

33rd IBBY International Congress, London

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33RD iBbY INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS

CROSSING BOUNDARIES: TRANSLATIONS AND MIGRATIONS

23 - 26 August 2012, London



Logo for the 33rd IBBY International Congress held at Imperial College London. Designed by former Children's Laureate (2009–2011) Anthony Browne.

EDITORIAL

‘ There is in London all that life can afford’

(Samuel Johnson, 1777, quoted by Boswell)

Certainly Dr Johnson’s words could well be applied to London in summer 2012, with the Jubilee, the Olympics and Paralympics, and, more pertinent to *IBBYLink*, the 33rd IBBY International Congress.

Many people have spoken about how heartening it was to see so many people from different parts of the world assembled in South Kensington, not only to hear an impressive range of plenary and workshop speakers, but also to intermingle with other delegates of like minds and similar interests.

This issue of *IBBYLink* includes a few personal impressions by delegates from various parts of the world as well as from the UK, and in due course the proceedings will be available for all to read on the congress website (www.ibbycongress2012.org/). Encounters in visual form can also be shared by both those present and those who couldn’t be there. Shaun Tan’s presentation can be watched at www.youtube.com/watch?v=kUJINRAnnUI&feature=youtu.be. Other videos and transcripts of the proceedings will be available on the congress website shortly. Photographs taken at the congress are on Flickr (and the number is growing still) at www.flickr.com/photos/ibbycongress2012. Some personal videos have been put on YouTube by attenders and can be found by searching.

I was particularly struck by the way that so many of the audience regarded Shaun Tan’s talk, of which the text is included here, as one of the highlights – the combination of his own diverse background, which in itself served as an epitome of the congress theme of ‘Crossing Boundaries: Translations and Migrations’, and his ability, relatively rare in an

illustrator, to put into words the feelings so well conveyed in his own pictures, meant that he encapsulated the experience of so many of the children with whom IBBY is concerned.

The congress isn’t the only thing happening this year – details of the annual November IBBY/NCRCL MA conference at Roehampton are given on p.61 and on the back cover. We also include, as usual, a number of reviews, reports and news items.

This will probably be the last issue of *IBBYLink* to be edited by me, as the combination of advancing years and the prospect of a move outside the London area have suggested to me that it is time to cut down on some of my commitments. Ferelith Hordon, whose many years of distinguished service as a librarian are drawing to their close, has nobly agreed to take over the editorial role. Jennifer Harding will continue in her essential role as Associate Editor, responsible for presentation, information about awards and so much more besides. Sue Mansfield will also continue to be responsible for reviews. They have made my task as editor so much lighter in recent years than when I put together the first issue, with only 12 sides, in September 2001!

Issue 36 of *IBBYLink* will be largely devoted to the November 2012 conference at Roehampton, which is entitled ‘Beyond the Book’. We hope to have material related to both the plenary and workshop sessions. Contributions (articles, reviews, reports, news etc.) are invited by 11 December 2012 – send to Jennifer Harding (jjharding@onetel.com).

Pat Pinsent

**Impressions of the 33rd IBBY International Congress,
Imperial College London, 23–26 August 2012:
'Crossing Boundaries, Translations and Migrations'**

**INTERNATIONAL
CONGRESS 2012**

Darja Mazi-Leskovar, Slovenia, University of Maribor, IBBY Slovenia committee

Literature, as the oldest of the media addressing people distant in both space and time, has always been not only a means of crossing boundaries between nations, cultures, generations and traditions, but also a spiritual bridge between all those who contribute to its material appearance and the reading audience. The 33rd IBBY International Congress also confirmed the fact that children's literature acknowledges the importance of oral expression, the primordial form of the verbal art, which is today seen as an especially fruitful link between literature in its traditional format and the other media. Additionally, the London congress testified to the importance of illustration, another connection between literature and the varied contemporary visual media. On the symbolic level, the complementary role of the verbal and pictorial components was underlined by the introductory words of two patrons of the congress, the researcher of children's literature Margaret Meek Spencer, and the illustrator Anthony Browne, the 2000 Hans Andersen prize winner for illustration. The thoughts expressed in their welcome to participants in the booklet *We're all from the Same Big Land* coincide in their belief that crossing boundaries, translations and migrations are 'reality' (Meek Spencer, p.2) as books 'find children across countries and across cultures' (Browne, p.3). In the same publication, Ann Lazim and Kathy Lemaire, the co-directors of the congress, explain why we all can benefit from such a reality: because 'literature, especially for children, is universal, not confined within boundaries' (p.3).

The programme itself confirmed the international importance of crossing frontiers. Translation, without which international sharing would hardly be possible, was put into focus by Emer O'Sullivan, the first plenary speaker. In her talk, 'Why Translate Children's Books?', she showed how awareness of the significance of translation has spread, revealing new aspects of its 'service' to children's literature, including the importance of translators. Additionally, questions related to translation were dealt with in several parallel sessions, focusing on such issues as adaptation, and the translation of various types of visual text. Some renowned translators presented their views on their literary migration between cultures and languages. A special treat for the audience was hearing Anthea Bell, whose work has opened windows on European literatures to English readers. In this context international prizes for translation appear invaluable since they testify that the list of those who invest their knowledge into the transposition of texts from one language to another is characterised by a continuous influx of young enthusiasts coming from various traditions. A session on the translation of picture books offered insight into academic approaches to translation, based on research in North America (USA, Canada), Japan, Korea and central Europe (Slovenia). The dimension they all shared was the translation of picture books into English. By pinpointing challenges that arise when texts are translated into different target languages, interesting specific features of translation of children's literature were evoked. Cultural issues appeared particularly relevant, since targeted child audiences have little personal experience of various traditions. On the other hand, translations of texts into languages belonging to different language groups, for instance, of a Slavic book into a Germanic or Romance language, open up interesting comparisons, particularly in the area of symbolic language. Discussions confirmed the presupposition that the interplay of text and illustration also enables the access of targeted readers to the culturally specific features of the stories embedded in another tradition.

A strong cultural impact was felt also in the artistic retelling of stories rooted in various countries. The art of conveying the content through play, body language and modulation of the voice proves that it is possible to enjoy a performance without having the slightest knowledge of the language. This seemed particularly true of the Mongolian reteller, a real actor who enchanted the audience. A similar atmosphere was created during the

retelling of stories based on Jewish traditions which are shared by a significant part of Europe. The humour embedded in the texts successfully addressed the audience who were highly appreciative of the inclusion of retellings in the programme.

The international nature of IBBY was, as is traditional, mirrored in the Honour List, which reveals what individual country members consider to be good literature and art for children. As such, this list may be seen also as an incentive for the future migration of children's literature and new extensions of its borders. It is likely too that not only the books but also the ideas expressed in the talks of this year Hans Andersen award winners, María Teresa Andruetto and Peter Sís, will be receiving the attention they merit due to the universal messages they include. This year, the congress had another specific humanitarian aspect: the Japanese section reminded us that their country had been afflicted by two disasters, a natural one and a man-made one. We do hope that their efforts will be crowned with the success they were hoping for.

Like every international event, this congress was a place of human encounters, a chance to meet the friends we are in contact with, mostly through emails. It also offered the possibility of meeting authors or researchers till then unknown personally – for me it was an unexpected gift to meet Beverley Naidoo in person. The book by this famous author years ago helped me to understand the issues around racism and it was a pleasure to be able to tell this to her. I do hope every participant of the congress had such an encounter, to add to the way in which the intellectual incentive offered by the event will be a benefit from which to pool our future work.

Clive Barnes, Chair IBBY UK committee

It is difficult to share my impressions on the congress since I spent much of it caught up in some way or another with aspects of the day-to-day organisation, behind the congress enquiry desk. Dealing with small crises, sudden demands and quick solutions, occasionally chairing sessions or behind the microphone, means that I didn't have a delegate's eye view.

I suppose the first thing to say is that, after over two years of being involved with the organisation of the congress, initially on the periphery because I took over the role of chair of IBBY UK to enable Ann Lazim to give her full attention to the congress, it is amazing how this huge undertaking at last came together. What a privilege it was to work closely over the four days with the team that had made it happen.

From the first it was an ambitious undertaking that, until the very last minute, had a threat of financial disaster hanging over it. Without the funds to employ an administrator, we went ahead on the faith, enthusiasm and dedicated hard work of members of the congress organising committee, most of whom already had full-time jobs, and the support of many in the wider British children's book world. All the time we were keeping our fingers crossed that enough delegates would come to make the congress viable while application after application for grant aid was rejected, only for us to learn, a matter of weeks before the congress, that we had a grant of £38,000 from the Arts Council.

While Kathy Lemaire and Ann Lazim must take most of the credit for the huge success of the congress, it was a tremendous team effort not only for those four days, but for the two or three years that preceded it. I would like to make one or two other special mentions, the first to Kathleen Milne, whom I hadn't met before the congress because she had left for a new job in the north of Scotland before I joined the IBBY UK committee. Her oversight of the congress website was crucial to the congress's international promotion, and she was also largely responsible for the frustrating and thankless task of grant applications, which finally paid off so spectacularly. And then to Sue Mansfield, whose work as congress treasurer enabled us to see exactly how we might make the congress work financially.

From the congress itself, I would select a few of my own highlights. First, the film of London school children's reactions to some of the books on the IBBY Honour List, put

together largely by Pam Dix and Candy Gourlay.¹ This gave us a children's presence (if only on film). Secondly, the congress book, a compilation of contributions from writers in over 40 national sections on the themes of the congress. Coordinated by Sue Mansfield and published by Mantra books, this was a tangible reminder of what IBBY is about and a wonderful souvenir for each delegate. Lastly, for me personally, there was an opportunity to meet Patricia Crampton, who attended as a delegate. A name I had known for years and a stalwart supporter of IBBY long before I had been a member. That was really memorable.

Valerie Coghlan, Ireland, President of Bookbird, Inc.

Organising an international conference is a major undertaking, and the IBBY UK committee is to be congratulated for the way in which the 2012 IBBY International Congress stimulated, entertained, challenged and invigorated the delegates. Imperial College was an excellent choice of venue: big enough to accommodate everyone without feeling cramped, yet allowing people to meet, mingle and feel very much part of the goings-on. The team of enthusiastic helpers created a welcoming atmosphere and guided and managed without becoming intrusive. How, on my first morning, a helper identified me in the street outside Imperial as a delegate, I have no idea. Had she x-ray eyes that could see 'IBBY' invisibly tattooed on my forehead? Anyway, I was glad to be reassured that I was heading in the right direction.

Or, perhaps she noticed my invisible *Bookbird* hat, for my involvement with *Bookbird*, the journal of IBBY international, was one of my reasons for attending the congress. It also meant that I didn't get to all the sessions, but those that I did attend were full of content and interest. It was worth going to London to hear both Emer O'Sullivan and Shaun Tan giving very different presentations on the conference theme, and the vigorous panel discussion on translation that followed O'Sullivan's paper was provocative, stimulating a lot of conversation at coffee time. The illustrators' panel was one of the opportunities provided by the conference to showcase some of the excellent visual work taking place outside the Anglophone world. And a number of sessions highlighted the important work carried out by IBBY and other agencies with which IBBY has links one way or another – such as the winners of the IBBY-Asahi Reading Promotion awards – working in parts of the world where access to books is not easy for young readers.

For the first time at an IBBY congress, there was a dedicated *Bookbird* stand. One of the highlights was the special congress issue of the journal that focused on British children's literature. The guest editors, Liz Thiel and Alison Waller, provided rich insights into how British writing, illustrating and publishing looks to the global as well as to the local, with articles on aspects of multiculturalism, including 'My (Black) Britain', and on themes of marginalisation in British writing.

Bookbird, Inc., the *Bookbird* board, hopes that participation at the congress will encourage a wider readership for the journal; it is one of the ways in which IBBY members can communicate with each other, and the *Bookbird* correspondents' meeting at the congress highlighted the importance of this. Given the status of British children's literature internationally, we would like to see greater participation in *Bookbird* within the UK. Articles, reviews and information features are welcome, and it would be good to see more people subscribing to the journal – Professor Kimberley Reynolds has stated that 'those with a professional interest in children's literature need *Bookbird*'. And *Bookbird* needs input from IBBY members, so comments and suggestions are always welcome.

Attending the *Bookbird* stand also gave me an opportunity to chat to many of the congress delegates, and to hear their enthusiasm and appreciation for the content of the congress programme and the hard work put in by the congress organisers.

¹ The film made with students from Mount Carmel and St Aloysius schools in Islington, and Stoke Newington school in Hackney by Candy Gourlay (children's book author) and Pam Dix (IBBY UK committee).

Petros Panaou, Cyprus, University of Nicosia, IBBY Cyprus

The 33rd IBBY International Congress was definitely a success – similarly to that other, less important event, that was also organised in London in 2012. The ‘Children’s Literature London 2012 Olympic Games’ was a truly international and transnational event, bringing together hundreds of people from around the globe with a common love for children and stories.

I presented in the poster sessions, providing information about a European project IBBY Cyprus has been coordinating during the past two years. The project is called EUMOF (European Mobility Folktales; www.eumof.unic.ac.cy). Through EUMOF, stories about travelling travel around Europe, connecting teachers and students, and reinforcing a sense of a democratic European citizenship that encourages tolerance and respect for peoples, languages and cultures. Several educators, librarians, academics, editors, authors and illustrators approached me during the sessions, showing authentic interest in this exciting project. The congress was an important portal through which EUMOF mobility stories became even more mobile.

Both the poster presentation sessions and the other parts of the conference I attended were exceptionally organised. I particularly enjoyed a parallel session on storytelling, which included a beautiful storytelling performance. I smiled for hours after browsing the amazing books exhibited in the congress. I was moved to see my friend Frixos Michaelides (author and illustrator from Cyprus) participate in the IBBY Honour List presentation. And, finally, the highlight of the congress for me was Shaun Tan’s inspiring talk, entitled ‘Arrivals and Departures’. I wholeheartedly thank the many people who worked hard to make these experiences possible and look forward to more IBBY ‘arrivals and departures’ in the future.

Alice Curry, UK, Children’s Literature Advisor, Commonwealth Education Trust

As the Children’s Literature Advisor to the Commonwealth Education Trust – a charity that invests in primary and secondary education across the 54 nations of the Commonwealth – I was delighted to see so many diverse countries represented at this year’s IBBY International Congress in London. Such a multicultural group generated a wealth of discussion about the continuing importance of children’s literature as a medium of cultural exchange, and showcased an award-winning selection of children’s books in several languages. The acclaimed plenary speakers told stories, recited poems, sang songs and made us laugh, but more importantly encouraged us to think deeply about the significance of children’s literature as a cross-disciplinary venture in the wider context of a worldwide community.

Of particular interest to me were the Commonwealth contributors; papers from South Africa, Canada, India, Singapore, Australia, Cameroon, New Zealand and Uganda as well as the United Kingdom demonstrated that children’s literature in the Commonwealth is not only growing – both in terms of book publication and analysis – but is also finding its place as a unique and valued literature within the international arena. The theme of the congress was therefore particularly apt. The varied ways in which literature can cross boundaries and migrate across borders is central to an understanding of Commonwealth literatures for children. Commonwealth stories that have crossed borders – whether through the retelling of traditional tales, the remembered stories of migrant populations, or collaborations between authors of different nations – encourage a wider appreciation of Commonwealth literatures and promote understanding of the shared values, experiences and story traditions of 54 nations.

The Commonwealth Education Trust’s own interest in promoting children’s literature as a vital aid to education coalesced last year in the publication of a collection of stories and poems sourced from the 54 Commonwealth countries, entitled *A River of Stories: Tales and Poems from across the Commonwealth*, the subject of the poster I exhibited during the conference. Thanks to the striking images drawn by the award-winning

illustrator of the collection, Jan Pieńkowski, this poster was immediately eye catching and provoked some useful discussion about the significant role children's literature could, and to a greater or lesser extent already does, play in the developing world. The Trust's initiatives to encourage the writing, illustration and publication of high quality local children's literatures are considerably strengthened through the support of those IBBY members who are working tirelessly to promote children's literature around the world. The 2012 congress gave such like-minded people a creative space to discuss all aspects of children's literature production and reception, and renders IBBY itself an extraordinarily valuable organisation.

Niklas Bengtsson, Finland, author and artist, IBBY EC member 2006–2008

There is no doubt that the most moving topic of the 33rd IBBY International Congress came from Japan. Earthquake, tsunami and radioactive contamination in March 2011, each element of which by itself would be a terrifying catastrophe, combined to be too much to bear for one nation. During JBBY's early-bird session on Saturday it became clear that help is still urgent in the tsunami-devastated area. Children are especially in urgent need of attention. Luckily there are several possible ways to help the Japanese. One of the most interesting is to donate artworks to Books for Tomorrow, which is a fund-raising project operated by JBBY and the Japan P.E.N. Club. I do hope that delegates from all over the world will spread this message. Personally I have sent some engravings to the JBBY Secretariat to be auctioned and I have also translated their leaflets into Finnish: this has helped Finnish artists' organisations to pass the word on to their members. [Details of the project, photographs, progress so far and how to donate are at www.jbby.org/ae/news/english-%e2%80%9cbooks-for-tomorrow%e2%80%9d-project-for-children/4456/?lang=en.]

Even though sorrow was the immediate feeling that arose when listening to the Japanese presentations, reading their leaflets and speaking personally with them, it was apparent that participants in the early-bird session had the benefit of a high-quality and powerful artistic presentation, especially with the song 'Hana wa saku' ('Flowers Will Bloom'), which looked forward to a better world. Tears? Yes, but no fears for the future! Let us all make a better world through IBBY, including the personal contacts that can easily be created in our international congresses.

As in former IBBY congresses it was very easy to make new friends in the congress held in London. For example during queuing (which was probably a very English custom, even though not a specially planned programme for the congress) for Shaun Tan's signature, I made new friends from Denmark and Indonesia. Dina Novita Tuasuun invited me to Bali for a children's literature congress; I hope I will have time for that. And Kang Woo Hyon invited me to set up an exhibition of pop-up books for Naminara, South Korea, which I am looking forward to. The reason for this invitation is that since 2001 I have exhibited children's books as designed objects in several cities in Finland and the Åland Islands: books needn't be regarded only as literature, even illustrated literature. Mainly I have tried to build my exhibitions of unconventional books in the Spring so that they will celebrate International Children's Book Day.

One common start for a conversation with old and new friends in the congress was to ask 'Why do you have a red/blue dot on your name badge?' I had a blue dot, and at first I thought that the blue one was for boys and the red one for girls. But I just couldn't figure out who would need that information on a name badge. And because the congress was not held in the USA, the dots could not mean red and blue politically inclined states either. Neither could they be indicators of communists and right-wing people. Ahmad Redza Ahmad Khairuddin joked that his dot was connected to his name: red was for Redza. Certainly, there was a mystery about this in the air; the reason was uncovered by some people sooner and by others later. At least some people understood the meaning of the dots when they were queuing at the wrong time for lunch!

For a foreigner it was superb that nearly all the sessions and events were held in the same building. There were no difficulties in finding lecture and session rooms once you had made your way to Imperial College itself.

The Science Museum was an interesting choice for the presentation of the Hans Christian Andersen awards. The speeches by the award winners María Teresa Andruetto and Peter Sís were inspiring, but a special flavour for the Gala Reception came from the location itself. In a sense, the atmosphere of the Science Museum was almost surrealistic, but I liked it. It was great that the domination of fiction was challenged by natural science. I think it showed us that we should pay more attention to non-fiction books for children in IBBY congresses.

Pam Dix, congress committee and IBBY UK committee

What a privilege it was and what fun too! It has not been hard to present the UK and London in a great light this summer after the success of the Olympics and I think this overflowed into the congress organisation. All those meetings and preparation meant that we were well organised with a great team and an excellent programme.

Spending four days with 500 like-minded professionals from 50 countries was exciting, challenging and full of stimulating discussion. My congress started with meeting some of the Cambodian delegates from the Eurostar with the result that they became my particular 'friends' during the congress. I was overwhelmed to hear of the great successes of their SIPAR programme – look it up on www.sipar-books.com/. Unbelievably, they now have a network of staffed primary-school libraries, government recommended standards and a very exciting development programme.

I was not able to attend that many sessions but I was absolutely determined to hear Shaun Tan and this was undoubtedly my high spot. This was filmed and is on the congress website. Quiet, thoughtful and full of insight, this is, I know, a talk I will revisit and certainly recommend to all my students. Seeing Shaun Tan in amongst the curious and technical exhibits in the Science Museum at the Saturday night Hans Christian Andersen awards was almost an embodiment of an illustration in *The Arrival*.

My other pleasure was to manage the timetable for a wonderful team of volunteers who contributed to making the congress such a great experience for everyone.

Pat Pinsent, Vice-Chair IBBY UK committee

I was able to attend only the Saturday of the IBBY congress, but so rich was the fare that I think I'd have got mental indigestion if I had been able to be there for the whole time! First impressions were of being somewhat overwhelmed by the number of people and the obvious linguistic diversity – it was quite a relief to be able to check in and see familiar faces from the IBBY UK committee. Scarcely a moment had passed, however, before I was greeted by Emer O'Sullivan (whose talk, unfortunately on another day, I had missed); this was the first of many encounters with people I either knew already or had been in touch by email without having ever met. (I am always grateful when people introduce themselves to me as my prosopagnosia – face blindness which I've had all my life but only known about for a few years) can put me in danger of ignoring someone I ought to recognise!

The first event on Saturday was Shaun Tan's lively and stimulating talk that is reproduced elsewhere in this issue of *IBBYLink*). This was followed by a panel of illustrators from very different backgrounds: Shirin Adl, originally from Iran, living in Britain; Kitty Crowther English/Swedish, living in Belgium; and Chen Jiang Hong, from China, living in France. It was fascinating to see the different ways in which their art responded to cultural diversity.

During the course of the day I attended presentations on the construction of identity and on the transmutation of fairy tales, learnt a great deal about the situation of people from the Philippines who make up such a large proportion of both seafarers and migrant

workers, and witnessed the procession of more than 30 writers, illustrators and translators coming onto the platform to be recognised by the audience for work awarded the accolade of IBBY Honour Book.

I'd like to pay tribute to the smooth and efficient running of this international congress and just wish I'd been able to experience more of it.

Rebecca R. Butler, UK, researcher, reviewer and PhD student

Considering the number of different countries and cultures represented at the 33rd IBBY International Congress, it was a truly impressive achievement to create a cohesive and collegiate atmosphere devoid, as far as I could see, of any spirit of discord or rivalry. Despite the myriad detailed impressions I received over four memorable days, that spirit of unity is my most abiding recollection. During the stage presentation of *War Horse*, Albert, the fictional owner of the horse, sings a farm song 'Only Remembered'.² Michael Morpurgo sang the song unaccompanied and the entire congress joined in. The spirit of unity and celebration was tangible and irresistible. The community around literature for young readers was united and powerful.

I will also remember the plenary presentation of the Australian illustrator and author Shaun Tan, after which the line of those hoping to have works signed stretched right down a long corridor, delaying arrivals at the next session.

At another session, a series of storytellers narrated stories first in a mixture of Welsh and English, then in Arabic and English, and then in Mongolian and English. The sequence of cultures was dazzling and we really knew we were in a multicultural milieu. I travelled the world without leaving my home town.

I presented my own session under the title 'But you Can't Walk, how Can you Travel?'. I wanted to illustrate for those attending my session the journey made by disabled characters in fiction (and in real life). There is a migration that disabled people make from the stark realisation that they are not as other people are, to an acceptance of disability, but a view of themselves, nevertheless, as independent individuals with life aims and the means to encompass them. This migration was illustrated with the aid of two novels, namely *Saffy's Angel* by Hilary McKay and *A Different Life* by Lois Keith. As a doctoral student delivering a paper for the first time at the international congress, I was somewhat daunted to find that the two co-presenters in my session were both professors from well-known American universities. They did, however, greet me and cooperate with me as an equal. It settled my nerves a little to spot in the audience a couple of familiar faces, people I knew from the NCRCL (National Centre for Research in Children's Literature) or from previous conferences. The seminar room for our three presentations was packed, with standing room only. My paper was greeted with enthusiasm and elicited some interesting questions. One such question was why disability in literature is an area light in scholarly research. My own academic work is designed to help remedy this deficiency. Several people commented that my presentation provoked serious thought. Perhaps the role of disabled characters in books for young readers is a subject that deserves wider consideration.

One other impression worth recording is that despite the undoubted value of the plenary sessions, the parallel sessions and the award ceremonies mounted by the congress organisers, some of the most valuable moments were to be found in the informal exchanges. People lining up for a session or a book signing, waiting to get food or drink, maybe even enduring the long wait for a lift to appear, would exchange thoughtful comments and form contacts that might have inestimable value in the future. With the internet and social media, such contacts will be easier to maintain and develop than they ever have been before.

² The song can be heard at www.youtube.com/watch?v=uyoJn8Ebb7I. Beware, it is addictive! For the words, see www.coopeboyesandsimpson.co.uk/only_remembered.htm.

Swapna Dutta, India, author and translator

It's August, 2012. I'm at Heathrow Airport looking about me eagerly at the bright pink line and the Olympic crowd. But I'm here to attend the 33rd IBBY International Congress being hosted at Imperial College London from 23 August where there will be delegates from 72 countries from around the world. The last congress I attended was at Basel 10 years ago. I'm keen to discover if it's going to be just the same or ... ?

I can't wait to check in at the Prince's Gardens where I'm to stay and rush off to the venue of the congress for the registration. It's nearly time for the opening ceremony and many delegates have registered already. I take possession of my Wally bag and my identity badge and make for the opening ceremony at the Great Hall. I have already heard of Theatre Peckham, celebrating their silver jubilee this year. I really enjoy the songs presented by the children from *The Miraculous Journey of Edward Tulane*, one of their recent productions. We join in Wally's 25th birthday party in the Queen's Tower Room and return to the hall for the main programme of the evening. I am eager to hear the main speakers: Michael Morpurgo OBE, Anthony Browne and, most of all, Julia Donaldson MBE, the current UK Children's Laureate (I'd fallen for her *Gruffalo* at my first read five years ago!). I'm not disappointed! Michael Morpurgo enthralled us as he recounts his experiences as a writer and sings from the play based on his book *War Horse*. Anthony Browne is equally interesting. But the audience simply falls for Julia Donaldson and her husband as they recite, sing and dance, thus bringing her poems to life, especially the many-language version of her *Gruffalo*. The programme concludes with the 2012 IBBY-Asahi Reading Promotion awards.

I have already discovered two other delegates from India who are old friends and also staying in the Prince's Gardens. We make for the Great Hall soon after breakfast, well in time for the first plenary session. Being a translator myself (although I'm primarily a writer) I am particularly interested in today's subjects: 'Why translate children's books?' and 'Talking about translation'. I find Daniel Hahn's presentation both interesting and stimulating. I look for my notebook and biro and don't find any. I'm told that they haven't been given away because no one has sponsored them. So anyone wanting to make notes must find their own stationery. A reminder that times have changed since the Basel conference.

When it is time for the parallel sessions I am happy to remember that since I am not presenting a paper this time I'll be free to attend whichever session I want to, more than one if I have time. Lunch is also the time for making new friends and greeting old ones. I am thrilled to meet Liz Page and Leena Maissen from Basel after a gap of 10 years and old friends from the International Youth Library, Munich, Germany. I look around for others whom I had hoped to see and feel disappointed to find them missing. The sight of delegates scattered about the lawn makes me remember my college days. I really enjoy the typical British lunch served during the next two days, especially the fish and chips, and the turkey and apple pie with hot custard sauce.

I spend a lot of time looking at the exhibition of popular children's books from the UK in the Queen's Tower Room where the IBBY Honour Books are also exhibited. I pick out several books by my favourite authors to carry home. In fact I am a frequent visitor at the congress bookshop right throughout the congress. I cannot but envy the writers from the UK whom their publishers have promoted so conspicuously and wish things were the same in my own country. I spend the afternoons attending many interesting parallel sessions.

Many speakers in the plenary sessions leave a lasting impression, including Shaun Tan, Kitty Crowther, Junko Yokota, Shirin Adl and Patrick Ryan. Among the parallel sessions I particularly enjoy the live translation where two translators translate the same extract from a novel by a Spanish author. It is interesting to see how Daniel Hahn and Rosalind Harvey differ in their expressions and subtle nuances although both are translating the same text. It makes me understand why my editor sometimes changes my language and puts the same thing differently! I'm sure this experience will help me feel less annoyed the next time it happens to me. I also love the storytelling sessions: Beatriz Montero's in a parallel session in particular is absolutely fascinating.

We are now all set for the Hans Christian Andersen awards presentation ceremony at the Science Museum. The venue is interesting although it is very crowded and most of us have no place to sit and can only hear the awards being presented to author María Teresa Andruetto from Argentina and illustrator Peter Sís from the Czech Republic. But we do spend a jolly evening – even the crush is enjoyable! What I enjoyed most of all was the music played by the Silk Street Jazz – I’m really impressed to know that all the band members are full-time London professionals, some of them leading musicians in their field.

The time to bid adieu arrives all too soon and we are at the Great Hall once again for the closing ceremony. My eyes are full as I listen to Lemn Sissay and hope that some of the writers who have been lucky enough to attend the congress will be ‘torch bearers’ and ‘the catchers of light’ for the young readers.

Judith Philo, IBBY UK committee

A girdle round the earth! Congress, four days of closely packed events, awards, talks, films, presentations, receptions, performances, panel discussions and multiple translations in a variety of forms. So much that was stimulating and an enthralling experience, it is hard to know how to begin to separate it. First, the venue. Imperial College is a huge campus, its buildings and rooms named after august scientists, the Queen’s Tower a central geographical feature. It provided an imposing, spacious site that was always bursting with life, the lively activities of congress taking place within a larger thriving community of research and learning. The conference desk was the hub, set up as a makeshift camp, reminding me of something out of Arthur Ransome or Never Never Land; it was always busy. There was a constant display of colourful leaflets available and ever-present IBBY members responding to queries and providing information. At registration everyone received a Wally bag (much sought after by passing undergraduates) filled with booklets and, most vitally, the congress programme which was an excellent source of information and easy reference. Also included was a specially collated book of poems and stories from 46 countries, celebrating the theme of the congress, *We’re all from the Same Big Land*. Many of the pieces featured twice, first printed in their language of origin or script, then in translation. This is a very special memento to possess. I liked ‘Flying Chimpanzees’, Beverley Naidoo’s tribute to Anthony Browne’s conference poster – an image we were all familiar with long before the congress happened, and which was a constant backdrop to all the presentations. The image conjured up for me is Willy the Champ as Ariel. This encompasses the range and depth of the conference experience, however my capacity to assimilate it is not so effortless as Ariel’s. I describe what were highlights for me.

The opening ceremony, appropriately, started with a delightful performance by children from Theatre Peckham. Three children’s laureates followed, each offering their interpretation of the role and their fulfilment of it. Michael Morpurgo and Anthony Browne were entertaining and true to their own individual style, but for me Julia Donaldson (the present laureate) stole the show. With her husband busking on guitar and several keen volunteers from the audience, she orchestrated a spontaneous, hilarious and spirited performance of ‘A Squash and a Squeeze’, a song whose narrative unfolds then returns to its beginning but with a new understanding gained. Julia Donaldson has a hearing impairment and is particularly aware of the power of signing and performance for children who are deaf.

The winners of the IBBY-Asahi awards and presentations followed. Both were inspiring projects that had developed over a long period. Abuelas Cuentacuentos, the grandmother’s storytelling programme in Argentina, gives women an opportunity to extend their role in society later in their life and the experience also enhances their self-esteem. This project appealed to me particularly.

The other winner was SIFAR, the origin of which was helping refugees living on the Cambodia–Thai border during the Khmer Rouge regime. After 30 years it is now a thriving educational network and promoter of reading centres in rural areas. Its survival

and achievements brought home to me the courage and steadfastness of purpose required from those who live through civil war and its destructive impact on communities.

Shaun Tan's presentation was for me the most rewarding experience of the conference. His quiet presence drew everyone's attention. He explored his title, 'Arrivals and Departures', simply and clearly, whilst his complex illustrations were eloquent. Later, when the presentation of the Hans Christian Andersen awards was made in the Science Museum's Turbine Hall, the scale and complexity of the space and its contents conjured the idea of a Shaun Tan landscape. Another feature of the Saturday was a delightful film celebrating the Honour Book awards, featuring the views of London children who are representative of the individuals whom IBBY seeks to reach.

On the final day, storytelling in two languages, Welsh/English and English/Arabic, was made dramatic by the switch from one language to the other. Dashdondog Jamba from Mongolia performed a beguiling mime. Performances by Michael Rosen and Lemn Sissay were both hugely enjoyable and spirited, each with their own distinctive content and delivery. It all lives on in memory.

Ferelith Hordon, UK, Youth Libraries Group past chair

Like the Olympics, the 2012 IBBY International Congress, hosted by IBBY UK and held this August at Imperial College London was a long time in the making. Then suddenly, it happened. And what a happening; four days of packed sessions. Despite the recession, it was wonderful to welcome delegates from all over the world – Mongolia, Argentina, Europe were some – and, yes, the UK.

What was on offer? Plenary sessions with speakers such as Shaun Tan (inspirational), Patsy Aldana, Wendy Cooling, and four of our children's laureates – Michael Morpurgo, Anthony Browne, Michael Rosen and Julia Donaldson – to name just a few. There were early-bird sessions and parallel sessions, and I was able to chair a couple of these. These were fascinating, involving speakers from around the world presenting papers on subjects of interest. In my case, one session was built around the theme of 'barriers' and how they are presented in picture books: the Berlin Wall, the barrier created by death and the bridge in the Three Billy Goats Gruff – esoteric? No – thought provoking. I realised that I could not think of one picture book, or even a novel, dealing with the creation or destruction of the Berlin Wall for young people in the UK – correct me if I am wrong.

There were the celebrations – the presentation of the IBBY-Asahi awards, the IBBY Honour Books with the UK represented by Marcus Sedgwick (Lucy Cousins was unable to attend), and the Hans Christian Andersen awards that took place in the Science Museum, surrounded by the amazing exhibits – impressive. There was the bookshop for those wanting to buy books, and authors and illustrators to sign them.

The overarching theme of the congress was translation and migration – how stories move round the world; the ownership of story. As a result, translation featured strongly in the programme, with Daniel Hahn curating a simultaneous translation session. There was Aidan Chambers talking to Bart Moeyaert, the Belgian author, and Anthea Bell in a session with the German author Kai Meyer.

Then there was the storytelling. Elizabeth Laird, Beverley Naidoo and Jamila Gavin all spoke about how they collected the stories they tell. And then three storytellers told stories in a multiplicity of languages – Welsh, Arabic and Mongolian. Closing the weekend, Michael Rosen drew on his own experiences as someone who can, in his own heritage, draw on a multiplicity of stories. From the beginning the celebratory atmosphere was there, with a group of young people from Theatre Peckham performing for the opening ceremony to the poet Lemn Sissay at the closing ceremony. Tiring? Yes. Stressful? Sometimes. Inspiring and enjoyable? Yes, yes, yes.

Susan Bailes, IBBY UK committee and teacher

In glorious sunshine, South Kensington's Imperial College London proved to be an excellent, popular venue for the 33rd IBBY International Congress, welcoming delegates from all over the world – truly international. I was delighted to attend this, my first IBBY congress.

The proceedings began very smoothly and appropriately, with a child focus, as accomplished children from London's Theatre Peckham enchanted us with their rendering of a dramatisation of the book *The Miraculous Journey of Edward Tulane* by Kate DiCamillo. There followed the opening ceremony, featuring three children's laureates: in order of appearance, Michael Morpurgo, Anthony Browne and Julia Donaldson. Michael Morpurgo, dressed in his familiar red suit, reminded the assembled company of the origin of the children's laureateship following that of poet laureate. (It is great to realise that so many other countries have followed suit.) It began over a bottle of red wine and a chat between Morpurgo and his farmer neighbour and celebrated poet and children's writing judge Ted Hughes. Morpurgo entertained us with accounts of visits to schools during his time as children's laureate, and of a recent visit to Moscow where he was taken to meet Vladimir Putin. Anthony Browne explained his early love of drawing and seeing the uncanny, in particular interpreting shapes in a highly imaginative way, a skill he has encouraged in workshops involving his Shape Game. He spoke of works like *Voices in the Park*, which he returned to after many years, and also how much he had enjoyed producing *Willy the Dreamer*, which gave him the freedom to show links with great art masterpieces in a fun way.

If anyone wondered how this could be followed up, we were all amused and highly delighted by Julia Donaldson and her accompanist on a guitar, husband Malcolm, a recently retired, but not retiring, doctor. It was quite a feat for them to give us a rendition of *The Gruffalo* with minimal props, in four languages, as Donaldson is travelling both here and abroad in her role.

The Walker Books' *Where's Wally?*'s 25th birthday party, complete with dressed-up catering staff, was somewhat drowned out by the crescendo of voices as excited delegates warmly greeted one another and exchanged news. On show was a splendid exhibition of 2012 Hans Andersen award nominations and the 2012 Honour Books, as well as fabulous books for sale.

Other congress highlights for me in the parallel sessions: the amazing Spanish storyteller Beatriz Montero, who had us all participating with great gusto in Spanish; learning about the Japanese Kamishibai folk tales from a Canadian academic; and discovering how an American children's writer went about capturing the feelings of an Iranian girl after spending time travelling studying Persian textiles, rug making and dyeing wool, and then trying these techniques in a similar way herself back home.

Who could not be moved to learn of the great work to gather picture books for the tsunami-devastated area of Japan? We were reminded in this session that books are incredibly powerful and touch all humanity.

The panel of acclaimed writers whose books I have explored over the years was a personal delight: Jamila Gavin, Beverley Naidoo and Elizabeth Laird. Laird has been travelling all over Ethiopia in a land rover with an interpreter collecting folk tales to capture the oral tradition before it disappears. An Iranian illustrator commented on how, living away from her original home, she has learned to appreciate what is missing: the art, the carpets and traits of Persian culture.

In a keynote address, Shaun Tan spoke most eloquently and revealed how his work tackles big questions. He is so talented and the video of his talk is well worth watching on the congress website (www.ibbycongress2012.org/index.php).

Listening to the three professional storytellers from Wales, Palestine and Mongolia was inspiring. Their photographs are on Flickr (accessed from the congress website). The song from the Mongolian storyteller was very moving – how fortunate the children are to hear them. Michael Rosen spoke candidly of feeling like an outsider as a Jewish boy

growing up with two academic, communist parents. I won't forget his tale of the waterproof torch in a hurry: so true to life!

Speaking of torches, just as the Olympic torch was handed over to Brazil for the next Olympic Games, IBBY's next international congress will be in Mexico City in 2014. So that just leaves me to say thank you IBBY for a wonderful congress and thanks and best wishes to everyone involved: the delegates, the speakers, the publishers and writers. If ever one needed a model for bringing people together in a peaceful fashion the 33rd IBBY International Congress did it.

First Day of the Congress, Friday

Impressions³

Alexandra Strick, consultant for Booktrust and manager/founder of Outside In

The first day of the 33rd IBBY International Congress at Imperial College London was a resounding success for me.

Over 450 delegates from IBBY branches all over the world and others gathered in the prestigious Great Hall for the opening ceremony. Illustrating the congress theme to perfection, a small troupe of children from Theatre Peckham was the first to take to the stage. Their songs and dance were from a production based on *The Miraculous Journey of Edward Tulane*, adapted from Kate DiCamillo's 2006 children's book about a china rabbit on a voyage of discovery. With most of the roles played by children, some as young as five, the cast displayed more confidence and poise than many a seasoned adult actor.

Once the audience had given the cast several (well-deserved) rounds of applause, the stage was taken by the IBBY UK congress directors, Ann Lazim and Kathy Lemaire, who formally welcomed the delegates to the congress. Ann reiterated the extent to which Theatre Peckham epitomised the theme – Peckham being a highly multicultural area of London and the play itself having 'migrated' from a book.

The opening ceremony went on to recognise three key IBBY members for their contributions to IBBY – Ana María Machado from Brazil, Peter Schneck from Austria and Urs Breitenstein from Switzerland were awarded honorary membership.

Chieko Suemori was then invited to tell the congress a little about an innovative project to provide picture books for the children of the tsunami-affected area of Japan. Being herself a resident of the area, she told us first-hand about the devastation caused by the events of March 2011. She described how she realised she had to do something.

Remembering past efforts such as those following the Indonesian disaster, she set up an appeal for books that was met with a great response: 2,300 picture books were soon received, to help children in the affected area. Out of the sadness, she explained, 'we need strong and happy and hopeful children'. Chieko Suemori urged delegates to visit the stand and come to the (very) early-bird session on Saturday morning.

IBBY UK's Ian Dodds then invited members of the congress to adjourn to attend a lively 'Where's Wally' tea party downstairs. Here we all enjoyed a huge cake and celebrated Wally reaching the ripe old age of 25. Walker Books told of Wally's own travels and migrations as well as his impressive record-breaking antics (Ireland delegates let out a resounding cheer when it was announced that Dublin was the venue for the event featuring the largest ever number of people dressed as Wally). Returning to the Great Hall, John Dunne of IBBY UK welcomed three of the UK's children's laureates to the congress to talk about the role and their respective achievements.

Michael Morpurgo was first up, paying tribute to editor Aidan Chambers and describing how the concept of a children's laureate was first born – over a discussion (and a glass or two of claret) he shared with Ted Hughes. Sadly the poet laureate himself did not see the dream realised, dying before Quentin Blake was announced as the first children's laureate.

Morpurgo told us that the children's laureateship is all about 'speaking about what you care about for two years' and in doing so inspiring government, teachers, children and society at large. It's a great way to focus our minds and heads on what is out there for children, helping them to grow into readers.

He described his loathing for the idea that one's love of books could be quashed from an early age by being 'marked' on reading. He described how he used his laureateship to take his love of books around the world; for example, travelling to a remote island of

³ Items from the congress blog are reproduced with permission of the authors.

Scotland to talk to 12 children and visiting the Kremlin to see 400 librarians eating caviar with first ladies Mrs Putin and Mrs Bush (as you do!).

Anthony Browne then took over, to share some of the experiences and priorities during his tenure as children's laureate. Browne was keen to use the opportunity to encourage children to try the Shape Game – a simple activity that he and his brother loved as children, and which 'makes artists of us all'. Browne explained that drawing 'isn't about making a glass of water look like a glass or water'. It's rather about trying to share something.

Particularly compelling was the chance to view a picture from Browne's own childhood, in which his surrealist tendencies were already apparent, even at the tender age of six. His image of a pair of legs showed a pirate peeping out of one shoe and a second tiny pair of feet disappearing into the top of the trousers. Browne insisted that he doesn't 'create' stories himself. They come from somewhere else. They come to us like dreams. They emerge from the events we see, the stories people tell, from other people's books, from newspapers and art.

He adeptly demonstrated how famous artists have also played the Shape Game – a statue by Picasso was the perfect example of one thing looking like another, creating something from something else. 'Nothing comes from nothing,' said Browne. Creating books is all about borrowing, adapting, stealing!

Interestingly, both laureates agreed that children's books were at risk of being marginalised – Browne being particularly concerned about picture books and the tendency to try to drag children away from them and on to 'proper' books as early as possible.

It's true that visual literacy is often underrated. Browne's books provide a feast of visual stimulation, full of quirky details and hidden messages (and even a few elements which Browne admitted he couldn't explain, he just included for the fun of it). He showed images from his book *Voices in the Park* which features four different perspectives of the same events, showing how everyone sees things differently. It's a perfect example of the way his books boast numerous nods towards 'spot the difference' puzzles and, of course, the Shape Game itself.

Julia Donaldson then introduced herself as the 'reigning' laureate, sporting the famous medal to prove it. She started her 'set' with a lively song (accompanied by her husband Malcolm on the guitar) developed during their busking days in Italy – and with heavily pasta-inspired lyrics!

Donaldson described her three priorities as laureate, drama being one of them. For a lot of children, she explained, drama is a vital way into stories. The local library is also one of things about which she 'cares passionately'. She shared her concerns about the plight of libraries in this country. As she pointed out, it's no doubt better to have a library run by volunteers than no library at all, but surely when our libraries are losing valuable professional expertise we are heading in the wrong direction and cannot simply dress this up as being part of the Big Society. Supporting deaf children was the third of Donaldson's particular priorities as laureate, having hearing aids herself and believing strongly in deaf children's rights to enjoy books.

She described her 'progress to date' in relation to all three objectives. In terms of deafness, she is listening to deaf children and supporting programmes like Sign 2 Sing and the young deaf poets of Life and Deaf. Pulling together the other two areas (drama and libraries), Donaldson wowed everyone by performing an unforgettable rendition of 'A Squash and a Squeeze' with the help of audience volunteers (in some cases volunteered by Donaldson). Particularly memorable performances were given by a South American goat and an Asian cow. As if this were not enough, Donaldson ended her 'set' by performing her book *The Gruffalo* in a medley of different languages.

Between the three of them they have, I'm sure, guaranteed the future creation of new children's laureates all around the world. And on that note, John Dunne informed

delegates that children's laureates have already been announced in Wales, Australia, Ireland, Sweden and the USA.

The final session of the day was the presentation of the 2012 IBBY-Asahi Reading Promotion awards. The winners were Abuelas Cuentacuentos – the Grandmother Storytelling Programme, Argentina – (an amazing project involving older people in reading to children) and SIPAR, Cambodia (a stirring and clearly long-term programme helping to provide books, libraries, schools, teachers and training, following the four years of genocide perpetrated by the Khmer Rouge). The day ended with two highly insightful and often moving presentations from these two award recipients, both projects demonstrating the vital role of books in helping children to carve out brighter futures for themselves.

The first day of the congress provided the perfect balance of reflection, celebration and recognition, praising all those who build bridges between books and children.

Humour in Translation

Erica Gillingham, reviewer and postgraduate student of children's literature

'Why translate children's books?' was the topic of Emer O'Sullivan's plenary session talk on Friday morning. From my seat in the rafters, it appeared as if the audience members were enjoying the journey O'Sullivan was taking us on as she dissected her own question and regaled us with examples of translated children's books. This was a thorough overview of the days to come of the congress, nuanced and highly informative. And then something unexpected happened: O'Sullivan made us, the audience, laugh.

It was a knowing laugh: this group of delegates could not only see the humour in the French asserting that their children had 'too much common sense' after the Second World War to believe that Pippi Longstocking could lift up a horse (it was changed to 'a pony'), but they had been there. This was a room full of translators, publishers, authors, academics and others who had been in those gridlocked conversations over the appropriateness of one, singular translated word.

O'Sullivan followed this example with another: Axel Scheffler's udderless goat drawing entitled 'The Scissors of International Coproduction'. It appeared that the US version of one of his picture books preferred its sitting goat sans udders.

Indeed, not just translations, but translators were a much-heard topic of commentary, too. O'Sullivan praised them, quoting Gillian Lathey, as the 'unsung and often unpaid heroes', 'the great disappeared'. The following panel with Aidan Chambers and Bart Moeyaert had slightly differing opinions on the translators each author had worked with in translating their novels. Chambers proclaimed that he had 'discovered some of the strange things translators do', while Moeyaert welcomed translators who shared his view to 'please he [his] second self'.

And then it was the translators themselves on stage as Daniel Hahn and Rosalind Harvey discussed their choices in translating a piece of Eliacer Cansino's writing from Spanish to English. Insightful and enlightening about the translation process (choices for this word over that, passive voice versus active, etc.) between the two translators, the conversation was also peppered with humorous remarks.

On including a piece of information regarding a character, not known at this point in the story, Harvey defended her choice:

RH: That's because you didn't read the book.

DH: It's cheating if you read the book.

The chair remarked that he had needed to 'teach Microsoft Word so many swear words'. Harvey and Hahn shared some of the mistakes their audio dictation has made:

RH: 'For foxes' sake!'

DH: 'Excrementation point'.

Hahn gave an example of one of the various uses for italics:

DH: Italicising things signals to people that they are in another language, so that *red fish* becomes *rrred feesh*.

Even in the parallel sessions, the funny side of the work that people are doing comes through. In Session 12, 'Translation and Adaptation', Naomi De-Malach spoke about translating children's books from a more classical Hebrew to modern Hebrew: 'We have a section in our libraries that is called 'Books that Children Don't Read'. Can you imagine a section of children's books which children don't read?! Of course, what De-Malach went on to explain – that children today know a different version of Hebrew from the one their parents learned, given that the language is still so new – made perfect sense. What struck me about her comment, indeed all the comments that got a laugh throughout the day, was the delight and humour in this kind of work.

Saci Lloyd said in her lunchtime talk that she was moving back to comedy in her writing. When asked about this later, she stated that, with her research, 'if you don't laugh, you'll cry with this stuff'. What was most joyous to me about the day was the opportunity, after countless hours of solitary toil with extreme dedication and purpose, to share not just what we know but also those moments of discovery that make us giggle when we're alone – with an audience who can sympathise.

Second Day of the Congress, Saturday

Ellen Ainsworth, IBBY UK committee

Joining such a 'jambalaya' of a congress for just one of its four days was both exhilarating and a little frustrating. I wanted to be sure not to miss anything but also to relax at refreshment breaks and chat to as many new people as possible, plus an occasional long-lost friend such as Patricia Crampton, who led the last IBBY International Congress to be held in Britain – in Cambridge in 1982. I chose to attend Saturday largely because Shaun Tan was a featured speaker. Though I knew nothing of his background, some of his near-wordless picture books had really spoken to me: of loneliness and friendship, of 'arrivals and departures' (his title), and of alienation and inclusion. His illustrated talk was indeed fascinating and moving.

Tan's speech and the following-on illustrators' panel made me keenly aware that so many of us attending the congress are truly 'aliens' in some way ourselves, even in our everyday lives, whether growing up speaking different languages at home and at school, or voluntarily transplanting ourselves to another region or country and making a new life there. That Shaun Tan, a Chinese Australian who says he is used to feeling like an alien wherever he goes, has a Finnish wife (who is a fellow artist) seems a perfect example of embracing the 'other'.

During the lunch break I listened to Verna Wilkins, a long-time heroine of mine for her ground-breaking stories for very young children, illustrating great diversity. It was poignant to learn that the battle is far from won; very recently a bookseller in Vancouver politely refused to stock Verna's books because 'we don't have any customers who look like that', while the display window was full of books about gruffaloes!

The IBBY Honour Books presentation in the afternoon was another highlight for me – such diversity of excellence, and such a fun international feel to the appearance and body language of those rewarded. The accompanying booklet was extremely well put together, and makes a good souvenir.

As for the parallel sessions, I made an excellent/lucky choice in the morning – Tilka Jamnik of Slovenia, and Ligideng Orlet and her father from Inner Mongolia – despite being puzzled as to how the two cultures had anything in common for us to discuss. Each of them spoke of an intense longing to spread the best of their distinctive children's literatures to the wider world, and facing similar problems with translation and mass production. A memorable line from the Mongolians: "The 'soul' of a story can so easily be lost if it has to pass through a third language (in their case, Chinese) on

its way to English or Spanish, which we see as our best route out to the wider world.’ Jamnik said there are similar issues with Slovenian having to pass through another language, usually German, en route to English.

My choice for the afternoon session was about variants, especially film versions, of the Cinderella and Red Riding Hood stories, discussed by researchers from Spain/Germany, Iran (at the American University, which I hadn’t realised was still there) and mid-western USA. I was surprised at the dearth of reference by the Spanish and American speakers to the work of Angela Carter and Bruno Bettelheim, among others. The Egyptian speaker Yasmine Motawy was, however, very good, introducing us to the work of an important Egyptian writer A.W. El-Messiri, who uses these traditional tales in a playful, subversive, humanistic way.

Third and Final Day of the Congress, Sunday

We are the Tale

Jaq Delany, librarian

The overriding theme during the Sunday morning plenary sessions was ‘Who owns the story?’ In a world where issues of cultural appropriation and misappropriation are raised, how can a writer approach telling a story about a culture that is not their own?

The flow of stories around the world was the subject of the first session with Elizabeth Laird, Jamila Gavin and Beverley Naidoo. All three spoke engagingly about their experiences of hearing the threads of stories meandering along trade routes and across oceans. The art of the storyteller looms large for all three and they told of their own journeys to collect stories and pass them on to their own readers, and of how storytelling in many cultures is not for children and children are driven away if they try to listen. How is it, they asked, that storytelling has been infantilised?

Whilst travelling across Ethiopia meeting storytellers and collecting their stories to be published for Ethiopian children, Elizabeth Laird found a tradition of storytelling made richer by isolation. ‘I had no idea,’ she said, ‘what riches I would uncover.’ Jamila Gavin spoke of the link between folk tales and biblical stories and asked the question, which came first? As stories travelled along trade, silk and spice routes, how did they shift and change to reflect the culture of those hearing them and then passing them on in their own interpretations? Beverley Naidoo told of how stories of Mmutla the clever hare journeyed across the ocean to be told by slaves ripped from their homeland, Mmutla transforming into Brer Rabbit. So was the slave experience reflected in the stories they told, stories where animals are humanised and humans dehumanised.

All three are accomplished storytellers in the written form and it was three accomplished storytellers in the oral tradition who followed them onto the stage to illustrate brilliantly that culture and language are no barrier to understanding the story. Michael Harvey had the audience in stitches with his tale of Jack, who, given more and more difficult tasks by the king, was saved only by his own cunning and kindness. Harvey told his tale in a mix of Welsh and English, alternating language without translation. The audience were happy to follow along and even participate when necessary. When his story was over, Sonia Nimr told him that the same story is found amongst Palestinian folk tales, reiterating what the first session had stated over and over. Sonia Nimr herself first told her tale in English and then told it again in Arabic. ‘Are you following?’ she asked us. ‘Yes!’ we replied. Finally, Mongolian travelling storyteller Dashdondog Jamba sang and recited his tales in Mongolian, and, despite what I imagine was an audience with few Mongolian speakers present, we all understood the intent and sheer joy of the story though probably not the words themselves.

In the second session, Patsy Aldana spoke with great vigour about her own cultural heritage and how she believes that the human face of globalisation is migration. When the publishing scene is predominantly white and obsessed with vampires, how much does the cultural identity of the writer matter? She posed questions on the authority of

voice and the appropriation of voice. ‘What right,’ she asked, ‘do you have to tell my story when I cannot tell it myself?’ It was these questions that have led her to search for writers and illustrators who could tell their own stories, and then publish them through Groundwood Books, the publishing house she founded in 1978. ‘Homogenisation of books,’ she said, ‘is dangerous for our society.’

Following Aldana and ending the plenary sessions of the congress, Michael Rosen also spoke passionately about the need to embrace multicultural literature. ‘Why is it,’ he asked at one point, ‘that some people think being interested in other cultures makes your life less?’ Rosen then went on to regale the audience with stories and poems from his own rich cultural heritage. Growing up in East London with Jewish communist parents, he touched on political activism, parenting and, in one memorable story, corned beef! With typical humour and candour, he had the entire audience laughing along with tales of Harold and Connie as they raised their family in a time of huge change and cultural upheaval. The perfect way to end the congress, with the joy of listening to storytellers doing what they do best, engaging their audience and leaving them wanting to hear more.

Post-Congress Excursion, Tuesday: Discovering the Real ‘Green Knowe’ and ‘Midnight Garden’

Ellen Ainsworth, IBBY UK committee

The excursion was to Lucy Boston’s house and to sites associated with Philippa Pearce.

Green Knowe

A day trip by mini-coach to Green Knowe! What a rare treat for a non-driver like me – a chance to visit the remote Cambridgeshire village of Hemingford Grey, and its 900-year-old Manor House where Lucy Boston (1892–1990) lived, mostly alone but much visited, for over 50 years, and where she set her exciting and empathetic Green Knowe stories for children.

On our mini-coach (along with the tour company International Friends’ excellent guide and driver) were 12 congress delegates, from Australia, Germany, Japan, Lithuania, New Zealand and the USA as well as the UK. The brightest star amongst us was Reina from Japan with her encyclopedic knowledge of the Green Knowe stories and her love of all things English.

Hemingford Grey was as enchanting as I had hoped, with its sleepy riverside village, Manor House, and topiary and flower-filled gardens, still vibrant in late summer in an artfully random-looking way that takes great skill to achieve. Though Lucy Boston herself died 20 years ago, the house that she called Green Knowe in her books has a deeply devoted keeper of the flame in Lucy Boston’s beloved daughter-in-law Diana Boston (widow of Lucy Boston’s son Peter, who illustrated her books). Diana Boston still lives in the house and personally shows visitors around by appointment. Her respect and enjoyment of this ancient place and her many colourful little anecdotes about Lucy Boston’s life and work, make the experience of visiting the house truly magical.

Highlights for me included the fairy-tale inglenook fireplace in the downstairs study where Lucy Boston wrote her books, a glimpse there of a rough draft in her own writing, and two wonderful rooms upstairs. The sitting room still has its thick walls and Norman arched windows and also a marvellous hand-cranked gramophone; on it Lucy Boston had played her hundreds of classical 78 rpm records during the musical evenings which were much loved by the lonely airmen from nearby bases, whom she regularly invited to visit during the Second World War. Up some steep curving stairs is the nursery still full of old toys and a bird cage familiar from Peter Boston’s illustrations. The setting evokes the feeling that Tolly and his ghostly friends from past of the first Green Knowe book have just stepped out for a moment. We were enchanted to hear that Diana Boston is currently reading, in this very room, the Green Knowe books as bedtime stories to her eight-year-old twin grandchildren on their frequent visits: one wonderingly said only last week, ‘That’s this house, isn’t it?’

I had not known that Lucy Boston was also one of the most famous patchwork quilt designers and makers in England: seeing the actual quilts displayed in another bedroom was a surprise and delight. (Reina was delighted to hear they will soon be en route to Tokyo for a very special 2013 exhibition.) All Lucy Boston's books were written and most of her quilts made when she was between the ages of 60 and 90, but only in the winter months; in the summer she gardened all day every day. What an inspiration to us all!

Midnight Garden

After lunch in the village, our excursion continued on to some of the settings for scenes in Philippa Pearce's classic children's novel *Tom's Midnight Garden* – Ely's beautiful cathedral plus the house and garden in Great Shelford, just over the border in Suffolk, from which Tom and Hattie skate along the river to reach Ely.

The Books

I am now rereading and greatly appreciating all Lucy Boston's books, and plan to go on to Philippa Pearce's. My mind's eye now is furnished with so much more to see and imagine as I read, and I urge all IBBY members who possibly can, to visit these wonderful places themselves.

For further information on the Manor House at Hemingford Grey, see www.greenknowe.co.uk or email diana_boston@hotmail.com.

Strange Migrations

Shaun Tan

I'm very glad to be invited to speak at this IBBY International Congress,⁴ particularly on this conference theme of how stories and books can cross boundaries and migrate across cultures. That invitation may be no surprise given my background and the kind of books that I create, typically dealing with these themes quite directly, although almost subconsciously as recurring objects of fascination: colonisation, migration, translation, language difficulties and cultural differences ... often featuring creatures with tentacles or strangely shaped heads, though arguably (hopefully) no less serious than any other presentation. It could actually be said that *all* artists and writers are preoccupied with these themes to different degrees, expressed in individual styles. The crossing of boundaries is, after all, fundamental to storytelling. It's also a universal condition of being alive, which I'll consider here by reflecting on my own small corner of experience as a creator of picture books, graphic novels and other illustrated stories.

For a start, I'm very fortunate to have my work translated into many languages, straddling different nations and cultures. It's also worth noting that my stories find themselves straddling different *reading* cultures too, ranging from this one – children's literature – through the orbit of science fiction, intersecting with fine art, film, theatre and comics; and 'migrating' through genres from fantasy to social realism. They are also enjoyed by people of different ages, representing another kind of crossover. That is, when we talk about different cultures, we should include the differences between childhood and adulthood along with all gradients in between, as 'cultural' differences. So there are all these various groups that exist beyond geographical or linguistic boundaries, which can be categorised all the way down to personal private universes. We are all practising members of our own cultures, subcultures, and micro-subcultures (our private imagination), each looking for suitable translations, and illustrated books are very good at crossing divides.

That said, I've never set out to deliberately be cross-genre, international or even intergenerational (like many other illustrators, I rarely think about the age of my readers). I'm too preoccupied in quite a narrow way at the drawing table to think about what happens once anything leaves that table. In fact I'm quite self-absorbed, even self-indulgent, which is almost necessary to some extent in any artistic practice, a certain introspective focus to the exclusion of other concerns. Maybe because of that I'm also not terribly interested in categories: I just try to make each story or image as engaging as possible, appealing to all parts of my own nature: a child, an adult, a rational critic, an emotional being, an often confused person who doodles, writes and paints as a way of figuring things out.

The theme of migration also relates to my personal background, as I'm a part-Chinese, Malaysian, Irish and English person from Perth, Western Australia. Although my work is not especially autobiographical and doesn't dwell on these facts (which I grew up regarding as uninteresting), I suspect there is actually a strong indirect effect of this heritage. Namely that I'm routinely attracted to ideas of belonging, difference, and the conceptual boundary between what is familiar or 'normal', and what is exotic or 'weird'.

Coming from 'Nowhere in Particular'

It's important to mention that I grew up in a place that seemed known to the rest of the world only if there was a shark attack, a city that otherwise sat quietly on the edge of a far southern continent, between the Indian Ocean and a desert interior four times the size of Texas, and that's even before you reach the state border. I wrote about my

⁴ A running display was the backdrop to the talk, showing illustrations from the books mentioned. Two of these illustrations have been inserted into this text. Permission to reproduce both the text and illustrations from the author was brokered by Corinne Gotch for Hachette Children's Books.

impressions of this homeland recently as a preface to a recent exhibition of paintings, many as a fairly aimless painter in my early 20s, and appropriately entitled 'Suburban Odyssey': a journey you have when you're not really going anywhere. The curator asked me what my memories were of growing up in Perth, and I wrote this:

Long, hot afternoons, wide and empty suburban streets, the drawl of crows, ocean air, unfiltered light, home and school: a feeling of being somewhere and nowhere at the same time. Our family did not travel extensively so my memory of Hillarys, the northern suburb in which I spend most of my childhood and adolescence, lacked much in the way of outside definition. It was a kind of *sui generis* bubble, which may be true of many people's childhood homes, where things just *are*. Perhaps more so in a place that was still being invented, with bulldozers working away at the coastal dunes, literally paving the way for new roads, shops, schools and homes throughout the late '70s and '80s. The world I grew up in was one still being manufactured.

If there were any parameters here they weren't cultural or historical, but those of the bush, the ocean and the sky. It seemed that any fresh brick veneer inevitably bled away into an ancient tangle of scrubby trees and even language was doomed to evaporate under the sun. You could almost feel the dissolution of meaning as you walked from the suburbs to the beach, something we did routinely as kids, sensing the fragility of our somewhat artificial lives. The receding street signs, named after famous explorers – Flinders, Cook, Banks – seemed out of place, like so many front lawns that survived only by virtue of plastic reticulation, the water coming from far away. The same was true of our decidedly non-indigenous culture.

By comparison the surrounding coast was mysterious and everlasting (or so it seemed at the time). The old tuart trees were shaggy giants that crawled with prehistoric bugs and other nameless things. It may be that this was one thing that attracted me to painting and drawing as a child, the fact that you can represent things without words, which sometimes seems a more accurate or realistic means of expression. I still feel that way when painting as an adult, occasionally reluctant to add a title to a picture in case it creates too much of a boundary.

So Perth generally felt like a peripheral place not just physically but also in a lot of other conceptual ways. Peripheral in a positive way, implying great possibility and opportunity, and Perth is a microcosm of Australia that way, especially when compared with older cities and nations. There's a certain license to muck about in the backyard, invent your own meaning, and this was especially important when I began to think more seriously about writing and painting in my late teens and early twenties, and transforming some of that imagery later into stories.

This idea of being 'peripheral' has always been important to me, as I think it probably is for most creative people. It's actually much easier to cross boundaries or enjoy internal migrations of the imagination when there's not much in the way of fencing or you feel, whether by circumstance or your own volition, like a bit of an outsider already.

A Multicultural Family

It may be useful here to also say a little about my mixed-race family, which was quite an unusual thing for Hillarys at the time (much less so now, which is a positive development). My father is Chinese, his parents being migrants to Malaysia from China, and it wasn't until very recently that my Dad visited his cultural homeland as a tourist (something I've yet to do). My mother is Australian, which is also something of an insufficient description: more specifically a third generation Australian of English and Irish ancestry, but has never visited the northern hemisphere. Interestingly, my great grandfather was sent to Australia as a child orphan with no recorded background, not an uncommon story. My father never intended to stay in Australia, but then he met my Mum, who worked in a store where he bought a pen. Our whole lives are built on such accidents. In any case, it felt very normal to be growing up in a place to which none of us had any deep historical footing, and the sandy soil of Hillarys has excellent drainage and sunlight strong enough to bleach memory. Being both culturally and genetically 'across boundaries', 'transitional' or 'multicultural' is a default position and nothing

special, especially in Australia, a culture of multiple heart transplants and constantly shifting identity.

As a child I did feel a bit of an outsider – well, don't we all? In my case, I can lay claim to being unusually small. (I only once met a kid of the same age who was shorter than me on a softball team, and was rather disappointed to learn that he was an actual dwarf!) More problematic was a simmering racism in suburban Western Australia during the 1980s, when it was not uncommon to hear or see spray painted the slogan 'Asians Out'. All this meant in practice was that bullies didn't even have to try to think of a flaw when it came to Asian kids, just being Asian was bad enough. Which is insulting on many levels – ideally your enemies should work hard when it comes to finding a flaw. (Interestingly, my father suffered from the nickname 'Big-Eye Kee' in his home village, due to having very big round eyes for a Chinese boy.) Over time this improved, but I think it did motivate me to gain some respect through drawing and writing, or at least some precocious power of language, to try and be 'smart'. And being automatically outside the forum of cool you can actually enjoy being odd or unusual, given that being normal is not an option. And my friends did appreciate that – especially a talent for drawing spaceships and monsters, which proved to be highly popular.

Even though I didn't think about any of this much at the time, in retrospect it seems that my childhood landscape and family have a big subconscious part to play in the subjects of my books, paintings and film designs many years later. Particularly the subject of cultural dislocation, which seems to emerge again and again like a recurring dream.

It's also worth mentioning that my wife is Finnish, and we live in Melbourne, in a street seemingly ruled by patrolling Greek and Italian pensioners, and share the house with Diego, a free-range Brazilian parrot, and two crazy budgies (our only indigenous residents, Snowball and Filip). All of which seems completely normal. This mixed family has done much to inspire recent stories, including both *The Arrival* (in which you can see the likenesses of Inari and myself, and a creature somewhat like Diego), and stories such as 'Eric', the very quiet foreign-exchange student, based on an experience with a Finnish friend, or *No Other Country* about an Italian migrant family with a portal to the 'old country' in their ceiling space, inspired by ethnic neighbours.

Arbitrary Realities

If the play between art and life has taught me anything, it's that there is not really any such thing as 'normal'. The ordinary, the everyday, quotidian, usual, banal, familiar, commonplace, straightforward and average – all these things are a kind of illusion, one especially suffered by adults who are too adept at categorising experience, or those unfortunate souls obsessed with mono-culturalism, and doomed to suffer all manner of debilitating prejudice. Meanwhile, the world continues every day to be as strange and miraculous as it was when we first saw it as toddlers, although that's not always so easy to notice this with age.

Culture, nature, family, belief, work, play, language, all these things are flexible realities, something we realise especially when we travel overseas, and discover that the commonplace is exotic and the exotic is commonplace, depending on what side of the tour-bus window you happen to be sitting on. One of the great gifts of travel, multiculturalism and other boundary crossing – including of course reading – is that your own culture, lifestyle and language is suddenly not so absolute, normal, righteous or sacrosanct, it's just another way of thinking and existing, based on historical accidents that mainly happened before you were born.

The first time I arrived in London, I had a sense of this very strongly. This was my first independent trip to another country, at the age of 22, during a very formative period as a young artist. I'd just finished my first picture book and was contemplating a second, *The Rabbits* written by John Marsden, about the colonisation of Australia by the British, and uncertain about both this quite difficult concept and, more broadly, what I was really doing as a career (I did the first tentative sketches for *The Rabbits* during a crossing in the 'Chunnel', which in retrospect seems highly appropriate).

Walking around, especially suburban London, I could see first-hand the genetic blueprint for most Anglo-Australian housing, food, language and manners, things seen peripherally only through all the BBC shows I enjoyed on Australian TV. But it was all slightly different, not better or worse, neither ancestral or descendent. Just different. Not a ‘mother country’ at all, but an alternative cousin, very much a weird parallel universe with charming accents. (I of course don’t have an accent ... Australians are far too laid back to cultivate such affectations!) It did make me wonder why we still have a British queen as our head of state, a person who doesn’t even live in our hemisphere, but I can only emphasise once again that reality is often arbitrary and bizarre.

Elemental Commonality

Cultural difference is fun and interesting for its own sake, but it also can tell us a lot about ourselves as human beings. That is, looking at so many different ways of thinking and living inevitably provokes a question of intersection. Among these variations, what do we all have in common? What binds us in the most elemental ways and perhaps defines our humanity? Where is the ‘train station’ through which all these cultural railways pass?

These might seem like big philosophical questions, but they need not be presented in big philosophical ways. In fact, they come up all the time at a modest scale, especially in literature for young people. Here we are compelled to consider elemental things all the time and at its best this literature asks very profound questions in a way that is disarming, entertaining and even silly, much as children do.

Interestingly, writers and artists (like children) don’t do this by examining life reductively, the way that you might pull a clock apart, boil chemicals down to a periodic table or crack a DNA code to say ‘look at these fundamental building blocks’. Instead we try to do what evolutionary nature does, experimenting with constant *sideways* variations on existing things, testing to see if anything clicks, creating small other universes that hopefully intersect in an unusual or surprising way with our own real world, like so many species of beetle studied by Charles Darwin, each further questioning and defining an essential idea of ‘beetleness’.

My own illustrated fiction offers an example I’m best qualified to talk about, particularly *The Arrival*. This book more or less began as a grand ambition to tell a universal migrant story. In early notes I explained to my editor that I wanted to ‘distil’ multiple anecdotal histories I was researching – across many countries and centuries – into a single story featuring a generic everyman protagonist. That was the initial guiding concept: distillation. In practice, however, it seemed impossible to think about so many real-life tales reductively. They were all too unique and diverse, ranging from Asia to the Middle East to Europe to Australia; from nineteenth-century mass migrations to contemporary refugee crises; from young children to the elderly; the unskilled and educated, rich and poor; the persecuted, the adventurous and also accidental migrations. Many different reasons for changing lives and many different outcomes, both positive and negative. There were common elements certainly – homesickness, family, strange food, language, work – but how do you show the essence of these things in a way that’s interesting, and not too abstracted or simplistic? In other words, how to make it feel real and honest?

Certainly I realised that some reduction was necessary, an ‘elemental’ approach that involves stripping back reality. In this case, removing words, character identity, any precise notion of time or place, and also hovering between realism and the dreamlike softness of drawing. I realised that all these things allowed the reader to interpret the story in their own way, and at their particular pace or level of understanding. But what is most interesting to me as a creator is the parallel *complexity* of the new universe then presented, that the best way to be ‘truthful’ is sometimes to go in the opposite direction: fantasy.

The place I thought of as ‘The New Country’ ended up being rich in all sorts of details, so is not a boiled-down version of real history at all. It’s a sideways history, an alternate universe that we might usefully compare to our own, and consider the common

intersections of feeling, what we might do as international travellers, and instinctively as readers. City streets in the book are complex and alien but also familiar, so we recognise pathways, shops, vehicles and other necessities of a working community. Language is detailed but indecipherable; the difficulty of it draws focus on the things that are most important to us, the essential need to communicate basic questions and answers. The weirdness of new-world food – how it looks, is acquired, prepared and eaten – reminds us that our own ‘ordinary’ culinary rituals are actually pretty strange. And the problems of working life as an illiterate migrant seem more acute when they are odd; to be chased by a large reptile while delivering parcels, for instance, might best illustrate a lapse in education or street wisdom.

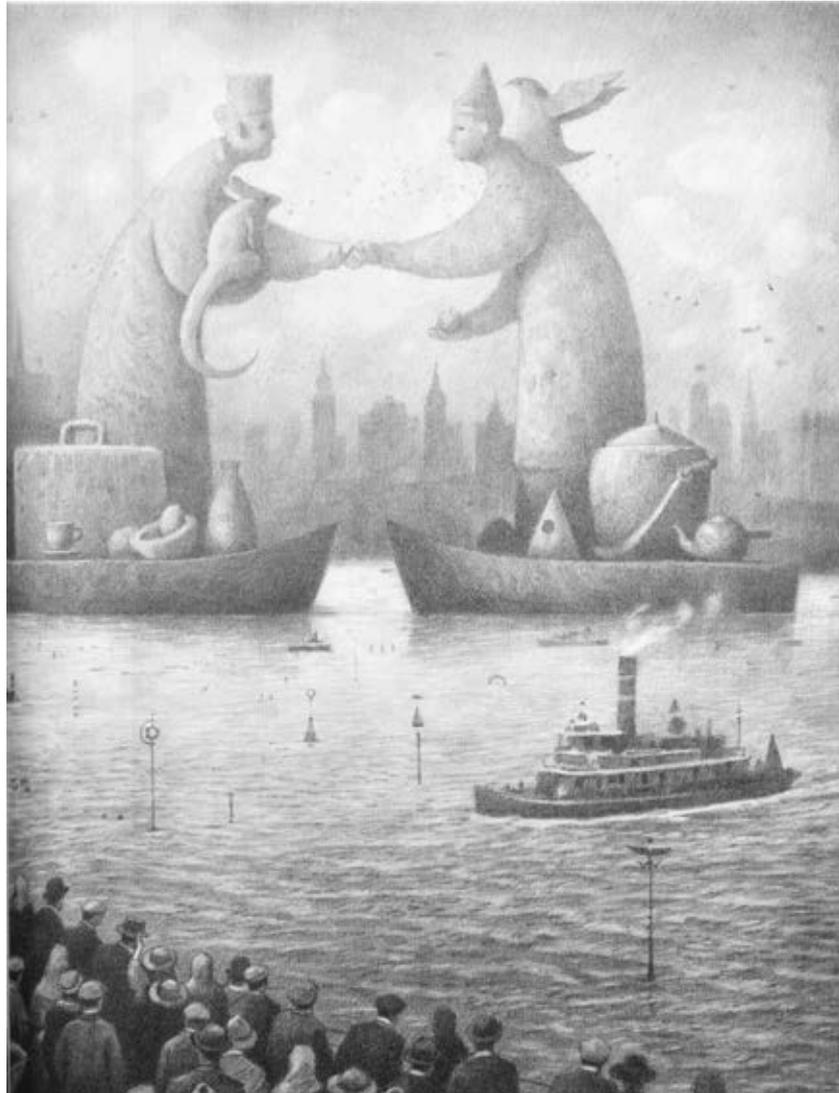


Figure 1 The immigrants are not welcomed by Lady Liberty. Standing in her place are two gigantic strange statues shaking hands. From *The Arrival*. Reproduced with permission Lothian Children's Books, an imprint of Hachette Australia, 2006. Copyright © 2006 Shaun Tan.

So it is that through strangeness we arrive at a kind of clarity, like looking at things from a distance. This idea also extends in *The Arrival* to a number of short back stories that illustrate social or environmental crises. Rather than representing these in symbolic or simplified ways, I've imagined parallel realities that may or may not have specific meaning, from black serpents swimming in the air to masked giants looming over burning towns. These are as bewildering to the reader as they might be for the characters in the story, and perhaps offer some idea of what it is like to live through traumatic historical events as they unfold, without the security of omniscience or hindsight.

I quickly realised that instead of focusing on things that made sense, trying to simplify some universal migrant experience, trying to *understand* everything, the best thing to do is simply to focus on strangeness, dislocation and complexity. In other words, trying to

make a world as befuddling as our own would be to any new immigrant, just to imagine what that is like. And above all else, to never actually explain anything.

Bewilderment is not a bad thing: it can often bring out the best in us. It galvanises our natural human ability to draw sense from a puzzle, to use our imagination, rather than lean upon received knowledge or wisdom get us through. We also need to trust and respect the creative abilities of other people, and I do consider readers of my work as co-creators, needing to invest meaning into illustrative stories that are really half-finished, deliberately incomplete. Surrealism has often felt very useful to me for this reason. If handled carefully it can get closer to reality rather than further away, more or less by ‘waking us up’ from the complacency of ordinary recognition. We begin to appreciate ordinary reality as not so ordinary.

Childhood and Wisdom

Of course, we all know surrealism very well, because, when we were very small, pretty much everything was surreal (we tend to forget how mystifying even the most basic things used to be) and we had to constantly use our imagination through play to test ‘alternate realities’, to accumulate stable references, ideas that would stick together as useful patterns of meaning and agency. So much childhood play is, on some level, a kind of intensive mental laboratory where we hone our understanding. As we figure things out, we become better at communicating, organising thoughts, discerning value and gaining wisdom, all of which are essential.

However, the cost of such education can sometimes be intellectual complacency, as if learning is something you do to graduate from one level to the next (which is often how we misunderstand schooling): having figured something out, we shut down the laboratory and move on, as if we are filling up an archive, learning tables or marking off entries in a ledger. Life can lose some of its magic that way by creeping degrees, and a kind of ‘closed reading’ can supplant imagination altogether.

This is a problem examined in *The Lost Thing*, a story that could also (in this context) be looked at as a set of interesting questions about critical literacy – not to mention things with tentacles. It’s the first story I entirely wrote and illustrated, and probably still one of my best because it’s so simple: a curious boy stumbles upon a nameless ‘thing’ in a world that has no place for it. Spurred on by this dilemma he experiences a brief adventure, trying to solve the question ‘where does it belong?’ After a series of setbacks, an unusual solution is found: a traditional picture-book structure if ever there was.

There is of course a deeper question going on, which I realised only after I’d written the story (as is usually the case). That is, why do we feel compelled to ask or answer a question of belonging at all? Why do we crave a ‘right place’ for this lost thing? This gets back to my own ideas about critical literacy, that there is a lot more to reading – a book, picture or the world at large – than simply asking the right question or finding the right answer, because there is *no right answer* in this case.

The best anyone can do, whether the character in the story or the reader, is just to ask *good questions*, remain receptive and know that there might not be any predictable solution. Instead, we are free to imagine all possible meanings and actions. I myself do not know what the lost thing is or where it belongs, but I still enjoy the mystery of this, the same way I enjoy the mystery of a rock, tree or bird, even after it has been fully ‘explained’.

On the other hand, the citizens of the fictional city in *The Lost Thing* don’t need to worry about mystery. They have, arguably, a very organised understanding of their world. Everything has a meaning, a place of belonging, a consensus of value, and there is even a ‘Federal Department of Odds and Ends’ to comfortably take care of any miscellaneous abnormalities, a world of closed reading that’s actually very functional, even comforting. However, it’s also bleak and ludicrous: it has given birth to a mechanised landscape that can serve only its own bureaucratic purpose. People maintain the city and the city maintains the people, and they all do it so efficiently that any question of meaning or higher purpose is simply redundant. Imagination is unnecessary. Art, music and other purposeless activities do not exist.

I actually drew upon two sources of inspiration for this little universe. The first was ‘economic rationalism’, a popular concept in Australia at the time of writing *The Lost Thing* in the late ’90s, where moral considerations are put aside in favour of more quantifiable economic outcomes (similar to Thatcherism), things that can be measured. Who would guess that such an ideology could be so artistically inspiring? Which brings me to my second, even less colourful source of interest: a set of old physics and mathematics books from my father’s time as an engineering student. I wondered what it would be like if this was the only kind of literature in the world. That is, absolutely practical, meaningful and purposeful stuff, but also (like economic rationalism) lacking a certain humanism. There’s certainly nothing wrong with either economic or engineering reductionism, but a society based on these things *exclusively* would not be very open-minded.

Enter into this universe a large red tentacled thing: a *lost* thing. The boy (who like the main character in *The Arrival* is modelled after myself, here as a teenager) is faced with an obvious problem. He does not have any idea what to do with a useless creature; on the other hand, he feels he must do *something*. It’s a dilemma I often confront in my own life, and part of the writing process involves examining that anxiety.

And it’s the kind of dilemma that is the basis for most stories. What to do about a thing that you don’t entirely understand? Do you ignore it, become fearful or regard it with compassion, participate in an unknown risk, and to what degree? And this is where a more expansive idea of visual literacy is useful, and where crazy stories such as this one might transcend amusement and have quite a lot to do with real-world parallels: meeting new people, encountering new situations, dealing with cultural difference, pausing to consider your own motivations and fears. In order to deal with a lot of these things, simple recognition or comprehension might not be enough, and neither instruction manuals or ideological rules can really prepare us for many of life’s hook turns.

A Note on Visual Literacy

As an illustrator I’ve often come across the phrase ‘visual literacy’, which might also include art appreciation or criticism, and is generally very useful. Sometimes it’s presented as a kind of deconstruction exercise, where meanings and artistic intentions are identified, subtexts and ideologies unpacked and so on. Such decoding can be an important skill, but I don’t think it’s necessary unless you’re an academic. Far more interesting for the average reader are two very simple questions about any story, painting, or indeed life experience: How does it make me feel? What does it make me think about?

That covers two basic aspects of any aesthetic experience, feeling and idea. In good art, these go hand in hand, so that meaning comes primarily from feeling and free association, and need not be terribly privileged or cloistered knowledge. It’s available to anyone who permits him- or herself to be open to it.

The real answers are therefore not in the work, a story or picture, but in the readers’ contemplation of their own reactions to that work. This simple realisation can open up a lot of things for a lot of people, and also diminish a great deal of intellectual anxiety about reading or looking at images. You need never panic in front of a blotchy abstract painting, a peculiar art-house film, or an obscure picture book if you keep in mind that your own thoughts and feelings are the most important subject of analysis, not those of the artist. It doesn’t mean that all opinions are equal, but that they should at least be very personal.

That’s also great for me, as an author and illustrator, because I have to worry only about making the most interesting stories and pictures I can imagine, and I don’t need to dwell upon what they might ultimately mean, or what kind of message I’m imparting – a big relief! These things are left for the reader to decide in their own way, especially given that every reader is a unique person, and mostly unknown to me. They might be of any age, nationality, background, subculture or education level.

Even when I may have made particular references or allusions to other paintings or literary works (as in *The Rabbits*, which borrows compositions from old colonial

paintings) it's not important that the reader actually knows about these. What matters most is that a certain feeling is conveyed (such as the vague impression of an old colonial painting), something that's much harder to academically footnote, and more likely to send thoughts trailing off in more directions than a deconstruction might allow. A good image must always remain a bit strange, a bit hard to circumscribe, yet open to all.

Confronting Strangeness

The question of a personal response in the face of strangeness is one I find endlessly fascinating, and lies at the core of everything I've produced, and am likely to produce until I fall off the perch or take up golf. That is, do we respond to strangeness positively, negatively or not at all? And how do the unexpected transitions in our lives affect our thinking, or give us cause to reflect upon our values?



Figure 2 From 'Eric' in *Tales from Outer Suburbia*. Copyright © 2008 Shaun Tan. First published by Allen & Unwin, Sydney Australia 2008, published in the UK by Templar Publishing 2009 www.templarco.co.uk. Reproduced with permission.

All my own stories illustrate various reactions that are possible when dealing with incomprehensible events. In *The Rabbits*, there are mixed reactions to the arrival of colonial creatures from a distant shore, where violence gradually supersedes curiosity, with very negative consequences. In the story 'Undertow',⁵ a dugong (a marine mammal) appears on a neighbour's front lawn one morning. Some characters are angry about this, some are concerned only with keeping the animal safe until emergency services arrive, while others long for a deeper knowledge of what has occurred. In 'The Nameless Holiday', people must offer a personal belonging to a giant reindeer that visits their roof, and are then left to consider whether it was worth exchanging a material object for an immaterial experience, is this positive or negative? In the story 'Eric', a quiet foreign exchange student is not so interested in the things his host family finds compelling, and exhibits strange habits. How are they to react to this? With irritation or

⁵ The stories 'Eric', 'Undertow' and 'The Nameless Holiday' are some of the 15 stories in *Tales of Outer Suburbia*, Dorking: Templar Publishing, 2009.

tolerant amusement? When a tiny red tree starts growing in the middle of a bedroom floor at the end of *The Red Tree*, it might be approached with either optimism or trepidation.

The questions in each story really begin as questions for myself. As someone who lives a relatively stable, largely non-transitional life, I often have trouble digesting challenges, and am no more open-minded or experienced than anyone else. But art and literature offer a constant reminder to not take wisdom, experience or comfort for granted, and that I probably know and understand a lot less than I think. I create stories from rumination on problems rather than any desire to communicate a ‘message’, which is why I wilfully avoid didactic tales. I’m interested in elaborating an issue by presenting it in an intriguing way, not necessarily in offering a solution.

Internal Migrations

Coming back to the theme of the conference of crossings, translations and migrations, it’s worth looking at this from a very personal, internal perspective. That is, while we all go on outward journeys, whether crossing a kitchen floor or relocating overseas, we also have many internal journeys all the time. In fact, in our lives there are several selves, and a spectrum of memorable transitions from childhood to adulthood, where our circumstances, thoughts, feelings and beliefs are subject to change. That can even happen in a year, week or day: small ‘internal migrations of the soul’, each experience and thought crossing yet another boundary. And of course reading is a part of that process, being solitary, private and deeply contemplative.

Stories offer us frameworks for reflecting on transitional experiences because they are *always about transitional experiences*: growth, trauma, discovery, transformation, destruction and creation, journeys big and small. I think good stories are those that teach us to expect these changes, to embrace new and unknown things with *empathy*, *curiosity* and *imagination*, rather than hope everything will stay the same and that the world will continue to be ‘normal’ and understandable. It might be nice if it did, but, let’s face it, highly unlikely.

It’s important especially for young people to remain aware of this, both for pleasure in the moment of reading or living, and as future adults. A lot of the negative forces currently shaping our world are, when you think about them, a rejection of exactly those values that reading and critical/visual literacy might embrace: empathy, curiosity and imagination. Is it any coincidence that the most prejudiced people, fundamentalists, oppressors and the wilfully ignorant prefer ‘common sense’ to imagination, and almost always privilege ‘obvious truth’ over speculation, preferring ‘answers’ to questions? Is it also any coincidence that the best scientists, artists, business or community leaders throughout history are often the first to admit the limits of wisdom, to openly say ‘I don’t know’ and more than willing to consider oppositional ideas? As Einstein put it simply, ‘imagination is more important than knowledge’. Imagination keeps asking good questions, even after knowledge is acquired; it offers endless opportunity for growth. The unknown must remain as interesting to us as the known.

Embracing the Unexpected

It’s also worth observing that key moments of transition or migration, whether external or internal, are usually quite unexpected. In his book *Black Swan*, philosopher Nassim Nicholas Taleb suggests that big turning points in our lives are typically unplanned, from a terrorist attack to falling in love. They are wildcard unknowns, much like the sighting of a black swan at a time when it was a clearly proven fact that all swans were white. Not only did black swans not exist, the very idea of them did not. (Interestingly, the Western Australian state flag is composed of two symbols: the Union Jack and the black swan, which I quite like!) Big conceptual shifts – often alarming or exciting shifts – remind us that change is the only constant and our best literature reflects this, from *Gilgamesh* to *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*. Each tale poses an endlessly interesting question: when expectation is challenged or equilibrium disrupted and we find ourselves floundering in new territory, what do we do? Do we act well or badly? And how does this define who we are, as characters in our own story?

Transitions and migrations bring out our best and our worst. As Taleb suggests, personality might be less defined by so-called normal life than how we behave in an unusual situation (all storytellers know this intuitively too). In simplest terms, when faced with the unexpected, we might respond with either apathy, prejudice or curiosity. Of course the last one offers the only source of genuine hope: curiosity is really a kind of empathy, a will to find ‘otherness’ actually interesting rather than problematic, whether that be a person from another culture, a political idea, a tentacled creature, or any much smaller day-to-day encounter with the unanticipated.

And this is where literature as a play of words and pictures moves beyond entertainment, acknowledging the flexibility of reality, the actual pleasure of realising how limited our knowledge might be, and the ensuing pleasure of speculation. Good fiction also reminds us that we are not alone in this sea of questions. I notice this especially when hearing responses to *The Red Tree* and *The Arrival* in particular, where readers express strong feelings of identification with characters who are lost or emotionally capsized. Children often comment that they enjoy *The Red Tree* because it ‘feels real’, which might seem odd for such a weird-looking book, but I think they like the unvarnished admission that loneliness and confusion are inevitable facts. And similarly, I receive a lot of feedback from migrants, both young and old (some of whom cannot read English), that certain sequences in *The Arrival* are remarkably accurate to their personal experience, even though, of course, it’s set in an entirely imaginary and even implausible world, not to mention a very flat and papery one. Yet the feelings of dislocation and uncertainty represented through this sideways medium are actually realistic (being based on real-life stories gathered during my initial research).

What I think these readers are responding to, along with myself when drawing or writing, is a simple acknowledgement that our day to day circumstances are basically quite mysterious and weird, and that we are all adrift to some extent. But that’s okay, because our compass bearing – especially when things get choppy – is a deeper humanity, as it always has been: a confidence in our adaptable imagination, a willingness to learn, and an ability to then read the world as if it were just another crazy story in a book, one that’s being continuously written and illustrated as we travel from one unexpected thing to the next.

REVIEWS

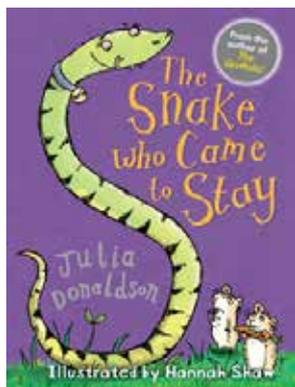
Barrington Stoke Books for Reluctant Readers

The Snake who Came to Stay

Julia Donaldson, illus. Hannah Shaw, Edinburgh: Barrington Stoke, pb. 978 1 7811 2008 8, £5.99, 2012, 64pp.

Mr Birdsnest and the House Next Door

Julia Donaldson, illus. Hannah Shaw, Edinburgh: Barrington Stoke, pb. 978 1 7811 2005 7, £5.99, 2012, 64pp.



Both these books are part of the Little Gems series, designed for children aged 5 to 8 but with an appeal extending to children up to ten whose reading ability is below their age level. As might be expected from someone as original as the current children's laureate, the books are witty and child friendly, while the illustrations indirectly indicate the setting of a multi-ethnic neighbourhood.

The location of *The Snake who Came to Stay* is Polly's newly set up Holiday Home for Pets, at which the first guests are the guinea pigs, thin Bill and fat Ben; they are swiftly followed by Charlie, a mynah bird, and Doris, the eponymous snake. The adventures, surprisingly complex yet always credible, start with the effects resulting from Charlie imitating all the sounds in the house, and culminate in Doris vanishing. Polly's empathy with the imagined feelings of her friends if any of the pets perish is well portrayed, as are the reactions of her long-suffering mother. The anticipated happy ending involves an additional pet for Polly – careful reading of this review may give a clue to its identity!



Most of the action in *Mr Birdsnest and the House Next Door* is generated by the narrator's younger brother, Elmo, who takes too literally his father's admonition to 'get lost' and is discovered in the house next door. The garden of this house also provides a more exciting place to play than the neat premises of the children's new house. The issue of care for an elderly parent is also integral to the story, as is the behaviour of estate agents and the relationship between neighbours.

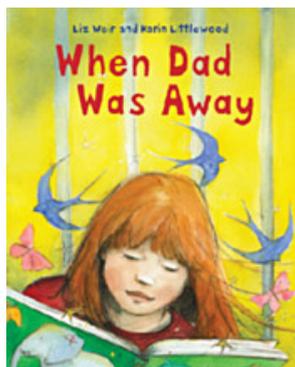
Both these books combine simple vocabulary and syntax with unexpected twists to the plots. Their appeal is enhanced by covers that fold out to display activities, and excruciating riddles to delight child readers. Further titles in the Little Gems series by Eoin Colfer, Ross Collins, Kevin Crossley-Holland and Geraldine McCaughrean are planned for 2013, and should be welcomed by parents and teachers, but more especially the children for whom they are designed.

Pat Pinsent

Picture Books and Illustrated Story Books

When Dad Was Away

Liz Weir, illus Karin Littlewood, London: Frances Lincoln Children's Books, hb. 978 1 8450 7913 0, £11.99, 2012, 32pp.



This picture book is written by an acclaimed storyteller and writer from Northern Ireland who works extensively in schools and prisons. When Mum tells Milly that her Dad has been sent to prison Milly is angry and confused. 'Pri-son! Prison!' taunt the children in the street, behind Milly's back. This is a gentle and sensitive story showing how Milly and her family come through this difficult time together. Mum struggles with the painful task of telling Milly where her Dad is and what he has done. On Milly's first visit to see her Dad in prison, she looks up at the high walls and huge doors – it is 'scary'. But while the detail of the surroundings isn't overlooked, it is balanced by the joy Milly feels on seeing her Dad. They read and laugh together, just the way Dad did at home.

A week later, a special package arrives at Milly's house: a CD of Milly's favourite animal stories; Milly and her young brother Sam can now listen to Dad's voice talking over and over again, whenever they want.

At Christmas, Milly's friends are all talking about going to see Santa with their mums and dads. But there is a surprise – Milly and family are invited to a party in the prison, with a Santa, presents and Christmas photos. And in the spring comes the best surprise of all

The illustrator Karin Lockwood lives in London, and books illustrated by her have been nominated for the Kate Greenaway Medal three times. She gives workshops in schools and libraries across the UK. The loosely drawn watercolour illustrations are soft and realistic and complement the sensitivity of the writing. The tender close-up images of Milly reading with her Dad and later listening to his recorded voice highlight key emotional points in the story, showing the enormous importance of maintaining a close relationship with her absent Dad.

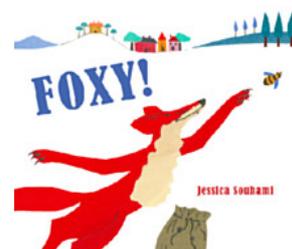
Some time ago I was visiting a junior school for a day, and during a break the class teacher mentioned that some of the children in the school had parents or family members who were 'absent'. The children were often given a 'story', usually by a family member, in order to protect both the vulnerable child and their family; sometimes the child made up one of their own. Losing a parent or family member to prison can be traumatic and lonely for a child. Hats off to Frances Lincoln for publishing this realistic and sensitive book.

Carol Thompson

FOXY!

Jessica Souhami, London, Francis Lincoln Children's Books, hb. 978 1 8478 0218 7, £11.99, 2012, 26pp.

The bright red figure of a fox stretches across the cover of this book. It is reaching after a bee, and a half-open sack to stow this booty in is just visible. On the horizon a graceful line of softer colours depicts houses and trees set amongst gentle hills. One bold word, FOXY!, proclaims the book's title.



Jessica Souhami has chosen to tell a North American version of a story that is known in many parts of the world, each having its own distinctive characters, but universally recognisable by the recurring pattern and form of the narrative.

In this version Foxy is a cunning opportunist with an acute understanding of human weaknesses who drives his crafty ambitions forward by exciting the curiosity of those he meets on his travels. This simple format follows a cumulative pattern until Foxy's behaviour oversteps the boundaries of human decency and he is hounded off into oblivion.

Jessica Souhami's illustrative style is bold, bright blocks of colour and clean lines. The illustrations flow around the text in a way that matches the narrative pace, highlighting the vividness of the story without distracting from it and reaching a visually heartwarming and conclusive ending. This is a book to read aloud and relish.

Judith Philo

The Goblin and the Girl

Neil Irani, illus. Park Yun, Pulborough: Maverick Arts Publishing, pb. 978 1 8488 6078 0, £6.99. [2011] 2012, 32pp.

In the foreground of the cover illustration (reminiscent of the princess in Tintoretto's *St George and the Dragon*) the distressed figure of a young girl comes towards the viewer, bare trees behind her. The bold lettering of the title is placed as though to menace her. The title page illustration repeats this sense of isolation and agitation.



Over the page the narrative begins in silence, a series of pale footprints leading across a double-page spread to the squat ugly form of a small brown dog about to enter the wood. Or is it a wild boar? We enter the story in the girl's bedroom. Dressed in her school clothes she stands forlornly, head bowed, in front of a full-length mirror, confronted by a bare, misshapen body that she appears to believe is her reflection. The text opens, 'Once upon a time, there was a girl. She was quite normal, but when she looked in the mirror, she didn't see herself ... Instead she saw a goblin.'



A goblin is a mischievous, ugly demon who lives in private houses, chinks of trees and various other places, and this tormenting image has insinuated itself into the girl's mind. She wears a large hat in order to hide herself from other peoples' gazes. The story unfolds to show that we cannot avoid being noticed by other people whose perceptions may differ from those of our own ruthless inhabitant. It also suggests that appearances can be deceptive as it is the ugly little dog who searches the girl out when she becomes lost, leading the shy kindly boy to find her. Thence the path to being herself is opened, or so it would seem as the narrative ends silently leaving words behind. The final illustration shows the confident figure of the girl on her way to school deep in thought. The image of the dog, at the heels of the boy who is only partly present on the page, links the three figures. In this way the narrative thread is left in the mind of the reader.

The text of this story is simple, as it were the bare bones of it. It is the illustrations that bring it to life and allow curiosity and feeling to impress our sensibilities.

Judith Philo

Grandma Bendy

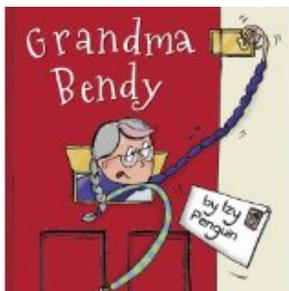
Izy Penguin, Pulborough: Maverick Arts Publishing, pb. 978 1 8488 6077 3, £5.24, 2012, 26pp.

This book presents a delightful moral tale of how to ensure that one's attributes, however quirky they may be, are used for the furtherance of good rather than for evil wrong-doings.

Young readers follow the eponymous heroine, with her unfeasibly bendy arms and legs, on a journey of self-discovery from a life of twisty burglary to a more enlightened and ultimately satisfying position as a pillar of the local community.

The book's lively illustrations and simply written text focus on the different ways in which feelings can follow actions and provide an excellent case study for young children to see how their choices can affect others around them.

Sarah Stokes



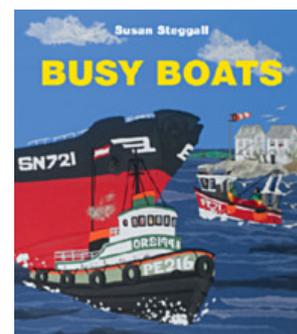
Busy Boats

Susan Steggall, London: Frances Lincoln Children's Books, pb. 978 1 8478 0198 2, £6.99, [2010] 2012, 24pp.

With its simple rhythmical text, this book takes the reader through the many and various machinations of life in an industrial dock. Several different boats are revealed, each with its own sense of purpose and alliterative description. As a new boat is discovered, the journey of the one on the previous page can be traced in the distance, giving this book a feeling of the passing of time and the hectic to-ing and fro-ing of the boats within a busy working dockyard.

The author's use of a range of vibrant collage materials gives the illustrations the illusion of almost jumping out of the book. Each turn of the page reveals an array of colour, a patchwork of tactile elements and a wealth of interest for the reader. There is so much to discover as each picture is explored in greater detail, warranting the book several rereadings.

Sarah Stokes



Hedgehog's Home

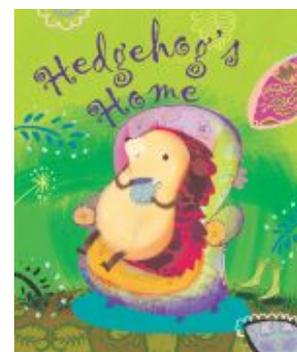
Branko Copic, trans. S.D. Curtis, London: Istros Books, 978 1 9082 3602 9, £6.99, 2011, 26pp.

This book, in translation from the original Serbian text, tells the story of brave Hedgemond the Hedgehog, 'Lord of his world and fearsome defender', who holds the other woodland animals in rapture at his daring deeds and tales of valour.

It transpires, as the book's separate chapters in verse reveal, that Hedgehog has been rather misinterpreted by the animals, who assume him to be king of a mighty castle and pompous and arrogant about his surroundings. Having decided to follow him home to see if this is indeed the case, they discover that things are not quite as they had expected them to be.

An unusual illustrated text on how one should never judge a book by its cover.

Sarah Stokes



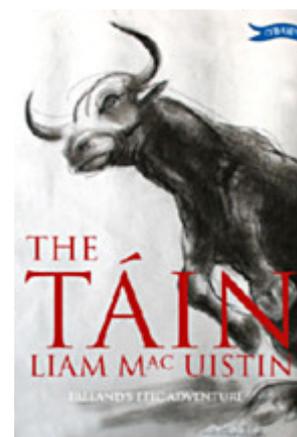
The Táin

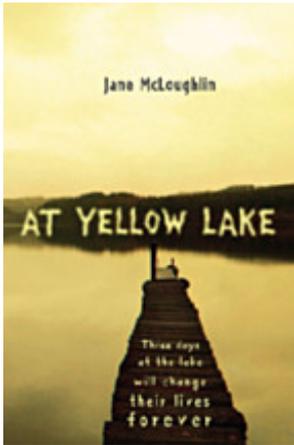
Liam Mac Uistin, Dublin: O'Brien Press, pb. 978 1 8471 7288 4, £5.99, 2012, 112pp.

This story is one of the great heroic tales of Irish mythology. Queen Maeve, the Warrior Queen of Connacht in the west of Ireland, casts covetous eyes on the famous Brown Bull of Cooley which she wishes to add to her trophies. The Bull is owned by the famous warrior Cuchulainn who lives in Ulster so Maeve plans a cattle raid (Táin) to steal him. Having put a spell on the warriors of Ulster, Queen Maeve sets out to defeat the warrior, who singlehandedly defends his province and the Bull, killing many members of her army in doing so. Eventually Queen Maeve captures the Bull and escapes back to Connacht, but the Bull has other ideas and breaks loose and heads back to Ulster.

A fast-moving story, full of action, which describes one of the great battles of the Irish mythological past.

John Dunne





At Yellow Lake

Jane McLoughlin, London: Frances Lincoln Children's Books, pb. 978 1 8478 0360 3, £6.99, 2012, 364pp.

The lives of three teenagers come together in unusual circumstances and the young people undergo a threat which is averted only by their combined actions. Etta, a girl who is harassed by her Mom's boyfriend, Peter, who is coping with his mother's recent death and Jonah, who is searching for his roots, meet up in a remote part of North America. None of them is sure of themselves as individuals, nor indeed as a group once they have eventually met up. Nevertheless, the external threat they come up against enables them to pull together and survive their ordeal.

A well written, tense story that sees all three characters growing up quickly when threatened by evil men.

John Dunne

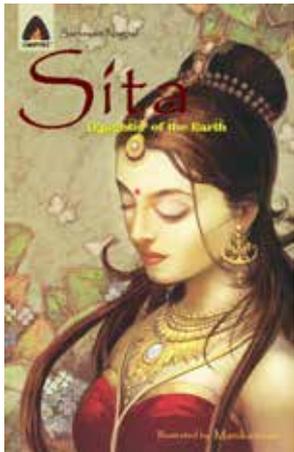
Graphic Books – Campfire, India

Campfire's mission statement is 'To entertain and educate young minds by creating unique illustrated books to recount stories of human values, to arouse curiosity in the world around us, and to inspire by tales of great deeds of unforgettable people.'

Sita, Daughter of the Earth

Saraswatri Nagpal, illus. Manikandan, New Delhi: Campfire, pb. 978 9 3800 2837 8, £8.31, 2011, 96pp.

Sita is one of the books in the Myths series and tells the story of the heroine of the Hindu epic the *Ramayana* in a graphic-novel adaptation.



As exemplified by the front cover, the princess is shown as beautiful, seductive and intelligent. Her father rules the kingdom of Videha. He is a wise ruler, kind and compassionate but sorrowful that he and his wife have not had a child. However, Sita is given to them in extraordinary circumstances and is of divine origin. Her parents then give birth to three daughters, the eldest, Urmili, becoming Sita's dearest companion. Sita's divinity is shown early, as a child, when she lifts the bow of her grandfather that no warrior had been able to lift as she searches for her ball that had strayed into the forbidden great hall. The story proceeds with her dreams of marrying a great prince, her dreams later focusing on Prince Rama of Ayodhya, who is also of divine origin. A fairy-tale marriage takes place with the four princesses of Videha marrying the four princes of Ayodha. However, when Rama's father attempts to crown Rama as Prince Regent, jealousies between the mothers of the princes are stirred up by Queen Keikeyi, which result in Rama and Sita being banished to the Dandaka Forest to live as hermits for 14 years. They are accompanied by Prince Lakshmana, the husband of Urmili. Prince Bharata, son of Queen Keikeyi and the next in line, is crowned Prince Regent. But no more of the story as you need to read it yourself!

The *Ramayana* is attributed to Valmiki, who is regarded as India's first poet. It consists of 24,000 verses in seven books so I assume the author of this graphic version used one of the many abridged versions though no reference is given. I have attended some exhibitions on the *Ramayana* which concentrated on the artistic aspects and had completely forgotten the story so I approached this book as a new story.

Although Sita is an idealised portrayal of a perfect child, wife and mother, I immediately felt in sympathy with her as she tells her story. It is a love story, an adventure story and has many twists and turns that are unexpected, giving an exciting read. The story requires concentration and I faltered in a few places. It is necessary to keep track of the names of the wives of both kings and whose son or daughter belongs to which queen! Indian words are interspersed in the text and occasionally I had to refer to the glossary. On p.29 I didn't know to whom 'Manthara' referred and couldn't find the name on previous pages. I looked up the name on the internet and find that she is Queen

Kaikeyi's maid. I also had to look back from p.55 to remind myself of Ma Anasuya as she is not a main character. Hanumana is introduced as 'son of the Wind God' so I was not sure to whom 'the monkey' referred a few pages on – I suppose I should have noted better the illustration of Hanumana earlier. It is only from the glossary that that I realised that Viku is the God of the Wind as the names are not used together. The BOOOOMM on p.90 I feel is very out of place in the telling of such a story and a distraction in such well-told serious writing. Although I have described my own reservations, I am sure no reader will read as minutely as I have as a reviewer. It has been a real page turner for me, with much enjoyment. It has also been an education in something with which I should have been more familiar.

Amongst the end pages there are notes on the *Ramayana* and Sita, with some photographs of sites.

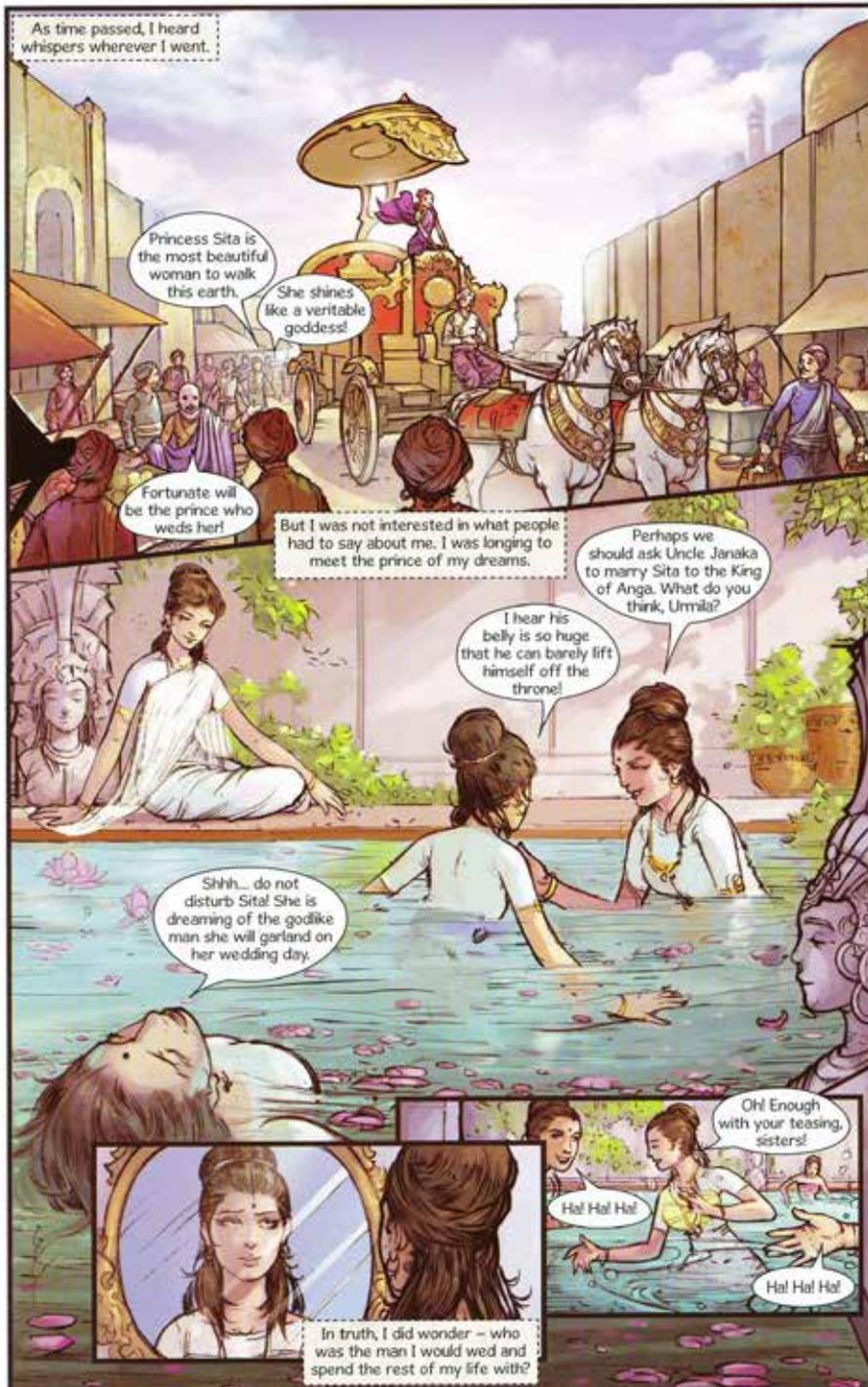


Figure 3 Sita dreaming of marrying a godlike prince.

The book is beautifully presented in full colour. The text flows well from box to box in well-written and clear text. Sita's commentaries are delineated in boxes with dashed outlines. The illustrations match the story well and work together, the text being a very necessary component so this is not a graphic book for those wishing to read the story from the illustrations alone. (See Figure 3.) Much thought has gone into the production of this book and it brings alive an important manuscript, making the story accessible to a wide audience. If the original was intended as depicting the duties of relations in a narrative allegory, this graphic version has no moralistic tone but tells a legend for modern readers.

Jennifer Harding

Three Men in a Boat

Jerome K. Jerome, adapted Nidhi Verma, illus. K.L. Jones, New Delhi: Campfire, pb. 978 9 3800 2888 0, £6.99, 2011, 72pp. Original first published 1889.

Three Men in a Boat is one of the books in the Classics series and tells the story of Harris, George and Jerome, along with Montmorency the dog, when they decide to take a break from their tedious routine to restore their 'mental equilibrium' by taking a boating trip on the Thames. I remember reading this as a student and being doubled up with laughter. However when I gave it to my husband-to-be, he didn't laugh once I cannot remember the story, but I picture a staid rowing boat with the three in Edwardian attire complete with boating hats or on land in their bowlers. So the shock of the cover of this graphic adaptation will be apparent to you! So here goes into the book!

The book opens with a short biography of the author and then introduces the characters. The men sport Edwardian moustaches and hairstyles, and wear jackets, waistcoats, ties and rolled up trousers (no stripes), but no hats of any sort. The depictions give a good impression of the Edwardian era in a modern graphic novel without resorting to the more stylised original illustrations (Figure 4).



Figure 4 Illustrations by A. Fredericks, from original published by J.W. Arrowsmith (Bristol), pp.5, 98 and 301.

Now to start reading. I am finding the pages very busy and so much to look at that it is hard to keep track of the text, which, of course, is cut up into boxes. I am surprised to find 'lock' and other what I feel are common words explained, while not shilling, and the lock definition does not sound correct to me. I should prefer the footnotes to be at the bottom of the page rather than mixed in with the text so that they are less distracting. Some of the illustrations seem over caricatured, for example the faces of Harris and Jerome as they place the bathtub strategically alongside George's bed as he is asleep. A glance at the original shows that the original text has been followed closely but is modernised and shortened. For example, the original reads:

The river affords a good opportunity for dress. For once in a way, we men are able to show our taste in colours, and I think we come out very natty, if you ask me. I always like a little red in my things – red and black. You know my hair is a sort of golden brown, rather a pretty shade I've been told, and a dark red matches it beautifully

And in the graphic novel as:

The river gives one a good opportunity for dress. For once, we men are able to show our taste in colours, and I think we come out pretty fashionable. [New box] I always like a little red on me – goes well with my hair, I'm told.



Figure 5 Do you find this amusing?

I found only one missing word (p.49), the text telling the story well – perhaps in too literary a style for the illustrations although I did get accustomed to them! This is a book of a trip on the Thames by the three friends, recounted by one of them, Jerome. He makes remarks about the others as asides, but all three have no idea of how to look after themselves, such as cooking and washing their clothes. They all like to bore the others with stories of their past adventures, told with pride, and also to tell stories of the others' misfortunes brought on by their stupidity. Jerome addresses his asides to the reader.

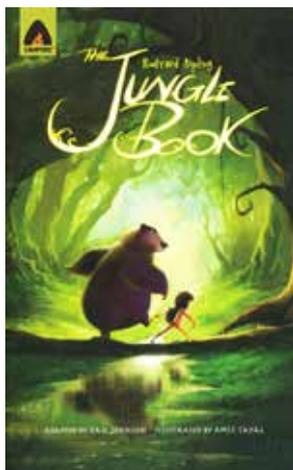
They get themselves into ridiculous situations such as catching their fishing lines in another boat as they are not looking around them, and they are driven into gloom by trivia, such as a lack of mustard for their beef. Does it work as a graphic novel and will it be found amusing by today's generation? I am not sure. I should prefer to read this story as continuous prose and to imagine the situation myself. For me the setting is too parodied and not Edwardian enough. I am also unsure if the current generation of readers will find the situations amusing or simply think the book 'silly'. I have to confess to not giving one smile of amusement during my reading of this graphic adaptation. Do you find Figure 5 amusing? Look at this figure and judge for yourself.

However, the text is well adapted and well written. The illustrations are consistent and will be liked by those who enjoy comics. The production of the book is excellent. It is rare to see such high quality printing and it is a pleasure to read without strain.

Jennifer Harding

The Jungle Book

Rudyard Kipling, adapted Dan Johnson, illus. Ait Tayal, New Delhi: Campfire, pb. 978 8 1907 5157 5, £8.31, 2011, 101pp.



The Jungle Book is one of the books in the Classics series and tells the story of Mowgli, the boy brought up by the wolves in the jungle, wanted by the tiger, instructed by a panther who with the bear championed him, and then kidnapped by the monkeys. The book is a graphic-novel adaptation of Rudyard Kipling's text of rivalries and differing moralities for survival in the jungle.

The cover of jungle greens looked a little Disney like so I approached turning over with trepidation. Opening the book, I found that the child's portrayal in the frontispiece did nothing to allay my fears. I was also disappointed to see the jungle greens turned to bluish greens.

The front pages include a short note on Kipling, following by a page depicting the main characters. I am slightly reassured by the portrayal of Mowgli who looks suitably Indian, human, tough but a child.

The layout is the usual style (see reviews of other Campfire publications) but the footnotes are mixed in with the text. Although they are distinct, I find this a little distracting and should prefer them at the bottom of the pages. The text flows well and although I would have preferred more classic illustrations, less reminiscent of Disney films, the animals and scenery are well depicted to match the text. I dislike the large text representing loud noises that suddenly appear in jarring colours. Kipling's verses that preface each chapter are given verbatim but not all are given in full or quoted (Figure 6).

Occasionally a song from the end of a chapter is given, such as part of 'Mowgli's Song'. I love the illustration on p.34 of Mowgli on Bagheera the panther's back as he is taken home from the monkey's Cold Lairs, an old deserted city (Figure 7). Other illustrations are atmospheric silhouettes. Night time is very evocatively drawn, often evoking fear and danger.

I had not read the book for so many years that I had forgotten the story and so read it as if for the first time in this graphic adaptation. I stumbled a little on p.70 and couldn't work out why the illustration showed Mowgli having thrown the knife, but the handle pointed towards him. I can only interpret it as being in his mind, imagining what he could do.

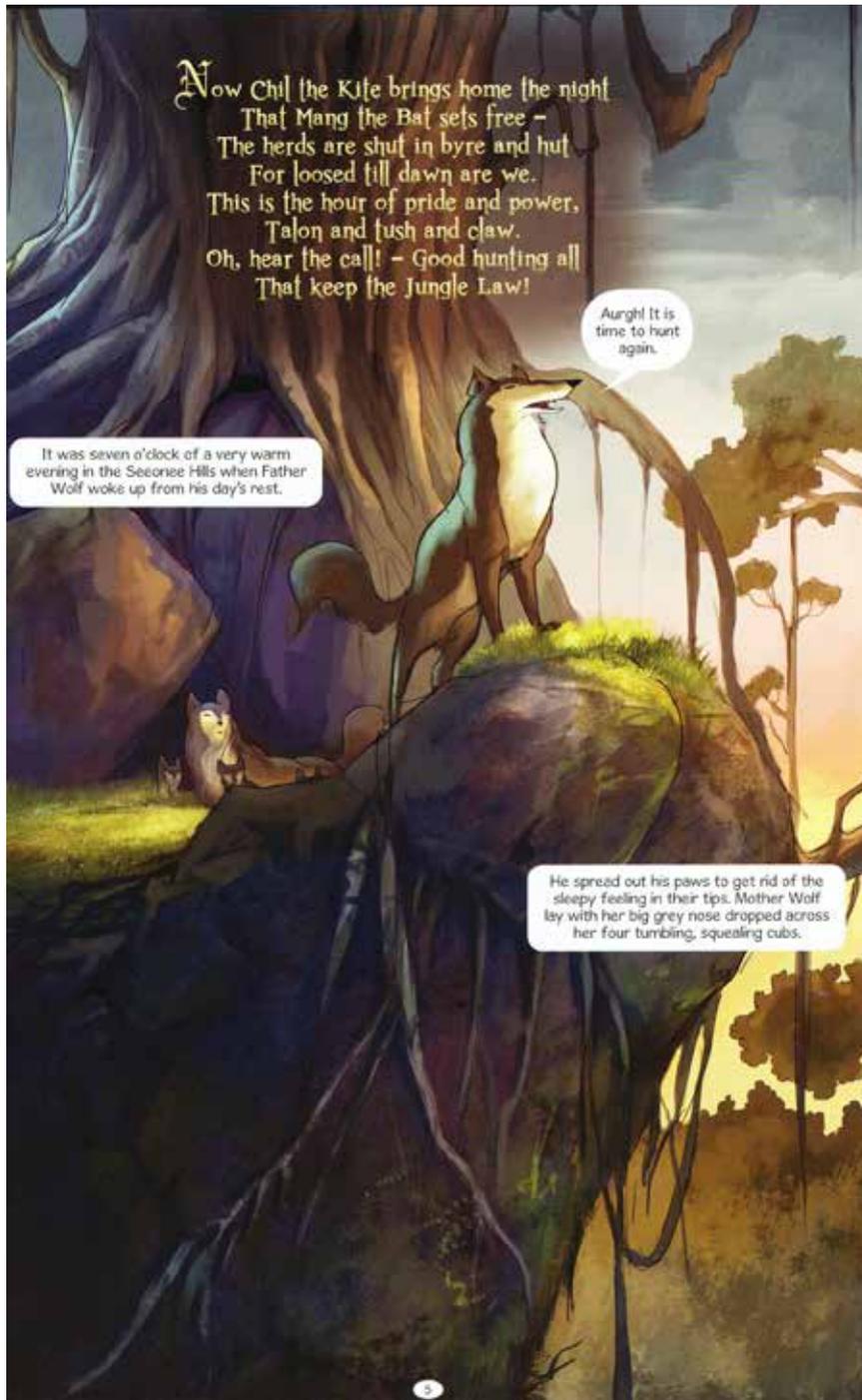


Figure 6 Verse from Chapter 2 of Kipling's original – last four lines of eight.

The pace of the book keeps up with the story as Mowgli's man-wolf history draws on towards the inevitable. The song as Mowgli sits by the river pondering is illustrated with much poignancy on p.91.

Man goes to Man! Cry the challenge through the Jungle!
 He that was our Brother goes away.
 Hear, now, and judge, O ye People of the Jungle,—
 Answer, who shall turn him – who shall stay?

Man goes to Man! He is weeping in the Jungle:
 He that was our Brother sorrows sore!
 Man goes to Man! (Oh, we loved him in the Jungle!)
 To the man-trail where we may not follow more.

And as he bids farewell to those of his jungle comrades and then walks away:

On the trail that thou must tread
To the threshold of our dread,
Where the Flower blossoms red;
Through the nights when thou shalt lie
Prisoned from our Mother-sky,
Hearing us, thy loves, go by;
In the dawns when thou shalt wake
To the toil thou canst not break,
Heartsick for the Jungle's sake;
Wood and Water, Wind and Tree,
Wisdom, Strength, and Courtesy,
Jungle-Favour go with thee!

Kipling's 'thou' has been changed to 'you' but this is in keeping with modern readers. I felt a heavy sadness too as I read the last pages.



Figure 7 Mowgli on Bagheera's back.

This is an excellent adaptation bringing the book alive through its graphic adaptation, keeping the pace and excitement and opening up the book to new readers. I have not checked the words against the original text but the style of the text is excellent as are the illustrations, once I got over my anti-Disney complex.

The book is stitched not paste bound and the double spreads open completely making the book easy to hold and read, so in sharing with a young child both would be able to see clearly, while and the reader would be able to hold the book with one hand and point with the other. At the back is a double spread of background on 'The Law of the Jungle', 'The Feral Child', 'How Tigers Became Man Eaters' and 'Seeonee' – the name given by Kipling to his mythical jungle. A 'Do You Know?' includes mention of the Disney film.

Jennifer Harding

REPORTS

‘Children’s Literature and the Inner World’ Conference

University of Roehampton, London. Saturday 12 May 2012.

The NCRCL blog has reports on some of the sessions. For Part I, see <http://ncrcl.wordpress.com/2012/05/31/ncrcl-conference-report-from-students/>. For Part II see <http://ncrcl.wordpress.com/2012/06/26/ncrcl-conference-report-part-ii/>. Details of the day can also still be found: www.roehampton.ac.uk/Research-Centres/National-Centre-for-Research-in-Childrens-Literature/Conference/.

[Alison Waller]

Book Launch

The Illustration Cupboard, St James’s, London. 20 September 2012.

The Illustration Cupboard, in the St James district of London’s West End, was the location for the launch of *Where My Wellies Take Me* by Clare and Michael Morpurgo, illustrated by Olivia Lomenech Gill and published by Templar Publishing. The book takes the form of a childhood scrapbook, based largely on Clare Morpurgo’s own Devon holiday memories and interspersed with familiar, and less familiar, poems. It was slightly difficult amid the throng to see the artwork, but what I could view, either on the walls or in a copy of the book itself, was very attractive, with pictures of the countryside which radiated colour, and some impressive portraits of prize pigs. So popular was the event, however, that I suspect that it might have been easier to see the artwork on the ‘public’ days of the exhibition than at this ‘private’ view!

Incidentally the venue itself is well worth a visit for the other pictures displayed, including, among other treasures, lithographs by Maurice Sendak, and a number of illustrations by Victor Ambrus for Channel Four’s Time Team series.

[Pat Pinsent]

AWARDS

The Queen of Teen 2012

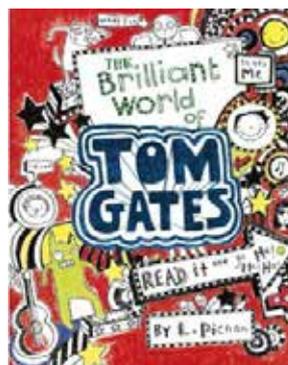
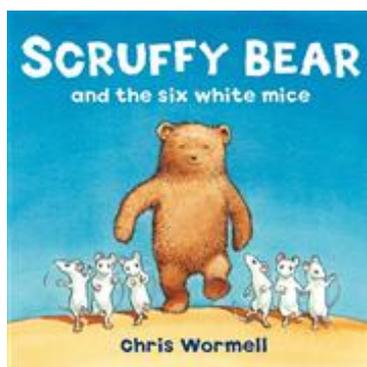
Described as ‘the most glitzy and glamorous award in the world of books, rewarding the nation’s favourite authors of teen fiction’. The award was founded in 2008 to celebrate ‘the fantastic teen and tween authors who bring so much enjoyment to their readers, dealing with real-life issues in a way that is honest, entertaining and fun’.

The winner, announced on 7 July 2012, is Maureen Johnson. Her latest book is *The Name of the Star Book 1* (2011, HarperCollins) for 13+. A sample can be read at www.scribd.com/doc/63600546/The-Name-of-the-Star-Shades-of-London-1-by-Maureen-Johnson.

Red House Children’s Book Awards 2012

This is the only national book award voted for entirely by children. The award is made annually to the best work of fiction for children in the categories Younger Children, Younger Readers and Older Readers. There is also an award for the best work amongst the winners. The winners were announced in February 2012, for books published between 1 July 2010 and 30 June 2011.

The Best Work winner and Older Readers winner is *A Monster Calls* by Patrick Ness (illus. Jim Kay), London: Walker Books, 2011. See description on p.48.



The Younger Children winner is *Scruffy Bear and the Six White Mice* by Chris Wormell, London: Jonathan Cape, 2011. ‘One day a small scruffy bear meets six terrified white mice; they’re scared of the dark forest and all the predatory creatures that live there. But Scruffy Bear has all kinds of ingenious ideas about how to keep them safe.’

The Younger Readers winner is *The Brilliant World of Tom Gates* by Liz Pinchon, London: Scholastic, 2011. ‘Fans of The Wimpy Kid will delight in the hilarious adventure of Tom Gates! Fantastic fun told in words and pictures. A delight of a reading experience.’

The shortlists can be read at www.redhousechildrensbookaward.co.uk/winners/index.

CLPE Poetry Award 2012

The CLPE poetry award for a book of poetry for children was launched by the Centre for Literacy in Primary Education in 2003 to highlight an important branch of children's literature. The award is given annually for a book of children’s poetry published the previous year. The shortlist was announced on 14 June 2012.

John Agard (2011) *Goldilocks on CCTV*, illus. Satoshi Kitamura, London: Frances Lincoln Children’s Books.

Brian Moses (2011) *Holding the Hands of Angels*, London: Salt Publishing.

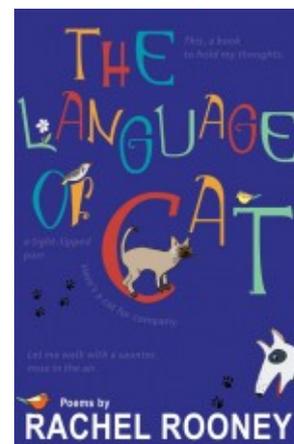
Rachel Rooney (2011) *The Language of Cat*, illus. Ellie Jenkins, London: Frances Lincoln Children’s Books.

Fred Sedgwick (2011) *Here Comes the Poetry Man*, London: Salt Publishing.

The judging panel was Philip Gross, winner of the 2011 CLPE Poetry Award for *Off Road to Everywhere*, Morag Styles, Professor of Children's Poetry, University of Cambridge, Fiona Waters, winner of the 2008 CLPE Poetry Award for *Why Does my Mum always Iron a Crease in my Jeans?* and Julia Eccleshare, co-director of CLPE (chair).

The award is sponsored by the Travelling Book Company.

The winner, announced on 24 July 2012, is Rachel Rooney for *The Language of Cat*, a debut poetry collection for children, 'filled with humour, wordplay and riddles', marked by what the judges called a 'subtle distinctive speaking voice'.



The Guardian Children's Fiction Prize 2012

The Guardian Award is given annually to the author of a fiction book written for children or young adults (at least age seven) and published in the UK. It is a lifetime award in that previous winners are not eligible. The award is judged by writers. Publishers submit books from which a longlist of eight is compiled. A shortlist is then made with a maximum of four books and is announced in November. Children are encouraged to post reviews on the website. For further details of the prize, see www.guardian.co.uk/books/guardianchildrensfictionprize.

The 2012 longlist was announced on 8 June 2012. The judges comment: 'The submissions for 2012 show that while paranormal romance of the *Twilight* kind still abounds, there are also a great many novels that reflect current preoccupations, as the eight titles selected so deftly illustrate.' The judges this year are children's writers Tony Bradman, Cressida Cowell and Kevin Crossley-Holland. The prize will be awarded in November, with the winner then being a judge on the 2013 panel.

A Boy and a Bear in a Boat by Dave Shelton (David Fickling, £10.99). Age: 9+

A Greyhound of a Girl by Roddy Doyle (Scholastic, £10.99). Age: 12+

Bullet Boys by Ally Kennen (Scholastic, £6.99). Age: 14+

Dead End in Norvelt by Jack Gantos (Corgi, £5.99). Age: 12+

Dying to Know You by Aidan Chambers (Bodley Head, £12.99). Age: 14+

Soonchild by Russell Hoban, illus. Alexis Deacon (Walker Books, £9.99). Age: 14+

The Abominables by Eva Ibboston (Scholastic, £10.99). Age: 8+

The Unforgotten Coat by Frank Cottrell Boyce, photographs by Carl Hunter and Clare Heney (Walker Books, £10). Age: 9+

For details of the books, see the 2012 longlist gallery at www.guardian.co.uk/childrens-books-site/gallery/2012/jun/08/childrens-fiction-prize-longlist-gallery.

SLA Information Book Award 2012

The SLA Information Book Award, organised by the School Library Association and sponsored by Hachette Children's Books and Peters Bookselling Services, is an annual award designed to reinforce the importance of non-fiction and support school libraries, whilst highlighting the high standard of resources available. Now in its second year as a national book award, the SLA announced this year's shortlist in July 2012, whittled down from over 100 submissions.

Under 7s

A Stork in a Baobab Tree: An African Twelve Days of Christmas by Catherine House, illus. Polly Alakija (Frances Lincoln).

A Walk in London by Salvatore Rubbino (Walker Books).

Dolphin Baby by Nicola Davies, illus. Brita Granström, (Walker Books).

Who Has What by Robie H. Harris, illus. Nadine Bernard Westcott (Walker Books).

7–12

Beatrice's Dream by Karen Lynn Williams, illus. Wendy Stone (Frances Lincoln).

Can We Save the Tiger by Martin Jenkins, illus. Vicky White (Walker Books).

Nature Adventures by Mick Manning and Brita Granström (Frances Lincoln).

North: The Greatest Animal Journey on Earth by Nick Dowson, illus. Patrick Benson (Walker Books).

12–16

Afghanistan from War to Peace: Our World Divided by Philip Steele (Wayland).

Charles Dickens: A Lifetime of Storytelling by Catherine Wells-Cole, illus. Ian Andrew, Caroline Anstey and Diz Wallis (Templar).

Star: From Birth to Black Hole by AlaDyer (Templar).

Terezin: A Story of the Holocaust by Ruth Thomson (Franklin Watts).

Scottish Children's Book Awards 2012

Run by the Scottish Book Trust in partnership with Creative Scotland, the SCBA are Scotland's largest children's book awards, recognising excellence in Scottish writing and illustration for children across three age categories: Bookbug Readers (3–7 years), Younger Readers (8–11 years) and Older Readers (12–16 years). The total prize fund is £12,000, with the shortlisted authors and illustrators receiving £500 per book, and the three overall winners receiving £3,000 per book. The winner of each category is decided by Scottish children themselves, who will be reading the shortlisted books and voting for their favourite over the next seven months. The winners will be announced at a ceremony on World Book Day (7 March 2013) at the Caird Hall, Dundee.

The 2012 shortlist was announced on 25 June.

Bookbug Readers (0–7 years)

Jack and the Flum Flum Tree by Julia Donaldson, illus. David Roberts (Macmillan).

The Day Louis Got Eaten by John Fardell (Andersen Press).

Solomon Crocodile by Catherine Rayner (Macmillan).

Younger Readers (8–11 years)

Out of the Depths by Cathy MacPhail (Bloomsbury).

Soldier's Game by James Killgore (Floris Books).

The World of Norm: May Contain Nuts by Jonathan Meres (Orchard).

Older Readers (12–16 years)

The 13th Horseman by Barry Hutchison (Harper Collins).

Code Name Verity by Elizabeth Wein (Electric Monkey).

The Prince who Walked with Lions by Elizabeth Laird (Macmillan).

Coventry Inspiration Young People's Book Awards 2012 and 2013

The 2012 website opened on 11 October 2011 for the city people to vote online for the 2012 awards. In its sixth year, the annual event aims to find the city's favourite books of people of all ages and is run by the city council. The book awards promote reading for everyone in the community, with polls for every age group of children and young people and adults. The panel, which consists of a wide variety of citizens, chooses a shortlist of 12 books for each category from nominations from the public and professionals. Each book must be in print in paperback and not have won a major national award (except those in the Favourite Classics category) – other regional awards are discounted. The shortlist aims to have a mix of very new titles, and backlist titles that may have just missed out on an award or may appeal to a new generation of readers. All books must 'inspire the reading habit'. The winners in the various young people's categories are as follows.

Never too Young 0–4

Lulu Loves Stories, Anna McQuinn, illus. Rosemary Beardshaw, Slough: Alanna Books, 2009.

What's the Story 4–7

Good Little Wolf, Nadia Shireen, London: Jonathan Cape, 2011.

Raring 2 Read 7–11

The Memory Cage, Ruth Eastham, London: Scholastic, 2011.



Read it or Else! 11–14

H.I.V.E. (Higher Institute of Villainous Education), Mark Walden, London: Bloomsbury, 2011.

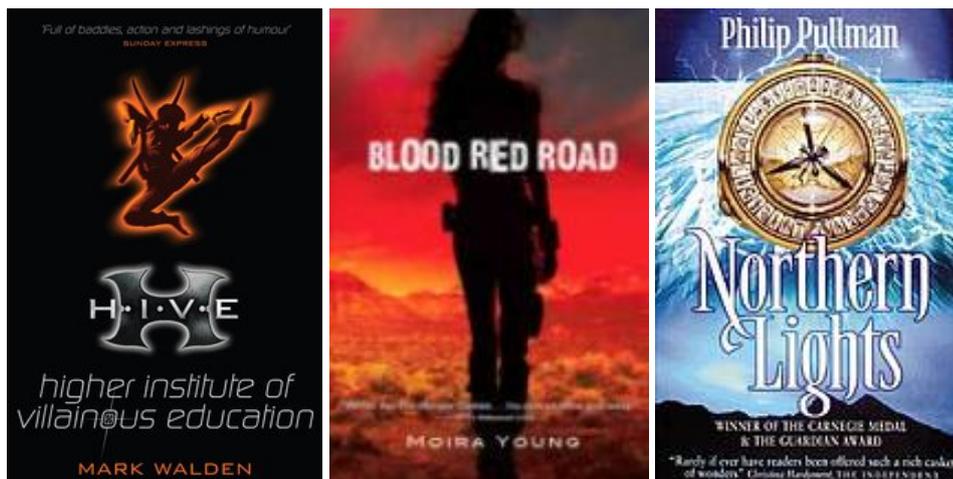
Simply the Book 14+

Blood Red Road, Moira Young, London: Marion Lloyd Books, 2011.

Our Favourite Classics

This award is aimed at everyone, regardless of age, who has enjoyed these classic titles of childhood. They will have found their way into most homes and classrooms because of their universal appeal.

Northern Lights, Philip Pullman, London: Scholastic, 1995

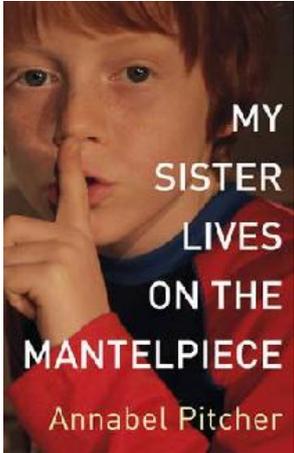


For details of the awards see www.coventry.gov.uk/bookawards.

The shortlists for the 2013 awards were announced in July and can be downloaded from http://clg.coventry.gov.uk/downloads/4/educational_services. The online polls (accessed for the Young People category at www.coventry.gov.uk/youngpeoplebookawards2013) launched on 1 October 2012 (the Monday at the start of Children's Book Week). Eliminations will begin on 20 January 2013, with two titles in each group in each week being eliminated until the winner is finally found. The winners will be announced on

Wednesday 20 February 2013 to coincide with school half term. The award ceremony will be on 12 June 2013. More information on these various stages of the voting and the announcement of the winners are at http://clg.coventry.gov.uk/info/4/educational_services/540/news_events_and_opportunities.

Branford Boase Award 2012



The award was set up in memory of prize-winning author Henrietta Branford, and Wendy Boase, editorial director and one of the founders of Walker Books. The award is specifically to encourage new writers and to highlight the importance of the editor in nurturing new talent. This annual award is unique in that it is given to both the author and the editor of an outstanding debut novel for children.

The 2012 winners were announced on 5 July 2012 at a ceremony at Walker Books in London and are Annabel Pitcher (author) and Fiona Kennedy (editor, Orion Children's Books) for *My Sister Lives on the Mantelpiece*.

The other books on the shortlist were:

Long Lankin by Lindsey Barraclough, editor Annie Eaton (Bodley Head).

Being Billy by Phil Earle, editor Shannon Park (Puffin).

Small Change for Stuart by Lissa Evans, editor Annie Eaton and Ruth Knowles (Bodley Head).

Everybody Jam by Ali Lewis, editor Charlie Sheppard (Andersen Press).

Sky Hawk by Gill Lewis, editor Liz Cross (OUP).

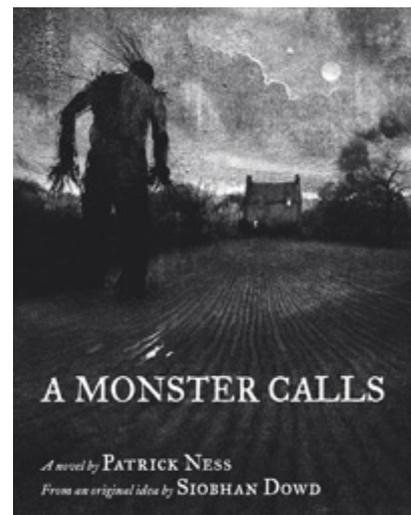
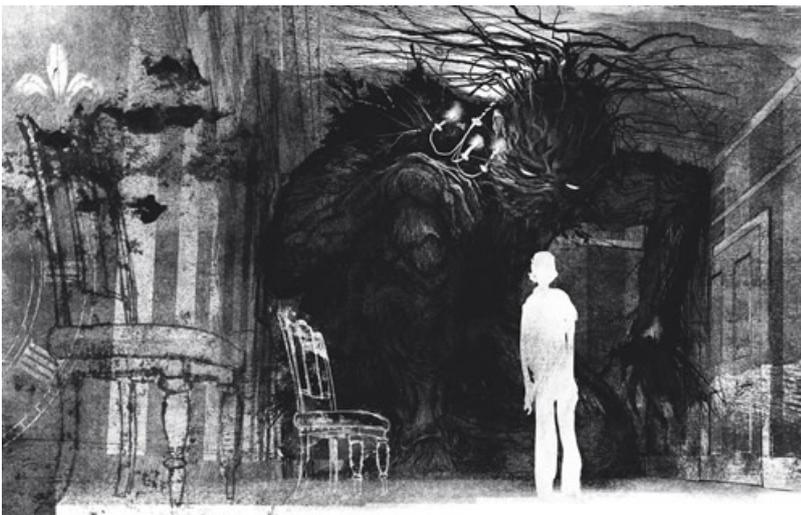
A Beautiful Lie by Irfan Master, editor Emma Matthewson (Bloomsbury).

Fiona Kennedy, also edits best-selling children's authors Francesca Simon, Michelle Paver, Caroline Lawrence and Sally Gardner.

Former children's laureate Dame Jacqueline Wilson presented Annabel Pitcher with a cheque for £1,000 and both Annabel Pitcher and Fiona Kennedy received a unique, hand-crafted silver-inlaid box.

CILIP Carnegie and Kate Greenaway Medals 2012

14 June 2012 – a unique announcement in the history of these awards.



For the first time the same book has won the Carnegie and Kate Greenaway medals. The book is *A Monster Calls* (Walker Books), with the Carnegie medal going to the author Patrick Ness and the Kate Greenaway medal going to the illustrator Jim Kay. It is also the second consecutive award of the Carnegie for Patrick Ness, his book *Monsters of Men* being the 2011 winner. Only once before has the Carnegie been won by the same author in consecutive years – by Peter Dickinson in 1979 and 1980.

A Monster Calls was created by Ness from the final idea of the late Siobhan Dowd, who died in 2007. A share of the royalties go to the Siobhan Dowd Trust that brings books and reading to disadvantaged children in the UK. The book is the story of 13-year-old Connor whose mother is dying from cancer and who encounters a monster in his nightmares. Kay's illustrations are in shades of black, white and grey and have been described as 'conjuring immense symbolism, atmosphere and emotion to complement Ness's haunting text' by the chair of the judging panel Rachel Levy, Children's Library Services Manager for Sutton Libraries.

The awards are annual and are administered by the Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals (CILIP). The Carnegie is awarded to the author of an outstanding book for children and young people. The winner of the Carnegie receives a golden medal and £500 worth of books to donate to a library of their choice. The Kate Greenaway is awarded annually for an outstanding book in terms of illustration for children and young people. The winner receives a golden medal and £500 worth of books to donate to a library of their choice. Since 2000, the winner of the Kate Greenaway has also been awarded the £5000 Colin Mears Award.

UKLA Children's Book Awards 2012

The UK Literacy Association Children's Book awards are a national award conferred by education professionals and held in high esteem by teachers, who regard the shortlists as a reliable indicator of the best books of the year for inclusion in class and school collections. Publishers can submit a maximum of three books per imprint for each award. These may be picture books, fiction, poetry, non-fiction or play scripts. Books (and poems in anthologies) must have been published for the first time in the UK between 1 June 2011 and 31 May 2012. Books may previously have been published in other countries and translations are eligible; reprints and new editions are not eligible.

The books are selected by 60 teachers from Coventry and Leicestershire, who look for books with powerful language across the age range 3–16. The awards are divided into the categories 3–6, 7–11 and 12–16.

The shortlists for each category were announced in March 2012. See *IBBYLink* 34. The final judging was by a panel of teachers, and the winners were announced at an award ceremony at the UKLA International Conference, University of Leicester, on 6 July 2012. They are:

3–6

Catherine Rayner (2010) *Iris and Isaac*, London: Little Tiger Press.

'Iris and Isaac are not friends. Off they stomp, in a big huff, as far away from each other as possible. And as they stomp, they see funny, strange and wonderful things. If only they were together to share them.'

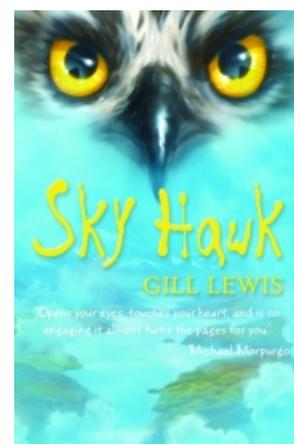
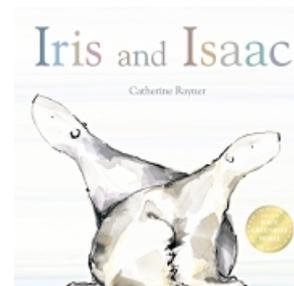
7–11

Gill Lewis (2011) *Sky Hawk*. Oxford University Press.

'A debut novel set in the stunning Scottish countryside, *Sky Hawk* tells the story of Callum and Iona and their amazing discovery, a magnificent Osprey and how that discovery affects them and their friendship. It also deals with the threats to the natural world and the challenges that people who live below the poverty line face.'

12–16

Patrick Ness (illus. Jim Kay) (2011) *A Monster Calls*. London: Walker Books. (See p.48 for details of this book.)



Foyle Young Poets of the Year Awards 2012

The deadline for entries was 31 July 2012.

An award is an opportunity for any young poet aged 11–17 to accelerate their writing career. The award has been in operation for 15 years. This year's judges were Helen

Mort (a previous winner and now a published poet) and Christopher Reid. Each year 100 winners (15 overall winners and 85 commendations) are selected. Funding is by the Foyle Foundation. Entry is free. Winners from the 15–17 age category attend a week-long intensive residential Arvon course where they develop their creative writing skills alongside fellow poets. Winners from the 11–14 age category benefit from poetry residencies at their schools, followed by distance mentoring. The winners will be announced on 4 October 2012 (National Poetry Day).

For further information see www.poetrysociety.org.uk/content/competitions/fyp.

The Times Chicken House Children’s Fiction Prize 2013

Closing date for entries is 26 October 2012. See details in *IBBYLink* 34.

Frances Lincoln Diverse Voices Children’s Book Award 2013

The closing date for entries is 31 December 2012. See details in *IBBYLink* 34.

Waterstones Children’s Book Prize 2012

The Waterstones Children’s Book Prize celebrates new and emerging talent in children’s writing. The author must have published no more than one other children’s fiction title and author–illustrator teams no more than four previous picture books. This year, for the first time, the prize has been divided into three categories: Picture Book, Fiction 5–12, and Teen Book. The books are chosen by Waterstones booksellers. The winner in each category and an overall winner were announced on 28 March 2012.

Overall winner and also of the Picture Book category

Jonny Duddle (2011) *The Pirates Next Door*. Templar Publishing.

‘Meet the Jolley-Rogers – a pirate family who are moving to Dull-on-Sea, a quiet seaside town. Stopping to fix up their ship, this unusual family get the whole neighbourhood spreading rumours. Defying the grown-ups, Matilda from next door decides to become friends with the youngest pirate son.’

Fiction 5-12 category

Liz Pichon (2011) *The Brilliant World of Tom Gates*. London: Scholastic.

‘Tom Gates is the master of excuses for late homework: dog attacks, spilt water and lightning. Tom’s exercise book is full of his doodles, cartoons and thoughts, as well as comments from his long-suffering teacher. After gaining five merits for his “Camping Sucks” holiday story, Tom’s work starts to go downhill – which is a pity, as he is desperate to impress Amy Porter, who sits next to him.’

Teen Book category

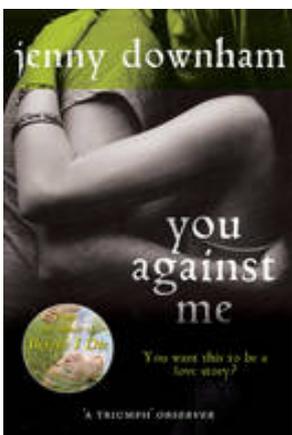
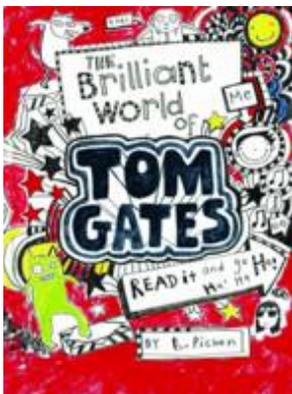
Jenny Downham (2011) *You against Me*. Oxford: David Fickling Books.

‘When Mikey’s sister claims a boy assaulted her, his world begins to fall apart. When Ellie’s brother is charged with the offence, her world begins to unravel. When Mikey and Ellie meet, two worlds collide. It is a book about loyalty and the choices that come with it. But above all it’s a book about love.’

Royal Society Young People’s Book Prize 2012

This book prize celebrates the best books that communicate science to young people.

The prize is open to books in which science is a substantial aspect of the book’s content, narrative or theme and which are written for young people aged up to 14. Books submitted for the prize must have been first published in English in the calendar year of 2011. The authors of the shortlisted books each receive £1,000 and the winner receives £10,000.



Publishers across the UK submit their best recent books that communicate science to young people. An adult judging panel narrows the choice to a shortlist of six books. The winning book is selected by groups of young people from schools and youth groups around the UK. These groups together form a judging panel that looks at all the shortlisted books and chooses a winner. The announcement will be on 15 November 2012.

The six books shortlisted by the shortlisting panel for 2012 were announced on 18 May 2012.

How the Weather Works by Christiane Dorion, illus. Beverley Young (Templar).

Out of this World: All the Cool Bits about Space by Clive Gifford (Buster Books).

Plagues, Pox and Pestilence by Richard Plat, illus. John Kelly (Kingfisher).

Science Experiments by Robert Winston and Ian Graham (Dorling Kindersley).

See inside Inventions: An Usborne Flap Book by Alex Frith, illus. Colin King (Usborne).

The Magic of Reality by Richard Dawkins, illus. Dave McKean (Bantam Press).

For all previous shortlists and winners, see <http://royalsociety.org/awards/young-people/all-shortlisted/>.

For details of the 2012 shortlisted books, see <http://royalsociety.org/awards/young-people/shortlist/>.

For previous year's winners, see <http://royalsociety.org/awards/young-people/>.

For previous shortlists, see <http://royalsociety.org/awards/young-people/all-shortlisted/>.

Blue Peter Awards 2012

In a change of format from previous years, two fiction books and two non-fiction books were chosen by a panel of judges to make up a shortlist of four books. From this shortlist the Blue Peter Book of the Year was decided by around 200 young Blue Peter viewers from ten schools in Great Britain and Northern Ireland. The award is presented on World Book Day. This year there was also an award for the Blue Peter Best Children's Book of the Last 10 Years.

Shortlist for 2012 Award

Discover the Extreme World (Discover the World) by Amanda Askew. Thaxted: Miles Kelly Publishing. (Non-fiction)

The Official Countdown to the London 2012 Games (Olympic and Paralympic Games) by Simon Hart. London: Carlton Books. (Non-fiction)

The Considine Curse by Gareth P. Jones. London: Bloomsbury. (Fiction)

A Year without Autumn by Liz Kessler. London: Orion Childrens Books. (Fiction)

Winner

The winner of the 2012 award was announced on 1 March 2012.

This year's winner, a fiction book, is *The Considine Curse* by Gareth P. Jones.

'Fourteen-year-old Mariel returns to England for her grandmother's funeral. It is the first time she has been back since she emigrated with her mother as a baby, and it is the beginning of the uncovering of some really extraordinary truths about the Considine family. What is the dark secret that lies at the heart of the family?'

Shortlist for the Blue Peter Best Children's Book of the Last 10 Years

These books were award winners in the year cited.

Alex Rider Mission 3: Skeleton Key by Anthony Horowitz (Walker Books, 2002)

Candyfloss by Jacqueline Wilson, illus. Nick Sharratt (Random House Children's Books, 2006)

Diary of a Wimpy Kid by Jeff Kinney (Puffin, 2008)
Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix by J.K. Rowling (Bloomsbury, 2003)
Horrid Henry and the Football Fiend by Francesca Simon, illus. Tony Ross (Orion Children's Books, 2006)
Mr Stink by David Walliams, illus. Quentin Blake (HarperCollins Children's Books, 2009)
Private Peaceful by Michael Morpurgo (HarperCollins Children's Books, 2003)
The Series of Unfortunate Events: Austere Academy by Lemony Snicket (Egmont Books, 2002)
Theodore Boone by John Grisham (Hodder & Stoughton, 2010)
Young Bond: SilverFin – A James Bond Adventure by Charlie Higson (Puffin, 2005)

Winner

The winner is *Diary of a Wimpy Kid* by Jeff Kinney, the title chosen in 2008 for the Blue Peter Award of that year.

Christopher Tower Poetry Prizes 2012

Tower Poetry exists to encourage and challenge everyone who reads or writes poetry. Funded by a generous bequest to Christ Church, Oxford, by the late Christopher Tower, the aims of Tower Poetry are clear: to stimulate an enjoyment and critical appreciation of poetry, particularly among young people in education, and to challenge people to write their own poetry. The project is administered by the poet and academic, Peter McDonald, the first holder of the Christopher Tower Studentship and Tutorship in Poetry in the English Language at Christ Church, Oxford. Central to the work of Tower Poetry is the belief that the encouragement of young people to write poetry can foster a creative appreciation that is essential for a mature understanding and contribution to cultural life in the future. The Christopher Tower Poetry prizes, launched in 2000, offer young people a major opportunity to write poetry. Each year, students between the ages of 16–18 years are asked to submit poems on a set theme. The competition rules can be read at www.towerpoetry.org.uk/prize/competition-rules.

Judges for 2012 were poets Christopher Reid, Don Paterson and Peter McDonald and the theme was 'Voyages'. The longlisted poems can be read at www.towerpoetry.org.uk/longlisted-poems-2012, and the winning poems are listed at www.towerpoetry.org.uk/prize/winning-poems. The poem winning the first prize is reproduce below.

Papa's Epilogue

You crawl up from
 oblivion; the rust of
 your eyes glaring at the
 silver dollar sun.

Doling words out like
 cards, chewing your tongue
 and tobacco beneath
 a full sailor's beard.

The ace of spades, king
 of hearts, the matador.
 Your bull heart tangled
 in sangria sheets.

You were always an
 ocean child, a Poseidon
 of lyrics. Fishing for salmon
 but bringing home trout.

You wanted to put a hook
 into the emptiness and call it
 your own. You dreamt of
 lions on African beaches.

Your women were sirens;
 Hawk lips stealing words and
 kisses, singing off-key jazz.
 You plucking them like worms.

The whisky was a poison;
 Tu doble, tu Diabolo, tu hermano.
 It let the wasp of your hand and mouth
 out of its cage, cage, cage.

And now, ripe with age, you
 stroke the flounder blood off your
 beard, and stroke the leg
 of your whore.

©Sarah Fletcher, 2012, The American School in London. Reproduced with permission Christopher Tower Poetry.

The 2013 competition will open on 9 November 2012 and details will be on the website (www.towerpoetry.org.uk/prize/competition-rules) from that date.

Newbery Medal, Honor Books and Notable Children's Books 2012 (USA)

It seems that we ignore awards from other English-speaking countries so here is a start at amending our insularity.

The Association for Library Service to Children (ALSC), a division of the American Library Association (ALA), announces its media awards every January at a Monday morning press conference that takes place during the ALA Midwinter Meeting. All medals also have Honor Books and Notable Books.

The Newbery Medal was named for the eighteenth-century British bookseller John Newbery. It is awarded annually by the ALSC to the author of the most distinguished contribution to American literature for children.



Newbery Medal winner is *Dead End in Norvelt* by Jack Grantos, New York: Farrar Straus Giroux, 2011/London: Random House Children's Books, 2012 (10–14). Available on Amazon.co.uk and Amazon.com. You can Look Inside on both Amazons. The book is described as follows.

Jack's summer has hit a dead end. After being 'grounded for life', Jack is facing a summer of doing nothing. But who's got time to die of boredom when there are so many more interesting ways to die in this town? He might crash in his dad's homemade plane, or catch the disease that makes you dance yourself to death, or fall foul of the motorcycle gang that wants to burn the town to the ground. Old people seem to be dying faster than Miss Volker can write their obituaries, and Jack is starting to worry that it might not just be the rats eating the rat poison. As darkly amusing as it is highly imaginative, it is a hilarious blend of the entirely true and the wildly fictional.

Honor Books are *Inside Out & Back Again* by Thanhha Lai, London and New York: HarperCollins Children's Books, 2011 (8–12 years) and *Breaking Stalin's Nose* by Eugene Yelchin, New York: Henry Holt and Company, 2011 (9–12 years). Both are available on Amazon.co.uk as well as Amazon.com. You can Look Inside on both Amazons.

Inside Out & Back Again: Hà and her family flee war-torn Vietnam for the American South. In spare yet vivid verse, she chronicles her year-long struggle to find her place in a new and shifting world.

Breaking Stalin's Nose: On the eve of his induction into the Young Pioneers, Sasha's world is overturned when his father is arrested by Stalin's guard. Yelchin deftly crafts a stark and compelling story of a child's lost idealism.

For the Notable Books list, which covers many of the ALSC awards and contains much of interest, see www.ala.org/alsc/awardsgrants/notalists/ncb.

David Almond Fellowships

Newcastle University's School of English Literature, Language and Linguistics, and Seven Stories: The National Centre for Children's Books, have announced the first award of the David Almond Fellowships for research in children's literature. The fellowships aim to promote high-quality research in the Seven Stories collections that will call attention to their breadth and scholarly potential.

There was a strong field of candidates from scholars at different stages in their careers and from several countries. The awards were made on the basis of both the merit of the proposal and how well the project could be supported by the holdings at Seven Stories.

The 2012 David Almond Fellows are Dr Keith O'Sullivan of the Church of Ireland College of Education, and Eve Lacey, who recently completed a first degree at Cambridge University and is about to start an MLitt at Newcastle University. Keith O'Sullivan's project will examine the Philip Pullman materials in the Seven Stories archives. Eve Lacey's project is on 'Illustrated Bodies and Traces of Disability' and will look at material relating to David Almond's *Heaven Eyes* and Jacqueline Wilson's *The Illustrated Mum*. More information about the projects will be circulated after the fellows have conducted their research.

[Kim Reynolds]

FORTHCOMING EXHIBITIONS AND EVENTS

Daydreams and Diaries, the Story of Jacqueline Wilson

Hove Museum and Art Gallery, Brighton. 24 November 2012 – 30 April 2013.

This is a chance to find out about Dame Jacqueline, in the first ever exhibition (now touring) dedicated to the bestselling author. The exhibition guides you through a journey of her favourite stories, characters, daydreams and working process. It shows how her favourite characters began, including Tracy Beaker, Hetty Feather and the Illustrated Mum, from ideas to text and working with illustrator Nick Sharratt to bringing her stories to life. Visitors can also follow Dame Jacqueline on her creative journey during the making of *Sapphire Battersea*, the sequel to *Hetty Feather*, released in September 2011. The exhibition is supported by Random House Children's Books

See www.brighton-hove-rpml.org.uk/Museums/brightonmuseum/Pages/home.aspx or www.brighton-hove-rpml.org.uk/WhatsOn/Documents/RPM%20What%27s%20On%20Sep%20Dec%202012-FINAL.pdf.

A Squash and a Squeeze: Sharing Stories with Julia Donaldson

Seven Stories, Newcastle Upon Tyne. 17 March 2012 – 13 February 2013.

This exhibition brings Julia Donaldson's captivating stories to life. It shows how she wrote modern classics such as *The Gruffalo*, *Princess Mirror-Belle*, *The Troll* and *The Highway Rat* and explores original artwork by her many illustrators – most famously Axel Scheffler. Visitors can follow her journey from song writer for children's television to current children's laureate. Children and their families can share stories and explore sensory environments based on Donaldson's books. They can also enjoy following in Toddle Waddle's footsteps, climbing into the cave with the Cave Baby and meeting the Gruffalo. Other activities include a sing-a-long to Donaldson's songs on Julia's Jukebox and performing a play on Seven Stories stage. The exhibition is supported by Scholastic, Macmillan Children's Books and Alison Green Books.

For more information see www.sevenstories.org.uk/whats-on/a-squash-and-a-squeeze-sharing-stories-with-julia-donaldson-e49331.

A Viking's Guide to Deadly Dragons with Cressida Cowell

Seven Stories, Newcastle Upon Tyne. 7 October 2012 for approx. one year.

The new exhibition developed by Seven Stories and Cressida Cowell will include Cowell's original drawings, manuscripts and working processes from her *How to Train your Dragon* series, which have also been made into films by DreamWorks animation. The exhibition will take visitors to a time and place when dragons lived among us and we could speak to them in Dragonese. Visitors will be guided through a Viking village by Gobber the Belch, discover where going to school meant, learning how to be a Viking pirate and what it means to be a hero. They will also be able to discover the Wild Dragon Cave, sail on a Viking long ship and share Viking stories in the Great Hall. The subject matter of this exhibition is aimed to encourage and engage reluctant readers with humour, interactive play and learning.

Enid Blyton Exhibition

Seven Stories, Newcastle Upon Tyne. Spring 2013.

This major exhibition will draw on the Seven Stories collection to reveal popular and less well-known aspects of her work.

For information nearer the opening, see www.sevenstories.org.uk or contact Amanda Beckham amanda.beckham@sevenstories.org.uk.

There's Nuffin Like a Puffin!

Lyme Park, Disley, Cheshire. 11 a.m. – 3 p.m. weekends and school holidays,
3 November 2012 – 17 February 2013.

A rare opportunity to view original illustrations and the chance to explore some of the most loved children's stories. *The Borrowers*, *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* and *Spot the Dog* are just some of the titles on loan for the first time from Seven Stories.

Garden and gallery admission applies. National Trust members free. For more information contact 01663 762 023.

Through the Magic Mirror: The World of Anthony Browne

Beane Museum and Art Gallery, Canterbury. 23 November 2012 – 24 February 2013.

Step into the story books of recent children's laureate Anthony Browne, meet Dad and Willy the Chimp, enter the enchanted forest and play the Shape Game in this interactive exhibition for all ages. This is a touring exhibition from Seven Stories.

See www.canterbury.co.uk/Beane/.

Philippa Pearce Memorial Lecture

Homerton College, Cambridge. 5 p.m. 5 September 2013.

The 6th Philippa Pearce Memorial Lecture will be delivered by Kevin Crossley-Holland. The title of his talk will be available later.

Free 'tickets' will be available from June 2013 and a place must be booked. For more information see www.pearcelecture.com/lectures/2013.

The 2012 lecture was given by Malorie Blackman and was entitled, '21st Century Storytelling: Will the Advent of New Technology Create a Paradigm Shift in the Writing and Reading of Children's Literature?' A video of the lecture will be available soon at www.pearcelecture.com/lectures/2012.

To read Philip Pullman's 2011 lecture, see www.pearcelecture.com/lectures/2011.

Fairy Tales, Myths and Modernity Conference

Universität Kassel, Germany. 17–20 December 2012.

The title of the conference is 'Fairy tales, Myths and Modernity – 200 years of the Brother Grimm's Children's and Household tales'. For more information see www.uni-kassel.de/projekte/en/brueder-grimm-kongress-2012/startseite.html.

The Story Museum

Rochester House, 42 Pembroke Street, Oxford.

The Story Museum exists to celebrate children's stories and to share enjoyable ways for young people to learn through stories as they grow. 'We take story performances, exhibitions, activities and ideas to schools and communities. We now have a permanent home in the heart of Oxford, UK, which we plan to open in 2015 as a magical new centre of children's literature and storytelling. In the meantime we are already holding events and exhibitions in our dilapidated and atmospheric building.'

The Alice project ends on 16 September 2012 and will be followed by The Thousand and One project. Michael Rosen, the curator of stories, is choosing 1001 tales for the growing collection. See details of the project and the dates of the autumn programme at www.storymuseum.org.uk/the-story-museum/The1001. Titles and dates of these events are summarised below.

Wednesday October 10

‘Story and desire’

Psychoanalyst and writer Adam Phillips.

How is it that stories touch the heart as well as engage the head?

Friday October 19

‘The Odyssey – A never ending story’

Academic Professor Oliver Taplin and author Geraldine McCaughrean

Why does the Odyssey continue to enthral audiences and inspire artists and writers thousands of years after it was first told?

Friday October 26

‘Stories of my life’

Poet and playwright, Lemn Sissay.

An exploration of Lemn Sissay’s autobiographical writing and performance.

Friday November 16

‘The First Story and its tellers’

With British Museum curator and world expert in cuniform script, Dr Irving Finkel.

What do we know about the earliest storytellers of what are now canonical narratives?

Friday December 14

‘Stories? What nonsense!’

Colin Harrison, the Ashmolean’s curator of Western Art.

Join two fans – Michael Rosen and Colin Harrison – as Lear’s 200th birthday year draws to a close.

For information about the museum and to book tickets for events, see

www.storymuseum.org.uk/the-story-museum/The1001 or email Cath Nightingale:

cath@storymuseum.org.uk.

NEWS

Children's Laureate

News of the activities and initiatives of Julia Donaldson are on the children's laureate website, www.childrenslaureate.org.uk.

A new website PictureBooksPlays was launched on 16 September 2012. The site is one of Donaldson's laureate projects. It is aimed at teachers and is intended to provide ideas and resources for using picture books as the basis for fun drama and performance activities in the classroom. See www.picturebookplays.com/.

Donaldson has sent a plea for keeping libraries open to Maria Miller, the new Culture Secretary. The letter can be read at www.childrenslaureate.org.uk/news-and-blog/news/71/. Details of the dates, places and times of her Library Tour are at www.childrenslaureate.org.uk/projects/libraries/tour-schedule.

Wales Children's Laureates

The first Young People's Laureate for Wales is Catherine Fisher. Her appointment was announced on 18 October 2011 and her term of office runs for three years. The Young People's Laureate is an entirely new post that aims to inspire the young people of Wales to get involved with reading and creative writing. Working with the support of a wide network of writers, she hopes to encourage enthusiasm for reading and writing amongst young people. In the face of increasing reports on the worrying literacy levels amongst the young, this project aims to be a positive influence on Wales' youth.

For details of the project, see Literature Wales, www.literaturewales.org/home/.

Welsh-language Children's Poet Laureate Bardd Plant Cymru for the year 2011–2013 is Eurig Salisbury.

See www.clc.org.uk/gwasanaethau-services/plant-children/bardd-plant-cymru.

July saw the announcement of a Clore Poetry and Literature Award of £10,000 (funded by the Clore Duffield Foundation) for the Eat my Words project. This is a new project for young people to work with poets and musicians to create a performance in response to the work of some of Wales' best literature. It aims to give disadvantaged young people in Wales the opportunity to access literature. Literature Wales Chief Executive Lleucu Siencyn hopes 'They will be our next generation of bards.'

See www.literaturewales.org/news/i/141551/.

Irish Children's Laureate

The second Laureate na nÓg was announced by President Michael D. Higgins on 8 May 2012. Niamh Sharkey is a picture-book maker who has published 15 titles and has been translated into over 20 languages. She will hold the title for two years. Laureate na nÓg is an initiative of the Arts Council with the support of the Office of the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs, Children's Books Ireland and Poetry Ireland.

You can read about Laureate na nÓg on the dedicated website www.childrenslaureate.ie.

Fenland Laureates

These posts were inaugurated on 13 February 2012 and the term of office ends on 12 February 2013. It is hoped that funding will be obtained for 2013. If the funding is given, the competition for new laureates will be announced later this year.

Junior Fenland Poet Laureate is James Collingwood-Smith.

Young Fenland Poet Laureate is Oliver Osborn.

Vintage Classics New Children's List

Vintage Children's Classics launched in August 2012 with 20 titles, with a further 20 being published by the end of the year. The list is aimed at 8–12 year olds. The advisory board includes Random House Children's Publishers' managing director Philippa Dickinson and Dame Jacqueline Wilson, author and former children's laureate.

The launch list features out of copyright perennial favourites:

Joan Aitken's *The Wolves of Willoughby Chase* (1962)

Louisa May Alcott's *Little Women* (1868–1869)

J.M. Barrie's *Peter Pan* (1931)

Frances Hodgson Burnett's *The Secret Garden* (1911)

Lewis Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* (1865)

Susan Coolidge's *What Katy Did* (1872)

Kenneth Graham's *The Wind in the Willows* (1908)

Erich Kästner's *Emil and the Detectives* (1929)

Rudyard Kipling's *The Jungle Book* (1894)

Edith Nesbit's *Five Children and It* (1902) and *The Railway Children* (1906)

Arthur Ransome's *Swallows and Amazons* (1930) and *Swallowdale* (1931)

Ian Serrailer's *The Silver Sword* (1960)

Anna Sewell's *Black Beauty* (1877)

Dodie Smith's *I Capture the Castle* (1948)

Robert Louis Stevenson's *Treasure Island* (1883)

Mark Twain's *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* (1884)

And contemporary classics exclusive to Random House:

Mark Haddon's *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time* (2003)

John Boyne's *The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas* (2006)

Each of the books is available in both print and ebook format.

The World of Stories, www.worldofstories.co.uk/ is an interactive website dedicated to Vintage Children's Classics, with fun quizzes, downloads and extra material for children to find out more about the stories.

See www.vintage-books.co.uk/classics/VintageChildrensClassics/. The catalogue is at [http://issuu.com/vintagebooks/docs/childrenscatalogue?mode=window&backgroundCol](http://issuu.com/vintagebooks/docs/childrenscatalogue?mode=window&backgroundColor=%23222222)
[or=%23222222](http://issuu.com/vintagebooks/docs/childrenscatalogue?mode=window&backgroundColor=%23222222)

For the World of Stories see www.worldofstories.co.uk/.

New Course for Children's Editors

The Publishing Training Centre (PTC) has will offer a new course The Children's Illustrated Book Editor. It will run at their training centre in London. The first course took place in September 2012.

The course aims to provide key skills and knowledge to enable delivery of a children's illustrated book, on time and on budget. It will cover the project management and editorial processes involved in producing illustrated children's books, covering all the

stages from planning the concept to designing the work. The course will also look specifically at editing an illustrated children's book and how this differs from generic copy-editing. Attenders will gain hands-on experience on how to budget and create a project management plan for a prototype project.

The course leader and tutor is Jane Walker. See www.train4publishing.co.uk.

NCRCL Director

Gillian Lathey is retiring as director in August 2012 as part of her phased retirement from National Centre for Research in Children's Literature at Roehampton University. From Autumn 2012 she will be working 1 day a week only at NCRCL. The director from that date is Lisa Sainsbury, who gave an admiring tribute to Gillian Lathey at the NCRCL May conference at Roehampton University.

Astrid Lindgren Memorial Award Celebrates its 10th Anniversary

An illustrated booklet with details of the 2002–2012 recipients and their work is at www.alma.se/Documents/2012/ALMA%2010%20%c3%a5r/AlmaEngelsk.pdf.

The 2012 Astrid Lindgren Memorial award was presented to Guus Kuijer from The Netherlands at a ceremony at the Stockholm Concert Hall on 28 May 2012. He made his debut as a children's author in 1975 and has published over 30 titles, mostly aimed at readers on the cusp of their teenage years. Key works include *Het boek van alle dingen* (2004, *The Book of Everything*), *Florian Knol* (2006), and the series of five books about the girl Polleke, starting with *Voor altijd samen, amen* (1999, *Together Forever, Amen*). His works have been translated into more than 10 languages, including English, Swedish, German, Italian and Japanese.

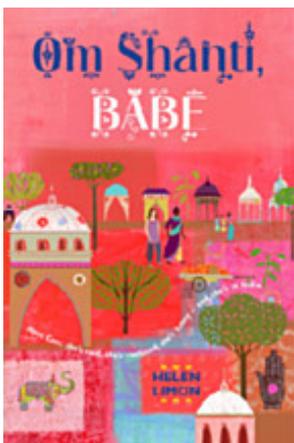
The Book of Everything (trans. John Nieuwenhuizen, 2007, London: Young Picador) is available in the UK. 'Nine-year-old Thomas receives encouragement from many sources, including candid talks with Jesus, to help him tolerate the strict family life dictated by his deeply religious father.'

Astrid Lindgren Memorial Award

IBBY UK has nominated Michael Rosen for the 2013 award. Michael Rosen was the 2007–2009 children's laureate. He is a broadcaster, children's novelist and poet. Currently he is Visiting Professor of Children's Literature at Birkbeck College, University of London. He gave a presentation at the annual IBBY/NCRCL MA conference in November 2011, entitled 'Why Write Poetry for Children? Challenges, Choices, Opportunities and Possibilities'. In his presentation at the conference he not only entertained us and persuaded us without effort to collaborate in poetry making but also educated us in the history of both poetry and education.

Frances Lincoln Diverse Voices Award 2011 Winner

The book that won the 2011 award was published on 6 September 2012 under the imprint Janetta Otter-Barry Books at Frances Lincoln Children's Books. The winner was *Om Shanti, Babe* by Helen Limon. 'Cassia can't wait for her first visit to India – Bollywood glamour, new friends to admire her uber-cool street-dance moves. But as she steps into real Indian life, nothing is as she expected.'



IBBY NEWS

A Birthday Party

IBBYLink reviewer Rebecca Butler celebrated her 30th birthday with an IBBY cake! Rebecca's perceptive articles on disability as portrayed in books for children add to the diversity of reviews in *IBBYLink*.



Bookbird IBBY UK Correspondent

Jennifer Harding, Associate Editor of *IBBYLink*, has taken on this duty. A short report on the 2011 IBBY/NCRCL MA conference on poetry will be in the 'Focus IBBY' section of the October 2012 issue.

A few UK award items have been sent to the next issue of the IBBY European Newsletter, which will then be posted at www.ibby.org/index.php?id=932.

As agreed at a committee meeting, *IBBYLink* issues for 2008, 2009 and 2010 have been sent to the International Secretariat and will appear on www.ibby.org/index.php?id=932 in due course.

IBBY UK/NCRCL MA Conference 'Beyond the Book'

University of Roehampton, London. 10 November 2012.

Now, more than ever, people are debating what constitutes a book. With the development of ebooks, apps, self-publishing and fan fiction, as well as the popularity of book adaptations to film, TV and stage, book boundaries are extended and broken all the time. The boundaries of children's books have always been flexible, with merchandise included with John Newbery's *A Little Pretty Pocket Book*, published in 1744, and J.M. Barrie's classic character Peter Pan appearing in various guises before being immortalised in fiction. The 19th IBBY UK/NCRCL MA conference will consider the many incarnations of stories that take place 'beyond the book', as well as the impact of children's books on wider culture, including discussions of the publishing industry and book design, digital developments, marginalia, adaptation, festivals, museums, collections and more.

Keynote speakers include Matthew Grenby (University of Newcastle), Sita Brahmachari (author), David Wood (adapter to film and screen), Dylan Calder (pop-up books) and a final exciting speaker not yet confirmed.

There will also be a panel comprising those involved with publishing, workshop sessions, exhibitions and book sales, together with the opportunity to meet others enthusiastic about children's literature. Workshop presenters have been chosen and a list is given below.

Abstracts and biographies can be read online (under the More Info tab and then scroll down the page) at http://estore.roehampton.ac.uk/browse/extra_info.asp?compid=1&modid=2&prodid=120&deptid=164&catid=87.

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 provisional programme is at <http://ncrcl.wordpress.com/british-ibbynrcrcl-ma-conference/>. For any enquiries on the conference (not the booking), contact Laura Atkins: L.Atkins@roehampton.ac.uk.

Bookings, including choosing the workshop you prefer, can be made on the Roehampton University estore: <http://estore.roehampton.ac.uk/browse/product.asp?catid=87&modid=2&compid=1>; 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
Academic Conference Coordinator
PT (Monday/Thursday)
Tel: 020 8392 3698
Email: c.matthews@roehampton.ac.uk

When booking, you will be asked to choose a workshop by selecting a letter, e.g. A, B.

Programme of Workshops

Workshop A

Michelle Ann Abate. The big smallness: Niche market picture books and the new children's literature

Gwen Athene Tarbox. Just a figment? Online participatory writing communities and the future of the young adult novel

Workshop B

Mieke K.T. Desmet. Smell the coffee! Miffy, Peter Rabbit, Paddington Bear, co-sell coffee and more

Kiera Vaclavik. The dress of the book: Children's literature, fashion and fancy dress

Workshop C

B.J. Espstein. Translation and dumbing down.

Ciara Gallagher. Virtual worlds and new literary interactions in Salman Rushdie's *Luka and the Fire of Life*

Workshop D

Hannah Field. Children's movables and the threat of the mechanical book

Carey Gibbons. Reimagining the form of the book: Su Blackwell's book sculptures

Workshop E

Kerenza Ghosh. Walking with wolves: Children's responses to the wolf tradition in stories

Sally Maynard. The impact of ebooks on young children's reading habits

Workshop F

Erica Berry Irving. Beyond the 'grown up child': The quality of childness in *Matilda: The Musical*

Anne Malewski. Second to the right and straight on till Gallifrey: The uses of J.M. Barrie's *Peter Pan* in Steven Moffat's *Doctor Who*

Workshop G

Kirsty Jenkins. Enhancing the experience: Rekindling and renewing forgotten texts

Lucy Pearson. What's the problem? Building teenage publishing in Britain

Workshop H

Marta Borges and Sandie Mourão. Planeta Tangerina: An editorial concept that pushes boundaries

Dominique Sandis. Greek children's literature in the digital age: An overview

Brief accounts of the papers that are presented at the conference will be published in the Spring 2013 issue of *IBBYLink*, the journal of IBBY UK. Full papers will be published in a book of the conference proceedings.

IBBY Section Newsletters

The latest newsletters uploaded to www.ibby.org/index.php?id=932:

Asian Regional Newsletter July 2012

IBBY Ireland, September 2012

IBBY Australia, August 2012

IBBY Bolivia, July 2012 (in Spanish)

IBBY Italy, July 2012 (in Italian)

IBBY Canada, June 2012 (In English and French)

IBBY France, May 2012 (in French)

IBBY Australia, May 2012

IBBY Ireland, May 2012

Shahaneem Hanoum 1949-2012

Shahaneem Hanoum President of IBBY Malaysia passed away on 24 September 2012 after a long battle with cancer. Shahaneem was born in 1949, and has been involved in IBBY since MBBY was reformed and readmitted to IBBY in 2001. For many years she was the director of Selangor Public Library Corporation in Shah Alam. In recognition of her contributions and achievements to children's literature and reading promotion activities, as well as for her work in libraries and women's associations, she was awarded various honorary titles from His Royal Highness, including DSSA in 1998, which carries the title Datin Paduka. She was elected to the IBBY Executive Committee at the General Assembly in Cape Town in 2004 and served as an EC member until 2006. During her time on the EC Shahaneem participated in meetings and served on various committees.

IBBY UK/NCRCL MA Annual Conference 2012

Roehampton University, London. Saturday 10 November 2012.

The topic will centre on performance and the title is 'Beyond the Book'.

The conference will include keynote presentations by well-known writers, publishers and academics. All aspects of the book industry; digital developments; book adaptation; evidence of how children read/interact with books; blogging; fan fiction; relevant websites; merchandising and book festivals; museums, book collections and societies; and the role of books/stories in popular culture will be discussed.

For more information, see <http://ncrcl.wordpress.com/british-ibbyncrcl-ma-conference/> or contact Laura Atkins: l.atkins@roehampton.ac.uk.

See p.61 for how to book.

The next issue of *IBBYLink* (Spring 2013, no. 36) (copydate 11 December 2012) will be devoted to reports from the 2012 IBBY UK/NCRCL MA annual conference on 10 November.

IBBYLink 37, Summer 2013 (copydate 12 July 2013) will be on the topic of Ireland's literature for children.

Articles on other subjects, reviews, reports, information about conferences and similar items are also welcomed. Contributions to Jennifer Harding, jjharding@onetel.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.

IBBYLink 35 Autumn 2012

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

Editor: Pat Pinsent, 23 Burcott Road, Purley CR8 4AD

Associate editor: Jennifer Harding

Reviews editor: Sue Mansfield

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

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