Malan

Ibbysa asked many questions, such as ‘Who am I?’, ‘Where do I live?’, ‘What do I do?’, ‘What lies ahead for me?’, ‘What am I going to do with my life?’, All are typically African questions. Ibbysa set out on a quest to find the answers.

First, Ibbysa asked the Friendly Lady at Home Affairs, ‘**Who am I?**’

The Friendly Lady said, ‘You are an umbrella ...’

‘I’m an umbrella?’ asked Ibbysa.

‘An umbrella body ...’

‘My body’s an umbrella?’ asked an amazed Ibbysa.

‘Eish,’ the Friendly Lady sighed. She passed Ibbysa a form. ‘Here, read this.’

Identity: What you are

You are an umbrella body that gathers together everyone who is interested: writers, illustrators, translators, librarians, teachers, parents, children and young people.

You were born in 1988, and your area of interest is everything to do with **South African books for children and young people**.

You are an independent, non-profit organisation, with an office in Pinelands, Cape Town.

You are run by an elected Executive, and you have members all over South Africa.

Oh, and by the way, you maintain warm links with the Centre for the Book and with Bibliodef South Africa.

‘That’s nice,’ said Ibbysa.

The Friendly Lady at Home Affairs stamped Ibbysa’s form and said, ‘Come back and get your ID book.’

‘How long will it take?’ asked Ibbysa.

‘Don’t ask silly questions,’ said the Friendly Lady and pulled her blind down.

Ibbysa sat down on the pavement, tired. This was a difficult quest. Ibbysa heard a little huff and a puff. Someone was standing right there, doing some forehead wiping with a large handkerchief. Ibbysa looked up. It was the Portly Postperson.

‘**Where am I?**’ Ibbysa asked the Portly Postperson, who pulled an envelope out of a bag and said to Ibbysa, ‘Here, this is where you are and these are what are called your contact details. Look, see.’

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‘Oh, thank you, Portly Postperson, I feel much better now I know where I belong.’

Ibbysa walked on, still on The Quest. Then Ibbysa stopped and did some head scratching. ‘But, I wonder ...,’ said Ibbysa. At that moment there was a whistle, directly up above. It was the Bookbird.

‘What’ssss the matterrr?’ asked the Bookbird.

‘I want to know **if I have parents or grandparents,**’ said Ibbysa.

‘I can tell you thatttt,’ said the Bookbird. ‘Look at the first page of thiss,’ and dropped a book on Ibbysa’s head.

‘Ouch,’ said Ibbysa, but it didn’t really hurt. Ibbysa opened the book ...

‘You are the South African offspring of **IBBY,**’ read Ibbysa, and wondered who IBBY was.

The Bookbird answered Ibbysa’s unasked question.

IBBY is the International Board on Books for Young People.

Ibbysa read on:

And IBBY is the world body on children’s and young people’s literature.

You represent South Africa in IBBY; all your members are automatically members of IBBY, you’re all part of the family.

South Africa has been a member country since 1992.

IBBY administers the Hans Christian Andersen Awards and the IBBY-Asahi Reading Promotion Award.

A biennial World Congress is hosted by different national sections.

IBBY exhibits an Honour List of selected books from its member countries. There have been South African IBBY Honour Books since 1994.

In September 2004, South Africa hosted the 29th IBBY World Congress in Cape Town.

For more information, go to IBBY’s website: www.ibby.org.’

‘I’ll do that right away,’ said Ibbysa, as the Bookbird waved a wing and flew off. ‘But, first, I must try to find out what I *do*. Everyone’s got to *do* something and everyone’s **got to have a plan ...**’

‘Ooo, hooo!’ Ibbysa heard, coming from behind. Ibbysa whirled round, and there were two large eyes, perched on the back of a chair. They belonged to the Wise Chair Owl. The Wise Chair Owl blinked once and then said to Ibbysa, ‘Here’s my vision for you. It’s on this greetings card, stuck to the chair with Prestik. My vision and hope for you is that you are transformed into an umbrella organisation’

‘Another umbrella,’ wailed Ibbysa, but the Wise Chair Owl said ‘Shush!’ and continued:

With warm greetings from the Wise Chair Owl

... a neutral meeting-place for authors, illustrators, publishers, schools, libraries, children, parents and all who are interested.

Broadly speaking, your aims can be placed into three categories:

- assistance
- innovation
- expansion.

You must help those active in the field, with resources and networking.

You can instigate change through innovative short- and long-term projects.

To do that, a clear and functioning structure must be put into place.

Lastly, only through growth in your membership can you achieve these goals.

I hope that our dreams for you will make new life in the South African children's and young people's book world not only possible, but fabulous! Ooo, hoo!

And the Wise Chair Owl was gone!

'I'd better **get some more members**, then, hadn't I?' said Ibbysa. 'I wonder how I do that?' There was a sudden chittering in the pinelands on Ibbysa's left, and two busy Secretary Birds skittered into view, flipping through files and papers.

'Here,' said the Secretary Birds, and flashed a form at Ibbysa.

'What's this for?' asked Ibbysa.

'Get more members!' chorused the Secretary Birds, and they vanished in a flurry of papers.

Ibbysa looked at the separate form the Secretary Birds had left. [This gives details of how to join IBBY SA.]

'Okay, that's lovely,' said Ibbysa, 'I'll get more members. But, apart from that, and what the Wise Chair Owl said, I still want to know **what I do**. What's my ...'

A soccer ball whizzed past Ibbysa's head and thudded into the net, as two Bafundi Bafundi bellowed in Ibbysa's ear:

'**Laduuuuuma!** Here's your **goal**, your **game plan**, your **Objectives**,' and they dummy-passed Ibbysa a folded-up scrap of paper with 'How to Win the 2010 World Cup' scribbled on it. Ibbysa unfolded the paper, and read it.

Your objectives

- To recognise South African youth literature of outstanding quality, and to make suitable awards.
- To review and select books for such purposes as your Honour List.
- To promote and exhibit your Honour List books as widely as possible.
- To organise events that will raise awareness of South African books for children and young people.
- To host regular meetings to bring together all the role players in a region.
- To publish *Books for Africa*, your regular newsletter, to report on your activities as well as news about South African children's and young people's books, writers, illustrators, translators, publishers, booksellers, librarians, parents and readers (*Books for Africa* email: booksforafrica@iafrica.com).
- To host and maintain your website (www.ibbysa.org.za).
- To promote South African children's and young people's books in the international arena, especially through IBBY and its awards, exhibitions, publications and conferences.
- To provide information on and to represent the interests of South African children's and young people's books in and outside South Africa.

Ibbysa said, 'Oh, I feel much better, now I know what I have to do. But ... the biggest head-scratch of all, I still don't know ...'

'Who – You – Are!'

Ibbysa spun around to see where the voices came from, and there was a little girl and a little boy. They were sitting cross-legged under a nice umbrella, reading.

'Well, can you tell me **Who – I – Am?**'

'Course we can,' the children said. 'We know you, we know who you are. Come and join us under our nice umbrella. Look what we've got for you.'

Ibbysa looked and saw a big pile of lovely books. Ibbysa ducked under the umbrella and sat down between them, on top of the pile. Ibbysa smiled and smiled. ‘So,’ said Ibbysa, looking from one to the other, ‘tell me.’

‘Well,’ the girl and the boy said, ‘you’re South African, and you’re called Ibbysa for short, and that stands for

IBBY SA and that stands for the **International Board on Books for Young People in South Africa**.

End of story

* This interesting and creative approach to IBBY identity derives from IBBY SA. The portion relating to South African membership has been reduced. [Note from Editor]

IsiZulu Nursery Rhymes

Phindi Dlamini

As part of our work as the publisher Nutrend, we visit schools to find out what they think of our material and to trial some of it, as well as seeing what is out there published by the competition. I was in Gasa Primary School because I needed the learners in grades R and 1 to perform a rap song for one of our books, titled *Gundi* [mouse]. They were going to perform the song in an Arts and Culture event. Gasa is a rural school in the south of KwaZulu Natal Province. Entering the school I could hear singing:

linga linga losi,
fa fa fa fa donkey,
achu, achu,
we o fo da.

It went on and on in one of the classrooms – children shouting at the top of their voices. I was listening and trying so hard to work out the words. A nursery rhyme for sure – that I could tell from the way it was recited and the actions – but as for the meaning I hadn’t a clue. I approached one of the teachers who was singing along in front of the children; she also couldn’t tell me the meaning, but recited it slowly for me so that I could hear the words clearly. Yes, I had heard it correctly, the words were as above. As an applied linguist this fascinated me. Of course, when I researched I found the proper words:

Ring a-ring o' roses,
A pocketful of posies.
A-tishoo! A-tishoo!
We all fall down.

And I learned that most English nursery rhymes reflect English history.

The fact that we have isiZulu speaking children reciting English rhymes which have no connection with their history and with words that do not make sense any more was the motivation for my research and the recording of *IsiZulu Nursery Rhymes*. The aim was to get children to recite rhymes that made sense to them, and thus to derive value from them.

Zulu culture is oral, with strong values entrenched in our unique value known as *ubuntu*. This word is untranslatable. Some have translated it as ‘humanity’, but it means something far deeper than that. It is the value that makes us feel that your child is my child: if I whisper words of wisdom to a child, I help to prepare that child for life. Different genres have been used to teach, warn and advise the young, and nursery rhymes are one of these conduits.

Therefore, we have recorded a set of nursery rhymes that have been taught to us by our ancestors and teachers. IsiZulu nursery rhymes share moral values with children, teach them about nature, and document the history of where we come from – though some are

just for fun. They serve also as one of the pedagogic techniques to help children remember information easily, which clearly is a useful aspect in school.

IsiZulu is one of the 11 official languages of South Africa, and is the most widely used indigenous African language, with close to 21% of the population using it as a home language.

When we came up with the idea of documenting this material, we wanted our young children to have access to nursery rhymes of relevance to them; we also wanted to share with the rest of the world the richness and diversity of our heritage. Hence, we have published the translation into English in a book with music, a CD and a DVD, so that people who don't understand isiZulu can follow – by reading the translations in the book, or by watching the DVD where there are also English subtitles.

Nursery rhymes are fun and somewhat frivolous, but if careful attention is paid to the words or the meaning behind them, it is possible to discern how the norms of a society are being taught to children. For example, there is a nursery rhyme talking about an old man: 'Kwakukhon' Ikhehla' (p.19). This rhyme conveys a message about showing respect for elders.

Another way that nursery rhymes are used is to record lineage. In the absence of a writing system, this was done orally. An example of this is the nursery rhyme 'AmaHlubi' (p.9), which refers to a clan closely related to the amaSwazi. This rhyme reminds generations scattered throughout South Africa of this relationship.

It seems that, even today, history is being recorded through nursery rhymes; a recent example, 'Nabaya Omame' (p.20), talks about mothers coming home with food parcels. In South Africa, and probably most of the world, the father is the one who is expected to come home with food, but due to changes in our society, more and more women are now the breadwinners. This nursery rhyme is recording the goings on of society for future generations.

From my research into this subject I came to the conclusion that using nursery rhymes as a way to pass on values and norms and to record historical events is far from unique to African nursery rhymes. For example, it has been suggested that the classic nursery rhyme 'Baa, Baa, Black Sheep' developed as a short rhyme for tax collectors back in 1272, recording a wool tax imposed on farmers to fund Edward I's crusades. Of the 'three bags full', one had to go to the 'master' (the king), one to the 'dame' (the church) and one to the 'little boy who lives down the lane' (the farmer), who was allowed to keep the third bag for himself.

I am happy that today our isiZulu children have nursery rhymes that they can recite with pride and understanding and can learn from. I hope these will replace 'Linga linga losi'!

An attempted classification of the rhymes

Teaching children about nature

'Nans' Inswempe' [Here's a partridge] – Children being taught about hunting, i.e. dogs are used for hunting, but do not always catch their prey.

'Imith' Igoba Kahle' [Trees move nicely] – Children observing and enjoying nature: their curiosity about nature coming out, and in wondering how birds stay in their nests when trees sway.

'Siyizinyoni' [We are birds] – Children enacting birds: being in touch with nature, but at the same time exercising their right of freedom, being free at last.

'Nans' Imfene' [Here's a baboon] (A round for four voices) – Children observing a baboon and appreciating wildlife and nature.

'Inkanyezi Enomsila' [A star with a tail] – This rhyme actually begins with a warning for people to run, as a 'star with a tail' is coming. This fear of a comet was passed on generations ago. They inquire, 'How far above the earth?', and towards the end of the rhyme display their awe of it.

‘Lomthombo Oqhumayo’ [The spring water] – Teaching children the origins of spring water and that spring water is fresh and pure, and safe to drink.

‘Umlilo Ovuthayo’ [A burning fire] – Warning children about fire and its dangers.

Teaching children values

‘Sicel’ Uswidi’ [Sweets, please] – Eating too many sweets causes stomach ache and is not healthy. Children can ask for food from anyone and that person should oblige, since ‘every child is my child’.

‘Kwakukhon’ Ikhehla’ [There was an old man] – An old man is crippled and walks differently. A boy who laughs mockingly at him is turned into a cat. Moral: don’t laugh at the expense of others, show respect and help elderly people, otherwise you will suffer.

‘Ngangihamba’ [I was wandering] – A brother, concerned for his sister, looks for her and finds her in Lesotho; family values are taught.

‘Salibon’ Ixhegwana’ [We saw an old man] – Children are taught about social order, i.e. the fact that older people become children’s best friends by sometimes bringing them food, telling them folk tales, teaching them skills and playing with them.

Instilling a sense of confidence and pride

‘Umlilo Ovuthayo’ [A burning fire] – We are the best. If you compete with us, watch out or you will get burned.

‘Ntabani Le?’ [What mountain is this?] – It is not wrong to tell the world what your strengths, talents and gifts are.

Documenting

‘Nang’ u May’ [Here are May and Dora] (A round for three voices) This recalls South African history whereby African children were given Christian names when taught by missionaries at school.

‘AmaHlubi’ – as detailed above.

‘Nabaye Omame’ [There are mommies] – The changed role of women in South African society, whereby mothers are working and are often the breadwinners, bringing home sweets and food for their children.

Entertainment and enjoyment

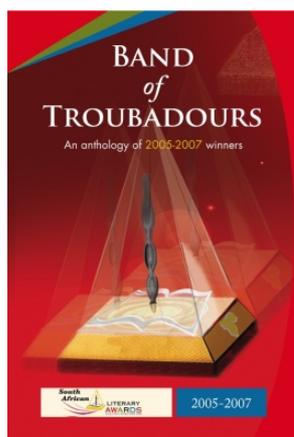
‘U Dudayde’ [Oh! Dudayde] – isiZulu version of the English rhyme ‘Yankee Doodle’. The English translation of the isiZulu is:

Oh! Dudayde went to Durban on horseback, Oh!
Oh! Dudayde went to Durban on horseback, Oh! back, Wow!
He had a feather on his hat Oh! Dudade. Oh!
He had a feather on his hat Oh! Dudade. Oh! de. Oh!
Dudayde’s horse started galloping
Dudayde’s horse started galloping
Dudayde’s horse started galloping
Oh! Dudayde.

[See a review of *IsiZulu Nursery Rhymes* in this issue of *IBBYlink*.]

Nutrend Publishers and some of their Publications

Pat Pinsent



It seems appropriate to start by quoting from Nutrend's publicity material:

Nutrend Publishers is a wholly black-owned South African educational publishing company established in Pietermaritzberg in 1998. Its aim was to set new trends in educational publishing, keeping the needs of South African children firmly in mind, while providing the necessary support for teachers. ... [It produces] stories that stimulate children's minds and sharpen their curiosity and thirst for knowledge. ... It has been company policy to create an atmosphere where young South Africans' talent is nurtured and developed through active monitoring and in-service training.

Among Nutrend's publications are *Band of Troubadours* (2008), an anthology compiled from books that have won South African literary awards, a number of dictionaries of indigenous languages and *Wheels on the Soul of my Shoes* (2008), the autobiography of poet and artist Musa Zulu, incapacitated after a car accident. They have a range of small books for young children, and some of these are discussed below.



The Praying Mantis that Wanted to be a Vegetarian (2008) and *The Log that Wouldn't Die* (2008), both by Anita Plant and illustrated by André Plant, are part of the Open your Eyes to Science series, while *The Tortoise and the Pangolin* (2009), by the same author and illustrator, is part of the Open your Eyes to Technology series. All these attractively illustrated small books focus on an appreciation of the natural world and the awareness of the role played by creatures who may not always appear immediately attractive to humans. In the first-named book, Oscar, a praying mantis, a V.I.B. (very important bug) feels sad because he is tired of eating insects that never did him any harm. Consequently the organic vegetable patch begins to suffer from the depredations of the prey he is no longer consuming and all seems disastrous until Ladybird no. 42 takes matters 'into her own antenna'. She summons the aid of Portia, an attractive female praying mantis, who joins Oscar for dinner, instructing him about the 'food chain' and ultimately restoring the balance in the garden. *The Log* reveals the abundance of creatures making a fallen log their home, while in *The Tortoise and the Pangolin*, a little boy's grandfather tells him a kind of 'just-so' story about how the tortoise got its shell, as a means of encouraging him to construct his own hideaway in the garden.

Shakina the Leopard Cub (2009) by Chloë Murdoch, illustrated by Erica Groves, is part of the Africa's Little Five series, which also features the young of lions, elephants, rhinoceros and buffalo, showing with vivid pictures the challenges of survival in the wild.

All these small books, produced with South African children in mind, have the asset of presenting creatures more familiar to them than those that inhabit imported European tales. At the same time, they would bring an attractive element of the exotic to children from outside that country.

Website

Nutrend Publishers. www.nutrend.co.za/.

Karen Sharkey

Book Aid International (BAI) increases access to books and supports literacy, education and development in sub-Saharan Africa. A large number of the books sent each year are for children and teenagers, yet many of the libraries that we work with do not have regular programmes or services for children. Over the past several years, BAI has worked closely with partners to address this lack of services through training and projects to increase skills and awareness of the importance of serving children in libraries. From the long-running, 'reading-tents' projects in Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania, to our current school 'library-in-a-box' schemes in Tanzania and our 'children's corner' projects in Tanzania and Kenya, our commitment to share knowledge and skills with library and school staff continues.

The children and teenager's corner projects in Tanzania and Kenya began in 2009 and, by the end of 2012, 24 libraries will have a freshly refurbished area with new books in English and Swahili, complete with mats, cushions, games and toys, along with library staff trained in providing services to children and teenagers. Working with the Zanzibar Library Service, another BAI project is providing primary schools with a 'library in a box'. Ten schools so far have benefited, reaching nearly 8000 pupils. We have sent 2700 English books and a further 1800 have been purchased locally in Swahili. Ten new schools will join up in 2011 in Zanzibar and this project has inspired a new library-in-a-box scheme in 15 schools in the Kagera region of mainland Tanzania.



Standard 2 children, Bunboro Primary School, Morogoro, Tanzania, February 2011.
Copyright © 2011 Book Aid International.

Training teachers on how to use books in the classroom is a key part of these projects. Most of these teachers have never had access to books to use in the classroom and their students have had limited, if any, exposure to books before these projects.

The main focus of our work is in supporting our partners with books donated from UK publishers. While these books are a valuable addition to partner libraries, we recognise that English books from the UK can fill only some of the gaps. This is why, in our project model, there are funds for our partners to purchase books locally. We are aware of the need, especially for children, to have books that reflect their cultural surroundings and as much access as possible to books in their mother tongue if available. As a relatively small non-government organisation (NGO) based in London, BAI is limited in what it can do to support local publishing, but it does as much as it can in this regard.

Projects with one partner in particular, the Children's Book Project of Tanzania (CBP), more directly support local publishing. CBP, with a great deal of support from CODE Canada (formerly known as the Canadian Organization for Development through Education), runs 99 school libraries as well as community libraries in four regions of Tanzania. We have worked with CBP on two publishing projects, one in 2008/2009 that resulted in the publication of four books, and a current project in which two new books will be published by the end of 2011. CBP has a strong model to support local publishing and production of quality children's books by guaranteeing the publisher a market for these books. Working closely with local publishers on content, it pledges to purchase 3000 of the 5000 books printed for their schools and libraries. The books not purchased by CBP will be sold locally, thus adding quality books to the Tanzanian book market.

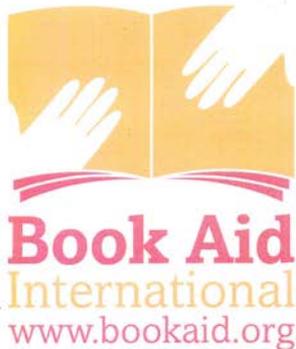


Zanzibar Protoa Primary School box project. February 2011. Copyright © 2011 Book Aid International.

The current project with CBP is for the creation and publication of two books in English for students in Year Four. Most of the books commissioned by CBP are in Swahili but the production of books in English in this project is to support new attempts to improve English language abilities of students at this age. In Tanzania, students in primary school are taught in Swahili; however, when they go on to secondary school, the language of instruction changes to English. Not all students have a strong exposure to English in primary school and many struggle with this transition. CBP intends to complement the Tanzanian government's efforts to improve teaching and learning of English through this project by training teachers and using these two new books as resources for this training. The books will be written in English and will be at an appropriate age level for students, as well as being relevant to their interests and experiences. Many books from the UK at the level appropriate to these students' reading abilities in English would reflect the interest levels of younger children. For this reason, CBP saw the need to start a new series of English books specifically designed for Tanzania.

Supporting and strengthening library services to children in public and school libraries is a large part of the work of BAI. Over half of the books we send each year to sub-Saharan Africa are children's books, and in working closely with our partners in libraries, we hope to add value to these services through special projects and training. Local publishing helps to build and sustain a reading culture. Working with partners to secure funds to purchase books in their countries, as well as working on projects with a partner such as CBP to support indigenous publishing directly, we at BAI are doing our best to ensure that there are local books available in libraries. Children need all kinds of

book to open doors to the world and they need well-trained people to help them find the books that can change their lives.



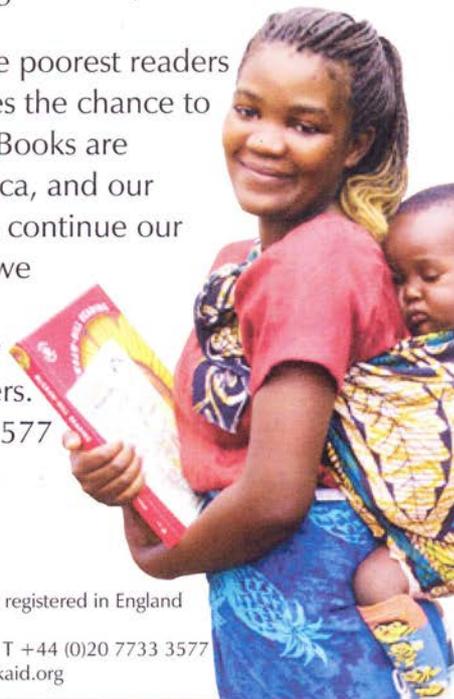
Books change lives

Poverty and illiteracy go hand in hand. But in sub-Saharan Africa, books are a luxury few can afford. Many children leave school functionally illiterate, and adults often fall back into illiteracy in adulthood due to a lack of available reading material.

Book Aid International knows that books change lives.

Every year we send over half a million books to partners in 12 countries in sub-Saharan Africa to stock libraries in schools, refugee camps, prisons, universities and communities. Literally millions of readers have access to books and information that could teach them new skills – from keeping chickens to getting a degree in Business Studies or learning how to protect against HIV/AIDS.

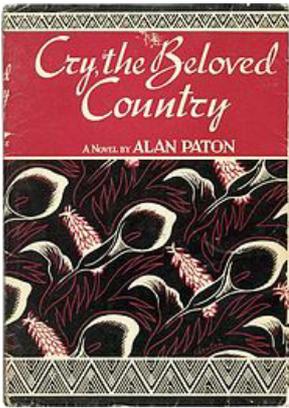
Books can bring hope to some of the poorest readers in the world, giving people of all ages the chance to make opportunities for themselves. Books are urgently needed in sub-Saharan Africa, and our supporters make it possible for us to continue our work. Each donation or legacy that we receive has the potential to make a long-lasting impact on education for hundreds, if not thousands, of readers. Please do contact us on 020 7733 3577 for further information, or go to our website at www.bookaid.org.



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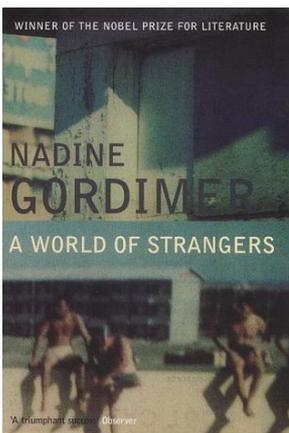
Featuring some South African Books

Pat Pinsent



Somehow it would seem wrong to have an issue of *IBBYLink* devoted to children's literature from South Africa without mentioning two of the great writers whose novels for adults, in the effect they had on an international readership, signified the power of literature to influence change. The classic is, of course, Alan Paton's *Cry the Beloved Country: A Story of Comfort in Desolation* (1948). Written before the apartheid system was legally imposed, it provides a view of a society already fractured by racial inequalities, especially those imposed by the disintegration of the tribal system as a consequence of the withholding of land from the Blacks, together with the increasing crime rate and the urban squalor in which many Black people had to live. It was banned in its native land but provided powerful witness throughout the rest of the world, helping to inflame sentiment against the injustices perpetrated in South Africa. Paton's use of language is well exemplified by the conclusion of the novel, a (symbolic) sunrise seen through the eyes of Stephen Kumalo, a black Anglican priest whose son Absalom has just been executed:

Yes, it is the dawn that has come The sun tips with light the mountains The great valley of the Umzimkulu is still in darkness, but the light will come there also. For it is the dawn that has come, as it has come for a thousand centuries, never failing. But when that dawn will come, of our emancipation, from the fear of bondage and the bondage of fear, why, that is a secret. (1948: 253)



Another notable South African writer is Nadine Gordimer, who early in her career wrote some children's stories, but is better known for her adult fiction, some of which was also banned in her own country while accumulating literary awards overseas: *A World of Strangers* (1958) was banned for 12 years. A later novel, *July's People* (1981) imagines the bloody revolution that never actually happened in South Africa. Gordimer gave support to the African National Congress while it was still an illegal organisation, and at the same time suffered the inevitable criticism that she, as a white person, was being patronising in her political adherence.

This is the context in which South African children's literature needs to be seen. On the one hand, writers who emanate from the white minority start from a position of involuntary implication in unjust legislation – something that, judging by their work, generates in them a sense of anger at the discrimination, poverty and breaking up of families that resulted from an evil political system. On the other hand, writers from other linguistic and cultural groups, notably Zulu and Xhosa, are little known outside their own communities and depend on either translation into English or Afrikaans, or the commitment of smaller publishing houses.

A book which most powerfully reflects the separation forced on families by the legislation is Beverley Naidoo's novel for children, *Journey to Jo'burg* (1985). Perhaps unique in being the result of meetings of a protest group, the Education Group of the British Defence and Aid Fund for Southern Africa, it tells the simple story of two children, Naledi and Tiro, who travel 300 km to tell their mother, who is working in Johannesburg, about the illness of their younger sister. Banned in South Africa for many years, it was succeeded by *Chain of Fire* (1989), a sequel featuring the same children in order to indict the forcible removal of families to their allocated 'homelands'. Equally powerful are Naidoo's portrayal of street children in Johannesburg in *No Turning Back* (1995), and her short stories in *Out of Bounds* (2001), which focus on different periods and places in order to highlight the history of apartheid and its consequences. Influential in a different way is Naidoo's study of the responses of children in an English school to lessons about racial justice, *Through whose Eyes? Exploring Racism: Reader, Text and Context* (1992).

One of the most distinguished South African illustrators is Niki Daly – see the report on IBBY South Africa for a brief description of his career and a recent award made to him. *Charlie's House* (1989) by Reviva Schermbrucker, illustrated by Daly, seems to me an

excellent indication of how seriously both author and illustrator took the social problems inherent in a racist society. It is ‘dedicated to Christina, Mavis and Charlie Mogotsi who lived in a shelter for six years’, and vividly depicts, in full page and sometimes double-spread pictures, how the little boy who lives with his mother and grandmother in a leaking cast-iron shelter, creates out of clay a model dwelling, of which the most impressive feature is that in it Charlie has a bedroom to himself. It is obvious that Daly had looked with close attention at the plight of people like Charlie and his relatives in sub-standard accommodation, but perhaps the most notable aspect is the happiness in the faces of Charlie and his family.

Another, very different, book which deserves mention for very effective collaboration between author and illustrator, is Dianne Hofmeyr’s *The Faraway Island*, illustrated by Jude Daly (London: Frances Lincoln, 2008, 978-1-84507-644-3), which is reviewed in *IBBYLink* 22, Summer 2008. This story features a man who is disfigured and seeks isolation on an island, but at the end, through friendship, finds happiness and comes to realise that he never was the monster he thought himself to be. The illustrations brilliantly portray the flourishing of the natural vegetation on the island and serve as an effective image of the regeneration of the man’s heart.

This brief account of a few of the many outstanding books by South African authors and illustrators could be said to support the concept that literature often flourishes when there are serious issues for it to contend with.

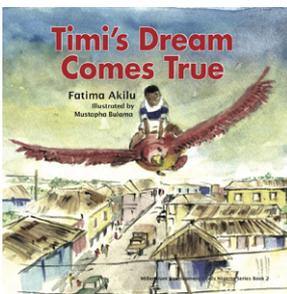
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Working with an African Publisher

Laura Atkins

For the last four years I have been working with an Nigerian publisher, Cassava Republic Press (www.cassavarepublic.biz/). Bibi Bakare-Yusuf, Cassava's co-publisher, contacted me after finding me through my website (www.lauraatkins.com/). She saw that I had seven years' experience working primarily at multicultural children's publishers in the USA, and asked if I would be interested in working as an editorial consultant for their new children's list. Cassava Republic was two years old at the time, and one of their driving principles is expressed on their website: 'We think that contemporary African writing should be rooted in African experience in all its diversity'. This was in response, I think, to the high number of imported books published in Nigeria. They wanted to develop an eight-book picture-book series based on the Millennium Development Goals (MDG), partially because they had support for these books from the Nigerian government, but they had no experience working on children's books.



I was delighted to be asked to work with Cassava, but was also aware of the possibility that my cultural background could limit and would certainly direct my responses to books. Thus began a fascinating back and forth with Bibi who herself is from Nigeria, but was partially educated in the UK. My first job was editing the MDG series that were written by Fatima Akilu, who worked for the Nigerian MDG office, but didn't have any experience writing picture books. The MDG, for those unfamiliar with them, are ending extreme poverty and hunger, making sure all children have access to education, promoting gender equality, reducing child mortality, improving maternal health, fighting malaria and other diseases, ensuring environmental sustainability and developing global partnerships. (If you wish to learn more about the larger United Nations MDG programme, look on their website: www.un.org/millenniumgoals.) These are fairly abstract concepts, and some lent themselves more easily to picture-book texts. For instance, the first book I edited was *Timi's Dream Comes True* (2009), in which a boy wishes to become a teacher, but is forced to be a fisherman like his father. This all changes when an airplane is donated with support of the MDG office to their village and subsequently turned into a school. This story was fairly straightforward.

But other books were more tricky. One of the more challenging turned out to be the goal of fighting malaria, which led to a situation in which I questioned my cultural response to a story. In this case the author's first draft was told from the first-person perspective of a mosquito and his friend Nana. The mosquito protagonist bites a baby in a family – the baby then becomes sick. The family installs a mosquito net treated with insecticide and the mosquitoes overhear them talking. As a result the mosquitoes come to understand their role in making the baby sick:

'But how can that be possible?' I wondered. 'I just liked biting her and sucking her blood. After all, we mosquitoes have to eat and babies are the easiest, they can't slap you away.'

Nana continued, 'When we bit her we gave her malaria, and now they have the perfect solution to prevent us from ever getting close to their beds.'

As the story ends, the mosquito storyteller realises that he has made the baby sick and regrets this in his final moments as he dies. Here were the final lines:

I took Nana's hand and held it tight. I was really sorry I made baby sick. I remembered her face as she was before I made her sick and as day broke I slowly faded away.

Reading this story over again, I have a dual reaction. On the one hand, I think this just doesn't suit a picture book. But at the same time I am, in some ways, drawn to such a non-traditional approach. At the time I wrote this to Bibi:

Having the mosquitoes as the main characters is odd, especially since they die in the end. The reader is asked to empathise with them, but at the same time they are

causing the damage. The basic story of the baby getting sick and the family getting the nets is fine, but I think she needs to rethink her approach to telling it.

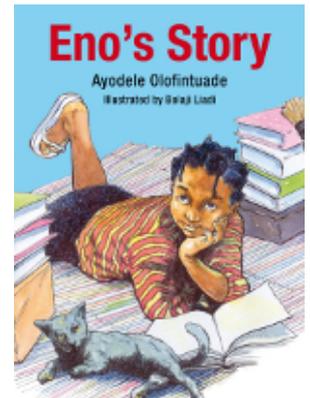
At some point I acknowledged my concern that my response might be cultural, and asked Bibi if she felt this story would work in a Nigerian context. She shared my reaction. And in the end a completely different story was written, about girls who learn about malaria and mosquito nets at their football practice one day. This conformed to more standard expectations of a picture-book script. But I do wonder if we lost an opportunity to do something that challenged boundaries. And, in the end, I just won't know if my response shut down something that might have been a particularly cultural aspect of the story, and have had to rely on Bibi to inform me on this front. (You can see the full list of MDG books at <http://cassavarepublic.biz/our-authors-mainmenu-100/100>.)

Since then I worked on a book about children being accused of witchcraft, which was done in support of the charity Stepping Stones. *Eno's Story* (2010) by Ayodele Olofintuade (www.cassavarepublic.biz/our-authors-mainmenu-100/107) was the resulting middle-grade book. I was cautious, at first, about working on a book that treated such a difficult theme. Children are beaten and killed in Nigeria and other African countries as a result of this practice. But I was impressed with the author's approach, telling the story from a feisty girl's perspective and keeping it light enough for middle-grade readers.

Cassave Republic's children's books often treat Nigerian experiences and themes, such as the African ABC book by Sade Fadipe that we are currently finishing and that will be published in late 2011. So I constantly have to be aware of my reactions and question where they come from. Bibi has kindly said about my work:

Laura works with our authors closely to make sure that they maintain the right tone of voice that is appropriate for the target age group. More importantly, she doesn't impose her own cultural norm onto the text. Instead, she is acutely aware of cultural context and is sensitive enough to appreciate the need to maintain sociocultural specificity of the writing whilst still ensuring that the story will have universal appeal.

While I am delighted that she feels this way, it is always a balancing act. I feel privileged to work with this dynamic Nigerian publisher, but am constantly aware of my non-Nigerian background and how that might influence my response.

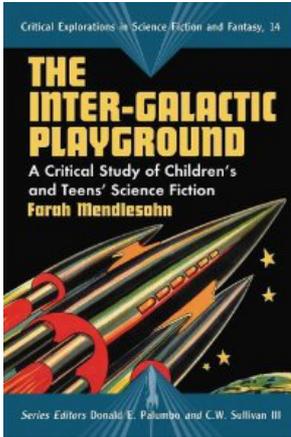


REVIEWS

Books about Children's Literature

The Inter-Galactic Playground: A Critical Study of Children's and Teens' Science Fiction

Farah Mendlesohn, Jefferson, NC and London: McFarland & Co., pb. 978 9 7864 3503 6, £39.95, 2009, 283pp.



It is always stimulating to read a book that challenges received wisdom – in this case the facile assumption that young people do not enjoy fiction that also provides them with information. Basing her judgement on her own experience and a large-scale informal survey of science-fiction readers, Mendlesohn recognises a cohort of ‘reading children’ who welcome the scientific knowledge that they can acquire from books such as those she identifies in her final chapter as demonstrating ‘best practice’ in areas such as genre values and structure.

In her first chapter, Mendlesohn indicates how she understands the term ‘science fiction’, putting forward a structuralist framework that involves cognitive estrangement created by a degree of Dissonance extended to the point of Rupture from the world as we know it. These alienating factors are followed by Resolution and Consequence, an effect that is wider than merely the effect on the individual. Mendlesohn discusses a range of books that constituted what was considered ‘best practice’, particularly featuring the work of Robert A. Heinlein and Andre Norgon. In subsequent chapters she challenges some of the assumptions about science fiction for children, such as the ‘truisms’ that children are not a market, didactic fiction is poor fiction and teen fiction should be about personal growth (p.23). She goes on to confront science pedagogy and to dispute the conviction that children cannot cope with information density. She offers a range of examples both from books written for children and from those concerned with the teaching and popularisation of science.

The remaining chapters present a plethora of good and less good examples of science-fiction writing for children and young people, looking in particular at changes throughout the second half of the twentieth century, and the tension between theme and plot in science fiction for children and teens. She illustrates, from the texts she considers, the extent to which books set in the future have often seemed pessimistic about the interaction between technology and society. The final chapter of the main part of the book presents a number of texts that she feels represent best practice now. This is followed by appendices that include a description of the questionnaire used in the research, and a discussion of picture books in the context of science fiction for children.

An impressive feature of this work is the very extensive range of books discussed, making it an essential text for anyone researching this area. The treatment of gender is particularly interesting. The book is also very readable, combining critical flair with individual and often original perceptions.

Pat Pinsent

(This review quotes a short piece that Pat Pinsent wrote in appreciation of this book, an excerpt from which is quoted on the book jacket.)

Through the Magic Door: Ursula Moray Williams, Gobbolino and The Little Wooden Horse

Colin Davison, Newcastle upon Tyne: Northumbria Press, 978 0 8571 6006 5. £18.99, 2011, 260pp.

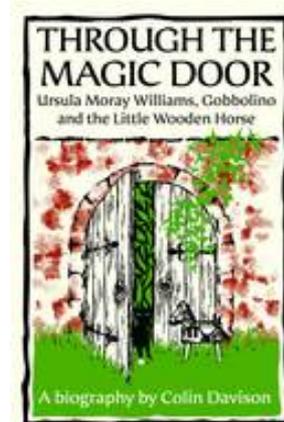
For those, like me, who remember reading *Gobbolino* and *The Little Wooden Horse* to their own children, the chance of learning more about the creator of these fantasies could not be resisted. This official biography, by a former journalist and neighbour of Ursula Moray Williams, is lavishly annotated and very fully supported by references to her books, journals and letters, as well as memories from her family and friends.

While Davison freely admits not to be a literary critic himself, he has tried to rectify any possible deficiencies in this area by recourse to comments – both those made at the time and more recently – from people who are. Thus he is in a position to discuss what is probably the main question intriguing his readers. Since the author's two most famous stories, named in the title of this biography, were first published in 1942 and 1938, respectively, and her final novel, *Paddy on the Island*, in 1987, 19 years before she died in 2006, why is her later work so much less familiar to us? Before grappling with this question and presenting some of Davison's answers, it is worth looking at some of the scenes from her own life that clearly provided so much material for her imagination to work on.

At the end of my battered copy of *Gobbolino* there is a description, presumably supplied by the author herself, in which she talks of her twin sister and younger brother, the huge Victorian 'folly' with 80 bedrooms in which they were brought up, their attendance at art classes and enthusiasm for reading, and their pony riding. She concludes by saying that she 'has never deliberately written for children; it just happens that they like what she writes' (Penguin, 1969: 151). Davison's book is, in effect, a lucid and well-documented, 200-page amplification of this potted biography, with ample information about how her many books and short stories relate to her life. More than 20 of them, for instance, include characters who are twins, while other family and domestic aspects occur frequently. Childhood enthusiasm for reading is clearly manifest – he mentions the influence of *Pinocchio* on *The Little Wooden Horse*, something about which Williams herself was apparently unaware until the affinity between them was pointed out by Elaine Moss in 1971 (Davison, p.57). The art classes also bore fruit: Barbara became a professional illustrator, and Ursula provided illustrations for many of her own books, including some particularly attractive cut-out pictures in *The Good Little Christmas Tree* (1943). The pony riding is also in evidence in several of her most popular books, notably *Kelpie the Gypsies' Pony* (1934). In particular, the scope for imaginative development provided by the mysterious and rambling house seems to have inspired the background to many of her stories.

Davison also reveals many other facets of Williams' life and character that are not provided in her potted biography quoted above. She participated enthusiastically in early outings of the Puffin Club, organised by her friend Kaye Webb, to the extent of travelling to remote parts of the country for fun weekends even at an age when this might seem over-adventurous. Her delight in children's enjoyment of her writing did not extend to a love of babies, whom she could scarcely tolerate until they reached the age of being an audience for her storytelling. In her later years she became very abrupt and blunt, even rude, to those children who transgressed against her own rather patrician standards of behaviour and manners. Nevertheless, overall she remains endearing, being very clearly 'good at heart'.

Why then the relative obscurity of much that she wrote in her later years? She had many difficulties with publishers who felt that the kind of fantasy she produced was out of favour with children in a period when 'gritty realism' seemed to dominate the market. She herself contended that the children were still interested in magic and witches, and it can be argued that the subsequent success of Harry Potter was a vindication of her convictions, though it came too late to be relevant to her. Later in her career, she also had some problems with 'political correctness', when some of her early books were republished. I suspect that her two most famous books will live on, perhaps with a



younger audience than she envisaged: their intriguing openings, fairy-tale structures, vividness of description and empathy of feeling with the title characters combine to make an immediate impact. They are also rewarding to read aloud, with repeated formulae such as that of the 'quiet little horse' whose only wish is to serve his master, and Gobbolino's constant wish to be 'a kitchen cat'. The character of Sootica, Gobbolino's less cuddly sister, is also attractive, and has frequently attracted particular interest from young girls listening to the story. Even late in her career, Williams attempted to build on the success of these two early books, with *The Further Adventures of Gobbolino and the Little Wooden Horse* (1984). Davison comments that this book 'is saved from undue sentimentality by the reformed, but still impudent Sootica' (p.191).

It would appear, both from Davison's book and from a second look at some of her writing, that Ursula Moray Williams was a natural storyteller, who became an intuitive writer, and, as she herself recognised, just happened to write what children liked.

Pat Pinsent

Going Graphic: Comics and Graphic Novels for Young People

Bridget Carrington and Jennifer Harding (ed), Lichfield: Pied Piper Publishing, pb. 978 0 9546 3849 8, £20, 2010, 258pp.

Despite a long tradition of producing comic papers, Britain has arguably lagged behind much of the rest of the world in the production of graphic novels, including those for children and young people. In recent years this has changed and the 2009 IBBY/NCRCL MA Conference, held as usual at Roehampton University, London reflected the growing interest in this type of literature in the UK and elsewhere, both in terms of readership and academically.

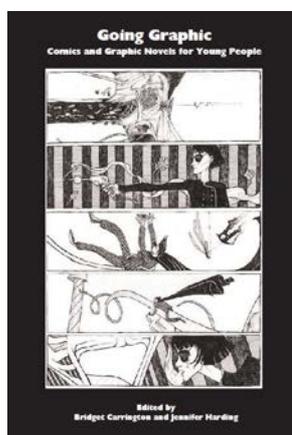
This collection of papers from that conference reflects the diversity of the speakers and delegates, as well as of the subject matter. Contributors come from a variety of backgrounds and take a range of approaches: publishers, artists and authors provide insights into the creation of comics and graphic novels; teachers examine ways in which these can be used to encourage literacy and enhance subject teaching; whilst academic writers analyse and discuss various works from many points of view. The comics and graphic novels discussed also vary hugely: many continue a subversive tradition originating in political cartoons, while others have more conventional aims of education and/or entertainment. Their 'authors' may be illustrators, gamers or scriptwriters, as well as more conventional print authors. Their original source or inspiration may be a film, a fairy tale or a video game. Some are published by multinational companies, others by individuals selling their products at comics fairs.

Yet there are some unifying themes. The study of comics and graphic novels within children's literature is still relatively undeveloped, and several authors attempt to define the genre using the works of the main theorists Eisner and McCloud, and discussing different works in the light of these theories. Some highlight the difficulties of categorising the books: when does a picture book become a comic strip or a graphic novel? Complementary to this is the theme of the inter-cultural nature of comics and graphic novels, as they push the boundaries between print, film and video game, as well as between languages and cultures. The many contributions to this collection by scholars who come from outside of the UK help to illuminate this.

The book is amply illustrated with both black and white figures and colour plates. Helpfully, as this is an area of study that is still new to many, it also provides a glossary of terms as well as a good index.

IBBY is perhaps unique in that its members come from a variety of professional backgrounds, albeit all with an interest in and enthusiasm for children's literature. This collection is another example of the success arising from that collaboration.

Sue Mansfield



BookPower: Literacy through Literature Book 2

Jane Bunting, Sue Ellis, Jenny Vernon, London: CLPE, pb. 978 1 8722 6746 3, 2010, £6.99, 64pp.

We are constantly reminded by researchers into children's literacy in the UK that a concerning proportion of homes have no books, that children (particularly boys) prefer digital media to reading a book, and that a concerning proportion of teachers don't read literature written for children. All this makes the promotion of reading an uphill task, and a daunting prospect for those teachers who themselves were not avid readers, or who are not aware of the range, suitability and literary value of the many excellent texts available for their students.

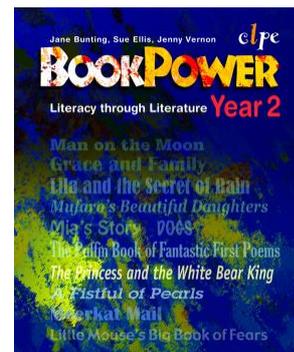
It is therefore encouraging to see a series that helps the overworked primary teacher to construct literacy lessons, and, far more importantly, engage and enthuse their students, in the very best and most appropriate literature for children. As there is also constant authorial criticism of the overuse of bite-size, bleeding chunks rather than whole texts that the current English curriculum encourages, it is heartening to see complete texts being studied and used as springboards for the student's own creative work.

BookPower is one of the products of the Power of Reading Project, an initiative by the Centre for Literacy in Primary Education (CLPE) that aims to raise children's achievement through teachers' knowledge of literature and its creative use in the primary phase classroom. The project is about to enter its seventh year, and has already published a Book Power volume for each of Year 1 and Year 5. The blurb for the series states that the teachers' books feature 'well-written and powerful books that have been chosen because they will stir children's ideas and feelings, and involve them in discussion, *BookPower* provides units of work on each, each lasting between two and five weeks, supported by learning aims, text-level objectives, key teaching approaches and resources'. It also claims that 'the wide-ranging classroom activities will encourage children to explore the texts through drama, role play and visual exploration, and through activities on the accompanying CD. It will also encourage children to think and talk about the books and to read them more intensively, providing inspiration for their own writing'. Whether there is a CD for Book 2 is not clear, as my review copy had no CD, nor was there any mention of one in the book itself.

BookPower Book 2 begins by explaining the key teaching approaches encouraged, and how texts can be used as the core of a literacy programme. The texts chosen are varied, with old favourites and new discoveries offering a wide range of genres and cultural insights from many countries and traditions. As well as biography, poetry, picture book and anthology, there are units based on texts that lead on to other areas of the curriculum, and well-known books by Mary Hoffman and Caroline Binch (*Grace and Family*), Michael Foreman (*Mia's Story*) and Elizabeth Laird (*A Fistful of Pearls*), and an author study of Emily Gravett. These aren't particularly challenging texts, but are lively and readable, and would sit well within the range of ability in a typical Year 2 classroom, particularly where there are English as in additional language (EAL) readers. The nine chapters, each centred on one of the texts and the format for teaching each of the texts recommended for use, follow exactly the same pattern. This is a great benefit to busy teachers, and reduces the time taken in planning each lesson. The activities include reading aloud, rereading, responding and reflecting, interpreting and performing, and the various practical steps that help when writing. The book is well illustrated with photographs of students at work and of the work they have produced, which allows teachers to gauge the responses they should expect.

This is a really useful book for teachers who are not children's literature specialists (and even for those who are), and if *BookPower Book 2* is representative of the others in the series, it would seem that the teachers' books, and the Power of Reading initiative as a whole, should be a valuable asset in raising the quality and effectiveness of literacy teaching in those primary schools that participate.

Bridget Carrington



Children's Books – South Africa

S is for South Africa

Beverley Naidoo, illus Prodecepta Das, London: Frances Lincoln Children's Books, hb. 978 1 8478 0018 3, £11.99, 2010, 32pp.



I deliberately deferred reviewing this volume in Frances Lincoln's World Alphabet series so that it could be included in this special South Africa issue of *IBBYLink*. Like more than half of the books in the series, this book features the distinguished photography of Prodecepta Das – crystal clear and abounding in detail – while, as might be anticipated from so committed an author, Beverley Naidoo ensures that the text far transcends mere description in its incisive portrayal of the changes that have occurred in this 'rainbow nation'.

Naidoo's introductory note provides a historical context, supplying young readers with information about Nelson Mandela, who also features in 'M is for Madiba'. The political aspect is apparent from the beginning:

A is for Apartheid Museum
showing all the hate in our grandparents' past,
black and white forced apart.
But now, hand in hand, we invite you to our land
and declare, 'Let's build a country for all of us to share.'

It would be a serious mistake however to see this book as no more than polemic. An enormous sense of fun is generated by the pictures and free verses accompanying topics such as 'C is for Cricket', 'D is for Days on Durban beach', 'J is for Jewellery' and 'B is for Bunny Chow' [a spicy bean curry]. Specific cultural aspects are highlighted in 'N is for Ndebele house-painting, /taught by mother to daughter', illustrated by an impressive display of a dwelling covered in colourful triangles and squares executed without the aid of a ruler, and in 'X is for isiXhosa', a definition that also embraces a multitude of other South African languages. Congratulations to Naidoo for avoiding the usual 'X is for Xmas'!

Photographs of 11 faces accompany words recalling the varied ancestry of South Africans, while the title verse perhaps says most about the country overall:

S is for South Africa where two oceans meet,
cold Atlantic from the west and warm Indian from the east.
Our country stretches wide over Africa's southern shores
from golden beach to misty mountain, desert sand to grassy plain
in a land of contrasts where we praise the sun – yet pray for rain!

This is undoubtedly an outstanding addition to this impressive series of books.

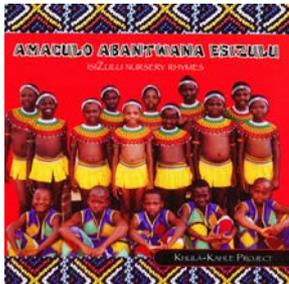
Pat Pinsent

Amaculo Abantwana Esizulu/IsiZulu Nursery Rhymes

Phindi Dlamini, Pietermaritzburg: Nutrend Publishers, pb. 978 1 9202 8004 8, R30.00, 2009, 28pp.

There is an accompanying CD and a DVD. All can be purchased from the Nutrend website: www.nutrend.co.za. Nutrend hope to find a UK publisher in the near future.

My interest in this project comes from my visit to the 2010 London Book Fair. South Africa was the focus of that year's exhibition and I had marked off on the programme a presentation by Phindi Dlamini on the project to find some isiZulu traditional nursery rhymes, produce a music book and record a CD and DVD at a primary school. South Africa, however, suffered badly at the fair as the Iceland volcanic cloud prevent many publishers and authors from attending, including Phindi Dlamini. A sad video of her regrets at not being present was shown at her slot and no books had been able to make their way to the UK. A representative for Nutrend was able to visit the UK later and sent



me the book, CD and DVD for review. Phindi Dlamini sent me the text of her presentation and that is printed in this issue of *IBBYLink*.

The music book contains 16 songs that cover various aspects of children's lives. Most of these are as relevant to UK children as to isiZulu children. Each song is annotated in solfar (doh, ray, me, far, so, la, te, doh) with the note for doh given. Under each line also are the words in isiZulu and in an English translation. See the article for details of the songs. The layout is clear and any UK primary teaching would enjoy using these nursery rhymes in class. They could be taught as part of almost any subject – Africa, language, social change, social behaviour, history or geography. The CD is a recording of the songs with a keyboard accompaniment at three Zululand primary schools.

The DVD shows the children performing the songs, dressed as shown on the cover in what I assume is a tribal costume. The dance actions are simple and could be learned by UK pupils, as they synchronise well with the rhymes and words of the songs.

A very enterprising project and a useful initiative for UK primary and nursery schools.

Jennifer Harding

Children's Books – Africa

E is for Ethiopia

Ashenafi Gudeta, illus. Ataklti Mulu, Betelhem Abate and Dama Boru, London: Frances Lincoln Children's Books, hb. 978 1 8450 7825 6, £11.99, 2010, 32pp.

This is another splendidly informative, delightfully illustrated volume in the same World Alphabet series. The history, religious traditions, products and culture of this country, which is, as Gudeta indicates, 'one of the oldest civilisations in the world', are all highlighted. Coffee, *injera* (bread) and *kitfo* (minced meat) feature, alongside *weha* (water) and the Italian loan word *merkato* (market). Long-distance running has its place, a result of the proliferation of Ethiopian marathon winners, but perhaps the most interesting sporting reference is to be found under 'X is for Xmas' (testimony to the Christian heritage of Ethiopia, though the Moslems are not forgotten either), where the tradition is recounted that 'the shepherds looking after their flocks played *genna* [a game resembling hockey] to celebrate the birth of Jesus'.

This book is a rich store of information for anyone wanting to find out more about the country, and particularly to support the heritage of the many people of Ethiopian origin now resident in Britain.

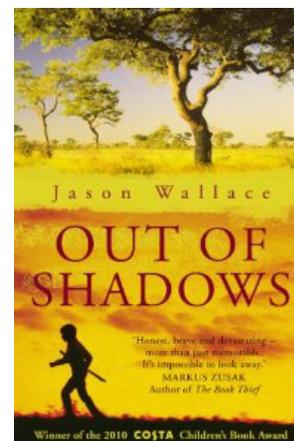
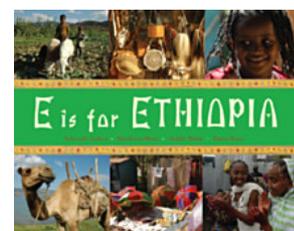
Pat Pinsent

Out of Shadows

Jason Wallace, London: Andersen Press, pb. 978 1 8493 9948 4 201 0, £6.99, 2010, 320pp.

This brutally realistic book, set in 1980s Zimbabwe after Robert Mugabe has come to power, won the Costa Children's Book award for 2010 (see report and description in our Spring 2011 issue). In view of the complex relationship between South Africa and the former Southern Rhodesia, it seems appropriate to say a little more about the book here.

In an article in *The Sunday Times* early in 2011, Jason Wallace recalls his own experience of culture shock when his parents took him to Zimbabwe at the age of 12, and how aghast he was at school (boys only, similar to that depicted in the book both in its predominately white intake and in its violent ethos) to hear the stories of fellow pupils' experiences of landmines and mortar shells, and of themselves firing guns at a very young age. Although this book, Wallace's sixth but his first to be published, was written during his daily suburban London commute to his work as a Web designer, it creates a vivid picture of the tensions in the newly independent country.



The prime instance of racial hostility is the way that Nelson, one of the few black pupils in the school, is treated: Nelson's unpleasant experiences go from being verbally abused as 'stinking chocolate-face' (p.12) in the dorm he shares with 19 white boys who are mostly under the dominance of the brutish Ivan Hascott, to being tortured by Ivan and his gang with vicious ants and a scorpion. All the time, the narrator, Robert Jacklin, despite the 'enlightened' outlook arising from his British background and his father's liberal sympathies (his father sees Mugabe as 'a great, great man' (p.4)), stands by, feeling guilty but doing nothing to help Nelson. Instead, Robert, through cowardice and the fear of being friendless, chooses to side with Ivan, staying with him during a school holiday rather than visiting Nelson's home, but constantly despising himself for his weakness.

The main moral issue, posed both at the beginning and the end of the book, is the age-old question as to whether tyrannicide is ever justified. It eventually appears that Ivan's main reason for wanting Robert as an ally is because the new boy is such an excellent shot that he could be a valuable asset to Ivan's plan to assassinate Mugabe. Robert resists, to the extent that at the end of the main text he shoots Ivan in order to protect Mugabe, who is visiting the school. In a postscript set in today's Zimbabwe, he inevitably ponders the irony of Ivan's dying words: 'You should have let me do it.'

Wallace did not write the book specifically for a teenage market, though he sees it as most suitable for boys of 12 or over, since he has not shirked the violence. In some respects the school setting puts me in mind of *Tom Brown's Schooldays*, brought very much up to date. While Thomas Hughes' book has a direct and sometimes explicit relationship to the public schools' role in maintaining Britain's empire, *Out of Shadows* is 'out there', in a society created by that empire. And like the scorpion, it has a sting in its tail, in the question as to whether Mugabe's death soon after his accession to power might have saved the people of his country much subsequent distress – a quandary intensified by the fact that the agent of the attempted assassination is prejudiced and acting from racist motives. The complexity of this novel certainly makes it worth reading by young people, not only for its treatment of Zimbabwean independence, but also because the questions it poses apply much more widely.

Pat Pinsent

Beatrice's Dream

Karen Lynn Williams, photog. Wendy Stone, London: Frances Lincoln Children's Books, hb. 978 1 8478 0019 0, £11.99, 2011, 32pp.

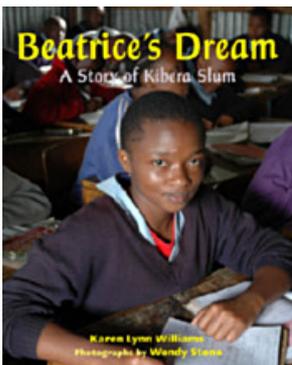
A heart-warming and down-to-earth look at the life of Beatrice from the Kibera slum in Nairobi, Kenya.

The matter-of-fact tone of the book enables readers to be grateful for their own style of living and at the same time admire Beatrice's determination to better her life and give back to her community. Issues that affect children the world over are handled in a sensitive manner, enabling teachers and children to explore their own feelings. We were surprised at the insightful and thoughtful comments the children made as a result of sharing the book together. The gentle humour in the book made us smile.

The photographs encourage the reader to be curious and to want to learn more about Kibera. Children can easily draw the parallels between their lives and that of Beatrice, the similarities and differences. Unlike Beatrice's description of parallel lines 'never meeting even if you follow them up to Heaven', in this book there is a sense of hope that we can work towards a future where our parallel lives do meet through education, both in the Kenyan slums and around the world.

An uplifting, sensitive and thought-provoking book much enjoyed by Years 4 and 6.

Vicki Willingham



Frances Lincoln First Experience Series

New Shoes for Helen

Ifeoma Onyefulu, London: Frances Lincoln Children's Books, hb. 978 1 8478 0128 9, £11.99, 2011, 32pp.

Helen needs new shoes. In this bright, colourful and cheerful photographic book, Helen is shown many different shoes to try, but finds each pair unsuitable for different reasons. The search for the perfect shoes allows us a glimpse of Helen's environment and an insight into the culture of Ethiopia, from home to the local market. The beautiful photographs encourage discussion and questioning, plus a sharing of experiences.

Both the girls and the boys in Years 2 and 4 enjoyed the simple repetitive style of the text, and the girls in particular were very keen to comment and talk about the pros and cons of each pair of shoes. Year 4 girls would have liked to see Helen dressed in her wedding finery wearing her new shoes. For such a simple, gentle book, I was surprised at how much discussion it generated. When left in the book corner, the children returned to it again and again.



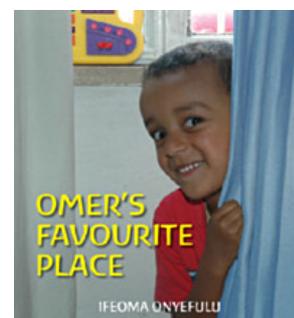
Omer's Favourite Place

Ifeoma Onyefulu, London: Frances Lincoln Children's Books, hb. 978 1 8478 0129 6, £11.99, 2011, 32pp.

Omer has a cheeky and infectious smile, which leads the reader from one of his playing places to the next, until we find Omer's favourite place to play. We explore Omer's world through the words in the story and through the photographs, which, although set in Ethiopia, are familiar to us all.

The voices in the book are familiar to every family and so this is a comforting and reassuring read for young children. Years 1 and 2 were keen to talk about the activities that Omer engages in and the gentle text encouraged the children to join in.

The book is a very good introduction to Ethiopian family life, challenging possible preconceptions, or misconceptions.



Vicki Willingham

Children's Books – Various

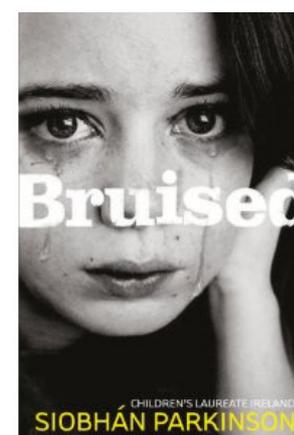
Bruised

Siobhán Parkinson, London: Hodder, 978 1 4449 0359 1, £6.99, 2011, 256pp.

This novel by the Irish Children's Laureate, Siobhán Parkinson, was sparked off when the novelist heard a radio talk by a woman whose alcoholic mother had on one occasion provided only a bag of apples for her children's dinner – an incident that seems to have stuck in the memories of both the speaker and the writer more than many accounts of outright cruelty. *Bruised* begins with this incident, as the narrator, 14-year-old Jono, is triggered into action on behalf of his eight-year-old sister Julie, when he sees her sitting on the floor, surrounded by the apples, having just been hit on the face by their mother. Clearly the title of the novel is to be taken both literally and metaphorically.

No longer able to take refuge with their grandmother, who has recently died, the children set off in the general direction of their father, who left the family some time earlier and has now remarried. In desperation at being unable to provide for Julie, Jono sends her to knock at their father's door, but we later learn that the father has turned Julie over to social services.

Despite the bleak scenario and many heart-rending events, Parkinson maintains a tone that seems appropriate to Jono's lively personality. The details of his past life are supplied incidentally by means of anecdotes, as he recalls school friends and a teacher who has inspired him with a love of literature. We realise that he has been just as bruised mentally by the family situation as his sister has physically. There is no



sentimental happy ending, but instead a realistic resolution that is neither the best nor the worst of all possibilities. A positive outcome is implied, rather than stated, and has been facilitated by people who are trying to help despite their own limitations. The most notable such character is Kate, the social worker, an important part of Jono's coming to terms with life.

The novel is fairly short, but quite demanding; as the Hodder publishing director, Anne McNeil, states: 'The author trusts the teen reader to be clever and be able to work out the story through layers ... we are never sure what exactly has happened' This ambiguity is a strength, making the reader aware that situations like that of Jono and Julie can never be neatly summed up, and, indeed, that such children will be permanently 'bruised', however much well-meaning adults try to help them.

Pat Pinsent

Nicholas

René Goscinny, illus. Jean-Jacques Sempé, trans. Anthea Bell, London: Phaidon Press, pb. 978 0 7148 6114 2, £40.00, 2011 (hb. 2005; French original 1960), 160pp.

Goscinny's stories about little Nicholas and his school friends have delighted French schoolchildren in the past and will doubtless appeal to adults of a certain age. Nicholas and his friends belong to an altogether more innocent time when boys dressed up in cowboy suits, or overflowing inkwells dirtied the hands of school inspectors. There is a gentle irony and nostalgic appeal to these stories, but it is the charm and wit of Sempé's drawings of tiny schoolboys and their escapades that are the real glory of the book: this benevolent satirist could capture every nuance of human behaviour.

Gillian Lathey

(This review was first published in *The School Librarian* in 2005 for the hardback edition.)

Bubble Trouble

Margaret Mahy, illus. Polly Dunbar, London: Frances Lincoln Children's Books, pb. 978 1 8478 0186 9, £6.99, 2008, 40pp.

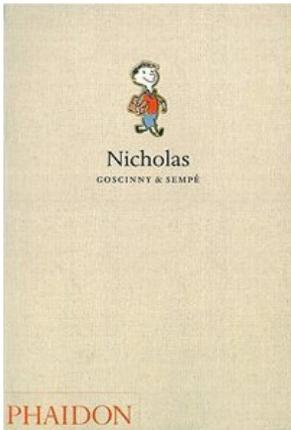
Margaret Mahy's skill with words is shown at its glorious best in this exciting picture book which tells how Mabel blew a bubble

which caused a lot of trouble, such a lot of bubble trouble in a bibble-bobble way, for it broke away from Mabel as it bobbed across the table, where it bobbed over Baby, and it wafted him away.

Baby's peril is spotted by a host of other children and adult characters, including crabby Mr Copple and feeble Mrs Threeble, all expressively illustrated by Polly Dunbar, until finally a choirboy 'who was fond of getting into trouble when he didn't have to sing' hits on a solution, and everyone rallies round, though we always knew it would end happily. The alliteration, rhyme and rhythm (in a pattern sometimes reminiscent of that childhood favourite A.A. Milne's *The King's Breakfast*) make this book great fun to read aloud to a wide age range, and there's a lot of detail to find in the illustrations.

Margaret Mahy, award winning author of over 200 novels, short stories and picture books, and Polly Dunbar, then an up-and-coming illustrator, combined well as a team in the creation of the popular picture book *Down the Back of the Chair* in 2006. Polly Dunbar is now an award winner herself as an author as well as an illustrator, and is well-established in the world of children's books. In this second book as a pairing, her gentle illustrations are full of warmth, and bring out all the humour in Margaret Mahy's words – a riotous romp of a story.

Diana Barnes



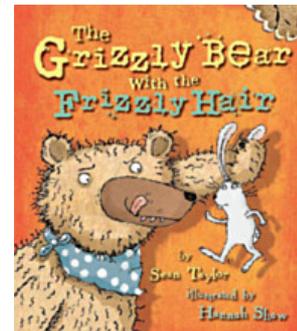
The Grizzly Bear with the Frizzly Hair

Sean Taylor, illus. Hannah Shaw, London: Frances Lincoln Children's Books, pb. 978 1 8478 0144 9, £6.99, 2011, 24pp.

This lively picture book, based on an ancient international folk tale, tells the story of a hungry bear arguing with his prospective main course, a cunning little rabbit. The bear's determination to make a meal of his catch drives him through the first half of the book, and it really does seem as though the story will reach its conclusion without the rabbit's survival. However, in a final desperate bid for his life, the rabbit entices the bear to the edge of a stream with the promise of something there much larger to eat. As the bear squints down into the waters below, his reflection glares back in defiance, enraging him enough to attack and slip into the stream, at which satisfying point the rabbit makes his leap for freedom, safe in the knowledge that 'this is as far as the story goes'.

A modern twist on a classic folk tale that should entertain and beguile both young and older readers alike, with its wicked sense of humour and energetic illustrations.

Sarah Stokes



Measuring Angels

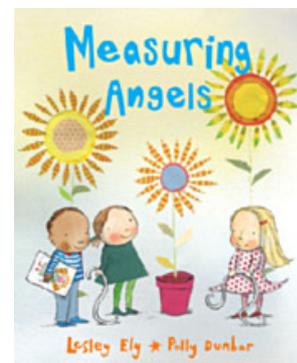
Lesley Ely, illus. Polly Dunbar, London: Francis Lincoln, 978 1 8478 0048 0, £6.99, 2011, 24pp.

Three genial little figures stand beside a brilliant sunflower-like plant. Two girls hold coiled lengths in their hands that resemble worms or snakes. The boy has tucked under his arm the drawing of a colourful figure with outstretched arms, or are they wings? Two magnificent flowers appear to be growing out of the heads of two of the children, or are they suns shining down on them? This lively cover, along with its intriguing title 'Measuring Angels', grabs the attention and invites curiosity.

The setting for this engaging story is school. This is a place where you learn facts; how to direct curiosity purposefully in the world about you; how to distinguish between what is literal and real, and what can be achieved through the power of imagination. School is also a place where you learn about life in the classroom and in the playground, where friendships thrive or sour. All this is in the simple text.

The illustrations bring the joys and sorrows of such experiences to life. The two girls fall out. Their friend Gabriel, who, like his namesake, believes angels are messengers of good will, appeals to their teacher. She listens, observes and encourages, but does not interfere. Swans flying overhead give the children an intimation of angels, but not reconciliation. Miss Miles makes the two girls reluctant partners planting sunflower seeds. When their seedling does not thrive they are encouraged to talk to it. Gabriel suggests making a guardian angel. A dream of a radiant angel hovering over a field of sunflowers suggests transformation. Handmade angels seem dowdy in comparison to the glory of the flowers and the glowing feelings that have been generated. Friendship and hope are restored and strengthened. A delightful book.

Judith Philo

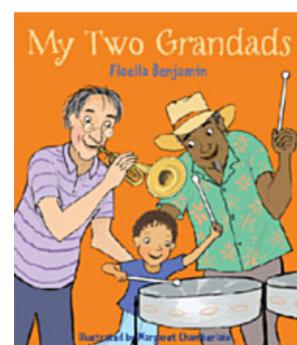


My Two Grandads

Floella Benjamin, illus. Margaret Chamberlain. London: Frances Lincoln Children's Books, hb. 978 1 8478 0060 2, £11.99, 2010, 32pp

This picture book is a warm-hearted tale of music from different cultural traditions. Aston loves music and is encouraged by both his Grandads. Grandad Harry, from Rochdale, teaches Aston the trumpet, while Grandad Roy, from Trinidad, introduces him to the steel drums. Aston must find a way of bringing both together at the summer fair.

The reader learns about different sorts of music – Aston imagines himself marching in Grandad Harry's brass band and then swaying 'from side to side' at the carnival. Both



scenes are conveyed with colour and energy through Margaret Chamberlain's illustrations. The story illustrates the difficulties of beginning an instrument and the importance of practice; Aston works hard to 'puff out his cheeks' in order to sound his first notes on the trumpet. A further dimension is added by the inclusion of the musical notation for the tunes featured in the story.

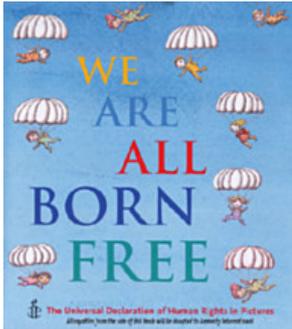
This book celebrates music as a unifying force, and highlights the joy that arises from sharing music with others.

Paul Stover

Children's Books – Frances Lincoln First Experience Series

We Are All Born Free (mini edition)

Amnesty International, Frances Lincoln Children's Books, hb. 978 1 8478 9151 7, £5.99, 2011, 72pp.



The original edition of this book in picture-book format, published in 2008, has, quite rightly, been a huge success critically as well as in sales, and this mini, or pocket, edition works just as well. Well-known children's illustrators have each taken one of the 30 Articles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and illustrated it in their own way on a double-page spread, so there is a wide range of styles and content. Laurence and Catherine Anholt's spread uses two styles: their familiar busy detail shows the right to a home (lots of variations on the idea of a home), money and medical help on the left-hand page, while on the right-hand page they have a very stylised take on the right 'Music, art, craft and sport are for everyone to enjoy', but most of the artists use the spread for one picture. The simplest is probably Satoshi Kitamura's: he illustrates the right to meet our friends with four hands shown from four directions meeting in the middle. The starkest is definitely Jane Ray's bloodstained rag doll showing that 'No one has the right to hurt us or to torture us'. There is clever use of black and white in Debi Gliori's classroom, with colourful bubbles showing the children thinking whatever they like, while Alan Lee's right to travel is completely in delicate grey. Korcky Paul and Chris Riddell use humour to illustrate the articles that no one should make another person a slave, and that there should be order, but the points come across clearly.

This is a book to share with a child or children, as some explanation may be needed, but, as David Tennant says in his introduction, 'we need to look after each other', and this book will help children to understand that. The Articles are simplified, but all the more telling for that, and may well lead to useful discussions in the classroom situation. With guidance, children from four to about eight, and possibly upwards, will find a lot to think about in this little book.

Diana Barnes

R is for Russia

Vladimir Kabakov and Prodecepta Das, London: Frances Lincoln Children's Books, hb. 978 1 8478 0102 9, £11.99, 2011, 32pp.



Who knows why Russian families eat pancakes on special occasions such as Maslenitsa, or the name of Europe's largest river? Do you know why an area in Russia called the Tundra is known as 'the land of the Midnight Sun'? Year 4 do! This book is full of fascinating facts about Russia that stimulate the reader's curiosity about a culture outside their own personal knowledge and understanding. It is also detailed enough for Russian children to learn something of their own country, enabling them to share and feel proud of their heritage.

Both children and adults will enjoy the superb photographs by Prodecepta Das in this photographic alphabet of Russia, showing how Russian people live, their lives, the magnificent landscapes, their history and traditions. Each page is set out clearly, with just enough information to keep young children engaged.

Another brilliant book in the World Alphabet series.

Vicki Willingham

Children's Books – O'Brien Press Bridges Series

This series of story books from O'Brien Press combines fact with fiction to depict a variety of countries and their associated traditions. The stories are presented through child characters who all find themselves in the middle of very different cultures. The series is aimed at readers who are developing and confident: the balance between picture and text varies from page to page, and would support those children who are making the move towards reading books that contain more text. The quirky and engaging illustrations are provided by artists of the Cartoon Saloon, an Irish multi-award-winning animation design studio, originally set up in 1999.

The Dreaming Tree

Eithne Massey, illus. Marie Thorhauge, Dublin: O'Brien Press, hb. 978 1 8471 7158 0, £6.99, 2009, 32pp

In each book, information about other countries is cleverly woven through the story: this includes the languages spoken, the weather and annual celebrations. Within the books the authors also present traditional stories. In *The Dreaming Tree*, for example, through the character of the grandmother, the author narrates a traditional Brazilian tale. Through this tale, readers may develop their vocabulary and knowledge of the world as they encounter exotic animals such as the 'tapir' and 'caiman'.

I Won't Go to China

Enda Wyley, illus. Marie Thorhauge, Dublin: O'Brien Press, hb. 978 1 8471 7159 7, £6.99, 2009, 32pp

The books portray dramas within family relationships. For example, in *I Won't Go to China*, Chang-Ming would rather stay in England to play football than visit his grandmother in China. The books also promote the value of children's relationships with their grandparents, by showing that their elders have a wealth of knowledge and experience of the customs within their country: when Chang-Ming eventually goes to China he is pleased to celebrate Chinese New Year with his elderly relative.

The stories offer insight into the traditions and values within other cultures, and would make a positive addition to the classroom.

Others in the series include:

Olanna's Big Day

Natasha Mac a'Bhaird, illus. Ray Forkan, Dublin: O'Brien Press, hb. 978 1 8471 7171 9, £6.99, 2009, 32pp.

The Romanian Builder

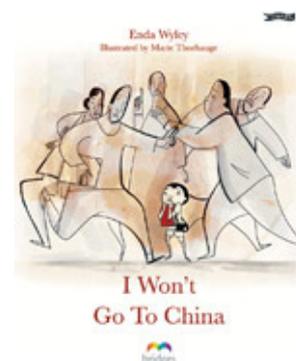
Peter Prendergast, illus. Ross Stewart, Dublin: O'Brien Press, hb. 978 1 8471 7105 4, £6.99, 2009, 32pp

Kerenza Ghosh

Not Bad for a Bad Lad

Michael Morpurgo, illus. Michael Foreman, London: Templar Publishing, hb. 978 1 84877 312 7, £7.99, 2010, 80pp.

In this book, set just after the Second World War, a grandfather recalls his story of going off the rails as a young man, to his grandson. Failure at school is redeemed by a teacher's discovery of his love of percussion instruments, but when the teacher leaves, his one reason for going to school ends. Minor transgressions with the law turn into more serious crimes, which see him end up in a borstal in which the harsh treatment is



relieved only by his helping out in the stables. Under the close but friendly eye of the stable manager he finds a rapport with the horses that eventually leads to him joining the army and a life in the cavalry where he finally becomes Drum Major with a horse he looked after at the borstal. This is a warm-hearted tale of a boy who survives a difficult life through the help of two grown-ups who could see the good side of him where others saw only failure. The illustrations, interspersed in the text and in large centre spreads, complement the story and create a real feel of the period, as well as making the book accessible to a wide range of children.

John Dunne

Children's Books – Barrington Stoke

These books are additions to Barrington Stoke's publications designed to attract reluctant readers, or those who have reading ages below the chronological standard.

The Mountain's Blood

Lari Don, illus. Paul Duffield, Edinburgh: Barrington Stoke, pb. 978 1 8429 9400 9, £6.99, 2011, 60pp.

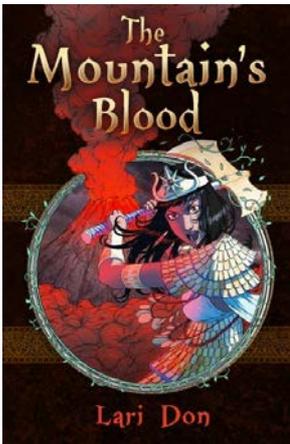
Just imagine being a goddess and being assigned a divine portfolio that completely fails to match your talents and desires. How frustrating can being a divinity become? Lari Don's protagonist Innana is feisty and combative. For some inexplicable reason she is appointed the goddess of love – Athena trying to be Aphrodite. She hates her job so much that when she meets a mountain that refuses to do obeisance to her, she declares war on the mountain. The remainder of the book is an account of her uphill struggle. Perhaps to attract boy readers, there is an illustrated catalogue of her armaments. In general, however, the illustrations soften the warlike impact, being stylised and deliberately archaic.

This little book poses a big confrontation of values. A female character can be as resolute and implacable as a male: tick this box for the gender agenda. Yet this is indisputably a story that dramatises and revels in armed conflict, not quite what we want to put before young readers when the daily news already provides them with too much of the same. The appeal of such a work is undeniable. Perhaps having a salutary message embedded is the best we can reasonably demand.

Candy Girl

Karen McCombie, illus. Jessica Secheret, Edinburgh: Barrington Stoke, pb. 978 1 8429 9875 5, £5.99, 2010, 68pp.

Karen McCombie's story is a teenage drama with more than a passing resemblance to *The Devil Wears Prada*. Dixie is a 13 year old with a 16 year old sister. She has a passionate attachment to the magazine *Candy Girl*, and to its elegant and sophisticated agony aunt Sharron Ford. Imagine Dixie's excitement when she lands a work experience internship at the magazine, working directly with Sharron. It's a dream come true Except that the offices of *Candy Girl* turn out to be a miserable place, dominated by a bullying editor ironically called Polly Cheer. On Dixie's first day, Sharron is absent. But when she appears she is a grave disappointment, surly and overweight and addicted to doughnuts. Dixie ends up picking the letters to be published and writing the responses. A particularly moving letter comes from an unnamed writer. Dixie pens the response unaware that the letter comes from her own sister. This is a biting satire on magazine journalism. Perhaps Meryl Streep might fancy the role of Polly.



Return of the (Un)teenager

Pete Johnson, Edinburgh:Barrington Stoke Teen, 2011, pb. 978 1 8429 9839 7, £6.99, 2011, 73pp.

Pete Johnson's book is a sequel, which does have the desired effect of making one keen to read its predecessor. On attaining his thirteenth birthday, Spencer made a solemn contract with himself not to conform to any of the conventional mores of the teenager. He will remain true to himself. In consequence he wears clothes like someone's grandfather and watches nothing on TV except documentaries about the whale. But his campaign hits a snag: he finds a girl to whom he is strongly attracted, Emily. His friend Zac tells him that Emily will never get serious about someone as weird as Spencer: he must dress, talk and behave like a proper teenager or he has no chance. It's Facebook and a hoodie, or a solitary life.

This book – expressed in diary form – stands or falls by the character of Spencer. He is both endearing and exasperating. No one can read Spencer's thoughts without feeling a thrill of identity: we have all nurtured wishes to subvert convention. I would say that Spencer has the attributes and clarity of a protagonist in a major novel. Worthy as these books are, I would encourage Johnson to seek a wider platform on which to parade Spencer's eccentric gifts, something comparable to *Billy Liar*.

A rarity in the Barrington Stoke catalogue, this book has no illustrations. Or rather it has brilliant illustrations, planted in the reader's imagination by the text.

Rebecca R. Butler

Aftershock

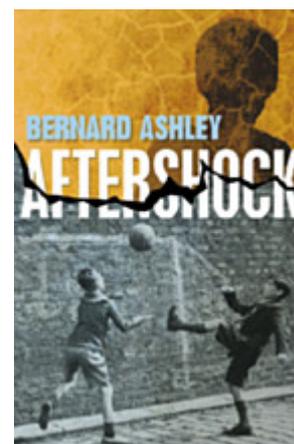
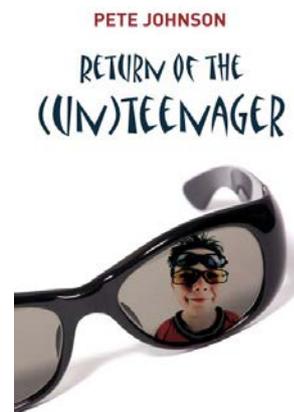
Bernard Ashley, Frances Lincoln Children's Books, pb. 978 1 8478 0055 8, £6.99, 2011, 139pp.

One of the themes of next year's IBBY World Congress is migration. Appropriately enough, Ashley's book is a study of one family's migration from Greece to England.

Makis is quite accustomed to dealing with earth tremors in his Kephallonia home, but when a severe earthquake destroys his home and kills his fisherman, father his mother opts to head for England for no better reason than that the members of the British rescue team were kind.

In a Camden Town school Makis encounters prejudice, while his mother simply refuses to adapt to life in London – she speaks and reads no English and never goes out except to church and the local Greek shops. However, Makis has a saving grace – he is a talented footballer and is soon selected for the school XI, a move bitterly resented by the English boy whose place he takes. Makis steals two English primers to help his mother learn English, overcoming her reluctance by pretending that he is the one who needs help from her. When Makis is chosen to appear in the school's Cup Final, his mother has a breakdown and Makis stays to comfort her and misses the kick-off. The head teacher, unaware of the circumstances, publicly accuses Makis of letting the school down. His mother arrives at the school. Indignation fuels her first conversation in English.

Ashley tackles his authorial task with two self-imposed handicaps. First, most of his readers will not be migrants and their sympathies must be enlisted on behalf of a stranger in a strange land. Secondly, many of his readers will (like this reviewer) have little interest in football, which forms an important leitmotif of the book. Nevertheless, he does engage the reader's sympathy. His characters are three-dimensional and convincing. The episode when Makis teaches his mother to read English is very moving.



This book has a worthy corrective message. To Makis sport and learning are twin objectives, neither eclipsing the other. To many boys sport is the be all and end all. If they score the winning goal, everything else ceases to matter. In the adult world that may be true for a handful of supremely gifted players: for most boys it is a delusion and a trap.

Rebecca R. Butler

Circle of Fire

S.M. Hall, London : Frances Lincoln Children's Books, pb. 978 1 8478 0121 0, £6.99, 2011, 290pp.

When Maya Brown's adoptive mother, head of an anti-terrorism team within the secret services, is kidnapped by Islamic fundamentalists, 15-year-old Maya evades MI5 protection in order to track down the kidnappers and rescue her. Maya's search takes her to Leeds, where she believes one of her mother's double agents is based, and to the headquarters of the Allied Brotherhood, which is planning a series of attacks on European cities unless Western armies are withdrawn from Muslim lands.

The book's format is that of the action thriller, and Maya is a courageous and resourceful heroine, a fine runner and good shot, who wants to follow her mother into the secret services. She is a rare example in this kind of children's fiction of a non-male, non-white heroine, especially one with a high-powered and much loved mother.

The action-thriller genre is not normally known for its detailed characterisation and this example proves no exception. The broad characterisation and the drive for forward momentum sit somewhat uneasily with the book's careful attempts to ensure that the fanatical terrorists, so necessary for the plot, are not suggested as being representative of all British Muslims, and to suggest why they believe that their campaign is justified.

Maya, whose Muslim birth parents were killed in Kosovo, poses as someone curious about her religious and cultural heritage as a way of infiltrating what she believes is a terrorist cell. Information about the cell members' beliefs is therefore presented more or less plausibly, although more sophisticated readers might be alert to the rather didactic nature of some of the exchanges.

Katie White

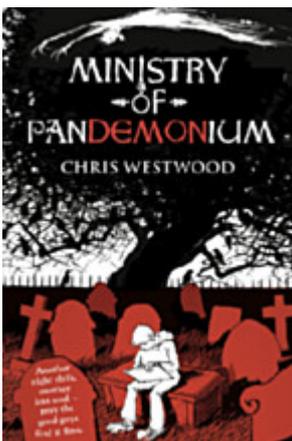
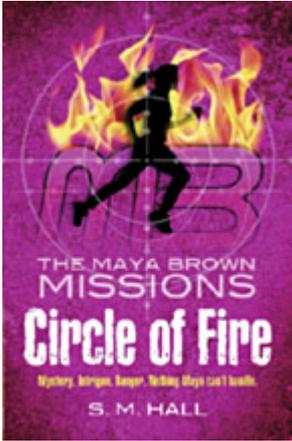
Ministry of Pandemonium

Chris Westwood, London: Frances Lincoln Children's Books, pb. 978 1 8478 0190 6, £6.99, 2011, 372pp.

Twelve-year-old Ben Harvester, according to his mother, is morbidly curious. He hangs around Highgate Cemetery and reads books about zombies and ghosts, but knows that none of them is real, until he discovers that some of them are. His school is haunted, ravens have him under observation, and he keeps running into the mysterious Mr October, who can change his appearance at will, and who believes that Ben has a special gift which he should put to good use by working with him.

Mr October is an official in the secret Ministry of Pandemonium whose purpose is to make sure that the recently dead get to where they are meant to be going, although the book is silent about their ultimate destination, if any. The Ministry is opposed by hordes of inventively realised demons, who would rather the dead were in their power. Ben's field trips involve him battling the forces of darkness, but he also puts in a lot of time at the office filing cards showing who has died and, by way of a reference number, how it happened. There is much black humour in all this (for example, 43765 is the code for someone who mails themselves as a present, but is killed by the scissors opening the parcel).

This is a cinematic book, with wonderful details of London scenes and an engaging affectionate and empathetic hero. Its underlying plot (special boy saves the day) is by no



means new, but its originality lies in making death so very much part of its hero's working and home life. Its many accounts of deaths, the dying and the bereaved, although generally lightly handled, may be too relentless for some readers but will not deter the more robust.

Katie White

Runaways

Joe Layburn, London: Frances Lincoln Children's Books, pb. 978 1 84780 080 0, £5.99, 2011, 137pp.

This book, a sequel to Layburn's successful *Street Heroes*, tells the harrowing story of six young people struggling to cope with life on the run. The lives of these children are hard, as all of them are running away from something important. As their stories are interwoven, it becomes clear exactly who or what these influences are and why they need to be escaped. In addition, they each possess the strange and sometimes onerous ability to communicate with each other through telepathy.

Layburn does not shy away from controversial subject matter in this book. Members of the British Fascist Party intent on inciting racial hatred, an angry alcoholic who vents his frustrations on young street urchins during vicious late-night beatings, a paedophilic stepfather and a North Korean dictator all make an appearance. No issue is sanitised, despite the book's presumed young readership. Events unfold in a realistic, often distressing narrative, witnessed from the perspective of each member of the Street Heroes group. The first-person narrative voice of the young characters, each of whom tells their story during the chapter bearing their name, brings an added poignancy to the reading.

A short factual account of how this book came into existence is provided in the final few pages. Layburn refers to a colleague of his, a journalist who risked his life to report on the terrible conditions endured by the street children he filmed in North Korea. This story, however, places that tale within the context of wider world atrocities and their effects on young people. It is stark, harrowing, powerful and, ultimately, perhaps, a necessary read for its target audience, due to its clarity of style and thought-provoking subject matter.

Sarah Stokes

Spirit of the Titanic

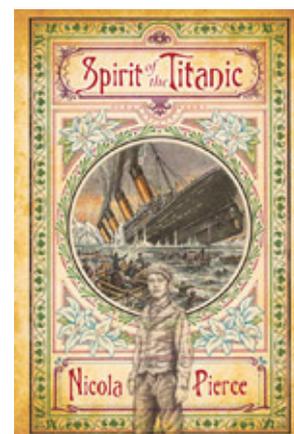
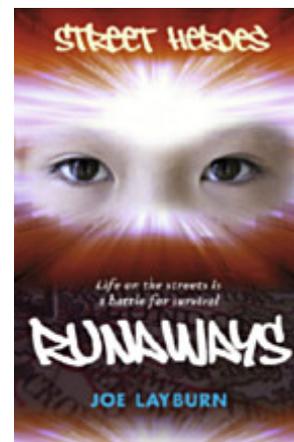
Nicola Pierce, Dublin: O'Brien Press, pb. 978 1 8471 7190 0, £5.99, 2011, 256pp.

The 'spirit' in question is the ghost of Sam, a 15-year-old boy who falls to his death whilst building the *Titanic*. Sam's spirit wanders the decks during the ship's doomed maiden voyage, revealing to the reader what life is like for crew and passengers. Sam becomes attached to one particular family: Jim, his wife Isobel, and their children Joseph and Sarah. During the voyage Sam shares their hopes and fears as they prepare to start a new life in America. Historical events surrounding the building of the *Titanic* and its doomed voyage have been carefully researched. The author provides a fascinating afterword, which outlines the real-life characters featured in the story.

Sam is an engaging narrator and there are moments of real tension and drama in the book. The 'sinking' itself is one such moment, especially effective because we have come to care so much about Jim and Isobel. Some readers may find the level of historical detail a little overwhelming, but, more often, the inclusion of 'real' material such as dialogue and telegrams is deeply affecting.

This is an engaging and informative tale, with a very original narrator in Sam. Many readers will undoubtedly be inspired to further historical study.

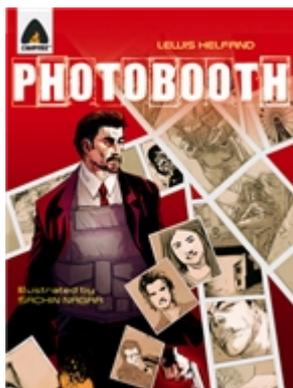
Paul Stover



Children's Books – Graphic Novels Published by Campfire (New Delhi, India)

Photobooth

Lewis Helfand, illus. Sachin Nagar, New Delhi: Campfire Kalyani Navyug Media, hb. 978 9 3800 2817 0, £6.99, 2010, 76pp.



This graphic novel situates itself alongside police-drama narratives, with an splash of magic meets crime fighting. Through the depiction and exploration of the protagonist's life story, themes such as drugs, the death of parents, familial bonds and the questioning of one's life purpose are all explicitly discussed. With stark black-and-white images and sequences of flashbacks, the reader is brought into the story. The key plot device of the photo booth – with the insight it provides for the characters lives – brings an element of the fantastic to this otherwise bleak graphic novel for young teens.

The Wright Brothers

Lewis Helfand, illus. Sankha Banerjee, New Delhi: Campfire Kalyani Navyug Media, hb. 978 9 3800 2816 3, £6.99, 2010, 68pp.



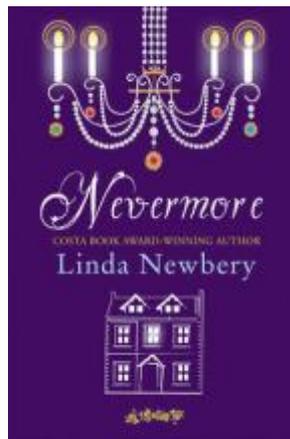
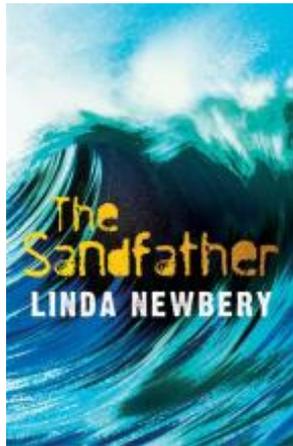
'What happened next was not special It was spectacular' (p.51). In an engaging and suspenseful graphic novel detailing the Wright brothers' lives from the first ever flight to their successes beyond, the author and illustrator set the invention of the airplane within its historical context. The reader learns about the brothers' lives as boys and young men with previous fascinations for printing and bicycles. Once Orville and Wilbur set their sights on man taking flight, the challenges, hardships and, ultimately, fame and reward come in waves – carrying on after Wilbur's death in 1912 and Orville's in 1948. For any child dreaming of pioneering a new field of technology, this graphic novel explores the full range of what it means to be an inventor.

Erica Gillingham

REPORTS

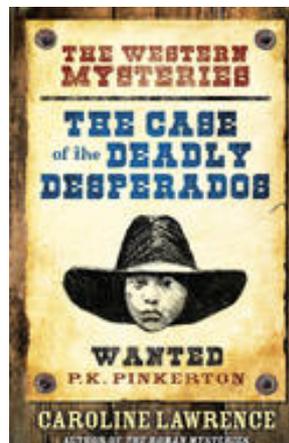
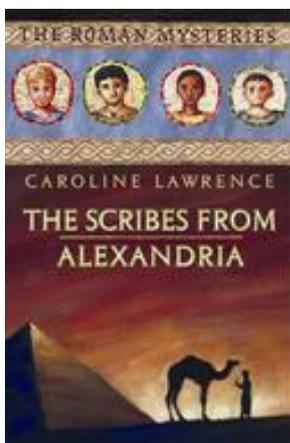
IBBY AGM author talks

Linda Newbery, whose books include *The Sandfather* (2009), the IBBY UK Honour Book nomination in 2010, and *Nevermore* (2008), copies of which were given by Orion to those who attended this AGM, was the first to speak. She told us how she came to write *The Sandfather*. For her, finding a landscape is the key to the setting and inspiration of a story; in this instance she used Bognor Regis. She was interested in exploring the experience of a boy of mixed race growing up in a predominantly white community, living with a mother who is white but whose black father is absent in every sense. In his search for identity, Hal has only half reflections of himself, a dual heritage that is only partly known, an aspect of himself that remains elusive. The image that expresses this most powerfully is the sand figure that he constructs and then witnesses the tide washing it away.



Illustrating her talk with photographs, Newbery showed us how she explored the unfolding of her story. She spoke of how imagery can be a prompt for dreaming, that she seeks to create atmosphere rather than focus on detail. Her research did take in some practicalities. There was a weekend on a sailing course, and she attended a 'Black Boys Can' conference in Birmingham, where she learned of the significance of 'unintentional' body language that can arise when there is a lack of a role model. She referred warmly to Ian P. Benfold Haywood who illustrated the chapter headings, liking especially the herring gull and the beach huts. Finally she showed us the Plate of Honour that she received at the 2010 IBBY World Congress in Santiago de Compostella, Spain.

Caroline Lawrence is known for her lively and successful Roman Mysteries (2001–2009), 17 of which have been published in the main series. Her new series is Western Mysteries (2011–). She concentrated her illustrated talk on how she is developing this particular genre.



She trained as a teacher (of classics), enjoys researching her material and pays scrupulous attention to detail. Starting with the idea that the Western needs reviving, she

made ten points that provided the basis for these stories. Historically, there is a rich seam to be mined with plenty of colourful characters and dramatic events, including the American Civil War and the Gold Rush. Virginia Town is her hometown, where her ancestors handed down amazing stories about life and incidents in the area and where Mark Twain spent three years. Poker playing with its potent body language, banjo music and the Campdown races all remain colourful, popular pursuits. Her lively enthusiasm is quickly conveyed and it is easy to imagine how she can captivate young readers. Elaborating on the ingenious artefacts of the period, she let it be known that she would have shown a cowboy pistol to a school group, but was refused permission to do so by the police!

Both authors have been teachers and they were asked if they have a didactic motive for writing. Caroline Lawrence said yes – she wanted to promote classical themes. Linda Newberry replied that what was more important to her was for her characters to be lived with. She referred to Philip Pullman talking about the narrative voice: ‘What does that voice think of the character he is depicting?’, a question that interested her. Both authors were generous in their responses to audience questions, and the opportunity to continue discussion over the signing of books was much appreciated.

[Judith Philo]

Annual General Meeting of IBBY UK

The meeting took place on 7 April 2011 at Orion Books, St Martin’s Lane, London.

Twenty-four members attended, well above the quorum of 15, and two non-members were also present. Ten apologies were received. Clive Barnes (chair) welcomed everyone, and thanked Orion Books, and in particular Nina Douglas, for hosting the occasion. Thanks were also extended to John Newman for arranging the initial contact with Orion.

Prominent among matters discussed was the successful application to the Charity Commission during the last year, a process that had involved drawing up a fresh constitution and the rewording of objectives; now we are waiting only for approval by the AGM. During the meeting this rewording was approved, so the aims of IBBY UK now read:

For the public benefit, to advance education in the subject of children's literature, in particular but not exclusively amongst teachers, librarians, publishers, writers, illustrators, parents, further- and higher-education students and trainers, by

- i. promoting reading and books for children and young people;
- ii. organising conferences and workshops, and the publication of journals;
- iii. disseminating good practice and research findings;
- iv. promoting good international relationships through children’s books;
- v. working with IBBY international to promote literacy and access to children’s books in all countries and to all children; and
- iv. any other charitable activity deemed suitable by the trustees from time to time.

All the above in accordance with the Statutes of IBBY (International Board on Books for Young People).

Recognition was given to Ann Lazim for her many years as Chairperson and Secretary to IBBY UK. She has now relinquished these roles in order to act as joint organiser of the London 2012 IBBY World Congress. In consequence, committee membership has been reconstituted.

Other matters

The Hans Andersen nominations of Philip Pullman, author, and John Burningham, illustrator, were endorsed unanimously.

John Dunne wanted it noted that the Christmas card was at present the main source of raising funds and that further thought needed to be given to future areas of fund raising. Julie Barton presented the treasurer's report, stressing the priority that needed to be given to a membership drive, with the hope that subscriptions would become the chief source of income, rather than the Christmas card. Renewal of subscriptions will now be organised around the fixed date of 1 April; new subscription forms would be sent out by email and post shortly. Charitable status will give IBBY UK the benefit of claiming gift aid on subscriptions, which is currently 23p in the pound. Increases in the subscription rate were agreed: Corporate £90 from £75; Individual to £30 from £25; Student/Concession £15 from £10.

Ann Lazim updated her report concerning the 2012 IBBY World Congress. See her report in this *IBBYLink*.

The current members of the committee all agreed to stand again.

[Clive Barnes]

A visit to 'Once upon a wartime' at the Imperial War Museum London

Inspired by the excellent summaries of Jane Rosen and Hazel Brown's (then forthcoming) event, given at the 2010 IBBY/NCRCL MA conference, my husband John and I visited this fascinating, informative and sometimes moving exhibition in April 2011. On entering it, we saw a large opened book, which is, to quote Hazel Brown, 'lit very dramatically'. Projected on to its verso page are the titles of the five key children's stories about war which are featured, together with the names of their authors. On the recto page, and very effective in the subdued light of the surroundings, a First World War soldier and a group of evacuee children dressed in 1940s clothes walk in turn across the screen and bow to us, to draw us into the experience that is to follow. Each of these five books provides the subject for a section, a sequence of storyboards being provided for those who haven't read them. Additionally, there is the continuous running of videos, the hands-on interactive elements, the objects and photographs on display from the museum's collections, the historical and geographical backgrounds to the stories, and some beautifully crafted small replicas of trenches and air-raid shelters, as well as multi-choice questions relating to the books.

The first section, which is devoted to Michael Morpurgo's *War Horse* (1982), shows a video of men and horses in action. With the sound of artillery fire and the whinnying of terrified horses, it really does bring home the plight of these animals. It is heartening to discover that many of them did survive their ordeals and become happy and well-cared-for 'pensioners'.

It was fun to see the life-size recreations of part of Hepzibah Green's kitchen in the *Carrie's War* (Nina Bawden, 1973) section, and of the secret fortress and the tunnel leading to it in *The Machine Gunners* (Robert Westall, 1975) area. A group of excited school children had great fun crawling through this short, low tunnel, though we oldies declined the experience and walked sedately into the secret fortress via an easier access. It was fascinating to hear via a telephone receiver how Bawden drew on her experiences as a 13-year-old evacuee, and to see Westall's manuscript with its editor's pencilled suggestions in the margin. We also learned that Morpurgo writes his stories in longhand, and that Ian Serraillier's notes and diagrams for *The Silver Sword* (1956) were scribbled on a used envelope while he walked on the Sussex South Downs. There is also a video film of the siege of Warsaw, showing evacuees in the Polish city, their plight being highlighted by a quotation from Ian Serraillier describing the city as being 'full of lost children'. As Hazel Brown points out, this exhibition does not gloss over the terrible reality of war: the loss of life, the destruction and the evacuees – all these areas are addressed by the books themselves. The remaining section is devoted to Bernard Ashley's *Little Soldier* (1999) about an orphaned boy from a fictional country in Africa who gets caught up in a civil war. This was a book I had not read, but intend to now.

It was interesting to hear some of the comments made by other visitors to the exhibition on the morning we were there. There were parents, too young to remember the Second

World War themselves, who were as intrigued by ration books and other war memorabilia as were their children, and there were those like John who had been children during the conflict for whom much that was on display brought back strong memories. This is indeed an exhibition that can be shared by all the family.

The Imperial War Museum London is open daily from 10.00 a.m. to 6.00 p.m., and the exhibition runs until 30 October 2011. Tickets can be booked online at www.iwm.org.uk/wartime or by telephoning 020 7416 5439. The exhibition will also be mounted in 2012 at the Imperial War Museum Manchester.

[June Hopper Swain]

Children's Laureate 2011–2013

King's Place, London. Tuesday, 7 July 2011.

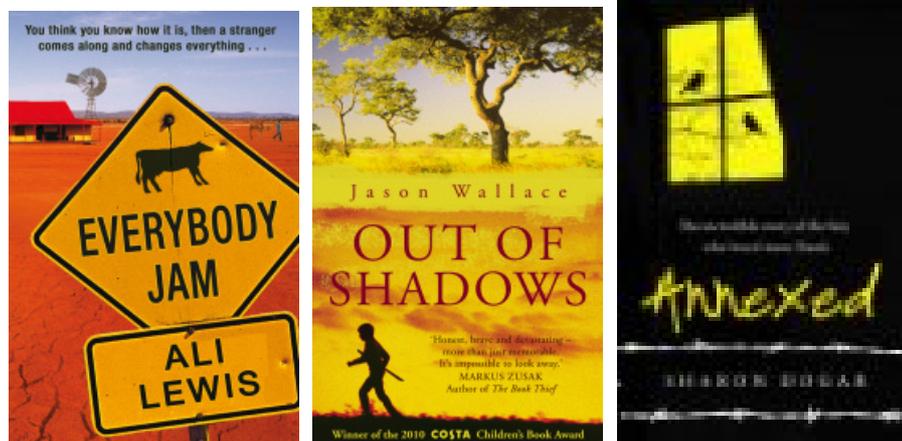
At a ceremony held at King's Place, London, it was announced that Julia Donaldson, probably best known as author of the text of *The Gruffalo*, is the seventh children's laureate. While the audience was held in suspense, earlier speakers paid tribute to the work of Anthony Browne, who has attended more than 90 events, visited more than 50 schools, made a number of international visits and held five exhibitions during his tenure. He has been the inspiration behind several major projects, notably The Shape Game, as well as two books encouraging both children and adults to draw, and, most recently, the Pop Up programme involving schools in the King's Cross area. Among the speeches was one by IBBY UK committee member John Dunne, Chair of the Children's Laureate Steering Group, who reminded us of the history of the laureateship, while Baroness Floella Benjamin, Chair of the Children's Laureate selection panel, made special mention in her talk of the part played on the panel by Clive Barnes, Chair of the IBBY UK committee.

Julia Donaldson, who feels that she has been given a huge honour, expressed her appreciation of the fact that all the previous Laureates have been allowed to interpret the role in a way appropriate to their own interests. As an enthusiast for music and drama, she hopes to focus on these areas during her tenure, as well as emphasising the importance of libraries and paying special attention to the needs of deaf children. She also hopes to take advantage of being based in Scotland in order to foster activities north of the border. Her speech concluded with a ditty evoking each of her six predecessors with tributes in rhyme, the most audacious coupling of which was 'tackling' and 'Jacqueline'! It made an encouraging and witty start to her two years in office.

[Pat Pinsent]

Andersen Press Teen Fiction Event

Random House, Vauxhall Road, London. Wednesday, 1 June 2011.



Three authors of books directed at young adults, Ali Lewis, Jason Wallace and Sharon Dogar, spoke about their recent books. Lewis's *Everybody Jam* (2011) and Wallace's

Out of Shadows (2010, see review elsewhere in this issue of *IBBYLink*) are the first published books by their writers, while Dogar's *Annexed* (2010) is a successor to her acclaimed earlier novels, *Waves* (Chicken House, 2008) and *Falling* (Chicken House, 2009). What was immediately notable was the warmth of the tributes paid by all three writers to the editorial work of Charley Shepherd that had immeasurably improved the earlier versions of their manuscripts, in particular by reminding them of their potential readership.

Wendy Cooling, who led the discussion, remarked on how all three of the books under discussion were set in the 'real' world and involved issues of race and families in crisis. Jason Wallace spoke of how his book evolved from being simply a story based on the school in Zimbabwe that he had attended, towards an exploration of wider political themes. Ali Lewis's book, set in the Australian outback, used her own experience of working at a cattle station, and treats bereavement and teenage pregnancy. *Annexed* is the most controversial of the books considered, as Sharon Dogar explores life in the house central to Anne Frank's diary from the perspective of her fellow inmate of similar age, Peter Van Pels. It has inevitably attracted hostile comments from those to whom the figure of Anne is sacrosanct, though Dogar revealed that Anne's cousin deemed that the character portrayal was accurate.

Answers to the audience's questions revealed, among other things, that the two women had no problems about creating male narrators, but that Wallace would hesitate to write in the voice of a girl. Matter for further debate here!

[Pat Pinsent]

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Children's Bookshow Tour 2011

The Children's Bookshow is an annual tour of children's authors and illustrators from the UK and abroad. The theme for this ninth Bookshow is 'Simply the Best'. Venues and dates are as follows.

De La Warr Pavilion, Bexhill: Alexis Deacon. Friday, 23 September.

Queen Elizabeth Hall, London: Tomi Ungerer Judith Kerr. Monday, 3 October.

Courtyard, Hereford: Daniel Morden. Tuesday, 4 October.

Oxford Playhouse, Tomi Ungerer and Judith Kerr: Wednesday, 5 October.

Warwick Arts: Kevin Crossley-Holland. Thursday, 6 October.

The Lyceum, Sheffield: Guo Yue and Clare Farrow. Friday, 7 October.

King's Hall, Ilkley: Mairi Hedderwick. Tuesday, 11 October.

Bluecoat, Liverpool: Jessica Souhami am, Patrick Benson pm. Wednesday, 12 October.

Arnolfini, Bristol: Alexis Deacon am and pm. Thursday, 13 October.

People's Theatre, Newcastle: Michael Rosen am and pm. Thursday, 20 October.

Royal Exchange, Manchester: Kevin Crossley-Holland. Friday, 21 October.

L'Institut Français, London: Quentin Blake and Kitty Crowther. Friday, 25 November.

Theatre Royal, Plymouth: Daniel Morden 10am. Wednesday, 7 December.

For further information, contact Sian Williams (sianwilliams1@gmail.com) and see www.thechildrensbookshow.com/.

NEWS

CILIP 2011 Carnegie and Kate Greenaway Medals

These longlist for these awards are chosen by librarians across the UK. Twelve librarians for CILIP's Youth Libraries Group then prepare the shortlist. The chair of this year's judging panel is Ferelith Hordon, Children's Librarian for Wandsworth Library Services. 3800 reading groups in schools and public libraries have registered to take part in the shadowing scheme for the 2011 awards, involving nearly 90,000 children and young people.

The winners will be announced at a ceremony at BAFTA, London on Thursday, 23 June.

Kate Greenaway Medal shortlist

Five former winners are on this list: Dob Graham, Mini Grey, Catherine Rayner, Juan Wijngaard and Anthony Browne (twice a winner). The list includes the Norwegian illustrator Kristin Oftedal with her first published picture book.

Grahame Baker-Smith, *Farther*, Templar (8+)

'A clever picture book with a dream-like quality', say the judges, 'Beautifully designed with a wealth of detail, conveying dark emotions, storms of war and weather, and a powerful sense of loss and bereavement.'

Anthony Browne, *Me and You*, Doubleday (4+)

'This multi-layered work creates a modern fable from the familiar story, contrasting the fairy tale world of the bears, with the realism of the world Goldilocks inhabits. A simple text is combined to great effect with a striking use of light and shade.'

Bob Graham, *April Underhill Tooth Fairy*, Walker Books (5+)

'A delightful and humorous story with a contemporary edge, which explores themes of identity and friendship. Graham makes great use of line from the endpapers and title page onwards, also employing light and colour to highlight the action effectively throughout.'

Mini Grey (text by Hilaire Belloc), *Jim*, Jonathan Cape (6+)

'In this book full of treasures, Grey has reinterpreted Belloc for the 21st century She employs filmic techniques and the idea of ephemera to great effect.'

Oliver Jeffers, *The Heart and the Bottle*, HarperCollins (5+)

'In this moving exploration of love and bereavement, Jeffers makes great use of colour, collage and placement on the page, and the recurring images of the beach and the chair subtly convey the passing of time.'

Kristin Oftedal (text by Carl Norac), *Big Bear, Little Brother*, Macmillan (3+)

'With a very limited colour palette, Oftedal skilfully evokes the snowy setting of this story. Her pencil line is fantastically expressive, conveying emotion as well as fluidity and texture.'

Catherine Rayner, *Ernest*, Macmillan (3+)

'This is an ingenious picture book which combines excellent draftsmanship with a brilliant sense of scale and perspective.'

Juan Wijngaard (text by Mal Peet and Elspeth Graham), *Cloud Tea Monkeys*, Walker (8+)

'A beautiful production which works wonderfully well as a whole, combining Wijngaard's oil paintings and line drawings. The colours he employs are wonderfully vivid, and his use of light masterful, evoking a great sense of setting, landscape and of the heat of the day.'

Carnegie Medal shortlist

Theresa Breslin, *Prisoner of the Inquisition*, Doubleday (12+)

‘An intriguing and well-achieved novel of impressive scope which brilliantly captures the atmosphere of 15th century Spain,’ said the judges.

Geraldine McCaughrean, *The Death Defying Pepper Roux*, Oxford Children’s Books (10+)

‘A cleverly-constructed, tightly-plotted, picaresque novel that has something for everyone. Beautifully realised settings, refreshing and original characters, it is wise, thoughtful, funny and very different.’

Patrick Ness, *Monsters of Men*, Walker (14+)

‘An outstanding novel, involving huge ideas about life, death and love that really challenges the reader to think about big questions.’

Meg Rosoff, *The Bride’s Farewell*, Puffin (12+)

‘A beautifully crafted novel with an exceptional heroine There is a strong sense of historical period, and of women’s place in society at that time.’

Marcus Sedgwick, *White Crow*, Orion (12+)

‘A dark and gruesome modern Gothic novel, with a compelling, and carefully crafted dual storyline that really builds the tension.’

Jason Wallace, *Out of Shadows*, Andersen Press (14+)

‘An extremely powerful novel. The institutionalised brutality of school life is grippingly conveyed ... It makes the reader feel complicit, leading us to question how we would behave in similar circumstances.’

[Jennifer Harding]

CLPE Poetry Award 2011

The CLPE Poetry Award for a book of poetry for children was launched by the Centre for Literacy in Primary Education in 2003. The judges this year are Carol Ann Duffy, Andrew Lambirth and Fiona Waters, and the judging panel is chaired by Julia Eccleshare. The sponsor is again Troubadour, which, as Travelling Books, are a provider of book fairs to UK schools.

The shortlist is as follows.

Allan Ahlberg (2010) *Everybody Was a Baby once and Other Poems*, illus. Bruce Ingman, Walker Books

Phil Bowen (2010) *Cuckoo Rock*, illus. Fred James, Salt Publishing

Mandy Coe (2010) *If you Could See Laughter*, Salt Publishing

Philip Gross (2010) *Off Road to Everywhere*, illus. Jonathan Gross, Salt Publishing

Roger Stevens (compiler) (2010) *A Million Brilliant Poems* (Part one), illus. Jessie Ford, A & C Black

The winner will be announced at a ceremony at the Centre for Literacy in Primary Education, Webber Street, London on Tuesday, 5 July 2011.

For further information about the award or the award ceremony contact Ann Lazim: ann@clpe.co.uk; 020 7902 228.

[Ann Lazim]

Jacqueline Wilson scholarship

NCRCL has announced a new Jacqueline Wilson PhD scholarship, generously funded by Dame Jacqueline Wilson. Since her appointment as Professorial Fellow at Roehampton two years ago, Jacqueline Wilson has taught a series of highly successful seminars on creative writing at MA level within the Department of English and Creative Writing. The Jacqueline Wilson scholarship will enable a student to join a thriving

community of PhD scholars and to benefit from Roehampton University's proven expertise in children's literature and creative writing for children.

The scholarship is advertised alongside two other PhD scholarships within the Department of English and Creative Writing at Roehampton University, for which children's literature scholars are also eligible. For further details and an application form: www.roehampton.ac.uk/about/jobopportunities/page33933.html.

[Gillian Lathey]

Death of Larry Sipe

Professor Larry Sipe (Lawrence R. Sipe), who will be known to readers for his work on picture books and children's responses to them, died suddenly on 11 March 2011. *Children's Literature in Education*, whose Editor-in-Chief for North America he was, is producing an issue in Spring 2012 in his memory. Articles that explore his particular interests of literature written for children and adolescents, early-childhood education and emergent literacy will be welcome, but other commemorative approaches will also be considered. Initial submissions should be made by or before 15 September 2011. Please attach a note to any such submission, stating that you wish it to be considered for this special issue. Online submissions may be made at the journal's website, where there are also full instructions for authors: www.springer.com/education+%26+language/linguistics/journal/10583.

[Pat Pinsent]

New Zealand Picture Book Collection (NZPBC)

Nicola Daly from Waikato University tells us that this resource (inspired by the European Picture Book Collection) is now available: www.picturebooks.co.nz. Her next focus is a Pacific picture book collection.

[Nicola Daly]

Phoenix Yard Books

Phoenix Yard Books is a new children's publisher for all ages. Its first books are:

Little Red Hood by Marjolaine Leray, trans. Sarah Ardizzone, 978 1 9079 1200 9

Lyra and the Adventure of the Flying Fish by Peter Emina, illus. Alice Ridley, 978 1 9079 1201 6

Coping with Chloe by Rosalie Warren, 978 1 9079 1202 3

Monacello the Little Monk by Geraldine McCaughrean, illus. Jana Diemberger, 978 1 9079 1203 0.

The publisher is particularly interested in publishing character-based fiction for younger readers (6–9 age range) and in exploring the possibilities in comic-style stories. For further information contact Andrea Reece: Tel. 020 8889 1292, Mob. 0776 2003464, Email andrea.reece@zen.co.uk.

[Andrea Reece]

IBBY NEWS

IBBY World Congress 2012

The 33rd IBBY World Congress will be held in at Imperial College, London, 23–26 August 2012, the first time it will have been in the UK since it took place in Cambridge in 1982. The title is ‘Crossing Boundaries: Translations and Migrations’, and the congress will be exploring these topics from a variety of angles and viewpoints. These will include translations between languages, and the migration of people and the stories they carry with them. It will also encompass translations and migrations across media, for example from book to film or play.

Programme

Speakers so far confirmed:

Patsy Aldana, a former president of IBBY, born and brought up in Guatemala. She is the publisher of Groundwood Books in Canada where she has published many translated and culturally diverse books. Founded in 1978, Groundwood is committed to publishing books that feature representations of marginalised voices and experiences that are not often heard. Aldana was recently appointed a member of the Order of Canada for her contributions to children’s publishing in Canada and around the world.

Aidan Chambers, winner of a Hans Christian Andersen Medal in 2002 for his books for children and young people, including the Carnegie Medal winner *Postcards from No Man’s Land* (1999). He has always championed the translation of literature into English, especially for children. He and his wife Nancy founded Thimble Press and the magazine *Signal* to promote children’s literature. Chambers’ publications *The Reading Environment* (new edn 2011) and *Tell Me* (new edn 2011) have been hugely influential with teachers internationally. His short-story collection *The Kissing Game* (2011) has been published recently.

Bart Moeyaert, Belgium’s nominee for a Hans Christian Andersen Award in 2012. Moeyaert’s novels have been translated into 19 languages. English translations of five of them, including *Bare Hands* (2004), are published in the USA by Front Street. He teaches Creative Writing at the Royal Art School in Antwerp, and has written screenplays and plays, as well as publishing Dutch translations of books from German, English and French. His latest book *De Melkweg* (*The Milky Way*) was published in May 2011.

Emer O’Sullivan, originally from Ireland and Professor of English Literature at Leuphana University in Lüneberg, Germany. She has written and lectured extensively about children’s literature in translation, including *Kinderliterarische Komparatistik* (2000), which won the biennial International Research Society for Children’s Literature (IRSL) Award in 2001 for outstanding research. The English-language version *Comparative Children’s Literature* (Routledge, 2005) won the Children’s Literature Association Book Award. She is currently co-writing a book on children’s literature in foreign-language teaching.

Shaun Tan, Australian picture-book creator, the author and illustrator of *The Arrival* (1974) and illustrator of *The Rabbits* (text by John Marsden, 1998), both of which deal with themes relating to migration. Several of his books, including *The Arrival* and *The Red Tree* (2001), have been adapted for the theatre. Recently he won an Oscar for the Best Short Animated Film for *The Lost Thing* (1999), and he is this year’s recipient of the Astrid Lindgren Memorial Award. His appearance at the congress is sponsored by Hodder Children’s Books.

In addition to individual plenary speakers, panels and ‘in conversation’ sessions on a range of relevant topics are being planned. Further information about speakers will be posted on www.ibbycongress2012.org as it becomes available and people are invited to register for updates. There will also be parallel sessions. The call for papers for these is now live on the website with a deadline for submission of 30 June 2011.

The programme will be available in December 2011 and congress registration will open in January 2012.

Further information

Shortly following the 2010 IBBY UK AGM, Nikki Gamble resigned as Congress Director and Ann Lazim and Kathy Lemaire took over as Co-directors. They are working with a congress organising committee, the IBBY UK committee, an advisory group and IBBY international's Executive Committee. The congress organising committee has a programme subcommittee and a translation subcommittee. Sue Mansfield has just taken on the role of Treasurer. Thanks are due to Scholastic for hosting the advisory group and the Centre for Literacy in Primary Education and Battersea Library (Wandsworth) for allowing us space for other meetings.

An Arts Council grant enabled a delegation of five (Kathy, Ann, Kathleen Milne, Daniel Hahn and Patrick Ryan) to attend the 2010 IBBY World Congress in Santiago de Compostela, Spain last September where we distributed our poster, designed by Anthony Browne and sponsored by Walker Books, and our leaflet. There was considerable interest in attending the 2012 congress.

Kathy and Ann, along with Pam Dix and Ian Dodds, attended the Bologna Children's Book Fair to promote the congress. Ann and Kathy also met with IBBY international's Executive Committee and made a presentation at the IBBY press conference.

At the London Book Fair this year there was a seminar organised and chaired by Bhavita Mehta, arranged with the intention of raising the profile of the congress and IBBY UK in general. Panel members were Philip Pullman, Julia Eccleshare, Beverley Naidoo and Piet Grobler.

How IBBY UK members can help with the congress

1 Publicity:

If you are attending a conference or event where it would be possible to distribute leaflets and posters, contact Ann Lazim annlazim@googlemail.com.

2 Fund raising:

- (a) Could you organise a fund-raising event, say a coffee morning, a reading group or, maybe, a concert?
- (b) Do you know of any companies that might be interested in our conference commercially as a marketing opportunity, or companies and charities that might be interested in supporting it, for instance by paying the fee for a delegate from a developing country? Could you let us have the name of the appropriate person to approach in that company?

Please contact Kathy Lemaire: kathy.lemaire@btinternet.com.

[Ann Lazim]

Nominees for the 2012 Hans Christian Andersen Awards

The Hans Christian Andersen Awards are presented every two years by IBBY to an author and an illustrator whose complete works have made an important and lasting contribution to children's literature. IBBY national sections from 33 countries have made their selections, submitting the following 28 authors and 31 illustrators as candidates for the 2012 Hans Christian Andersen Awards.

Argentina: Author: **Maria Teresa Andruetto**; Illustrator: **Pablo Bernasconi**

Australia: Author: **Christobel Mattingley**; Illustrator: **Bob Graham**

Austria: Author: **Monika Pelz**; Illustrator: **Renate Habinger**

Belgium: Author: **Bart Moeyaert**; Illustrator: **Louis Joos**

Brazil: Author: **Bartolomeu Campos de Queiros**; Illustrator: **Roger Mello**
Canada: Author: **Tim Wynne-Jones**; Illustrator: **Stephane Jorisch**
Cyprus: Author: **Elli Peonidou**
Czech Republic: Illustrator: **Peter Sís**
Denmark: Author: **Lene Kaaberbol**; Illustrator: **Charlotte Pardi**
Finland: Author: **Sinikka Noola/Tiina Nopola**; Illustrator: **Virpi Talvitie**
France: Author: **Jean-Claude Mourlevat**; Illustrator: **Henri Galeron**
Germany: Author: **Paul Maar**; Illustrator: **Rotraut Susanne Berner**
Greece: Author: **Christos Boulotis**; Illustrator: **Effie Lada**
Iran: Illustrator: **Mohammad Ali Baniyasi**
Ireland: Author: **Eoin Colfer**
Italy: Author: **Bianca Pizzorno**; Illustrator: **Francesco Tullio-Altan**
Japan: Author: **Masamoto Nasu**; Illustrator: **Satoshi Kako**
Republic of Korea: Author: **Hwang Sun-Mi**; Illustrator: **Hong Seong-Chan**
Latvia: Illustrator: **Anita Paegle**
Netherlands: Author: **Tonke Dragt**; Illustrator: **Annemarie van Haeringen**
Norway: Author: **Bjorn Sortland**; Illustrator: **Oyvind Torseter**
Romania: Author: **Silvia Kerim**; Illustrator: **Valeria Moldovan**
Russia: Illustrator: **Gennadij Spirin**
Serbia: Author: **Ljubivoje Rsumovic**; Illustrator: **Dobrosav Zivkovic**
Slovak Republic: Author: **Daniel Hevier**; Illustrator: **Peter Uchnár**
Slovenia: Author: **Tone Pavcek**; Illustrator: **Alenka Sottler**
Spain: Author: **Agustin Fernandez Paz**; Illustrator: **Javier Zabala Herrero**
Sweden: **Lennart Hellsing**; Illustrator: **Anna-Clara Tidholm**
Switzerland: Author: **Franz Hohler**; Illustrator: **Kathrin Scharer**
Turkey: Author: **Sevim Ak**; Illustrator: **Feridun Oral**
United Kingdom: Author: **Philip Pullman**; Illustrator: **John Burningham**
USA: Author: **Paul Fleischman**; Illustrator: **Chris Raschka**
Venezuela: Illustrator: **Arnal Balleste**

The elected chair of the international Hans Christian Andersen Award jury, Maria Jesus Gil (Spain) and jury members from Argentina, Austria, Brazil, France, Greece, Iran, Russia, Sweden, Turkey and the USA, will meet on 10–11 March 2012 and the shortlist will be disseminated immediately. The winners will be announced at the IBBY press conference at the Bologna Children's Book Fair on Monday, 19 March 2012.

2011 IBBY UK/NCRCL MA conference

Roehampton University, 12 November 2011.

The 18th annual conference is titled 'It Doesn't Have to Rhyme: Children and Poetry' and will explore all aspects of the relationship between young people of all ages and poetry.

Presentations at plenary sessions and workshops will look both at verse written by children themselves and at poems explicitly addressed to them or that have been seen as part of their poetic heritage.

Keynote speakers include Morag Styles, author of a highly regarded history of poetry for children; Susan Bassnett, judge of a poetry award; and two former children's laureates, Jacqueline Wilson (well-known for her down-to-earth children's books) and Michael Rosen (a poet very popular with the young).

There will also be a panel comprising those involved with the publishing of poetry for children, workshop sessions, exhibitions and book sales, together with the opportunity to meet others enthusiastic about the importance of poetry in children's lives.

The cost of a sandwich lunch is included in the conference registration fee. Prices are: full delegates £75, IBBY UK members £65, concessions (non-Roehampton University students and unwaged) £50, Roehampton University staff and students, and IBBY UK committee members £45.

The call for papers has gone out and is on the IBBY UK website, www.ibbyuk.org.uk.

Further information, as it becomes available, will be added to the NCRCL website: www.roehampton.ac.uk/ibby/index.html; or contact Pat Pinsent: PatPinsent@aol.com.

Bookings can be made on the Roehampton University estore (to be available soon): <https://estore.roehampton.ac.uk/browse/department.asp?compid=1&modid=2&deptid=164>; or contact Lucy Parsons or Caroline Matthews.

Lucy Parsons
Academic Conference Coordinator
PT (Tuesday/Wednesday/Friday)
Tel: 020 8392 3698
Email: l.parsons@roehampton.ac.uk

Caroline Matthews
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[Pat Pinsent, Sue Mansfield and Lucy Parsons]

IBBY/NCRCL MA Annual Conference 2011

Froebel College, Roehampton University, London. Saturday 12 November 2011.

The title of the conference is 'It Doesn't Have to Rhyme: Children and Poetry'.

More details are on page 50. For more information as it becomes available, see www.roehampton.ac.uk/ibby/index.html or contact Pat Pinsent: PatPinsent@aol.com.

The next issue of *IBBYLink* (Autumn 2011) (copydate 31 July 2011) will be titled 'Children and Libraries'. Articles on all aspect are solicited, including libraries in countries other than the UK, specialist libraries, special collections, how reading is encouraged, child-friendly spaces, languages other than English and choosing such books, and how you as a writer or illustrator were inspired by a library or librarian to write or illustrate books.

The Spring 2012 issue of *IBBYLink* will be devoted to short summaries of papers and presentations from the annual 2011 IBBY/NCRCL MA conference 'It Doesn't Have to Rhyme: Children and Poetry' to be held on 12 November 2011 at Roehampton University, London.

Articles on other subjects, reviews, reports, information about conferences and similar items are also welcomed for both issues. Contributions to PatPinsent@aol.com.

Titles for review

Publishers and others with books to be reviewed in *IBBYLink* should send them to Sue Mansfield at 37 Gartmoor Gardens, London SW19 6NX; mansfield37@btinternet.com.

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The newsletter of the British section of the International Board for Books for Young People (IBBY UK), published three times a year.

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To sponsor a future issue of *IBBYLink*, contact PatPinsent@aol.com.

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