

Children's Literature in Ireland

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Front hall mosaic at the National Library of Ireland, Dublin.

EDITORIAL

Ireland. I'm sure we all have our own images that are conjured up by that name, some will be personal, many will have an element of stereotype: leprechauns and River Dance, Guinness and the Liffy, graffiti on a Belfast wall, the Mountains of Mourne, Danny Boy. However, for me certainly, there is one thread that winds through my idea of Ireland and that is the notion of story: fantastical tales like those conjured up by Swift in *Gulliver's Travels*, tragedy, whether 'The Children of Lir' or the Battle of the Boyne, fairy tale or history, a whole tapestry weaving fact and fiction. With the idea of story comes the awareness of the storyteller. Again, there is the danger of a stereotype – the smoky bothy, the three-legged stool, shawls and the smell of peat. Oh, really?

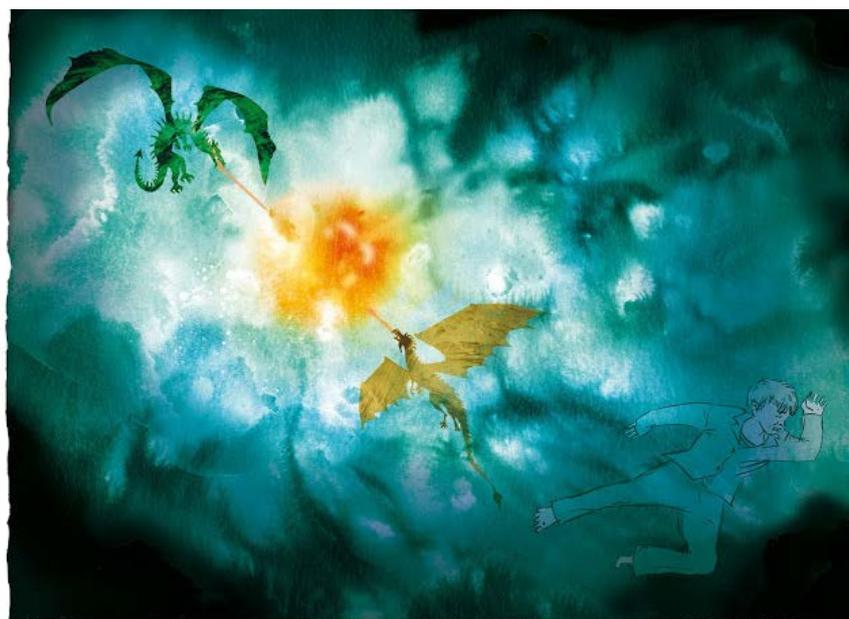
Story is indeed the linking theme of this *IBBYLink* featuring Ireland. But, as each contributor shows, it is not story preserved in amber and served up as a dish for the nostalgic. Rather, we are presented with a world where story is flourishing in a modern environment and across technologies. From Pat Ryan's comprehensive look at the state of oral storytelling and the initiatives supporting it, to Valerie Coghlan's survey of publishing in Ireland today, to affectionate reflections on a couple of Irish authors, here is a realisation that Irish storytellers whether authors, artists, publishers, or the seanachie are continuing to create worlds that cross boundaries, both imaginative and literal.

One initiative that illustrates this is the creation of an Irish Children's Laureate. Siobhán Parkinson, who was the first to hold this position, reflects on

what it meant and means. The current Laureate na nÓg is the artist-illustrator Niamh Sharkey. Her books have won numerous awards including the prestigious Mother Goose Award for the Best New Illustrator and a Bisto award in 1999 for her first two picture books: *Tales of Wisdom and Wonder* (Bisto Book of the Year, 1998; retold by High Lupton) and *The Gigantic Turnip* (Bisto shortlist, 1998; from text of Aleksei Tolstoy). Her most recent picture book, *On the Road with Mavis and Marge*, won the 2010 Junior Book of the Year award at the Bord Gáis Energy Irish Book Awards and was shortlisted for the Bisto Book of the Year. *Tales of Wisdom and Wonder* was included in the IBBY Honour Book List in 2002. Her work is characterised by its vibrant use of colours as well as a very individual style with more than an element of the theatrical.

Niamh Sharkey is also the creator and co-producer of *Henry Hugglemonster* – a 52-episode preschool series, based on her book *I'm a Happy Hugglewug* (2006), developed in association with the Irish Film Board and in production with Oscar-nominated Brown Bag Films, for Disney Worldwide. It will air in over 150 countries during 2013. Niamh Sharkey has worked on the development, pitch, series bible, concept art, character design, scripts and all the original content across this project. It is this initiative that is at the heart of the interview she recorded with Valerie Coghlan, together with her exhibition, *Pictiúr*; Irish storytelling crossing boundaries.

Ferelith Hordon



Olivia Golden's 'The Golden Dragon' from Rhiannon Watson's *An Dreagan Feasa* (2011, Cois Life). One of the illustrations featured in *Pictiúr*. See pages 3 and 55.

Niamh Sharkey, Current Irish Children's Laureate

Interviewed by Valerie Coghlan

CHILDREN'S LITERATURE IN IRELAND

You've had an amazing career as a picture-book maker, winning awards and winning over readers for nearly 20 years. The last year has brought two very exciting developments with your inauguration as Laureate na nÓg and the premiere of *Henry Hugglemonster*. Can you tell us a bit about both?

Yes, the fact that both the Laureate appointment and the launch of *Henry Hugglemonster* have coincided has made 2013 a busy year for me, and it's been a lot of fun. As an illustrator, for almost 20 years, I've spent a lot of time working alone in my studio. With both the laureateship and the collaboration with Brown Bag Films and Disney, I'm now working in creative teams, and this has been very satisfying. I've nurtured the Hugglemonster/Hugglewug family for eight years now, so seeing them make their screen debut makes me very proud, and thankful for all of the creative input from the Hugglemonster team at BBF.

The laureate team too are enthusiastic, supportive and knowledgeable – no idea is too ambitious, and so together we've been able to realise some really innovative creative projects.

What does being Laureate na nÓg entail?

Being laureate is, in essence, about being a champion for children's books, their readers and their creators. I want children to get really excited about reading and drawing.

As a picture-book maker my focus is visual as well as literary. I'm on a mission to get the nation doodling by any means necessary – this has included running monster-doodle workshops via internet video link, and Ireland's first radio doodle on RTE. I've run monster doodle sessions in the Ark, as part of the Leaves Festival in Abbeyleigh, and even as far afield as Hamburg, Germany. I hope that everything I do during my two-year term will have an impact – changing how adults and children view books, illustration, creativity and reading.

You curated the exhibition of children's book illustration *Pictiúr* that's currently touring, can you tell us a bit about that?

As Laureate I've curated an exhibition featuring 21 Irish children's book illustrators, which is currently travelling across Europe. The exhibition will travel to the Bologna Book Fair, as well as the European Parliament in Brussels. *Pictiúr* will raise the profile of Irish illustrators in Europe and Ireland and celebrate Irish talent. With doodle pop-ups designed by Irish designer Leo Scarff, we hope to make *Pictiúr* very engaging for children and families. We're delighted too to bring the exhibition to Ireland, and, in particular, to end the year in the Irish Museum of Modern Art (IMMA) in Kilmainham.

***Henry Hugglemonster* premiered on Disney Junior in February, how did that feel? How involved have you been in the show?**

As the creator and executive producer of the show, I've been very involved. I first worked with Brown Bag Films in 2008, when, with funding from the Irish Film Board, we developed a test animation based on my picture book *I'm a Happy Hugglewug*. From there we pitched the pilot to Disney, who commissioned a full 52-episode series. Creating the show has been a uniquely collaborative process.

Once the series went into production I worked closely with Brown Bag's 2-D concept artist, drawing everything from scratch – even with 3-D animation, it all starts in pencil. Working closely with the hugely talented Brown Bag team, we designed Henry's world, Roarsville, and all of the fun monsters that populate it.

Myself, Norton Virgien (director) and Sascha Paladino (story editor) even share an office so we can be in close contact when we are brainstorming new storylines for episodes.



Each script went through four drafts, then we do a script read-through, where team members play characters from the show – at which point further changes and additions are made. Even at the voice recordings, Sascha, Norton and I were on hand making tweaks to sharpen the humour and strengthen the nuances of the performances. It was great to be so closely involved.

Are you working on a new picture book at the moment?

I always have a notebook on hand for doodling and writing in, and I have a number of ideas that I'm developing. I also have a new studio in Ardgillan Castle, thanks to Fingal Arts Office, which is proving to be an inspirational creative space.

Reflections from Ireland's First Children's Laureate

Siobhán Parkinson

Between 2010 and 2012 I had the honour to serve as Ireland's first Laureate na nÓg or (Irish) Laureate for Children's Literature.

Children's writers spend a lot of their time meeting children, reading to them, talking to them about books and (the part I like best) working with them on their own writing projects. There is a (mostly unspoken) public expectation that a children's laureate will be a kind of super-powered mega children's writer and will do even more of that. I don't subscribe to that model of laureateship, however – and luckily neither does Children's Books Ireland (CBI), the body that is responsible for the running of the Irish laureate project. It's not humanly possible to fulfil expectations like that (unless maybe you had a live-in laureate helicopter): you just can't meet every child in the country. So my first decision as laureate was that I would find other and maybe more productive ways to interest people in children's books.

My major challenge as laureate was to work to raise the profile of children's literature and, as CBI so poetically expressed it, to work to 'bring children's literature into the conversation' about literature that is constantly going on in Ireland. So I spoke at literary festivals and summer schools; I spoke alongside other writers on the radio, on panels, at public events; I introduced a poet who was delivering a public lecture; I was interviewed (with a bunch of children who happened to be visiting me that day in my study) for a radio documentary on my work; and I delivered talks and lectures to anyone who would listen – and I do think I reached audiences outside the circle of 'children's books people'. One of the public engagements I enjoyed best was an informal talk I gave to the women graduates association of my own former university. And another was writing a children's guide to the outdoor sculptures at the Irish Museum of Modern Art.

I curtailed my work in schools in order to do all this, but I didn't give it up entirely. As a visually impaired writer, I make a special effort to engage when I can with blind and visually impaired children, and, as laureate, I undertook a short writing project with visually impaired children. Together we wrote a really terrific and totally mad story about a purple puppy. I also undertook a longer writing project with a local primary school. Not was only that project a great success in itself, but it has also led to other arts interactions with that school.

My one great regret as laureate was that I made no headway at all with trying to persuade our Minister for Education to reinstate funding for books in primary schools. This is partly because Ireland is in such a very deep recession at the moment, but children's books in schools are not a luxury that we should be cutting in hard times. They are an investment in literacy that will be paid back over decades and generations. Towards the end of my laureateship, our Department of Education published a national strategy for literacy. This document makes no reference whatsoever to the importance of having a wide range of engaging books for children in our schools. There's lots in there about the OECD's PISA findings, but our Department of Education seems to be unaware that the OECD has also found that the best single indicator of academic success

and social mobility among adults is having read for pleasure in childhood.¹ In other words, not only the national literacy project, but the whole educational project is best served when children read by choice – and children can choose to read only when they are given access to lots of books that they will want to read. Literature is as much the key to literacy as literacy is the key to literature.

As a former editor of *Bookbird* and with long-standing links to IBBY, I am very aware of how little exposure Anglophone children get to literature from other countries. I set out to establish international links between Ireland and other countries, I made a point of representing Irish children's literature abroad whenever I could and I was delighted to be invited to Sweden to celebrate the inauguration of Sweden's first 'ambassador for reading', which the Swedish Arts Council modelled partly on the UK laureateship and partly on the Irish one. This connection with Sweden led eventually to a 'laureate summit' at the Bologna Book Fair this year, attended by the two Australian laureates, on a European tour, the Swedish 'ambassador' and Niamh Sharkey, the current Irish laureate, and me. I was instrumental also in setting up Ireland's first international children's literature exchange – with Austria – and I am delighted to see that it has flourished and continues to grow in Niamh's term as laureate.

That is one of the great things about CBI's very open approach. It has developed a flexible model of laureateship that allows each laureate to set his/her own projects and priorities but at the same time would provide a platform for future laureates to build on – or jump off. I am delighted to see how Niamh has developed the laureateship in quite different and exciting ways.

Which brings me, finally, to the Laureate International Library (LIL), a mobile library of international books. The idea was to put together a collection of international children's books in translation or in their original languages and make them available to children in schools all over the country. The idea is to expose English-speaking children to books that come from other countries, some that are in translation and that they can read, some that they can't read at all but can find visually and culturally interesting, and at the same time, to give children who speak other languages at home an opportunity to see and be able to borrow the occasional book in their own language and to show their peers what books in their language look like. The collection is quite modest and very eclectic, but it is growing and what is even better, it is travelling. I was very touched and amused to hear recently that the library visited the (Gaelic-speaking) Aran islands off the coast of Galway, and one little boy was so thrilled with the books that he made a point of hugging them goodbye when they were being packed up to move on.

Note

- 1 The Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) is a worldwide study by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) in member and non-member nations of 15-year-old school pupils' scholastic performance in mathematics, science and reading. It was first performed in 2000 and then repeated every three years. It is done with view to improving education policies and outcomes. See www.oecd.org/pisa/.

[Siobhán Parkinson writes novels for children and teenagers. She is the author of *Bruised* (Hodder, 2011) and *Spellbound* (Frances Lincoln, 2012). She is also publisher of Little Island Books and a translator from German.]

Complex, Challenging and Staying the Course

Valerie Coghlan

Defining 'Irish children's literature' has sometimes been contentious, but it is now accepted that anyone who is Irish, or who has lived in Ireland for a long time, is regarded as an Irish writer or illustrator. These are criteria used for the country's leading awards, the Children's Books Ireland awards. Sometimes books set in Ireland, but

neither published there nor written/illustrated by someone who is Irish, are included in discussions about Irish children's literature.

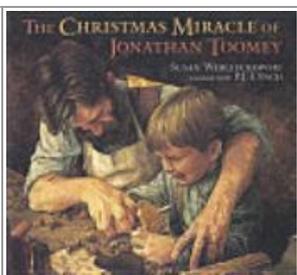
Thirty years ago, Ireland had no significant children's book business or children's literature, apart from retellings of myths and legends. Since the end of the 1980s this has changed, but the situation is complex and challenging. Most Irish publishing is in English, which, in theory opens a large market, especially in Britain. In reality, Irish publishing for young readers constantly struggles to survive, mainly because of the strength of British and US publishers and their dominance throughout the Irish market.

In the late 1980s and 1990s there was a small boom in children's publishing in Ireland. Changes in the education system led to a greater emphasis on books and reading for pleasure and there was a growing awareness that children should recognise others like themselves, rather than always reading about children in Britain or the USA. Initially, much of the output of Irish publishers was historical fiction, partly due to a demand for books that supported the school curriculum. Sensitive topics such as the nineteenth-century Great Famine, the Rebellion, the ensuing Irish Civil War and Irish soldiers' involvement in the Second World War were now acceptable. This, and the success of Marita Conlon-McKenna's *Children of the Famine* trilogy (1990, 1991, 1996), encouraged publishers to seek titles that dealt with these events.

However, the number of newly established children's publishing houses and the ensuing flurry of Irish published children's books proved unsustainable. It became difficult to maintain quality in output, and large British publishers made Irish authors offers that could not be matched in Ireland. Also, in Ireland, as in Britain, there is an expectation that children's books will cost less than adult books, something that is not sustainable in a small market. Unless they are part of a larger and more commercial publishing group, Irish publishers rely on financial support from the arts councils of the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland.



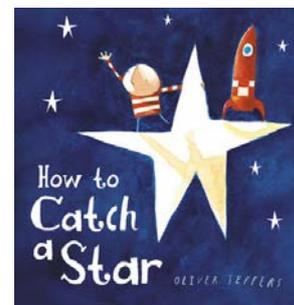
This support has helped Irish-language publishing in particular. State funding has enabled the publishing of original fiction, poetry and picture books in Irish and translation into Irish. Publishers include Cló Iar-Chonnacht, Futha Fatha, Cois Life, An Gúm, and An tSnáthaid Mhór (The Big Dragonfly), a small Irish-language publishing house in Belfast that is achieving recognition, initially for its gorgeously illustrated versions of Irish legends, and recently for modern stories for a younger market, such as *Ó Chrann go Crann* (text by Catriona Hastings, 2012). To all of these Andrew Whitson has brought a dramatic and distinctive eye-catching style. These and other recent picture books; for example, *Mise agus an Dragún* (2012) by Patricia Forde, illustrated by Steve Simpson, show that Irish-language publishing is lively and innovative. In 2012 Walker Books, an independent British publishing house, launched an Irish language list, Walker Éireann, with translations of four of the most popular picture books by Irish authors and/or illustrators.



Writing for young people has not waned, and is sustained by the many writing groups around the country. Irish authors and illustrators published in Britain are usually recognised as Irish, and marketing and promotional events include Ireland. Darren Shan with his fantasy and horror series, Eoin Colfer with his *Artemis Fowl* series and Derek Landy with his *Skulduggery Pleasant* series have had phenomenal success, and, most recently, illustrator Niamh Sharkey has achieved international recognition with the adaptation of her Hugglewug characters for a Disney television series, based on her *I'm a Happy Hugglewug* (2006).

A number of young Irish illustrators are now regarded as top-class. Until quite recently, the emphasis in Ireland was on fiction, and little poetry, picture books and information books were produced. One exception is artist P.J. Lynch, who has been receiving international acclaim for picture books in a distinctive painterly style since 1988. Lynch mostly works on books for older readers, and *The Christmas Miracle of Jonathan Toomey* (1995) has become a modern classic. He is highly regarded in the USA and his recent work, such as *No One But You* (2011), reflects the preferences of the American market.

Since his first-published title in 2004, Oliver Jeffers has achieved huge popularity. In each of the four titles about a boy and a penguin, which established Jeffers's reputation – *How to Catch a Star* (2004), *Lost and Found* (2005), *The Way Back Home* (2007), *Up and Down* (2010) – the boy is shown living a life independent from adults. Keith O'Sullivan suggests these books epitomise the Romantic image of childhood – Wordsworth's 'quintessential child' – arguing that Jeffers's boy is 'emblematic of a form of nostalgia that idealises perpetual childlikeness' (2011: 106). Jeffers's depiction of loss in *The Heart and the Bottle* (2010) proved more challenging and more disturbing than his earlier books. While it received critical acclaim, its otherwise rather mixed reception may have given Jeffers pause to consider what he would do next, leading to a couple of titles that were repetitive and did not confirm his earlier promise. But his most recent title, *This Moose Belongs To Me* (2012), with its collage, paint and line and slightly edgy palette shades show him as an artist who is still developing in an interesting way. Jeffers has also contributed line drawings to John Boyne's most recent publication, *The Terrible Thing that Happened to Barnaby Brocket* (2012), a whimsical story of a boy whose ability to float leads him to extraordinary adventures in many parts of the world. This very different sort of story from Boyne's highly successful, though controversial, *The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas*, has already been translated into many languages.



Kevin Waldron, Chris Haughton and Chris Judge are all new picture-book talents. Waldron adopts varying styles, from the flat retro look of his 'Mr Peek' books to his line and wash depiction of a meeting between a very large tiger and an annoying insect in *Tiny Little Fly* (text by Michael Rosen, 2011), to his colourful and teasing acrylic images for Edward Lear's poem in *The Owl and the Pussycat* (2011). While the simple shapes and limited palette in Haughton's *A Bit Lost* (2010) and *Oh, No George!* (2011) entice very small children, their sly humour and technical skill also appeal to older readers. Marie-Louise Fitzpatrick is a well-established picture-book maker, and her work shows variety and skill in handling various media in titles ranging from the gentle washes of *The Sleeping Giant* (1991) to the charcoal drawings of the American Choctaw tribe in *The Long March* (1998). Her best work is, however, two titles published in the USA, *I Am I* (2006) and *There* (2009). Both books aimed at an early childhood audience, though stylish, are simple in concept while posing sophisticated questions that intrigue readers of all ages. Recently Fitzpatrick has turned to writing novels for older children: *Dark Warning* (2012), her most recent title, is a paranormal thriller set in nineteenth-century Dublin.

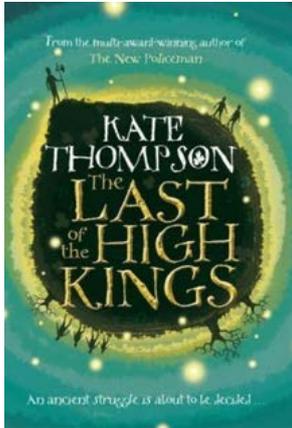


Emer O'Sullivan, discussing Irish publishing for young readers, remarks that only two of ten English-language publishers for children active in the 1990s survived into the 2000s (2011: 186–193), and now only one of those remains with any significant output: the O'Brien Press, which has been publishing children's books since the 1980s (it also publishes for adults). Historical fiction has always been one of its strengths, and its fiction list for older children remains strong, with a focus on the school history curriculum and commemorative events such as the sinking of *The Titanic*. It also produces fiction for pre-teens and teenage girls, and added greatly to the lamentably small output of poetry books for children with the elegant anthology *Something Beginning With P* (2004), and recently it has branched into the graphic-novel market.



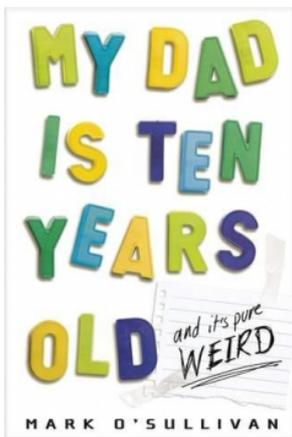
Little Island was established in 2009, with the aim of publishing books translated into English. However, its list, though deliberately small, has expanded to include original fiction for all ages, but especially for young adults. Reaching the British market has always been difficult for independent Irish publishers, but it is the only way that survival is possible without a high level of grants from funding agencies. Recently Little Island has established a partnership with Walker Books, whereby Walker markets its titles in Britain. This innovative development may provide a future model for Irish publishers wishing to expand their market. Little Island's focus is still on inward translation, especially from German and northern European languages, with, for example, *Thin Ice* (2011) by Mikael Engström, an exciting thriller from Sweden and *Bartolomé: the Infanta's Pet* (2012) by Rachel van Kooij, the story of a dwarf at the court of the Infanta of Spain in the seventeenth century (see review). Its other emphasis is on publishing

new Irish authors, such as Sheena Wilkinson whose young adult titles *Taking Flight* (2010) and *Grounded*, (2012) both feature a working-class Belfast boy who desperately wants to work with horses. Wilkinson's realistic narratives are among the few that do not deal with sectarian or political issues in Northern Ireland, and demonstrate that there are other matters of concern to young people growing up there. Kevin McDermott's *Valentina* (2012) does deal with conflict, but this time in a dystopian world, while Katherine Farnham's *Wormwood Gate* (2013) is a fantasy in which two modern-day teenage girls become embroiled in the politics of an alternative dystopian Dublin, while gradually realising that they are falling in love.



Though few yet match the success of Eoin Colfer, other Irish authors have incorporated aspects of the country's mythological or traditional past to create the subgenre of Celtic fantasy; Oisín McGann has turned to Victorian times for his gothic Wildenstern trilogy, and Kate Thompson has mixed the past and the present in titles such as *The New Policeman* (2005) and *The Last of the High Kings* (2007), where modern times intersect with Tir na nÓg, the mythological Land of Youth. More recently, Thompson, while still involving the world of faeries, or *siadhanna* (Irish faeries who are often malevolent), has, with *Creature of the Night* (2009), produced a grittier novel about a disturbed teenager who encounters a shape-shifting being when his family moves from familiar Dublin streets to a rural environment.

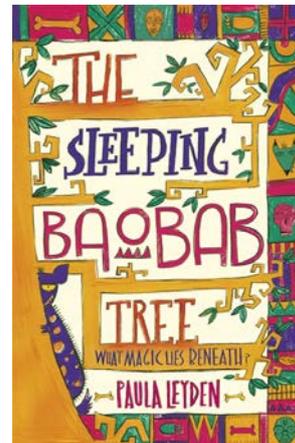
A belief that fiction with an Irish setting, other than fantasy, would not sell has been disproved. While fantasy dominates the market, some excellent socially realistic titles create a demand for this genre. Two authors in particular have shown themselves willing to experiment with form and style. Both Siobhán Parkinson and Mark O'Sullivan began by writing historical fiction, but later they turned to modern life in Ireland. Parkinson is one of Ireland's best-established authors and her work, in English and Irish, spans from early years to young adult. She is best known for *Four Kids, Three Cats, Two Cows and One Witch (Maybe)* (1996), which takes a wry look at the nature of story, and *Sisters ... No Way* (1997), a story of tension between teenage girls, soon to become stepsisters. The edgy *Bruised* (2011) concerns a boy on the run from the police after assaulting his alcoholic mother. It is to be followed by a sequel, *Heart Shaped*, later in 2013.



My Dad Is Ten Years Old (2011), Mark O'Sullivan's remarkable insight into a father who, due to an accident, reverts to the mental state of a 10 year old, has brought an author who had ceased to write for young people back to the market, where initially he had been recognised for his historical novels. These were followed by *White Lies* (1997), a young adult novel set in rural Ireland that explores the efforts of a teenage girl of mixed race to piece together her background, and the experimental *Angels Without Wings* (1997), which is partly set in Nazi Germany. Roddy Doyle, the chronicler of the underside of urban life in Ireland in his adult fiction, has written for children too, most recently with *A Greyhound of a Girl* (2011), that has a present-day setting into which a ghost intrudes, bringing together three generations of Irish women.

Publishing for children is still relatively conservative. Sex and religion are largely absent, especially in any contentious context. Siobhán Dowd, in a brief writing career abruptly shortened by her death, addressed aspects of recent Irish history concerning sexual and religious prohibitions in *A Swift Pure Cry* (2006), and with *Bog Child* she presented the Northern Ireland 'Troubles' in a way that did not rely on stereotypes. There is, as Pádraic Whyte suggests, still a lack of literature that confronts the turning of "a blind eye" to the plight of vulnerable children' (2011: 149). There are few titles that reflect the 'new Irish' who have come from abroad, or newer family configurations. It is not unreasonable, however, to expect that this will alter during the next decade. Horizons are expanding, and not all 'Irish' children's books are set in Ireland – Paula Leyden's *Butterfly Heart* (2011) confronts issues around child marriage in Zambia, and *The Sleeping Baobab Tree* (2013) is a magical realism story, also set in Zambia, that touches on issues modern and ancient. Irish society has changed considerably in the past 20 years, and this will be the background of younger authors whose experience of growing up in Ireland is vastly different from that of their parents.

Irish writing and publishing faces many challenges, not least that of responding to e-publishing. However, there is much about which to be positive, especially the increased recognition of the importance of children's books and the activities of organisations involved in the area. There is an active Irish section of IBBY, ISSCL (Irish Society for the Study of Children's Literature) promotes research in children's literature and Children's Books Ireland produces *Inis*, a biannual print and, more frequent, online journal, holds an annual conference, organises awards and has an active nationwide programme for children. Recently it has been involved in setting up and supporting an Irish Children's Laureate, Laureate na nÓg. Siobhán Parkinson was the first to hold this office and recently Niamh Sharkey has taken over. One of the current laureate projects is Pictiúr, a travelling exhibition of Irish illustrations curated by Sharkey, currently touring Europe (see later).



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Shortlist for the 2012/2013 Children's Books Ireland Awards

Robert Dunbar

In the 23 years of their existence what we now refer to as the Children's Books Ireland (CBI) awards have seen various changes in sponsorship, administration, book classification and judging procedures, but their purpose has not altered. CBI's objective with regard to the awards is, according to the organisation's website, to celebrate 'excellence' in writing and illustration in Irish children's books.

It is a most laudable undertaking and benefits just about everyone in the world of Irish children's books, not least the young readers themselves. From an adult perspective, the fun starts each year with the announcement of the shortlist (usually of ten titles) from which the winners will finally be chosen. In what ways and to what extent do they exhibit the 'excellence' that their choice allegedly celebrates? Are they, in effect, the best of the 80 or so Irish children's books eligible for consideration in any one year? Do they – or should they – reflect the reading preferences of children themselves? And, possibly most interesting of all, what do these 'excellent' books tell us about the state of contemporary Irish writing and illustration for the young?

Perhaps the most obvious inference to be drawn from the recently released 2012/2013 shortlist is the significance accorded to illustration. In no fewer than six of the ten books named the artwork plays a major role. Chris Haughton displays his talents in *Oh No, George!* (Walker Books) while the ubiquitous Oliver Jeffers gives us *This Moose Belongs to Me* (HarperCollins), in addition to providing the illustrations for one of the novels listed, John Boyne's *The Terrible Thing That Happened to Barnaby Brocket* (Corgi), and the jacket design for another, Sarah Crossan's *The Weight of Water* (Bloomsbury).



In two of the Irish-language nominations – Patricia Forde's picture book *Mise agus an Dragún* (Futa Fata) and Laoise Ní Chléirigh's *Na Laochra is Lú* (An Gúm) – the artwork is by Steve Simpson, while it is Olwyn Whelan's illustrations that decorate Siobhán Parkinson's *Spellbound: Tales of Enchantment from Ancient Ireland* (Frances Lincoln). Four full-length novels complete the shortlist: the already mentioned Boyne and Crossan titles, together with Marie-Louise Fitzpatrick's *Dark Warning* (Orion), Anna Heussaff's *Hóng* (Clo Iar-Chonnacht) and Sheena Wilkinson's *Grounded* (Little Island).

There is not a single book on this list without merit, but, considered as a whole, it is a shortlist that suggests that 2012, while a strong year for Irish children's literature, was not a vintage one. Clearly, our illustrators are currently producing work distinguished by its willingness to experiment in technique, style and subject matter, resulting in a rich and colourful output. A more pronounced conservatism is apparent (as has long been the case) in our children's and young adult fiction, though it must be acknowledged that all four shortlisted novels inject – to varying degrees – a note of freshness into both their form and content.

So, when the award winners are announced at a ceremony in the National Library on 8 May who will carry off the prizes? The judging panel will be selecting a winner in each of five categories, all of which will be hotly contested, and it would be a foolhardy commentator who makes too many predictions about a possible or deserved outcome.

Given the wealth of material involved, it will be particularly tricky to decide this year on the Honour award for illustration: my own vote would go to Steve Simpson, especially

for his work on Forde's *Mise agus an Dragún*. Again, the 'Honour' award for fiction will have caused much debate: here, my vote goes, by a very narrow margin, to *Grounded*, Sheena Wilkinson's novel set in contemporary Ulster.

Only two of the titles – the Crossan and the Ní Chléirigh volumes – are this year eligible for the Eilís Dillon First Time Book award: my choice here is Crossan's poignant and lyrical verse novel *The Weight of Water*, which, again by a narrow margin, has also my vote in the Book of the Year category. This leaves only the judges' Special Award, which I would give to the highly talented and exceedingly prolific Oliver Jeffers.

In case we forget, however, that these are books primarily addressed to a young readership, CBI commendably organises a 'shadowing' scheme to allow ten 'juries' of the country's children to participate in the awards by selecting (from the titles already shortlisted by the adult judges) their own Children's Choice. The best choice they could make would be one that healthily challenges the adults' conclusions. It might be even more revealing if they did not have to limit themselves to titles on the adult judges' list, though the logistics of organising such a nationwide poll would be dauntingly complex.

If CBI were ever to give a Use of Dialogue award then Derek Landy would almost certainly be among the potential winners. His new book *The Maleficent Seven* (HarperCollins, £12.99) takes Tanith Low, one of the most popular characters from his bestselling *Skulduggery Pleasant* series, places her centre stage and totally transforms her into something not merely 'beautiful, smart and tough', but 'twisted' as well. Her new nature has her involved in a sequence of quest-like missions, taking her and her 'maleficent-seven' team to locations as disparate as Germany, Poland, Chicago and London. It is all very entertaining, has a lively pace and, as always with Landy, handles the gruesome and the grotesque with relish. But best of all are the wit, the banter and the one-liners: tune in especially to Messrs Gracious O'Callahan and Donegan Bane, two roguish gentlemen well worth watching. This is Landy's best book to date and might even – who knows? – figure on next year's CBI shortlist.



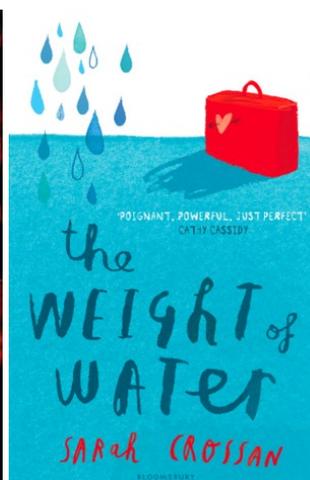
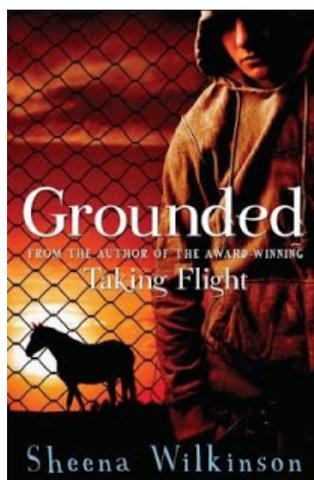
[Robert Dunbar is a commentator on children's books.]

The winners were announced on 8 May 2013 at the National Library, Dublin.

Book of the Year Award and Children's Choice Award

Sheena Wilkinson (2012) *Grounded*. Dublin: Little Island.

Belfast author Sheena Wilkinson is only the second author to win both the Book of the Year Award and the Children's Choice Award. Set in a bleak contemporary Belfast, the novel follows a talented show jumper from the wrong side of the tracks and his struggle to cope with his responsibilities as a boyfriend, son, employee and friend. The judges said 'this powerful first-person narrative is an unsentimental account of a teenager trying to cope with a series of unexpected responsibilities. It explores the effects of caring too much and of caring too little.' *Grounded* is the sequel to *Taking Flight*, which won both the Honour Award for Fiction and the Children's Choice Award in 2011.



Eilís Dillon Award (awarded to a first-time author or illustrator)

Sarah Crossan (2012) *The Weight of Water*. London: Bloomsbury.

Written in a verse narrative, Sarah's coming-of-age tale portrays not only the fear and isolation felt by many young immigrants, but also the courage and resilience that is often needed for a young person to find his/her way in the world.

Judges Special Award

Anna Heussaff (2012) *Hóng*. Inverin, Connemara: Cló Iar-Chonnachta.

Anna Heussaff's book focuses on the life of Evan, a young boy from Baile an Chuain who is obsessed with the computer game Hóng. He and his best friend Rio play this game constantly. However, Evan gets a strange message from another player, Yin, asking him to save her friend Yang, who is living in Baile an Chuain, from danger and possible death.

Hóng is Anna Heusseff's second novel for young readers (10–13 year olds). The story centres on current themes in young people's lives and raises ethical questions about the complexity of the internet, corruption and personal relationships. Anna Heussaff was raised in Dublin with Irish as her first language.

The judges said 'the author's delicately tuned language creates a narrative that manages to be accessible, authentic and convincing, all at the same time. The style of language allows the reader to engage sympathetically with the story of contemporary Irish-speaking teenagers in an English-speaking world of computer games and environmental recklessness.

Honour Award for Illustration

Oliver Jeffers (2012) *This Moose Belongs to Me*. London: HarperCollins Children's Books.

A young boy Wilfred finds a moose whom he names Marcel and assumes it to be his. Wilfred has rules for Marcel, who follows them with varying degrees of success. Then someone else comes along who claims Marcel is theirs.

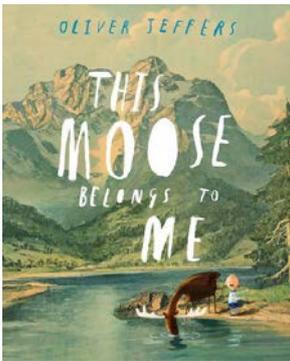
The judges said: 'Illustratively striking in its blending of collage and landscape painting, this is an imaginatively absurd book that encourages the reader to meditate on concepts of identity, ownership and friendship.'

Honour Award for Fiction

Marie-Louise Fitzpatrick (2012) *Dark Warning*. London: Orion Children's Books.

Taney sees things before they actually happen: it's a gift, inherited from her dead mother and it's always made her feel different. Working as a housemaid in a grand Dublin house, Taney's gift helps to uncover some missing jewellery – and the thief. Suddenly she is in demand, foretelling futures for the grand ladies of Dublin. Her crippled friend Billy is also using her gift to predict bets. But then young maidservants start being attacked. Taney experiences terrifying premonitions and develops her own suspicions about the perpetrator. Is her second sight a gift or a curse? A book for 12+ readers.

The judges said: 'Told from the perspective of its gifted young female protagonist and drawing on urban myths and lore of eighteenth-century Dublin, this is an original and exciting tale encompassing elements of mystery, murder and the paranormal.'



‘All the World’s a Story’: Storytelling and Children’s Books in Ireland

Patrick Ryan

According to legend, Ireland went to war over a book. Saint ColmCille, as a young monk and scribe, copied the manuscript of a psalter and so loved it that he intended to keep it. Saint Finnian, who owned the original book, disputed ColmCille’s right to the copy and their argument led to the Battle of Cúldreimhne, where many men were killed. A synod of clerics and scholars exiled ColmCille to Iona, where he went on to convert the heathen Scots. The synod also established one of the earliest laws regarding copyright: ‘To every cow its calf and to every book its copy.’

Not long after ColmCille began his exile, the Irish fell into disagreement with their poets and storytellers. The bardic class sat just below the high king in status, and were to be honoured with any favours or hospitality they demanded and the population felt they became too demanding. They were prepared to exile the storytellers and poets from Ireland forever. Only ColmCille was eloquent enough to speak on behalf of the bards and a way was found to bring him from exile on a technicality. (Not only does Ireland have a reputation for poets, writers and storyteller with a certain facility with words, it’s famous too for devious lawyers and politicians with a ‘gift of the gab’.)

The banishment stated that ColmCille was never to set eyes again on Ireland, and Iona was the closest he could be to his beloved native land without being able to see it. So the poets and storyteller devised that the saint should be blindfolded and led back to Ireland to speak. When at last ColmCille rose to defend the wordsmiths, he declared:

If poets’ verses be but stories,
So be food and raiment stories;
So is all the world a story;
So is man of dust a story.

And for this cause it were right for thee to buy the poems
of the poets, and to keep the poets in Ireland, since all
the world is but a story...

(The judgement of ColmCille)

Needless to say, the Irish relented and the storytellers and poets were allowed to stay and, thankfully, remain active there to this day.

While one never wants to rely on stereotype or cliché, there is no doubt that Ireland has a reputation for a love of language, stories, literature and poetry. Studies suggest that the Irish buy, and borrow from public libraries more books per head of population than any other country in Europe. In spite of the severe economic crisis, libraries have not been closed. When I worked at the Children’s Book Festival in Cork last year one librarian from Cork told me that if the government even hinted at possible library closures there’d be riots.

Irish storytelling is renowned, and as an art form it has a long and complex history. Its contemporary forms are as varied, rich and evolving as those of its past. One of the best sources I know of for anyone interested in its long history and the complexity of Irish narrative traditions is the folklorist’s Georges Denis Zimmerman’s study *The Irish Storyteller*. And for those who want a sense of how Irish storytelling continues today within an authentic, traditional practice, playing an important role in maintaining social ties, look to Ray Cashman’s *Storytelling on the Northern Irish Border*. But for those not familiar with Irish stories, for the young or the old, any library is sure to have a shelf full of anthologies of folk tales, myths and legends from Ireland. That’s as good a place as any to start.

Modern storytelling practices seen today in Ireland owe much to initiatives that began in Northern Ireland libraries in the 1970s and 1980s. Liz Weir, children’s librarian for

Belfast Libraries at the time, saw that children were not being served because of the violence of 'The Troubles' raging over those decades. Many branch libraries were on 'Peace Lines'; that is, they straddled a dividing road between neighbourhoods and by doing so served both sides of the community. This interface, however, was often where confrontations erupted and so few children felt safe or were allowed to walk to the library.

Having been trained and inspired by English librarian-storytellers Eileen Colwell and Grace Hallworth, and by Alice Kane, a fellow Ulster woman and librarian who became one of Canada's leading and most beloved storytellers, Liz realised storytelling was the way to reach these children. Liz trained herself and her staff to tell stories and read picture books aloud in the most entertaining ways, and also recruited local university and college students as part-time staff. Over the two-month school holiday each summer, teams of storytellers visited parks, community centres, and play schemes set up so that children had safe places to play. It was enormously successful and reached tens of thousands of children, parents and care workers over many years.

Always on the look out for more stories and storytellers, Liz soon linked with practitioners and experts all over Ireland, north and south, and the rest of the UK and beyond. As chair of Northern Ireland Youth Libraries Group (YLG) Liz set up conferences and courses on storytelling all over the province. Gradually this led to more storytelling there for children of all ages and also for adults. Similar activities were developing in the Republic of Ireland.

Storytelling in modern contexts, for children and adults, has grown substantially in the last 20 years in Ireland. There have been numerous projects serving children or adults with special educational needs or other disabilities, storytelling schemes that focus on travellers and on immigrant and ethnic groups recently arrived in Ireland, reminiscence and oral-history work with pensioners, programmes of digital storytelling supporting asylum seekers and countless other initiatives.

Storytelling enthusiasts are aware that, originally, folk and fairy tales from the oral tradition, and in their earliest literary forms, were adult entertainment never intended for children, so the appeal of folk and fairy tales to adult audiences today is no surprise. The Grimms were linguistic scholars, collecting German folk tales to support their studies. They were amazed to see their academic publication turn into a popular family book for children. (Their eyes were opened to this potential, in fact, by the first English translation of their work in 1823 by Edgar Taylor who published around 50 of the tales, 'with the amusement of some young friends principally in view'.) Early widely produced collections of Irish folk tales in English evolved with a similar pattern. Antiquarians and linguists from the seventeenth century onwards keenly translated Gaelic manuscripts relating marvellous ancient legends and wonder tales aimed at adult readers and audiences, and anthologies of English-language stories in Ireland similarly started as more academic publications for adult readers. These now often form material for modern Irish storytellers telling to both adult and child audiences.

One of the first English-language collections was *Fairy Legends and Traditions of the South of Ireland* by Thomas Crofton Croker, an antiquarian who corresponded with the Grimms, who translated his collection into German. Around the same time, probably much earlier, the chapbook *Royal Hibernian Tales* appeared and was widely disseminated throughout the nineteenth-century. These collections were meant for adult readers, in Croker's case to amuse the British public with tales of Irish foibles and in the case of the anonymous chapbook, for patriotic reasons, to assert that Ireland, like every other nation, had native tales. The next significant collections were by former teacher and bookshop owner Patrick Kennedy, whose *Legendary Fictions of the Irish Celts* and *Fireside Tales of Ireland* influenced W.B. Yeats and Douglas Hyde. Kennedy's works, too, seemed originally aimed at an adult audience, but certainly appealed to younger readers.

Outside Ireland, knowledge of its children's literature is perhaps not as well known, but, from the start, storytelling and folklore has had a link in its development. As Robert

Dunbar pointed out a few years ago in his pick of the top 50 Irish children's novels for *Inis*, CBI's magazine:

The positive side of our rich inheritance of ancient story lies in the word 'story' itself. Many of the titles in my list could derive only from a culture where the art of storytelling has been accorded a central significance and many, most commendably, are experimenting in ways of developing the tradition.

Evidence of Irish storytelling traditions making a mark on early children's literature include the classic by Irish poet and novelist Frances Browne, best known for *Granny's Wonderful Chair*. Sir William and Lady Wilde, parents of Oscar Wilde, collected Irish folklore, and Lady Wilde was a strong advocate for Irish independence and women's rights. Experts believe his parents' interest in folk tales inspired Oscar Wilde's children's stories.

Just as with other nationalist movements across Europe, the nationalist cause motivated collectors of Irish folklore. Folklorists, historians, linguists, and writers and poets all took an interest in preserving the Irish language, and in presenting a case for Irish culture being ancient, civilised and distinct from British culture, thereby making Ireland worthy of independence. W.B. Yeats' *Fairy and Folk Tales of the Irish Peasantry*, one of his first publications, had this aim, and he was much influenced by the earlier work of Kennedy, the Wildes, and by his colleagues Lady Gregory and Douglas Hyde.

By the late nineteenth century, fairy and folk tales were well on their way to being viewed as children's literature. As Irish language and literature scholar Angela Bourke pointed out (along with others), popular folk-tale writers like Andrew Lang, Joseph Jacobs and Jeremiah Curtin were among the first to practise what we would now view as cultural appropriation, and they included Irish stories from Croker, Kennedy and others in their works. Partly in response to this appropriation, and also as one of the leaders in the Gaelic-language revival, Douglas Hyde published *Beside the Fire: A Collection of Irish Gaelic Folktales* in English and Irish. The Celtic Twilight was also a response to how British imperial authority and commercial publishers interpreted and used cultural artefacts like folklore and storytelling, and the works of writers and academics in this movement did much to inculcate and support Irish storytelling in the early twentieth century so that the art form continued to be supported and revered.

The generation inspired by Yeats, AE (George William Russell), Gregory, Hyde and other leaders of the Celtic Twilight included three young men, James Stephens, Padraic Colum and Seumas McManus, who popularised Irish folk tales and storytelling in Ireland and other countries. James Stephens and Padraic Colum were contemporaries, friendly with James Joyce, who did his bit contributing to Irish storytelling (with the stories *The Cat and the Devil* and *The Cats of Copenhagen*, based on universal folk tales, written for Joyce's grandson, but also with his experimental works).

Stephens, Colum and McManus were nationalists, Stephens particularly, who published a number of retellings of Irish myths and legends. His *Irish Fairy Tales* and *The Crock of Gold* remain popular, and the latter is well worth a look for those interested in unusual children's literature from the late Edwardian–early modern period.

Colum turned to writing children's books when he first was in America. So as not to forget the Irish language he translated a long folk tale that became the classic American children's book *The King of Ireland's Son*. This led to a contract as a children's writer with Penguin that left him financially secure for life, as well as becoming a recipient of the Newbery Award.

Seumas McManus's career followed a similar trajectory as he settled, like Colum, in America. McManus became closely associated with the first modern storytelling revival of the 1890s through the 1920s. He worked with Kate Wiggin Smith, the author of *Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm*, and was extremely popular with and wrote for the children's literature magazine *The Horn Book*. He influenced a significant number of librarian–storytellers in public and school libraries in North America. He too reinterpreted Irish folk tales for modern audiences, particularly through many children's

collections and storytelling performances in public libraries, universities and on the radio.

A newly independent Ireland continued to collect traditional culture and support the Irish language through official bodies such as Coimisiún Béaloideasa Éireann (the Irish Folklore Commission), established in the early days of the Irish state. Séamus Ó Duilearga (Seamus Delargy) led his team of folklorists across Ireland to gather not only stories, but also customs, prayers, rituals and poems, creating one of the largest folklore collections in the world, now residing at University College Dublin.

Its Main Collection runs to almost 3,000 thick volumes, made up of a few hundred collections by early enthusiasts, but mostly consisting of recordings in the field made by a small group of paid, full-time collectors. One of the most fascinating projects Coimisiún Béaloideasa Éireann initiated was an original and far-reaching scheme: the Schools' Collection of 1937–1938, a collection of about 1,200 volumes, into which teachers and children entered their choicest gleanings from their extended families.

In 1937 all teachers of the upper-primary school grades in Ireland were tasked with setting weekly essays (in English or Irish, depending on the area where they worked and which language was dominant there). Using a simple handbook from the Folklore Commission, teachers asked the children to gather stories, legends, superstitions and local histories from their parents, grandparents, elderly relations and neighbours. Their copybooks were gathered up in great numbers and now make up the Schools' Collection. This has since been copied (in print and digitally) so that it is available in every County Library in Ireland. Many recent storytelling and creative-writing residencies in schools have made use of the Schools' Collection. It is a wonderful resource for modern storytellers and writers, whether their work is aimed at children or adult audiences.

A specific body of Irish children's literature also began to expand with the formation of an independent Ireland. Much of this did consist of collections of folklore, both in English and especially in Irish so as to promote the language. Children's fiction also incorporated elements of folklore and imagery. Three of the most popular and influential Irish writers in the mid-twentieth century were Eileen O'Faolain, Eilís Dillon and Sinéad De Valera. De Valera, wife of the Irish Republican leader and the third president of Ireland, Eamon De Valera, wrote popular collections including *The Emerald Ring and Other Irish Fairy Stories*, *The Stolen Child and Other Stories*, *The Miser's Gold* and *The Enchanted Lake*. Two charming books based on Irish folk tales are by Eilís Dillon: *The Voyage of Mael Dúin* and *Midsummer Magic*. Eileen O'Faolain's works consist of both folklore-inspired novels such as *The Little Black Hen*, *The Children of the Crooked Castle* and *Miss Pennyfeather and the Pooka*, and of two folk-tale collections, *Children of the Salmon and Other Irish Folktales* and *Irish Sagas and Folk Tales*.

Although Robert Dunbar, in his discussion of top 50 Irish children's books, quite correctly felt that 'too many of our writers have been seduced by our indigenous myth and legend as starting points for fictions which often follow very predictable and stereotypical paths', there have been many notable children's books in this genre coming out of Ireland in the last 30 years. These include Pat O'Shea's *Fin Mac Cool and the Small Men of Deeds* and *The Hounds of Morrigan*, and Kate Thompson's *The New Policeman* and *Last of the High Kings*. IBBY UK members will certainly be familiar with the popular fantasy books of Irish writers such as Eoin Colfer and his *Artemis Fowl* stories, the master of horror Darren Shan and Derek Landy's *Skulduggery Pleasant* series.

Pishogues (superstitions), oral history and local legends are elements of folklore that frequently appear in Irish historical fiction written for children, such as Marita Conlon-Mckenna's trilogy, set at the time of the Famine. Other excellent historical-fiction titles for children and young adults such as Catherine Sefton's (Martin Waddell) *The Beat of the Drum*, Siobhán Parkinson's Amelia books, Sam McBratney's *The Chieftain's Daughter*, Maeve Friel's *The Lantern Moon* and Elizabeth O'Hara's *The Hiring Fair* are just a few samples of a genre that appears very popular with Irish children's writers and their readers.

Storytelling and children's literature both remain strong and linked in positive ways in the modern Ireland. There's a lot of interaction and mutual support between storytellers and writers and poets. As an example of this, just look to Marie Heaney's *Over Nine Waves: A Book of Irish Legends* (an adult publication) and *Names upon the Harp* (for children, illustrated by award-winning Irish artist P.J. Lynch). For over 30 years now, the Irish Arts Council has sponsored an extensive and highly successful scheme known as Writers-in-Schools, run by Poetry Ireland. This places writers, poets, illustrators and storytellers in schools across the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland, for both one-day visits and for long-term residencies. Writers-in-Schools also hosts an annual forum for writers, poets and storytellers, as well as teachers and librarians, to share expertise and advice, and runs a mentoring programme where writers and storytellers experienced with doing work in schools shadow and advise those who are new to the programme.

Children's Books Ireland coordinates the CBI Children's Book Festival, one of the longest and largest children's book festivals in the world. Running for the entire month of October every year, CBI encourages every library and bookshop in Ireland to host multiple events, including lots of storytelling. Children's Books Ireland also runs an exciting and enjoyable children's book conference every May in Dublin, the CBI Summer School, and it's well worth attending.

Storytellers of Ireland maintains a series of workshops, conferences and events for those interested in storytelling, and it publicises a number of long-running and highly popular local and international storytelling festivals and adult storytelling nights throughout Ireland. IBBY Ireland is also an active and enthusiastic organisation with close ties to all these agencies.

All these groups, from time to time, come together for conferences or projects. Because of the strong historic links in Ireland between storytelling, folklore, literature, education and the arts, as well as the fact that it's a small place where it's easy for everyone to get to know each other and keep in touch, Writers-in-Schools, Poetry Ireland, CBI and Storytellers of Ireland find a great deal of overlap in their memberships and in their interests. Ireland is close by and very welcoming, so any one with an interest in storytelling or children's books would find good friends and a good time there.

Michael James Murphy, an author, storyteller and one of the Coimisiún Béaloideasa Éireann (the Irish Folklore Commission) folk-tale collectors once recommended three things one should do every year:

- Climb an Irish mountain
- Give a hand in the harvest
- Listen to a storyteller by the fireside.

Very sound advice. So what's stopping you?

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‘Compiled for the Amusement of Good Children; and the Instruction of Such as Wish to Become Good’: The Irish Study, Origins and Archives of Children's Literature

Anne Markey

Scholarship into juvenile literature in Ireland received a major boost in 1997 with the inauguration of a taught Master's programme in St Patrick's College, Drumcondra, and became firmly established as a national concern in 2002 with the foundation of the Irish Society for the Study of Children's Literature (ISSCL). To date, the ISSCL has published five volumes of essays on various national and international dimensions of the topic and two further collections are in the pipeline. Irish scholars of children's books have also published widely in other volumes, monographs and academic journals on titles published in Ireland and elsewhere. The on-going work of Children's Books Ireland, founded in 1997, and IBBY Ireland, founded in 1998, continues to raise the profile of the field. In addition, an annual Irish-language conference on children's literature and culture has been convened in various Dublin locations since 2011, drawing attention to a distinctive but often undervalued element of the Irish scenario. A second Master's programme began in Trinity College Dublin in 2011, and children's literature increasingly features on the curricula of other third-level institutions. While this might suggest that the field is a vibrant and healthy one, the general treatment of children's literature as a speciality interest at undergraduate level and low numbers of students at postgraduate level leaves little room for complacency.

The general focus of Irish research into juvenile literature has been on nineteenth- and twentieth-century material, but recently some attention has been paid to the origins and early history of Irish children's books. That history is a complex one, shaped by the country's political and economic subservience to Britain throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Although members of the Quaker community in Ireland produced text books and primers for young scholars (e.g. James Gough's 1756 *A Practical Grammar of the English Tongue* and John Gough's 1767 *Practical Arithmetic*, both published in Dublin), the first Irish books that aimed to entertain and instruct children were imprints of titles previously published elsewhere, most often in London. Copyright law did not extend to Ireland until after the Act of Union came into effect in 1801, so before (and sometimes after!) that date, enterprising publishers in Dublin and provincial centres had no qualms about reprinting the work of authors such as Sarah Trimmer (1741–1810), Hannah More (1745–1833), Thomas Day (1748–1789) and Mary Ann

Kilner (1753–1831) for young Irish readers. It is difficult to estimate the number of those readers, but as penal legislation forbade Catholics, who made up the majority of the population, to have schools of their own or to have their children educated by Catholic teachers, literacy rates amongst minors were low during the eighteenth century, and the market in children's books was accordingly limited. Occasionally, Irish authors of children's books chose to have their work published on home ground. The earliest such book to have been identified is *The Child's Toy or, A New Pet's Play-Thing* by Timothy Philologus, which was published by Isaac Jackson, a Quaker bookseller, in Dublin in 1755. The more usual procedure, however, was for Irish authors to publish their work in England, a practice adopted by Ireland's most famous Georgian writer, Maria Edgeworth (1767–1849), and followed by other writers for juveniles, including Margaret Jane King Moore (1772–1835), Alicia Le Fanu (c.1791–c.1844), Thomas ('Captain') Mayne Reid (1818–1883), L.T. Meade (1844–1914), Patricia Lynch (1894–1972) and Eilís Dillon (1920–1994). Recent research on early Irish children's books and ongoing work on later Irish authors is changing the way in which the broader field of children's literature is taught and studied in Ireland, and this revision and re-visioning of the discipline has been greatly enhanced by the availability of a number of important archives.

The largest of these is the Pollard Collection of children's books, bequeathed to Trinity College Dublin in 2005, which contains some 10,500 titles dating from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth century. The vast majority of these are in English, but there are approximately 200 French titles, over 70 in Irish, 28 or so in German, about 25 in Scots Gaelic, 10 or so in Latin, Italian and Dutch, and a handful in Greek, Danish and Portuguese. As a result, the collection has the potential to provide intriguing insights into changing European perceptions and constructions of childhood and the child reader over the centuries. In relation to English-language books, many were published in England and written by popular authors including Priscilla Wakefield (1751–1832), Barbara Hofland (1770–1844), Mrs Martha Mary Sherwood (1775–1851), R.M. Ballantyne (1825–1894), Lewis Carroll (1832–1898) and Mrs Molesworth (1839–1921). However, Irish authors, particularly Maria Edgeworth and L.T. Meade, are also well represented. Additionally, the Pollard Collection boasts Irish editions of works originally published elsewhere and some rare books published only in Ireland, including the first English-language novel for children known to have been written by an Irishman and printed in Dublin – the 1794 *History of Harry Spenser: Compiled for the Amusement of Good Children; and the Instruction of Such as Wish to Become Good* by Philanthropos. Although certain periods and genres are not well covered, the collection is generally representative of the range of works read by and published for children in Britain and Ireland over a period of approximately 300 years.

Most of the books in the Pollard Collection aimed to delight as well as instruct young readers, but the contents also comprise schoolbooks, religious texts, sermons and works that were originally intended for adult readers, including novels such as Oliver Goldsmith's *The Vicar of Wakefield* (1761) and translations, abridgements and adaptations of fairy tales such as Maria Edgeworth's *The Modern Griselda* (1813) and Lady Wilde's *Ancient Legends, Mystic Charms and Superstitions of Ireland* (1888). Intriguingly, one of the earliest Irish-language titles shows that the traffic between adult and children's literature operated in both directions; the 1833 edition of *Maith agus dearmad*, printed in Dublin for the Ulster Gaelic Society, dedicated to the Marquis of Downshire and aimed at adult readers, was a translation of 'Forgive and Forget', which originally appeared in the third, 1800 edition of *The Parent's Assistant*, Maria Edgeworth's renowned collection of children's stories.

The Pollard Collection, then, is a veritable treasure trove with the potential to further research into children's literature in general children's literature and Irish in particular. Unfortunately, however, the collection has not been fully catalogued and there are no plans, or funds available, to finalise this work, which did not begin until 2010 – five years after the collection's arrival in Trinity College Dublin. At first, the rigorous bibliographic standards established by the benefactor, Mary Pollard, College's first Keeper of Early Printed Books, were followed, and catalogue entries were full and

informative, but within a year it was decided to cut down on the amount of detail provided in the entries. Instead of giving information on the book's illustration, binding and history as Pollard had desired, the later, much briefer entries provide a minimum of bibliographic information as just the title, author, publisher, place and date of publication were recorded. Only 8754 items, representing 83% of the total collection, have been catalogued to date and made available through the library portal. Less than 3000 of these entries provide full bibliographic detail, while 17% of the original collection remains effectively unrecorded. The research potential of the Pollard Collection as a whole has been seriously undermined by this failure to fully catalogue it, as scholars have no way of easily discovering what exactly it contains. The curtailment and subsequent abandonment of the cataloguing project cannot simply be attributed to the downturn in the Irish economy, as the collection arrived in Trinity when the Celtic Tiger was in full swing. Instead, it seems depressingly indicative of a lack of real commitment on the part of the authorities of Ireland's oldest university to the concept of children's literature as a legitimate area of academic research.

Luckily, Irish students and teachers of children's literature have other archives and resources available for consultation, many of which are situated in central or suburban Dublin. The Children's Book Collection of the Dublin City Library Archive contains approximately 755 titles, including chapbooks as well as educational and recreational books published between the late eighteenth and twentieth centuries. A number of significant Irish authors, including Oliver Goldsmith (1730–1774), Maria Edgeworth, Thomas Mayne Reid, Rosamund S. Praeger (1867–1954), Patricia Lynch and Pádraic Colum (1881–1972), are well represented, and holdings of works by L.T. Meade and Rosa Mulholland (1841–1921) are particularly extensive. The National Library, meanwhile, houses many collections of interest to the researcher of both early and contemporary children's literature including manuscripts, books and illustrations by Irish authors and artists, such as Patricia Lynch, Eilís Dillon and P.J. Lynch (b. 1962). For those interested in older material, the records and publications of the Kildare Place Society, founded in 1811 by a group of philanthropic men to promote the education of the poor of Ireland, are held in the archives of the Church of Ireland College in Rathmines. From 1814, the Society produced an extensive library of reading books, which, although non-denominational, tended to be devoutly Christian in tone. Initially the titles were reprints of books previously published in England, but later Charles Bardin (1788–1842), the literary assistant employed by the Society, wrote a number of travel accounts, and commissioned other original works from Irish writers including Abigail Roberts (c.1748–1823) and Mary Leadbeater (1758–1826). The Church of Ireland Library also has a wide-ranging collection of nineteenth and twentieth-century Irish school textbooks and an archive of the first 1,000 titles published by Puffin in England. To the north of the city, the library in St Patrick's College in Drumcondra has extensive holdings of school textbooks, a range of Irish-language publications, and special collections of the works of Patricia Lynch and Pádraic Colum. In addition to a range of Boy's Own and Girl's Own magazines, the John Manning collection of approximately 300 titles held in the library of University College Dublin contains a variety of juvenile fiction, mainly by British and Irish authors, published between the 1870s and the 1920s. In relation to more recent titles, the branch network of the Dublin and regional public libraries system offers a broad range of contemporary Irish and international fiction and non-fiction titles for young readers, which can be borrowed or consulted onsite.

For Irish and visiting researchers into children's literature, the availability of these archival and library resources is a real boon, whose potential remains largely untapped. The current economic downturn, which has resulted in severely reduced funding for third-level and cultural institutions, has impacted negatively on all aspects of the study of the humanities in Ireland. From the perspective of those interested in the study of children's literature, the cuts came at a particularly bad time as the field is not a long-established one and so more vulnerable than most to the slings and arrows of budgetary austerity. Given the enthusiasm and dedication of those involved in the Irish study of children's literature, however, the future, while uncertain, is by no means bleak. Despite the challenges ahead, we look forward to discovering and disseminating more

information about books for children from Ireland and elsewhere, and to forging fruitful links with researchers at home and abroad.

Collections

The catalogued books in the Pollard Collection are available through the Trinity College Dublin library catalogue at <http://library.catalogue.tcd.ie/>. A short-title listing of all books in the collection is available at www.tcd.ie/Library/epb/named-collections/p.php.

The Children's Book Collection can be accessed through the Dublin City catalogue at <https://libcat.dublincity.ie/>. Further information and (a slightly out-of-date) listing of the collection is available at www.dublincity.ie/RecreationandCulture/libraries/Heritage%20and%20History/Collections/Pages/childrens-book-collection.aspx.

The National Library website is at www.nli.ie.

The Church of Ireland College (which holds the Kildare Place records and books) does not have an online catalogue, but information is available at www.cice.ie/AboutCICE/Archives.aspx and enquiries can be sent to library@cice.ie.

The main catalogue for the library at St Patrick's Drumcondra is at <http://leabharlann.spd.dcu.ie/> and information on special collections is available at <http://leabharlann.spd.dcu.ie/EnglishSite/Collections/Collections.html>.

Information on the John Manning Collection is at www.ucd.ie/library/finding_information/special/printed/manning/ and books from the collection are included in the University College Dublin catalogue at www.ucd.ie/library/finding_information/searchtools/.

[Anne Markey is President of the Irish Society for the Study of Children's Literature]

The Authentic Voice of Ireland: Children's Author Patricia Lynch

June Hopper Swain

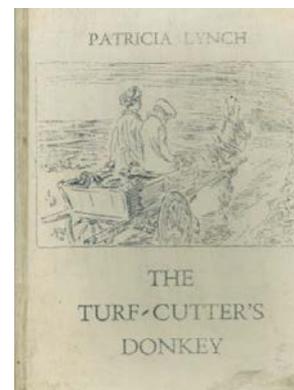
Patricia Lynch (1898–1972), the Irish children's author, captured the authentic voice of Ireland in her books. While today the Irish folk tale is enjoying a revival in Ireland and professional storytellers are, like storytellers in England, Wales and Scotland, once more captivating attentive audiences, it was Lynch who championed the folk tale when its popularity waned. When she was a child, the oral tradition of storytelling and the familiar figure of the storyteller or shannachie (an anglicised version of the Gaelic word *seanchái*) were very much an accepted and essential part of life. Indeed, Lynch's mother Nora loved retelling Irish folk tales, so it was not surprising that Lynch herself soon became a natural storyteller, and this made her very popular with her schoolfellows. Like the traditional storyteller, Lynch drew on myth, legend and magic in her writing, but it was also her colourful and nomadic childhood that gave her the inspiration for many of her stories.

With Lynch's father Patrick in Egypt seeking his fortune, when her grandfather died the family lost their home in Ireland. They travelled to England and, partly due to Nora's restlessness, moved from one town to another, even travelling to Paris at one point. Before the family were reunited with Patrick and they had a permanent base, there were many changes of home and school for the young Patricia, which could have been disruptive, but she took it all in her stride. Sometimes she was left in the care of a kindly family when her mother and brother continued their travels, and it was during a stay on a Kentish farm that she read a story by Enith Nesbit (1858–1924) that was serialised in *The Strand Magazine* called 'The Magic City' that inspired her to write.

Lynch's first book was *The Green Dragon* (Harrap, 1925), with illustrations by Dorothy Harding, about two runaway children who find happiness in London. The title is rather

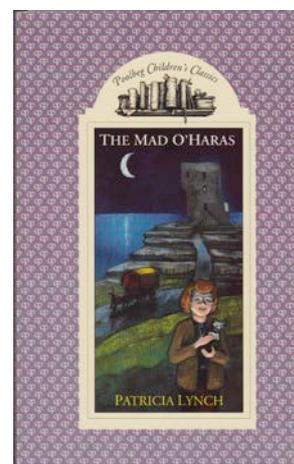
misleading as the story features no myth or legend nor hardly a hint of the exuberant style that she would use in subsequent books. Five years later, however, she had found her form with her second book, *The Cobbler's Apprentice* (Shalyor, 1930), a spirited and humorous story with black-and-white illustrations by Mildred R. Lamb. Besides Shamus, the apprentice of the title, Lynch introduces the Wise Woman of the Mountain, a changeling, a leprechaun and a talking cat. A highly successful book, it was awarded the Taileann Silver Medal in 1932.

The most popular of Lynch's stories feature a combination of magic, myth and realism, as in her third and, perhaps, most well-known children's book, *The Turf-Cutter's Donkey: An Irish Story of Mystery and Adventure* (J.M. Dent, 1934). This was the first in a series of stories about Long Ears, the little talking donkey, who, with the help of two children, Eileen and Seamus, runs away from his cruel master Yellow Handkerchief, chief of the tinkers. Along the way, they become involved in the fight between the legendary Danaans and the Firbolgs and meet the Salmon of Knowledge. This heady mixture was illustrated by the distinguished Irish artist Jack B. Yeats, his drawings capturing perfectly the narrative's otherworldly mood. Some of the characters, such as the tinkers, the leprechaun and the Ballad Singer, appear again and again in Lynch's stories, as do the settings of the fair and the tinkers encampment. Her autobiography, *A Storyteller's Childhood* (J.M. Dent, 1947), is, along with the Shannachie, peopled with many of these characters.



It is a pity that Lynch did not write a second memoir, for her adult life was just as eventful as her childhood. She was involved in the women's franchise movement, and in 1916 Sylvia Pankhurst sent her to Ireland to report on the rising for the *Workers' Dreadnought*. Entitled 'Scenes from the Rebellion', the report appeared in the 16-page pamphlet *Rebel Ireland*, which also included essays by Pankhurst herself and was published by the Workers' Socialist Federation circa 1920. Lynch was also a feature writer for the *Christian Commonwealth* from 1918 to 1920. She married the socialist author Richard Michael Fox in 1922 and they made their home in Dublin.

Lynch had already written several books by the time *Brogeen Follows the Magic Tune* (Burke, 1952), the second in a series of stories about a little Irish leprechaun, appeared. It was illustrated by Peggy Fortnum (who produced the marvellous original pictures for Michael Bond's Paddington Bear books) and it was the beginning of a very successful collaboration. Lynch and Fortnum enjoyed a good rapport, with Fortnam's drawings capturing perfectly Lynch's magical stories and down-to-earth prose. It was also during the 1950s that some of Lynch's books were adapted for Raidió Teilifís Éireann (RTÉ), while one of her more realistic stories, *The Mad O'Haras* (J.M. Dent, 1948), was made into a serial for BBC television. This tells the story of 14-year-old Grania O'Hara, who wants to become an artist and not a dressmaker, which is what her Aunt Bridget, with whom she lives, wants her to be. One day, however, her mother, whom she had thought long dead, unexpectedly sends for her to go and live with her and the rest of the O'Haras and their colourful friends at 'Castle O'Hara', and so begins a new life, and there's a chance for her to win a scholarship to study art in Dublin. Of Lynch's 42 children's novels, books of short stories and an autobiography, this is the only title in print in Britain today (Poolbeg Press, pb. 978 1 8537 1721 5, £4.99, 1997, 294pp.) and this is a shame because her stories, be they realistic or magical, have had an international appeal, with Lynch receiving several literary awards, including those from Ireland, Germany and America. Sadly, the terms of reference of the Carnegie Medal excluded her from consideration because she was a citizen of Ireland.



It is said that a skilled storyteller of oral tradition could give the impression that the stories they were telling, however fantastical, however magical, had really happened, even though both the storyteller and the audience knew them to be pure fiction. And this is how it seems with the stories of Patricia Lynch. Her critics sometimes accused her of lacking in restraint, often to the detriment of her stories, in her liberal use of magical, fantastical themes. But for her it was the story and its telling that mattered most. Everything, magic, myth and legend, might be thrown into the melting pot and the result has a liveliness in which the reader is very much aware of the storyteller's voice. Lynch

bothered little for subtle characterisation, and while some of her characters are inclined to be larger than life, her gift for dialogue makes them fairly leap off of the pages.

Finding a good selection in Britain of Lynch's out-of-print titles may require some application as they might not be readily available from all public libraries. Both West and East Sussex Library Service, for instance, have no Lynch titles in their catalogues and the former will only obtain books from outside the county if they are non-fiction. However, some are to be found in second-hand bookshops and they are well worth searching for. A good storyteller, like the shannachie, can hold an audience, of whatever age or background, captive, and in her books Patricia Lynch did just that and deserves to continue to do so.

[June Swain had written and published several articles on children's authors and illustrators before completing the MA Distance Learning Course in Children's Literature at Roehampton University in 2004. Since then, she has written several papers on the subject that have been published or are going to be published.]

June Hopper Swain

Walter Macken Changed My Life!

Anna McQuinn

I learned to read very early and was a voracious reader – I don't know what age I was exactly, but I must have been quite young to be such a fan of Enid Blyton's *The Adventures of Mr Pink-Whistle*. I was then given *The Naughtiest Girl in the School* as a present, and, because I didn't know how such books worked, I read it the same way as I did *The Adventures of Mr Pink-Whistle* – choosing a random chapter to start off with and then another It was incredibly confusing and the 'stories' didn't make any sense and were all about a girl called Elizabeth, but I couldn't work out what was going on! I must have read about four chapters before I realised that it was one long story and I had to start at the beginning and read all the way through – which was rather spoiled by the fact that I'd already read the penultimate chapter!

Once I got my head around it, I really enjoyed this new format and getting my teeth into longer stories – more Naughtiest Girl stories, followed then by the St Clare's, the Malory Towers, the Five Find-Outers and the Famous Five series, *The Secret of Spiggy Holes* (the Secret series) and *Mr Galliano's Circus* (the Circus series). These were all written between 1940 and 1961. I was reading them in the early 1970s. I just ate them up.

The books were full of girls called Felicity, Gwendoline and Penelope, playing lacrosse, eating cress sandwiches and drinking ginger beer. Growing up in rural Ireland in the 1970s, I had never met anyone called Gwendoline or Penelope and I had no idea what cress was. I was shocked that the children were allowed to drink ginger beer as I assumed it was alcoholic, but I adored the books anyway and read and reread them endlessly.

Then I was given a book called *Flight of the Doves* (1968). It's about a boy called Finn and a girl called Derval. The children run away from an abusive uncle to find their granny in Galway. Well, when I came to that bit, I was so excited. Galway! I'd heard of Galway – it was real. I might even have been there. To this day I remember how the world shifted on its axis as I read this book. Suddenly the world inside the book was real, tangible and meaningful. Children like me were *in* it. I read the book more than 40 years ago – I have even had to search Google to get the title – but I can still remember clearly that the girl cut her hair and pretended to be a boy so that people looking for them wouldn't recognise her and take her back to her uncle. I remember a bit where they were helped by a traveller family and how kind they were. I remember it like it happened to *me*. Suddenly books were something I was *in*!

Flight of the Doves was written by Walter Macken, and reading it began a voyage of discovery for me. This was an era before ‘teen’ (and, even more so, before ‘tween’) literature. It can still be a tough time for readers – outgrowing their childhood favourites, but not quite ready for adult themes. Back then it was nigh on impossible to find material for an avid and able reader in her teens. I went on to read Macken’s *The Silent People* – a moving adult novel set during Ireland’s Famine. This led to *Famine* – a magnificent book by Liam O’Flaherty, and then to O’Flaherty’s short stories both in English and in Irish.

My journey continued with *Across the Bitter Sea* by Eilís Dillon, then onto *And Quiet Flows the Don* by Aleksandrovich Sholokov and a raft of Russian writers.

It’s amazing how these early experiences influence and shape your life. I continued to have a passion for Russian fiction and it was my major at University College Cork, studying Chekov, Dostoevsky and Turgenev, before I turned away to specialise in the Gothic novel.

This in turn initiated my interest in the publishing industry itself, and on graduating I emigrated to the UK in search of work in publishing. I never thought I would end up spending all my working life in children’s publishing – as an editor, publisher and writer. Now, once more, I find myself back under the influence of that first reading of *Flight of the Doves* – reliving that feeling of discovering someone like me in a book.

It’s a feeling I nurture and keep at the centre of my publishing philosophy as I try to make books that include a range of children. So when I write or publish books with assertive girls or boys of colour or naughty frogs or grumpy bears, it’s not to fight racism or strike a blow for feminism or counter disabled stereotypes or promote empathy – though, of course, I hope it will do all those things. My driving force is to make sure all children see themselves *in* books. Books show children the world, and they need to see themselves in books to know they have a right to be in the world. I know that – Walter Macken taught me.

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[Anna McQuinn was born and grew up in Ireland. She moved to the UK and has worked in children’s publishing for over 20 years, as an editor, publisher and writer. Her many books have been translated into over 14 languages and are sold in over 27 countries. She currently runs a small independent publishing house called Alanna Books, and continues to work directly with young children one day a week, which informs both her writing and her publishing.]

REVIEWS

Books about Children's Literature

The Hidden Teacher: Ideology and Children's Reading

Peter Hollindale, Stroud: Thimble Press, pb. 978 0 9033 5555 1, £8.00, 2011, 114pp.

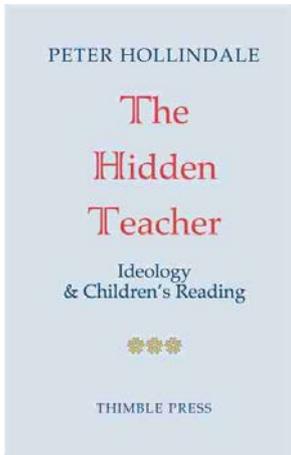
Peter Hollindale's essay, 'Ideology and the Children's Book', first published in *Signal* in 1988, reprinted by Thimble Press in 1991 and 1994, and reproduced in Peter Hunt's *Literature for Children: Contemporary Criticism* (1992), can scarcely be said to have lacked visibility. It has been quoted in a range of other critical texts, most notably John Stephens' influential *Language and Ideology in Children's Fiction* (1992), as well as being cited in innumerable student essays. So a question that inevitably arises is whether its reappearance as the core of this small collection of Hollindale's work is justified. How coherent can a book be when it prefaces the 1988 essay by another *Signal* essay, 'The Critic and the Child' (1991) and later offers a third, 'The Darkening of the Green', from 1990? As well as introductory material and some paragraphs inserted into the previously published texts, the book includes two new pieces: the application of Hollindale's critical approach to Edith Nesbit's *The Railway Children*, and an updating of his presentation of his own ideological stance on ecological matters in the perspective of more recent events.

Answers to the questions postulated above are not entirely clear-cut. First, Hollindale's views are always worth reading: they are presented both forcefully and clearly and are often challenging. Thus drawing the attention of contemporary readers to the previously published pieces can only be welcomed. The two main new essays certainly amplify the earlier work to advantage: in particular, the critical examination of Nesbit's still popular classic is illuminating, and will receive more attention below. It would however be more difficult to defend the overall coherence of this slim volume, since the second part bears only a tenuous relationship to the first and has less to say directly about children's literature: personally I should have welcomed more practical criticism on similar lines to the Nesbit, followed perhaps by an appendix combining the two 'green' essays as an instance of how a critic's revealed ideology may affect that writer's own reading.

The first essay (in fact the last published of the three) unifies its discussion of three then recently published books by the overall question as to how far works of criticism can 'help our understanding of children's literature and its place and value in the lives of boys and girls' (p.27). One of its most interesting sections is the provision of a 'code of self-interrogation' by which children's literature critics may determine the limitations of their own approach to any text or subject. Despite being published after the central essay on ideology, it makes a good preface to it.

The most notable change in Hollindale's well-established discussion of his 'three levels of ideology' seems to be his new labelling of the (previously unlabelled) third level (after 'active' and 'passive') as 'organic' (p.42). This term refers to how the ideology of any book is inscribed in the world in which its author lives. In the analysis of Nesbit's *The Railway Children* (1905) that follows, Hollindale illustrates all three of his categories, showing for instance how Nesbit's 'active ideology of classless generosity and interchange is compromised by her passive ideology of material class difference' (p.66). He illustrates his third category by a discussion of the double aspect of the railway, within both the book and the Edwardian period, as both purveyor of domestic happiness and 'a conveyance to and from a darkening world' (p.73). I think it is fair to say that many textual analyses by those who have taken on Hollindale's original categorisation would have been strengthened had this demonstration of his approach in action been available with his original essay.

'The Darkening of the Green' was first published in a period when there was far less ecological awareness than exists today. It includes the remarkable encomium of Lucy Boston's *A Stranger at Green Knowe* (1961) as 'perhaps the most outstanding children's book of modern times' (p.87) and '[possibly] the greatest of all modern children's books' (p.92), especially because of its 'imaginative empathy with Hanno [the gorilla] in



his jungle childhood' (p.87). This perhaps extravagant praise results from the fact that in this book, unlike most writers, Boston succeeds in transcending the limitations of a 'speciesist' perspective and thus comes closer to Hollindale's own 'dark green' ideology. At the end of this essay he expresses his hope that children will come to recognise the potentially disastrous outcomes of the way in which humans have treated our planet.

The concluding additional essay, entitled 'Hope Against Hope', acknowledges developments since 1990. Its main contribution to children's literature criticism is a discussion of Peter Dickinson's *Eva* (1988), in which the eponymous heroine's assumption of a chimpanzee's body enables the novelist to engage imaginatively with the concept of a future in which humans are extinct but other animals continue to evolve. This kind of exploration, which Hollindale also lauds in Julia Green's *Drawing with Light* (2010) and David Almond's *My Name is Mina* (2010), presents him with hope that today's children will be alert to questions about the future of the planet and the human race, and will therefore be 'determined to improve on the human performance' (p.110).

This book, then, provides a combination of very personal standpoints and excellent and perceptive original analyses. It would be difficult to argue that it is truly coherent, despite its continual reminders of Hollindale's own sensibility. That there is no index and a complex system of referencing does not make the task of the reader easier. Nevertheless, it certainly includes a number of pieces that deserve reading on their own merits but gain from being linked with others. It is always stimulating and challenging.

[This review will also appear in *The Journal of Children's Literature Studies*, vol. 10, no. 2 (July 2013).]

Pat Pinsent

Books from Ireland

Secrets and Shadows

Brian Gallagher, Dublin: O'Brien Press, pb. 978 1 8471 7350 8, £6.99, 2012, 221pp.

The year is 1941. Barry Malone, aged twelve, experiences a devastating air attack on his native city of Liverpool. After the terrors of that night he vows somehow to help the war effort. But he finds himself evacuated from Liverpool to the neutral Republic of Ireland, where he is relentlessly bullied at school for being English and mocked for his Scouse accent.

In Ireland however he meets an impressively feisty Irish girl named Grace Ryan, who quickly becomes his best friend. Grace's family has fallen on hard times, losing their home. Grace is now resident with her uncle and grandfather. To earn her keep Grace works part-time in a cake shop. Part of her entitlement is a couple of free cakes every week. She uses one of the cakes to hire the toughest bruiser in Barry's school to act as his minder. The bullying duly ceases.

The physical-education teacher at Barry's school is the Polish Mr Pawlek. Pawlek is, like Barry, a stranger in a strange land and so the two become friendly. Gradually however Barry becomes suspicious. Mr Pawlek asks a lot of questions about Liverpool, such as where Barry's mother works. Barry comes to suspect there might be more to this Polish refugee than meets the eye. Barry and Grace set out to probe the Pawlek mystery.

The remainder of the book narrates the investigation conducted by Barry and Grace. The mystery is excellently sustained. Surely these inexperienced children can't be right to suspect a teacher of being a spy when the security services of the state have given him the all-clear? Or can they?

The pace of the narrative is compelling and sustained. The 1940s diction is convincingly represented. Barry and Grace are credible characters for four-fifths of the book, though when the denouement comes they show expertise, resolution and judgment that seem frankly incredible for children of their years.

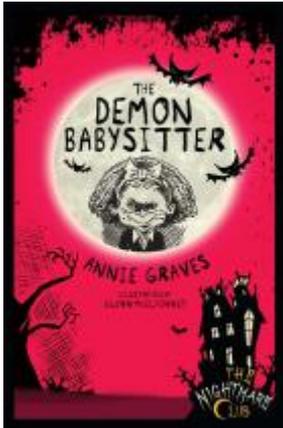


Books in English for young readers about Second World War are usually written from an undisguisedly pro-Allies or anti-Axis viewpoint. It is unusual to read such a book set in the context of a neutral country. The context is interesting from many viewpoints. For example, the rationing of food in Ireland seems to have been less severe than in Britain. The author might even have made more of these interesting differences. Nevertheless what sustains the interest of the reader and keeps us turning the pages is the need to learn the truth about Mr Pawlek. Innocent fugitive or Nazi agent?

Rebecca R. Butler

The Demon Babysitter

Annie Graves, illus. Glenn McElwhinny, Dublin: Little Island, pb. 978 1 9081 9580 7, £3.99, 2013, 52pp.

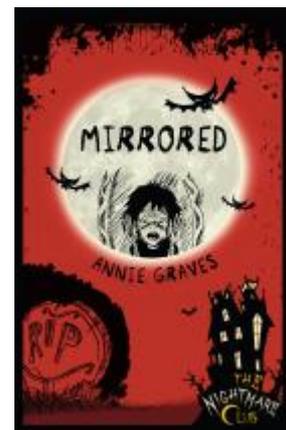
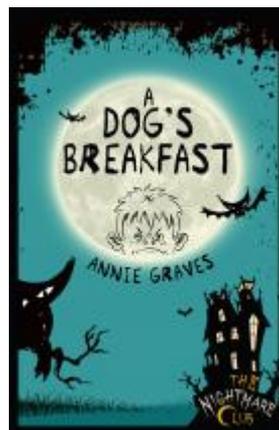
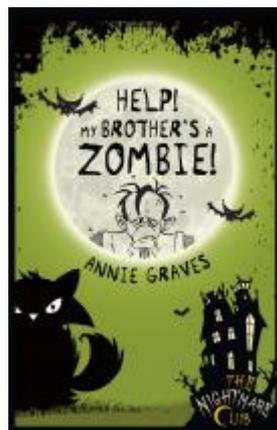


This is a single title in a series of short horror books (The Nightmare Club) suitable for junior school-age children. The putative author of each title is a 12-year-old orphan, Annie, who lives with a toad called Much Misunderstood and a black kitten, Hugh Shalby Nameless. Each story is told at an imagined sleepover by a different friend of Annie's. In fact the series has been put together by a team of Little Island authors and, from January to March this year, was promoted to Dublin families through libraries and bookshops as part of Dublin's UNESCO City of Literature. This particular story of a babysitter who begins as really nasty and ends up as purely demonic, is told as much by illustration as text. The layout is intended not to be intimidating to those who aren't confident readers, with a few short sentences and usually more than one illustration to each page. It's told in a straightforward conversational style that concentrates on the action and leaves the illustrations to provide the horrific edge as Dervla, the babysitter transmutes from an intimidating older child into a demon with horns, talons and a tail. The horror is nicely held in check by the no nonsense resourcefulness of Becky, the narrator, who eventually locks Dervla in an abandoned shed by the river, and by the absurdity of this nice little girl who is also a demon hunter (or so she says): an incongruity perfectly captured in McElwhinny's illustrations.

Clive Barnes

Other books in The Nightmare Club series

All the following books are by Annie Grave, illus. Glen McElhinney, Dublin: Little Island, €5.99, 2011, 48pp., and are paperbacks.



Help! My Brother's a Zombie

978 1 9081 9515 9

A Dog's Breakfast

978 1 9081 9516 6

Mirrored

978 1 9081 9514 2

Faced with a young reader – eight years up – who is wanting ‘horror’, what do you suggest? These three slim small books (and there is a fourth, ‘Guinea Pig Killer’) would be ideal. The stories are truly creepy, all using traditional themes that will be familiar to adults. Here they are neatly packaged and retold in a lively, contemporary style that speaks directly to the reader. Sentences are short, the text is well spaced and the font is sans serif. Indeed, as proved by Barrington Stoke, it is a design that can reach young people who may find the reading experience a challenge. The illustrations are suitably dramatic and of today, adding a visual familiarity and enhancing the narrative approach. Read – and shiver ... and hope the nightmares stay away.

This is a series to watch out for; it is good to see it making the leap across the Irish Sea. Let us hope it will now make its way into homes, libraries and schools.

Ferelith Hordon

Spellbound: Tales of Enchantment from Ancient Ireland

Siobhan Parkinson, illus. Olwyn Whelan, London: Frances Lincoln Children’s Books, hb. 978 1 8478 0140 1, £14.99, 2012, 64pp.

‘Tales of enchantment’ indeed, for in this slim volume Siobhan Parkinson serves up a magical selection of seven tales from the Irish tradition. While a couple may be familiar, such as ‘The Children of Lir’ and an Irish version of ‘The King with Ass’s Ears’, others are less so and it is a delight to be presented with the ‘Butterfly Girl’ – a tale of enchantment, love and transformation. Then there is the story of ‘The Land under the Water’ – where the unexpected ending speaks of choice and consequences. We meet Fionn Mac Cumhaill, the leader of the legendary Fianna, Dechtire, the princess who catches the eye of the god Lugh and, of course, the hero Cuchulain. All these characters step out of the past and are brought to life in Parkinson’s easy, contemporary storytelling voice that speaks directly to the young reader. Indeed, the stories demand to be read aloud and would serve well as shared experience for children of six to eight years old. These are not tales that have been romanticised out of recognition; Siobhan has retained the humour, the awkwardness, and even the uncomfortable, but in doing so she has kept the magic and the drama that are such important elements. For the fainthearted, a guide to the pronunciation of the Gaelic names is supplied. The illustrations by Olwyn Whelan are a bonus, bringing colour and vivacity to the page for those who will read the words rather than listen to them. Her style is reminiscent of Irish decorative manuscripts in its colour and the use of vignettes, while her full-page spreads create an impression of a tapestry. It is a pleasure to see such an addition to the folk- and fairy-tale shelves and one that can be recommended.



Ferelith Hordon

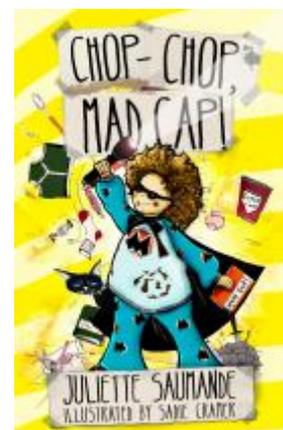
Chop-Chop, Mad Cap!

Juliette Saumande, illus. Sadie Cramer, Dublin: Little Island, pb. 978 1 9081 952 1 0, £4.99, 2012, 125pp. Distributed in the UK by Walker Books.

Madgie Cappock, aka Mad Cap, is a small child who is irrepressibly naughty and totally fearless. She and her friend Norbert Soup decide to set up an agency called Rent-A-Hero, designed to solve people’s problems, and to act as private detectives. Unusually the agency’s first client is also one of its founders. The first assignment for Rent-A-Hero is to get hold of the diary of Mad Cap’s older brother Colm and find out the name of his girlfriend.

The project doesn’t go well. Mad Cap gets hold of the diary but accidentally manages to smother it in chocolate, leaving Norbert furious because he has the job of cleaning up the book and Colm incandescent because his diary has gone missing.

Mad Cap is now sent to the butcher’s shop where she meets Mrs Mudrick, the old lady across the road who is cross with everyone, including Mad Cap. Mrs Mudrick, in a better mood than usual, hires Rent-A-Hero, though the mission is no more heroic than to



buy food regularly for her grumpy cat. At the same time Mad Cap hears someone ask permission to put up a poster in the butcher's shop for the village pantomime, which sounds to her like a dreary old-fashioned show in the making.

Mysteriously Rent-A-Hero's meat-purchasing mission is frustrated when the butcher's shop inexplicably closes and the butcher himself disappears. Now the agency has a real task: finding out why. The unavailability of Mrs Mudrick to do her own shopping and the disappearance of the butcher turn out to be linked to the dreary pantomime.

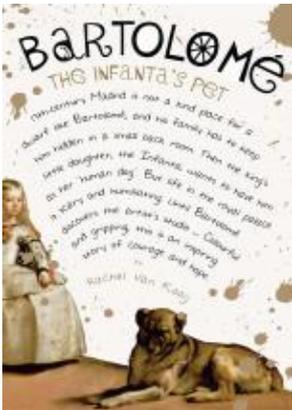
The characters in this slapstick are stereotypical and conventional. An experienced reader can see the next plot twist coming down the track. But for young readers of 7–11 Mad Cap and company will be hugely enjoyable and hysterically funny. The language of the book is simple enough for young readers, but complex ideas such as the paradoxical are introduced. Cramer's illustrations complement and punctuate the text well.

This reviewer found most amusement in the case notes from Mad Cap's diary of investigation. The book is stated to be the first in a series. It is worth looking out for successors.

Rebecca R. Butler

Bartolomé, The Infanta's Pet

Rachel Van Kooij, trans. Siobhan Parkinson, Dublin: Little Island, pb. 978 1 9081 9526 5, £6.99, 2013, 200pp.



Inspired by a Velázquez painting of Philip IV's daughter in which she is accompanied by a dwarf attendant, this is the tale of the dwarf son of the Infanta's coachman who, to his father's shame and his own considerable discomfort, becomes the Infanta's pet, obliged to play the part of her literal lapdog. Expertly translated by Siobhan Parkinson, herself, of course, a novelist, it is a richly imagined portrait of seventeenth-century Spanish society through the eyes of an outsider, who is, nevertheless, not entirely an outcast. Loved and pitied by his family and a cause both of disgust and fascination to many, Bartolomé has an extraordinary talent that, at first unnoticed, eventually finds a proper home in Velázquez's studio. If this talent enables a rather more upbeat ending than might be anticipated, Van Kooij makes clear that even if tolerated and able to make a living as a painter, Bartolomé's appearance will mean that he will still not be recognised by the Painters' Guild and so be unable to sign his own work. A world away, perhaps, from others like him begging on the street, but still an outsider. This is a fine historical novel, entirely convincing in its central character and his relationships, and its social context. The supporting cast are depicted with clarity and insight, even when their reactions to Bartolomé are unsympathetic, exploitative or ambivalent. In consequence, Bartolomé's own refusal to be cowed or dismayed, and the persistence of those who love or care for him, and come to admire him, shine that more brightly. First published in German in 2003, this is the first of Van Kooij's novels to be translated into English and has been listed, in translation, in the 2013 IBBY Outstanding Books for Children with Disabilities. Her 2008 novel, *Der Kajiütenjunge des Apothekers*, was a winner of the Österreichischer Staatspreis and an IBBY Honour Book. My congratulations to Little Island and to the other supporters of this English language translation, including the Irish Arts Council, Arts Council of Northern Ireland, Bundesministerium für Unterricht, Kunst und Kultur, Vienna and the German Ministry of Foreign Affairs through the Goethe Institut. It's a novel of power, ingenuity and passion that I'm grateful I have had the opportunity to read. I hope I may be able to enjoy more of this author's work.

Clive Barnes

Picture Books

Off to Market

Elizabeth Dale, illus. Erika Pal, London: Frances Lincoln Children's Books, hb. 978 1 8478 0338 2, 2013, £11.99, 32pp.

This is a simple old fashioned story, reminiscent of Aesop's Fables.

Joe drives his bus to market and is such a kind person that he does not leave anyone by the roadside. The setting is Uganda and the passengers are taking their goods to market.

Families are carrying everything from exotic fruit and vegetables, and colourful rugs to live chicken, geese and goats. Very soon the bus is so full of grown-ups, children and all their wares that it can't manage to get up a steep hill. A couple of bemused zebras look on from the side of the road while Joe decides that the bus is too heavy and someone will have to get off. Everyone refuses to move until little Keb, who is sitting on top of a goat at the back of the bus, says he will get off. So ... all the passengers have to get off in order to let him out!

The bus is stuck but Keb pushes and shoves hard while everyone watches and Joe laughs, until, to their surprise, the bus moves over the hill and everyone scrambles back on. They all have a very successful day at the market and thank Keb by letting him choose a treat ... he decides on a goat and Joe gives him a free ride back. Thus proving that one good deed deserves another!

This is a very lively and humorous book brought vividly to life by the bold and colourful illustrations. There is so much movement and detail in the drawings that it is almost like an animation. This is a perfect way to convey the idea of such a crowded journey. Small children will love finding all the subtexts on the pages, like a goat nibbling the driver's tie.

The tale is told in rhyme. This adds brilliantly to the all-round concept of different speeds during this eventful journey to and from the market. The African landscape provides a beautiful background to the story.

Everyone on the bus is having a wonderful time. We are lucky to be able to join in!

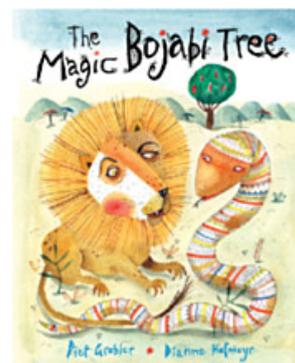
Shirley Hobson

The Magic Bojabi Tree

Dianne Hofmeyr, illus. Piet Grobler, London: Frances Lincoln Children's Books, hb. 978 1 8478 0295 8, £11.99, 2013, 32pp.

Drought has struck the African plains, and the animals are struggling to find something to eat. They find a tree laden with a most delicious and unfamiliar fruit, 'smelling of sweetest mangoes, fat as melons, juicy as pomegranates.' The only problem is that a huge python is twined around the trunk and he demands that the animals tell him the name of the tree before he will allow them to eat the fruit. Luckily, Tortoise remembers that Lion knows the name, although Lion lives far away. So, one by one, the animals set off to find Lion and ask him the name: swift Zebra, chattering Monkey, and confident Elephant (after all, he never forgets). But each time, the messenger forgets the name through some distraction on the return journey. Until, at last, Tortoise himself makes his slow and steady way there, all the way back singing a song to remind him, 'Bojabi for you. Bojabi for me. What will bring down the fruit of the tree? Bojabi! Bojabi! Bojabi!'

This is a tale that has appeared in slightly different versions before, including at least one picture book (although the title sadly eludes me) and, reflecting its origins, will tell aloud very well. Here, author and illustrator combine to produce a humorous take on what could be a rather desperate situation and make it eminently suitable for younger children. Hofmeyr's delightful retelling faithfully follows the repetitive structure of the story but cleverly varies the dialogue in the animals' meetings with the Lion; their explanation of their mission being progressively cut short as Lion gets angrier at their continual disturbance of his siesta, his frustration clear in Grobler's caricature



illustrations. His animals are as slim as you might expect in the circumstances (and Monkey especially looks thin and woebegone), but lively, filling the pages, anxiously meeting at the tree and going busily back and forth in a landscape barely suggested by colour washes and the occasional tree or tuft of grass.

Clive Barnes

I Want My Hat Back

Jon Klassen, London: Walker Books, pb. 978 1 4063 3853 9, £6.99, 2012, 40pp.

Have you ever been upset over the loss of a familiar, everyday item? This is bear's lament: he has lost his hat and he wants it back. Determined to find his hat, the bear politely and patiently asks the animals of the forest as to its whereabouts. As each animal in turn confirms that they have not seen his missing headwear, a dry humour can be observed in the bear's repetitive response, 'Oh. Okay then'. Yet, as we accompany the bear on his search, it becomes apparent that one of his neighbours might know more than he is letting on. Just as the bear prepares to face the fact that he will never be reunited with his prized item, he suddenly remembers: he *has* seen his hat!

This witty and entertaining debut picture book comes from Canadian writer, Jon Klassen. Told wholly in dialogue, it is a quirky version of the classic repetitive tale. Shrewd illustrations and the use of colour – red, in particular – contribute to the appeal of the book. The crux of the story lies in what is not written: children will enjoy the dramatic irony of seeing the rabbit wearing the hat and knowing this significant detail before the bear realises it himself. When the bear eventually confronts the rabbit, the subsequent action is concealed from the reader, thereby inviting children to fill in the events of the story themselves.

There is potential for this book to be used by adults to carry out activities with children; for example, to improvise a conversation between the bear and the rabbit. Since there is an absence of action in the story, which offers children an opportunity to fill in the gaps with their own ideas, it could also be used as a springboard for writing.

Klassen recently followed this work with an equally successful book, *That Hat Belongs to Me*, which was awarded the 2013 Caldecott Medal. Hats are clearly a veritable source of entertainment!

Kerenza Ghosh

Moon Forest

Patricia MacCarthy, London: Frances Lincoln Children's Books, hb. 978 1 8478 0283 5, £11.99, 2013, 26 pp.

This haunting tale follows the moonlit journey of a fox through a forest, surrounded by other nocturnal animals and desperately hunting food for her family. Each double-page spread offers the reader an opportunity to explore the delights and terrors of a woodland world in muted green, brown and blue tones; a feast of illustrative detail that merits lengthy discussion and further exploration.

The language is stripped back to the barest essentials, with short phrases capturing the atmosphere and tensions of the forest at night. Despite its brevity, it is rich with metaphor, while vivid noun phrases provide a wealth of factual information about nocturnal life through their evocative sounds and alliteration.

The ending is unexpected and rather alarming, although, on reflection, entirely appropriate for a book which grapples with the themes of predator and prey, adaptation and survival, and freedom and necessity. Parents and teachers may be advised to read it through first, but can feel confident that this is wildlife presented honestly to children in all its brutal splendour.

Sarah Stokes



The Man from the Land of Fandango

Margaret Mahy, illus. Polly Dunbar, London: Frances Lincoln Children's Books, hb. 978 1 8478 0220 0, £11.99, 2012, 32pp.

The merry character of this title is a smiling, clown-like, rosy-cheeked man who wears a 'tricolour jacket and polka-dot tie' and a 'hat with a tassel and all'. Upon leaping to life from a painting created by two children, he instigates a fantastical jaunt involving a menagerie of lively, musical animals. This jolly band includes 'baboons on bassoons', kangaroos, a bison wearing high heels and red lipstick, a bear and dinosaurs. The party dance through a quirky landscape until it is time to 'stop for a break and a drink and cake/ In their friendly fandandical way'. The man from Fandango is a true entertainer. He has the ability to transform himself into all manner of objects – 'He's a bird! He's a bell! He's a ball!' – and can juggle, summersault and dance on the ceiling. But, he makes an appearance only every 500 years, so children will need to keep an eye out if they want to spot him!



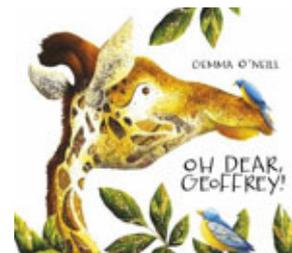
In terms of contemporary nonsense verse, Mahy can be placed alongside the nineteenth-century masters of the form, Lewis Carroll and Edward Lear. There is jingling and jangling, tingling and tangling aplenty; this is a rhyming story with pace and rhythm. Polly Dunbar's illustrations bring colour, humour and spark, providing an ideal accompaniment to Mahy's whimsical verse. The joie de vivre expressed in this book makes it most suited to younger children.

Kerenza Ghosh

Oh Dear, Geoffrey!

Gemma O'Neill, Dorking: Templar Publishing, hb. 978 1 8487 7348 6, £10.99, 2013, 32pp.

Geoffrey is a giraffe, a rather unhappy one. He is so tall that he doesn't fit in anywhere. Not even on the pages of this delightful book! It is not until he realises that he can take advantage of his height that he begins to make friends and have fun.



This book will make little children laugh as Geoffrey finds out, in a series of mishaps, how to stop scaring everyone away and to be aware of the richness of what can be seen and heard around his own head. The beautifully coloured and splattered effect of the well-observed animal and bird illustrations helps to show how Geoffrey eventually manages to come to terms with the unique way he is made. He 'tangles, trips, skips and flops' because his knees are 'bendy-buckly': thus frightening away the likes of the meerkats on the ground and the creatures by the watering hole.

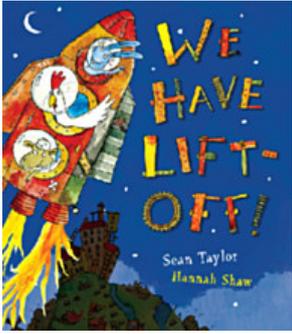
Suddenly, Geoffrey finds that when he does what comes naturally everything is easy. He discovers that when he looks into his favourite tree all the birds and monkeys up there want to be his friends.

A lot of thought has gone into the design of this book and it is matched by the simple cleverness of the words that tell this tale of accepting our differences and turning them into an advantage. The typography is set out in such a way as to enable the child reader to put the emphasis of what they are reading in the correct place. The whole page is well used to allow enough white space around the pictures so that the words are clear and easy to read. The predictable refrain of 'Oh dear, Geoffrey' will soon become fun for all readers to shout!

When Geoffrey eventually realises he can see high up into the sky, and maybe reach the stars, everyone wants to be like him. Being different is not a bad thing.

This is an extremely child-friendly book that adults will also appreciate and enjoy the experience of sharing.

Shirley Hobson

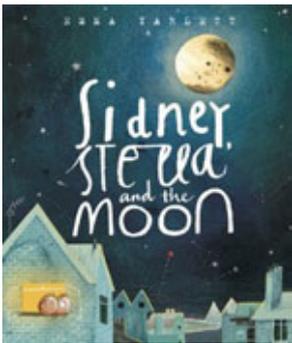


We Have Lift Off

Sean Taylor, illus. Hannah Shaw, London: Frances Lincoln Children's Books, hb. 978 1 8478 0322 1, £11.99, 2013, 32pp.

Sean Taylor and Hannah Shaw have already shown that they can put a picture book together, and this book follows previous successful titles from this partnership, including *Who Ate Auntie Iris?* shortlisted for the Portsmouth School Library Service's Picture Book of the Year Award. In this tale, a group of long-suffering animals make plans to leave their farm, neglected and polluted by the irresponsible farmer, and head for a new home in space. They successfully build a rocket and conduct a number of test flights, with the animals taking turns as pilots. But each flight, for one reason or another, ends in a disastrous return to earth. Finally, the curious farmer himself discovers the now very battered rocket and inadvertently launches himself into space. This turns out to be the best solution to the animals' problem by far. So much so that 'Now ANIMALS ALL ROUND THE WORLD (capital letters in the original) are building intergalactic rockets and sending people like Mr Tanner up to the stars.' There's a message here, of course, but it's delivered with a smile and panache. Hannah Shaw's cartoon illustrations follow the pattern of Sean Taylor's narrative, relishing its absurdity and respecting its intent, and richly develop it with colour, character and humour. The endpapers, which show the animals and the farmer drifting about in space along with a miscellany of earth rubbish, are a joy. It's all great fun.

Clive Barnes



Sidney, Stella and the Moon

Emma Yarlett, Dorking: Templar Publishing, hb. 978 1 8487 7943 3, £12.99, 2013, 32pp.

This is Emma Yarlett's first picture-book publication and is an absolute delight for young readers.

Sidney and Stella are siblings who must share everything: their toys, trips to the park, orchestra practice, and even a bedroom with its carefully delineated 'his and her' areas. Sibling readers will recognise (and sympathise) with plenty of the subtle nuances within Yarlett's quirky illustrations, as well as understanding just how tricky things can get when one sibling teases the other and revenge must be taken as a point of necessity.

So it is with Sidney and Stella one evening, as they argue over who has prior claim to an extremely bouncy ball, that a terrible deed is done and they realise that they must work together to resolve the calamitous situation that ensues.

It would be wrong to divulge the result of their misdemeanour, or, indeed, whether or not they manage to put things right. Suffice it to say, the ups and downs of Sidney and Stella's relationship enable young children to consider why it is important sometimes to set aside differences and work as a team to achieve a goal.

As the final page is turned, the promise of further adventures to be shared with Stella and Sidney is alluded to – a promise which, it is hoped, will be fulfilled sooner rather than later.

Sarah Stokes

Jemmy Button: The Boy that Darwin Returned Home

Jennifer Uman and Valerio Vidali, words by Alix Barzelay, Dorking: Templar, hb. 978 1 8487 7222 9, £12.99, 2013, 48pp.

Jemmy Button opens with a nighttime scene: a little boy is perched high in the trees gazing at the stars. One day a boat arrives and the gentlemen onboard ask the boy to come with them to see their civilised world. The men give the boy's family a pearl button in exchange and name the boy Jemmy Button. After a long journey, they arrive in England and Jemmy is surprised at the men's homes, and the vast number of people. He is given clothes and introduced to photography, music, and even the king and queen. But Jemmy begins to miss his island home, the trees and the night sky, and eventually heads back there where he finds everything exactly the same as when he left.

Alix Barzelay tells a story based on the real Jemmy Button in a sparse yet poetic style. Jemmy Button's lush wild homeland is presented in the same way as the 'civilised' world of the gentlemen – there's no preaching or attempt to comment on the historical rights or wrongs. The illustrations continue the balanced presentation – the island pages are packed with trees, the seas they journey over are teeming with fish, and the city pages are packed with interesting signage and people.

I like the way this book pulls the child reader in. Neither text nor illustrations tell children what to think, but will certainly prompt children to engage with Jemmy Button and think about the events of his life. A thoughtful and interesting addition to any collection; despite its apparent simplicity, it's quite a sophisticated book for children aged seven and over.

Anna McQuinn

Novels and Tales

An Illustrated Treasury of Scottish Folk and Fairy Tales

Theresa Breslin, illus. Kate Leiper, Edinburgh: Floris Books, hb. 978 0 8631 59077, £14.99, 2012, 160pp.

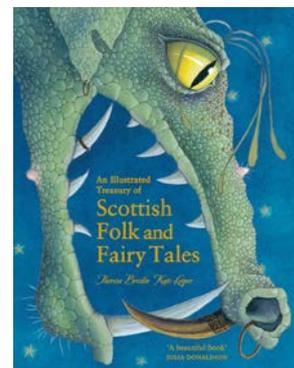
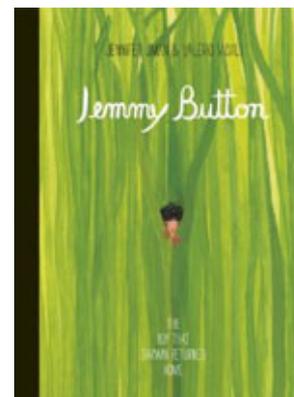
This is a beautiful book and one that demands to be included in any library or classroom. From the cover with its dramatic dragon, through the endpapers where words fly across the spread – a motif that is carried through the book – to the stories in which the illustrations range from powerful separate spreads to becoming part of the text, it is a delight. Kate Leiper is a young illustrator/artist to follow. However, if this were just a 'beautiful' object it would be limited; far from it. Here Theresa Breslin presents a selection of Scottish traditional tales with liveliness, humour and style. Whether it is the The Wee Bannock, a tale that will be recognised by all though it has a twist in the end, the romance of the Goshawk and the Brave Lady, or the wit of Kirsty Macleod and the fox, these are stories to delight and entrance old and young. Though not reproduced in the vernacular, Theresa Breslin manages to convey a lilt that echoes the patterns of such speech. This allows the text to be accessible to a wide audience. However, to make sure, she includes a glossary of dialect vocabulary for teachers and adults; children are less likely to worry. She also introduces each tale, giving it a locality and a little history. These never overwhelm the text – they are asides that add colour and depth. Whether as a present, an ideal one, I would suggest, or a source for reading aloud to a class, KS2 and up, this is to be recommended.

Ferelith Hordon

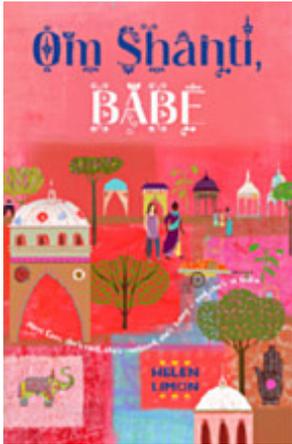
Om Shanti Babe

Helen Limon, London: Frances Lincoln Children's Books, pb. 978 1 8478 0357 3, £6.99, 2012, 215pp.

Cassia is a young British teenager who is taken on a buying trip to Kerala by Lula, her Indian mum, to buy stock for her mum's fair-trade craft shop. There she is confronted,



oh so gently, by the cultural differences between Britain and India, the gap between rich and poor, and some of the problems associated with rapid economic development.



If this sounds rather heavy, Cassia provides an engaging teenage grumpy narrative and there's plenty of the sort of glitz and romance calculated to appeal to 8–12 year old girls who are into clothes, dancing and pop stars, and for whom making friends and avoiding being embarrassed by their parents are the most immediate concerns. When the novel won the 2011 Frances Lincoln Diverse Voices Award, the judges said: 'The story is authentic, the narrative rock solid and it's laugh out loud funny.' What is meant by authentic, I wonder? Cassia makes friends as easily, perhaps more easily, with poorer (but intelligent and talented) children than she does with the well-off daughter of her mum's best friend. Together, all the new-found friends find the answer to Lula's business problems in the revival of a local candle factory. Is this likely? Perhaps not very; but, to my mind, Limon's success lies precisely in presenting important issues in the kind of glamorous and amusing wrapping that will, hopefully, engage this age group. The revelation that Jonny Gold, the Indian pop star whom Cassia idolises, and whose lyrics are so environmentally conscious, is the person responsible for the new hotel development that will destroy the local eco system, introduces a socially critical element that reaches a credible solution, even if it's not the glamorous one that Cassia initially envisages. Limon also introduces an interesting point of comparison with earlier treatments of India for young people, through Cassia's reading of Rumer Godden's *Peacock Spring*, although I can't see that the comparison leads anywhere in particular.

Clive Barnes

Greek Myths: Stories of Sun, Stone and Sea

Sally Pomme Clayton, illus. Jane Ray, London: Frances Lincoln Children's Books, hb. 978 1 8478 0227 9, £14.99, 2012, 80pp.

The Adventures of Achilles

Hugh Lupton and Daniel Morden, illus. Carole Henaff, Oxford: Barefoot Books, hb. and CD, 978 1 8468 6406 3, £14.99, 2012, 96pp.

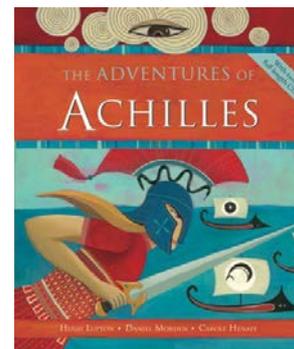
The stories from Greek mythology continue to be popular and appear in many guises from early reading texts to outlines linked to curriculum topics in which the background is explored extensively. This is always interesting, but there is a danger that the stories themselves become drowned in factual detail. There is no danger of that in the selection published by Frances Lincoln. Pomme Clayton is a storyteller of repute, and here she employs all her expertise to create a lively volume in which some very familiar tales appear, together with others that are less frequently told. Thus we are given the 'Birth of the Gods', 'Perseus and the Gorgons' and 'King Midas', but also 'Pandora', 'Atalanta' and 'Arachne'. Designed to be read by younger children, there is the danger that they might become anodyne. However, though some of the incidents may be adapted, Clayton's use of language and presentation has all the immediacy of the storyteller and her text would do well to be read aloud. Nor is scholarship ignored – each myth is given a brief context, while there is a good bibliography for those wishing to explore further. Then there is the added bonus of the illustrations by Jane Ray. Her trademark jewel-like colours, especially her use of gold, combine with her decorative style to create a satisfying visual experience and one that compliments the storytelling. Stories so encountered will certainly live in the memory.

At the heart of the cycle of Greek myths are the Homeric epics, the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. Of the two, it is the latter that is more accessible, certainly for a younger audience, and many of the adventures can be easily retold as separate stories. The *Iliad* is a different proposition and apart from the final episode with the wooden horse, much less easy to adapt. *Black Ships before Troy*, the atmospheric retelling by Rosemary Sutcliff is still available, as is Barbara Leonie Picard in OUP's Oxford Myths and Legends series. Both of these follow the Homeric narrative. However, Hugh Lupton and Daniel Morden have chosen to tell the story from the point of view of one of the characters – the greatest character, the hero Achilles who is central to the events. Doing

this allows them to flesh out the background, bringing an element of characterisation to the work. Both Lupton and Morden are true storytellers and they bring a refreshing immediacy to their text, successfully marrying a contemporary directness with Homeric cadences.

The words conjure images, but young readers will also find the illustrations by Carole Henaff, taking inspiration as they do from Greek vase paintings, add depth and colour to their experience of this retelling. The accompanying CDs, narrated by the authors themselves, will allow the story to be listened to – as it would have been when first composed. A brief bibliography will direct those who have been inspired to find the original text, as well as background to the myths that are so much part of this epic. This is a beautiful addition to any shelf, and one that will introduce a new audience to one of the great stories of all time.

Ferelith Hordon



Grimm Tales for Young and Old

Philip Pullman (trans.), London: Penguin Books, hb. 978 1 8461 4026 6, £20, 2012, xxv + 406pp.

Brothers Grimm Folk Tales

Brian Alderson (trans.), illus. Michael Foreman, Dorking: Templar, hb. 978 1 8487 7993 8, £16.99, 2012, 192pp.

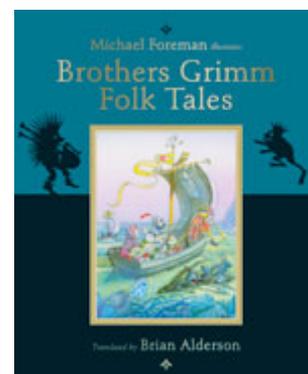
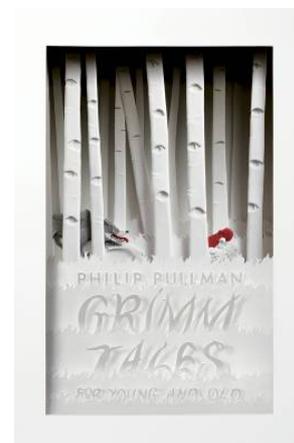
2012 marked the 200th anniversary of the first publication of the Grimm brothers' *Die Kinder- und Hausmärchen* [Children's and Household Tales], a collection of 86 stories. It was the first of a series of publications and republications over the next 45 years, until a total of more than 200 tales had been published. These folk tales grew up for a mixed audience, not merely children, and this is reflected in the title of Philip Pullman's new translation. In 1825 Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm adapted 50 of their original collection as a *Kleine Ausgabe*, specifically for children, removing some of the more overtly adult and sexual material. In an interview in *The Guardian* in September 2012 Pullman states that in retranslating some of the Grimms' work:

[his] interest has always been in how the tales worked as stories. So I decided to retell the best and most interesting of them, clearing out of the way anything that would prevent them from running freely. I didn't want to put them in modern settings, or produce personal interpretations or compose poetic variations on the originals; I just wanted to produce a version that was as clear as water. My guiding question has been: 'How would I tell this story myself, if I'd heard it told by someone else and wanted to pass it on?'

(www.guardian.co.uk/books/2012/sep/21/grimms-fairy-tales-philip-pullman)

Pullman's introduction to his translation reiterates this desire, as well as offering readers something of the general history of the Grimms, and of fairy tale and folktale telling and collecting, and encouraging new generations to *tell* rather than just read fairy-tales. He has selected 50 of what he considers to be the best stories, and presents them in unelaborated language, although, as a storyteller as well as translator, he occasionally enlivens them by a new tweak to a story or the language. Occasionally he incorporates elements from other versions, as in 'Cinderella', where he borrows elements from the British variant 'Mossycoat'. Each story is followed by a note of the tale type (using Aarne and Thompson categories, revised in 2004 by Uther), the source, and suggestions of similar stories and the ways in which the basic story has been adapted in a variety of media. Though previous editions of Grimm's *Tales* have attracted the most eminent of illustrators (as, of course, does Alderson's translation), Puffin have not included illustrations. This leads us to the conclusion that Pullman's edition is not designed specifically for child readers, but for an intellectually curious adult reader who will benefit from the slightly erudite introduction and the bibliography.

By contrast, Brian Alderson's edition, originally published in 1978, has neither an introduction nor bibliography. This is a surprise, as Alderson is well known for the scorn



he can pour on the work of others whom he feels have neglected to include bibliographical material or reference their work adequately. However he does supply a brief afterword, which supplies some of the background to Jacob and Wilhelm's collecting, together with some of the early publication history in the UK. Alderson has taken 31 of the original tales and retold them simply, though perhaps with a little more formality than Pullman, but, like him, stripping away the additional material they have acquired over the two centuries since their first publication, and returning them to their roots. He states his priority to be 'to make the stories sound as though they were folktales told in natural English by an English storyteller' (p.182). Like Pullman he stresses that they are folk tales, designed for telling and therefore have no reason for elaborate language when written down. The text of Pullman's is remarkably like Alderson's, and Alderson must therefore be viewed as an innovator in Grimm translation, as his book originally appeared more than 30 years before Pullman's.

Michael Foreman's sometimes funny, sometimes ethereal illustrations are always a bonus, and add the fairy-tale quality that turn Alderson's book into something equally suited to children and adults.

Both Pullman and Alderson have added to the body of retellings of Grimm's *Tales*, in different ways for different audiences, with the particular attraction of each lying in its the simplicity of style. Neither replaces what has gone before them, particularly Jack Zipes' *Complete Fairy Tales* (2007), every tale the Grimms collected, more traditionally translated but fully introduced and annotated, and animated by Walter Crane's illustrations.

Bridget Carrington

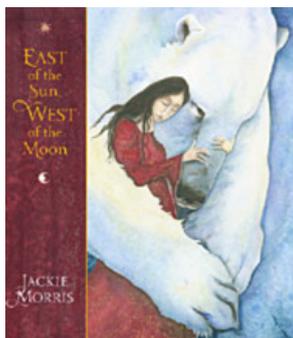
East of the Sun, West of the Moon

Jackie Morris, London: Frances Lincoln Children's Books, hb. 978 1 8478 0294 1, £9.99, 2013, 176pp.

This is a beautiful edition of a Northern version of one of the very first fairy tales, 'Cupid and Psyche', retold and illustrated by Jackie Morris. Like all true storytellers, Morris spins her tale as she imagines it: one moment a contemporary setting, the next a timeless dreamscape. The opening sentence plunges the reader into a magical present:

In an iridescent sparkle of frosted light he appeared, a huge bear, shifting and shimmering into solid form. Frost stars clung to his thick pelt ... they danced around him like an echo of the Northern Lights.

It is winter. The bear is in a busy, noisy city at dusk, seeking, by her scent, the heroine who lives here with her family in poverty. They are asylum seekers having fled from terrifying circumstances in their own country, but harsh rules of qualification have to be met before they are granted safe refuge. Meanwhile they scavenge for sustenance. The family seek to alter their destiny against harsh and unpromising odds. The bear too desires release from a crippling fate and asks the girl to go with him, promising 'all manner of things will be well' for her family (words with a familiar ring from Julian of Norwich). Against her family's wishes, the girl accepts because her heart is open to the sorrow of another's deep suffering and she recognises the bear as a potentially redemptive figure from her dreams. The long journey to freedom with its longueurs and separations begins for them both. At a brief family reunion at Christmas gifts are exchanged. The bear sends a long-lost and treasured family photograph, an offering of good faith. Despite the bear's warning to the girl not to see her mother alone, the encounter takes place. The mother's gift to her daughter is a box containing a candle and matches. The girl does not open the gift until it is too late to prevent the consequences of using it. A beautiful necklace from an elderly woman neighbour endorses her sense of personal value and inner strength. There are more symbolic gifts, kindnesses and also perils ahead, but the girl's capacity to be an active agent in her search to the ends of the earth has grown. Finally there are three golden gifts from the three sisters, each one bringing the girl nearer to her goal of releasing the bear prince.



Morris does not allow herself to be constricted by a tale that has to conform to a set pattern. She amplifies the story in many ways. She offers fresh insights into the meaning of love and sacrifice, and of responsibility and reciprocity in relationships. Many of the figures in the narrative could be seen as archetypal entities and so limited in their function – the four winds and the three sisters, the troll queen and princess – but in her telling Morris breathes life into them by giving them some human qualities and so evokes empathy in the reader. Nothing is simply black and white; opposites are brought into relationship through reconciling motifs and symbolic enactment. For anyone who knows Jung’s work there are rich seams to mine.

The core of the fairy tale lies in the psychological drama of a young couple coming of age and the completion of a quest, but with an unexpected final twist of an ending and a new beginning. The power of the tale resides in the way it is told, complemented by luminous illustrations. Landscapes filling a double page place the reader at the scene in the immediacy of the moment. Smaller illustrations of the protagonists, objects and wild life embellish the pages like medieval manuscripts and offer moments for thought. This new telling brings fresh insights to a profound and ancient story. It is a book to treasure and will delight mature young readers, and older ones too.

Judith Philo

Non-Fiction

The Great Big Book of Feelings

Mary Hoffman, illus. Ros Asquith, London: Frances Lincoln Children’s Books, hb. 978 1 8478 0281 1, £11.99, 2013, 40pp.

How do we know what feelings are, and name them, express them and discover them? How do we make the discovery that something that begins from an experience inside us can develop into a language of self-expression and become the means of communicating with those around us? How does something intimate between a baby and its closest carer, initially concerned with the primacy of physical needs, gradually develop into something more subtle and playful? Sounds, words, facial expressions, muscular activity, vigorous and tender exchanges all expand the repertoire of communication in that first relationship. Toys, music and books contribute to and augment this lively theatre of expression, socialisation and cultural experience that continues to develop throughout our life.

Mary Hoffman and Ros Asquith’s creative collaboration in words and pictures bring this book to exuberant and colourful life. It is a vibrant and engagingly inventive exploration of feelings, situations, individuals, family, friends and school. The ups and downs of life, great and small, simple or complex appear in pages that celebrate the richness and diversity of these everyday experiences and exchanges. Knowing what you feel and being free to express yourself is great. It is also helpful to know that sometimes feelings can be a complicated and confusing tangle of good and less good inclinations. The end pages are closely filled with an infinite variety of images suggesting a freedom to play with ideas and feelings, which is born out in the subsequent pages. A friendly cat acts as guide. Probably most suitable for five to eight year olds.

Judith Philo



REPORTS

Word Book Day 2013 in Wales

Children and adults come together in over 100 different countries on World Book Day every year to celebrate authors, illustrators and the magic of reading.

Organised by UNESCO to promote reading and publishing, World Book Day is one of the most important celebrations of books and reading all around the world. It's celebrated by swapping books, dressing up as favourite characters and all kinds of book-related activity.

To celebrate, the elves at Literature Wales HQ wrapped hundreds of books as gifts for the readers of Wales. Wrapped in brown paper and string, titles donated by publishing houses Gwasg Carreg Gwalch, Hughes a'i Fab and Honno were scattered around various venues in Cardiff, Llanystumdwy and along the fieldworkers' paths. In *Alice in Wonderland* Alice was enticed with parcels labelled 'Eat me' and 'Drink me', World Book Day Literature Wales labelled its parcels 'Read me'. The book-wrapping elves hid one golden ticket in one of the 300 children's books that were distributed across Wales. The lucky finder won four tickets for events at the Cardiff Children's Literature Festival held over the weekend of 23–24 March.

See the discussion on Twitter. Use the #readme hashtag for the trail or follow @LitWales. For further information, contact Literature Wales: email post@literature.org or see www.literaturewales.org.

Cardiff Children's Literature Festival

Cardiff. Saturday and Sunday, 25–26 March 2013.

This was the first Children's Literature to be held and was organised in conjunction with the annual Cardiff Literature Festival.

Since 2013 celebrates the fiftieth anniversary of Doctor Who, and since Cardiff has played a role in the show's revival, with the Doctor Who Experience (www.doctorwhoexperience.com/) at Cardiff Bay bringing fans in from all over the world, a popular Saturday event was 'The Science Fiction of Doctor Who'. This event dispelled any idea that science lessons were boring. Science-fiction expert Mark Brake and rap artist 'with a difference' Jon Chase explored the world of Doctor Who.

On the Sunday, many families with children attended the 'Urban Afternoon' at The Cardiff Story in The Hayes. This workshop inspired many visitor to be creative, inspired by their favourite author. A visiting illustrator created a massive piece of art during the afternoon, with visitors helping to colour and complete the work.

See www.cardiffchildrenslitfest.com/content.asp.

London Book Fair 2013

The focus of this year's London Book Fair was publishing in Turkey. The British Council organised a series of events as part of the fair to showcase different authors and publishers, one of which was with the well-known children's author Fatih Erdogan. None of her books are currently available in English. However she has translated into Turkish Helen Cowcher's series that includes *Tigress* and *Jaguar*.

IBBY UK was asked to find a school and a library to host the event, so we selected a school in the area of Stoke Newington in Islington that has a significant Turkish community and hosted the event in their local Islington library, Mildmay. The school sent two Year Four classes, and Fatih was surprised and delighted to find that about 50 per cent of the class could speak Turkish. The children were absolutely thrilled to arrive and find the introductions to the session in Turkish – they had just been told that they would have a 'surprise'.



Fatih was joined by Guy Bass and both authors talked briefly about their work and their history as writers, before exploring in Turkish and English one of Guy's books that has been translated into Turkish.

This was a very worthwhile partnership with the British Council, who were very pleased with the success of the event. Next year's focus for the fair will be Korea, so we are looking forward to working with them again, probably on picture books as this is such a strong area in Korean publishing.

[Pam Dix]

AWARDS AND COMPETITIONS

Coventry Inspiration Young People's Book Awards 2013



The shortlists for the 2013 awards were announced in July 2012. The online polls were launched on 1 October 2012 and eliminations began on 20 January 2013. The winners were announced on 20 February 2013. Details of the process are at www.coventry.gov.uk/info/2000655/coventry_inspiration_book_awards/1501/about_the_coventry_inspiration_book_awards_2013. See also www.coventry.gov.uk/info/2000655/coventry_inspiration_book_awards/1501/about_the_coventry_inspiration_book_awards_2013/2. The winners are given below.

Never too Young (0–4)

Armitage, Ronda (illus. Layn Marlow) (2009) *A Very Strange Creature*. London: Orchard.

When Monkey finds a strange creature in the jungle he's very puzzled, and he calls the other animals to help. It doesn't have a tail for swinging, a trunk for washing, a long neck for reaching the high trees or even webbed feet for swimming. Whatever could it be?

What's the Story? (4–7)

Pinfold, Levi (2011) *Black Dog*. Dorking: Templar.

Have you ever heard of the legend of the black dog? Some believe one glimpse of this fearful creature will set the most terrible events in motion. So when it visits the Hope family home, who could blame them for being a bit alarmed? This is a story about being scared. It is also a story about not being scared. It depends on how you see things.

Raring 2 Read (7–11)

Evans, Anne ([2004] 2007) *The Beast*. London: Usborne.

The remote and dramatically beautiful Scottish valley seems like the perfect spot for a family holiday, but as soon as Amanda (12) arrives she can't help feeling something is wrong. No one listens to her fears, even when she sees mysterious shadows on the mountainside and strange scratches on her brother Grant's (14) back. Soon Amanda and Grant are locked in a deadly battle with the terror that is stalking the Valley of the Shadows.

Read it or Else! (11–14)

Crossan, Sarah (2012) *The Weight of Water*. London: Bloomsbury.

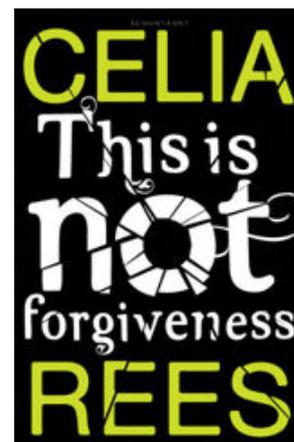
Armed with a suitcase and an old laundry bag filled with clothes, Kasienska and her mother head for England. Life is lonely for Kasienska. At home her mother's heart is breaking and at school friends are scarce. But when someone special swims into her life, Kasienska learns that there might be more than one way for her to stay afloat. This book is a startlingly original piece of fiction. A brilliant coming-of-age story, it also tackles the alienation experienced by many young immigrants. Moving, unsentimental and

utterly page turning, we meet and share the experiences of a remarkable girl who shows us how quiet courage prevails.

Simply the Book [of the year] (14+)

Rees, Celia (2012) *This Is Not Forgiveness*. London: Bloomsbury.

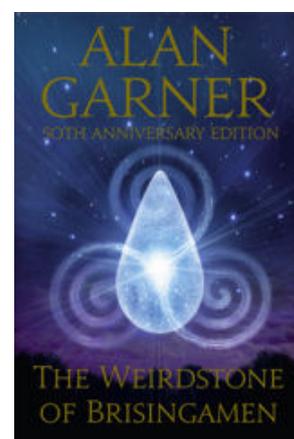
Everyone says that Caro is bad, but Jamie can't help himself. He thinks of her night and day and can't believe that she wants to be his girlfriend. Gorgeous, impulsive and unconventional, she is totally different from all the other girls he knows. His sister Martha hates her. Jamie doesn't know why, but there's no way he's going to take any notice of her warnings to stay away from Caro. But as Jamie falls deeper and deeper under her spell, he realises there is more to Caro – much more. There are the times when she disappears and doesn't get in touch, the small scars on her wrists, her talk about revolutions and taking action, not to mention the rumours he hears about the other men in her life. And then always in the background there is Rob, Jamie's older brother, back from Afghanistan and traumatised after having his leg smashed. Jamie wants to help him, but Rob seems to be living in a world of his own and is increasingly difficult to reach. With Caro, the summer should have been perfect, but that isn't how things work out in real life, and Jamie is going to find out the hard way.



Our Favourite Classics (classics of childhood)

Garner, Alan ([1960] 2010) *Weirdstone of Brisingamen*. London: HarperCollins.

Two children are led by a wizard to help find the Weirdstone of Brisingamen to stop an ancient evil arising. When Colin and Susan are pursued by eerie creatures across Alderley Edge, the wizard – Cadellin Silverbrow – takes them to safety deep in the caves of Fundindelve. Here he watches over the enchanted sleep of 140 knights, awaiting the fated hour when they must rise and fight. But the Weirdstone of Brisingamen is lost and the forces of evil are closing in. The children realise that they are the key to its return, but how can they defeat the powerful magic of the Morrigan and her deadly brood?



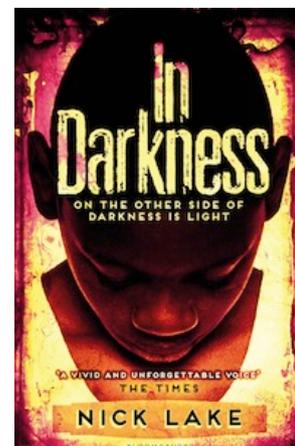
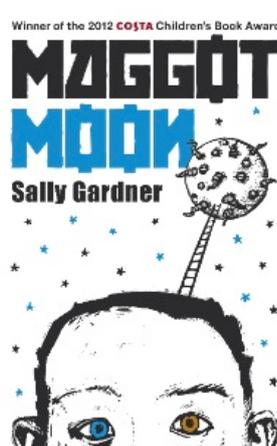
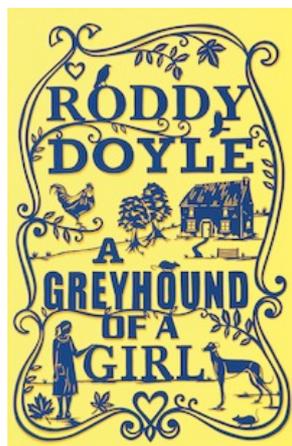
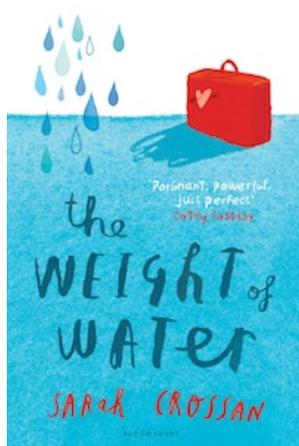
Information on the runners-up and the elimination order are at www.coventry.gov.uk/youngpeoplebookawards2013.

CILIP Carnegie and Kate Greenaway Medals 2013

Titles must have been first published in the UK between 1 September 2011 and 31 August 2012. Books first published in another country must have been co-published in the UK within three months of the original publication date.

CILIP again ran a shadowing scheme for both medals, engaging thousands of children and young people in reading the books on the shortlist. The shortlist was announced on 19 March 2013.

Carnegie Medal Shortlist



Sarah Crossan (2012) *The Weight of Water*, Bloomsbury (9+)

See page 42.

Roddy Doyle (2012) *A Greyhound of a Girl*, Marion Lloyd Books (9+)

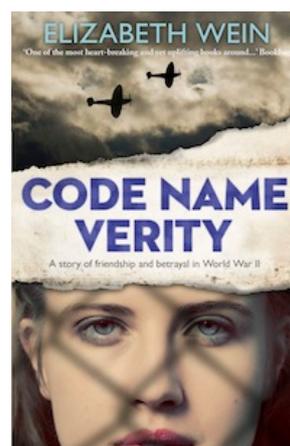
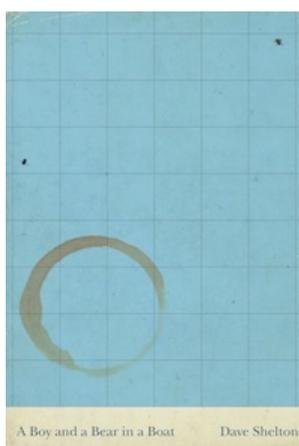
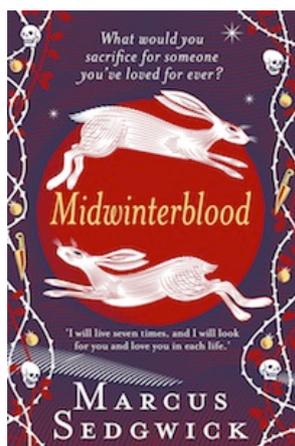
Twelve-year-old Mary O'Hara is the youngest of four generations of strong Irish women. Mary's mother Scarlett is more than a match for her, and her grandmother Emer would be if she weren't dying in hospital. Her great-grandmother Tansey is the feistiest of them all, and she's dead. But then Tansey's ghost arrives on Mary's doorstep with a very special mission – to take a midnight road trip back to the past.

Sally Gardner (2012) *Maggot Moon*, Hot Key Books (11+)

A ruthless regime is determined to beat its enemies in a race to the moon. But when his best friend Hector is suddenly taken away, it is up to unlikely hero Standish, his grandfather and a small band of rebels to confront and defeat the ever-present oppressive forces of the Motherland.

Nick Lake (2012) *In Darkness*, Bloomsbury (13+)

In the aftermath of the Haitian earthquake, Shorty, a teenage boy, is trapped beneath the rubble of a ruined hospital, thirsty, terrified and alone. He has been drawn into the gangster world, but he harbours a secret: a flame of revenge and a burning wish to find the twin sister he lost seven years ago. Shorty's fires burn so bright he forges a link with Toussaint l'Ouverture, the Haitian rebel who led the slave revolt two centuries ago. Together they must face their own darkness and find the strength to survive.



R.J. Palacio (2012) *Wonder*. London: Bodley Head (10+)

Born with a terrible facial abnormality, shy, bright ten-year-old Auggie Pullman has had countless operations and has been home schooled by his parents for his whole life. Now, for the first time, Auggie is being sent to a real school, exposing him to the stares and cruelty of the outside world, and he's dreading it. Through the voices of Auggie, his big sister Via and his new friends Jack and Summer, *Wonder* follows Auggie's journey through his first year at Beecher Prep.

Marcus Sedgwick (2011) *Midwinterblood*. London: Indigo (11+)

A story that spans hundreds of years, *Midwinterblood* tells the story of Eric and Merle who have loved and lost one another and who have been searching for each other ever since. In the seven different interweaving stories, the two appear as lovers, mother and son, brother and sister, and artist and child, as they come close to finding each other before facing the ultimate sacrifice.

Dave Shelton (2012) *A Boy and a Bear in a Boat*. Oxford: David Fickling Books (8+)

A boy and a bear go to sea, equipped only with a suitcase, a comic book and a ukulele. They are travelling only a short distance and it really shouldn't take long. But then their boat encounters 'unforeseeable anomalies'. Faced with turbulent stormy seas, a

terrifying sea monster and the rank remains of *The Very Last Sandwich*, the odds soon become pitted against our unlikely heroes in the story of a truly memorable friendship.

Elizabeth Wein (2012) *Code Name Verity*, Glasgow: Electric Monkey (13+)

Only in wartime could a stalwart lass from Manchester strike up a friendship with a Scottish aristocrat, one a pilot, the other a special operations executive, both serving during the Second World War. It's not long before they become devoted to each other. But then a vital mission goes wrong, and one of the friends is captured by the Gestapo. Now a prisoner of war, the story begins in 'Verity's' own words as she writes her account for her captors.

Kate Greenaway Medal Shortlist



Rebecca Cobb (2012) *Lunchtime*. London: Macmillan Children's Books (3+)

It's lunchtime for one little girl, but she's just not hungry. A visiting crocodile, bear and wolf, however, are starving. It's just as well that children taste revolting! A beautifully illustrated tale of food, friendship and fun from a new author-illustrator.

Emily Gravett (2011) *Again!*. London: Macmillan Children's Books (5+)

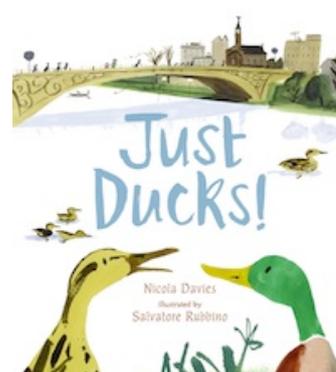
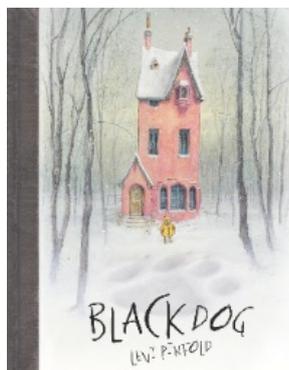
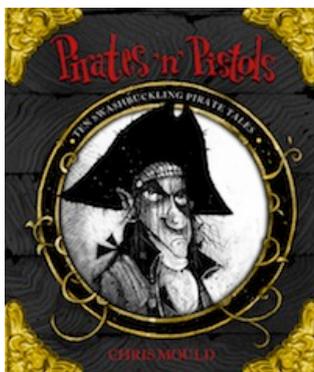
It's nearly Cedric the dragon's bedtime! He's brushed his teeth and had his bath, which means there is just enough time for his mum to read him his favourite book. However, once is not enough and mum is more sleepy than Cedric. Growing impatient, he pleads with his sleeping mum to read to him again – with some fiery consequences! Emily Gravett won the Kate Greenaway Medal in 2008 with *Little Mouse's Big Book of Fears* and in 2006 for *Wolves*.

Chris Haughton (2012) *Oh No, George!*. London: Walker Books (5+)

George is a dog with all the best intentions. And his owner, Harry, has all the best hopes that George will be a well-behaved dog when he leaves him alone for the day. But when George spies a delicious cake sitting on the kitchen table, his resolve starts to waver. You see, George loves cake – and it's so hard to be a good dog when there are cats to chase and flowers to dig up!

Jon Klassen (2011) *I Want My Hat Back*. London: Walker Books (5+)

The bear's hat has gone and he wants it back. Patiently and politely, he asks the animals he comes across, one by one, whether they have seen it. Each animal says no, some more elaborately than others. But just as the bear begins to despair of ever finding his hat, a deer asks a simple question that sparks the bear's memory, inspiring him to renew his search with a vengeance.



Chris Mould (2012) *Pirates 'n' Pistols*. London: Hodder Children's Books (9+)

Following on from Mould's *Dust 'n' Bones* and *Fangs 'n' Fire* comes *Pirates 'n' Pistols* – ten swashbuckling pirate tales about some of the most villainous and scurrilous rogues ever to sail the Seven Seas. Traditional pirate myths and legends, some new and some original tales, and memorable pirates from all over the world burst off the pages.

Helen Oxenbury (illustrator) and Peter Bently (author) (2011) *King Jack and the Dragon*. London: Puffin Books (3+)

Night is falling, bedtime is looming and playtime is almost over, but brave King Jack and his faithful followers, Sir Zak and baby Caspar, are more than a match for dragons and horrid beasts. With a band of faithful knights and a mighty castle too, this is a magical make-believe adventure. Helen Oxenbury won the Kate Greenaway Medal in 1969 with *The Quangle Wangle's Hat* and *The Dragon of an Ordinary Family* and again in 1999 with *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*.

Levi Pinfold (2011) *Black Dog*, Dorking: Templar Publishing (5+)

A black dog appears outside the Hope family's home. As each member of the household sees it and hides, the dog grows bigger. Only Small, the youngest Hope, has the courage to face the Black Dog. When it chases her through the forest she shows no fear, so it grows smaller and smaller. Finally, back to the size of a normal hound, the Black Dog is welcomed into the Hope household as their newest addition.

Salvatore Rubbino (illustrator) and Nicola Davies (author) (2012) *Just Ducks!*. London: Walker Books (5+)

The young girl in this story may live in the city, but outside her window there's a river full of mallard ducks. She hears them as soon as she wakes up, and on the way to school she sees them upside down bobbing for food. Interspersed with fun facts, her enthusiastic commentary about her feathered neighbours are paired with cheerful watercolour illustrations.

The winners will be announced on 19 June 2013 at a ceremony in London.

Karen Robinson is chair of the judging panel for 2013 and Youth Libraries Group chair elect.

Website: www.carnegiegreenaway.org.uk/home/. Shadowing website: www.carnegiegreenaway.org.uk/shadowingsite/.

For further information, contact Anwen Hooson at Riot Communications: anwen@riotcommunications.com, or Liz Hyder: liz@riotcommunications.com.

Blue Peter Awards 2013

The winners were announced and received their trophies on a special World Book Day edition of *Blue Peter*, which broadcast live on Thursday 7 March 2013. Books for the 2013 awards must have been first published between 1 November 2011 and 31 October 2012 in the UK.

Over 300 young *Blue Peter* viewers from a selection of schools across the UK and Ireland voted for their favourites to determine the overall winners. Some of the experiences of the young *Blue Peter* viewers who took part in this year's judging can be read at www.booktrust.org.uk/news-blogs-and-press/blogs/booktrust/530/.

Best Story

Liz Pichon (2012) *Tom Gates Genius Ideas (Mostly)*. London: Scholastic.

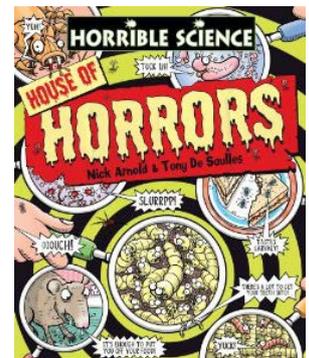
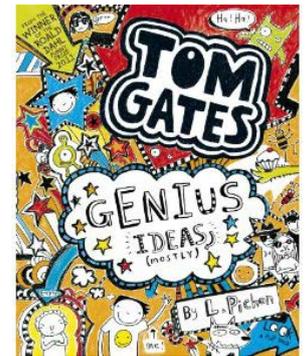
This book features Pichon's hero Tom dealing with the shame of his dad's plans to compete in the school sports day, while he plans his own training regime for the school talent show.

Best Book with Facts

Nick Arnold (illus. Tony De Saulles) (2012) *Horrible Science: House of Horrors*. London: Scholastic.

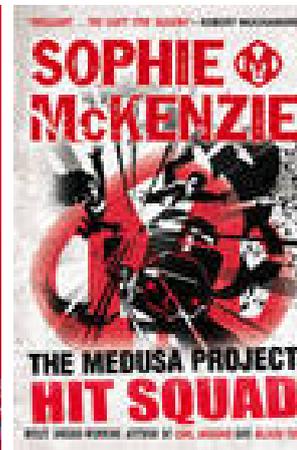
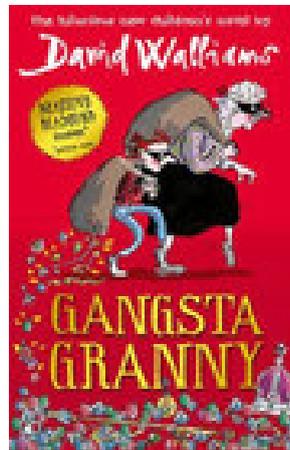
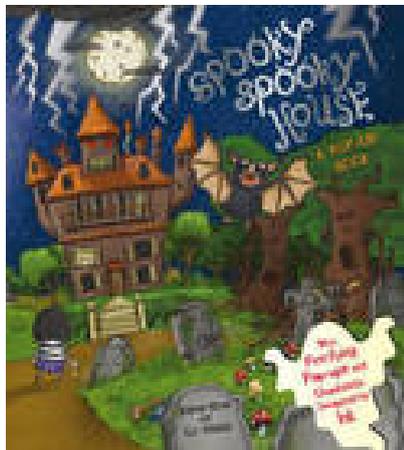
This book helps young readers to discover gruesome facts about the hidden aspects of everyday living with cartoon-illustrated fact-filled pages.

For further information, see www.booktrust.org.uk/prizes-and-awards/2.



Red House Children's Book Award 2013

The Red House Children's Book Award is the only national book award voted for entirely by children. The winner in each category was announced at a ceremony at the Queen Elizabeth Hall, South Bank, London, on Saturday 23 February 2013 as part of the Imagine Festival.



Younger Children and Overall Winner

Weale, Andrew (illus. Lee Wildish) (2011) *The Spooky Spooky House*. London: Corgi.

With a tantalising storyline that dares the reader to explore a monstrous mansion, this spooky new take on the classic haunted-house concept is completely engrossing. It is jam-packed with carefully designed pop-ups, and on the final page there is a terrific twist that will only be revealed when the amazing heat-sensitive ink is warmed up!

Younger Readers

Walliams, David (illus. Tony Ross) (2011) *Gangsta Granny*. London: HarperCollins.

A hilarious and moving story of old age, adventure, stolen jewels and swimming the Thames. Ben is bored beyond belief after he is made to stay at his grandma's house. She's the boringest grandma ever: all she wants to do is to play Scrabble, and eat cabbage soup. But there are two things Ben doesn't know about his grandma: she was

once an international jewel thief, and all her life she has been plotting to steal the Crown Jewels. Now she needs Ben's help.

Older Readers

McKenzie, Sophie (2012) *The Medusa Project: Hit Squad*. London: Simon & Schuster Children's Books.

Fourteen years ago, scientist William Fox implanted four babies with the Medusa gene – a gene for psychic abilities. Fox's experiment left a legacy: four teenagers, each with their own distinct and special skill. These four teens were originally brought together to form a crime-fighting force, the Medusa Project. Now the team is due to be disbanded and the teenagers sent to separate locations. But Nico, Ketty, Ed and Dylan are determined to investigate claims that a drug conveying the same powers as the Medusa gene has been developed. Joined by new friends Cal and Amy, who also have the gene, the four set off on their most dangerous mission yet.

For more information, see www.redhousechildrensbookaward.co.uk.

Hampshire School Library Service

The Hampshire SLS has run three book awards over the past years, aimed at Years 1, 5 and 8, and is piloting a new one in 2013 for Year 4. Two of the shortlists are currently available and are given below. For details see www3.hants.gov.uk/sls/sls-reading.htm.

Hampshire Picture Book Award 2013

<http://www3.hants.gov.uk/sls/sls-reading/hpba.htm>.

This is an annual award with the aim of introducing new picture books to Year 1 pupils, extending their experience and developing a love of books. It provides the pupils with a unique opportunity to be involved in a major county literary event, whilst giving them a real chance to enthuse about reading for pleasure. All primary schools subscribing to the SLS can apply to take part. The judges are Year 1 pupils in participating schools.

The shortlist is announced to coordinators at the end of the autumn term. Participating Year 1 pupils have the spring term to read and evaluate the books and then vote for their favourite.

Aims of the award are to:

- Promote the enjoyment of reading
- Develop children's visual literacy skills
- Develop pupils' creativity
- Develop pupils' critical ability, using listening and speaking skills
- Increase teachers' knowledge of new material
- Promote pupil use of the public library.

Shortlisted titles 2013

Wolf Won't Bite by Emily Gravett (2012, London: Macmillan Children's Books)

Stanley's Stick by John Hegley and Neal Layton (2011, London: Hodder Children's Books)

George Flies South by Simon James (2012, London: Walker Books)

If I Could Paint the World by Sarah Massini (2011, Bath: Gullane Children's Books)

Hampshire Information Book Award 2013

<http://www3.hants.gov.uk/sls/sls-reading/information-book-award.htm>.

This award is being piloted in 2013. The judges are Year 4 pupils, and the shortlist is made up of five books chosen for their potential both to stimulate discussion and to reinforce the value of information books in the digital age.

Aims of the award are to:

- Promote the enjoyment of reading
- Develop pupils' appreciation of information books
- Develop pupils' critical abilities in assessing the creative work of printed text, using speaking and listening skills
- Celebrate the value of information books in an electronic age
- Develop skills enabling children to evaluate information sources
- Develop pupils' confidence in information retrieval.

Shortlisted titles 2013

Knight Survival Guide: Are You Tough Enough? by Anna Claybourne (2011, London: A&C Black)

Acorn to Oak Tree (Life Cycles) by Camilla de la Bedoyere (2012, London: QED Publishing)

Fizzing Physics (Science Crackers) by Steve Parker (2011, London: QED Publishing)

Hidden in the Trees by Barbara Taylor (2012, London: QED Publishing)

Let's Ride a Bike (Let's Find Out) by Ruth Walton (2012, London: Franklin Watts)

UKLA Book Awards 2013

The UK Literacy Association announced the shortlist on 11 March 2013.

Fifty teachers from schools in Liverpool, Leicester and Manchester have been the judges and have demonstrated with their choices what an exciting and varied diet of quality texts is available to young readers in the UK. The shortlists in three age categories offer everything from toddler tantrums to legendary carnivorous water horses, alongside some sensitive, moving portrayals of grief, displacement and family break up, but all share the potential to excite, engage and challenge young readers. The submitted publications could be fiction or non-fiction, novels or picture books as long as they had writing in a language rich in layered meanings, imaginative expression and exciting vocabulary. Where present, high-quality illustration was also an important feature of the chosen texts. The nominated representatives from each panel now have the task of reading the shortlisted books in all categories and the final winners will be announced on 5 July 2013 during the UKLA International Conference at Liverpool Hope University.

The shortlist for the three categories, for pupils of age ranges 3–6, 7–11 and 12–16, include five debut authors and two past Carnegie Medal winners, Melvin Burgess and Frank Cottrell Boyce. The shortlist can be downloaded as a pdf from www.ukla.org/awards/ukla_childrens_book_awards_sponsored_by_mls/.

Marsh Award for Children's Literature in Translation 2013

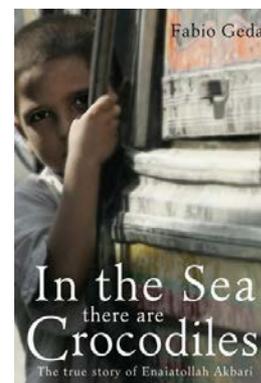
See *IBBYLink* 36 for details of this award, the shortlist and the judges.

The 2013 winner was announced by the International English-Speaking Union, Dartmouth House, Mayfair, London, at an awards ceremony on 23 January 2013.

Howard Curtis is the winner of for his translation of Fabio Geda's *In the Sea there are Crocodiles* from the original Italian and published in the UK by David Ficking Books.

A harrowing story of a young boy travelling from his home in Afghanistan to Italy, in search of safety. Based on the experiences of Enaiatollah Akbari, his story is told with a sense of humour and adventure, and with great pace and tension.

The next award will be in 2015. See *IBBYLink* 36 for submission details. For further information on the award, see the English Speaking Union website www.esu.org or contact Mary Greer, mary.greer@esu.org



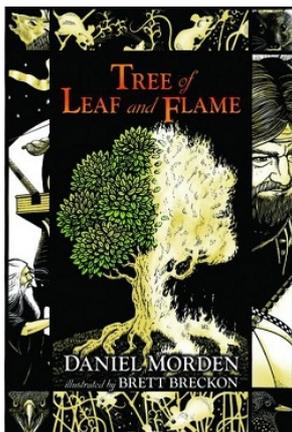
2013 Tir na n-Og English Award

Cardiff Central Library. 16 May 2013.

Tir na n-Og award was presented to Daniel Morden for his collection of stories, *Tree of Leaf and Flame* (illus. Bett Breckon, Llandysul: Pont Books, 2012).

Tree of Leaf and Flame is Daniel Morden's unique take on the tales of the Mabinogi. It's the perfect opportunity to hear these strange and fascinating tales retold by a storyteller who earns his living travelling Wales and holding audiences spellbound – just as the professional bards and troubadours did all those years ago. The book is illustrated by Brett Breckon in the striking scraperboard style that attracted such praise in the companion volume *Dark Tales from the Woods*, published by Pont in 2006.

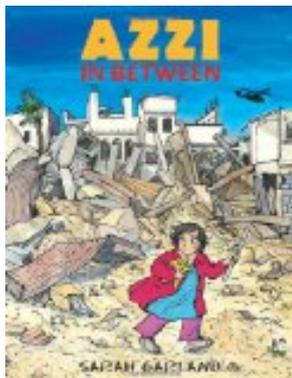
The Tir na n-Og English Award recognises the exceptional quality of books with a Welsh background for children and young people. It is sponsored by CILIP Wales (the Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals) and the award ceremony formed part of its annual conference.



Little Rebels Children's Book Award

London Radical Bookfair, Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London. 11 May 2013.

The winner of the new award for radical children's fiction is *Azzi in Between* by Sarah Garland (London: Frances Lincoln Children's Books, 2012).



Azzi in Between tells the story of a family forced to leave their homeland and settle in a strange and unfamiliar country. Azzi and her parents are in danger. They have to leave their home and escape to another country on a frightening journey by car and boat. In the new country they must learn to speak a new language, find a new home and Azzi must start a new school. With a kind helper at the school, Azzi begins to learn English and to understand that she is not the only one who has had to flee her home. She makes a new friend, and with courage and resourcefulness, begins to adapt to her new life. But Grandma has been left behind. The book is based on the author's own experience of working among refugee families and is endorsed by Amnesty International.

The Little Rebels Children's Book Award recognises fiction for ages 0–12 that promotes or celebrates social justice and equality. It is given by the Alliance of Radical Booksellers (ARB) and is administered by specialist children's bookseller Letterbox Library. Wendy Cooling, (Bookstart co-founder and editor) and Elizabeth Laird (children's author) were the judges.

The winner received a cash prize and a framed print by children's author-illustrator and *The Guardian* cartoonist Ros Asquith.

Contact: Fen Coles, info@letterboxlibrary.com, Tel: 020 7503 4801
Letterbox Library; Unit 151 Stratford Workshops; Burford Road; Stratford E15 2SP

Christopher Tower Poetry Awards 2013

Christ Church, Oxford. Thursday 18 April 2013.

Eighteen year-old Azfa Ali, Oxford Spires Academy, was awarded the £3,000 first prize for her poem 'Origins'. The winner of the second (£1,000) prize is Sarah Fletcher (last year's winner) from the American School in London with 'Kraut Girl' and the third prize winner (£500) is Erin Tunney (De Lisle Catholic Science College, Loughborough, Leicestershire) with 'The Devil'. The judges were the poets Bernard O'Donoghue, Carrie Etter and Peter McDonald.

The Christopher Tower Poetry Competition is the UK's most valuable prize for young poets and for the 2013 competition students between 16–18 were challenged to write a poem on the theme of 'The Details'. The competition is open to all 16–18 year-olds who are in full-time or part-time education. Funded by a generous bequest to Christ Church, Oxford by the late Christopher Tower, the aims of Tower Poetry are 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. The competition rules can be read at www.towerpoetry.org.uk/prize/competition-rules.

The poems can be read from www.towerpoetry.org.uk/winning-poems.

Origins

1 *Killindoni*

In my hometown:
I felt the rough sand
scrub against my feet;
chased salty orange crabs
who pinched my pinkie tight; so by
firelight,
I would crunch into lemon-seeping shells,
feel the faint texture of sand resting on my
tongue.

2 *Refugee on a Motorway*

Clutch the parcel of clothes
balancing on your head,
stare at the cluttered road ahead
with your *Kanga*
wipe off beads of sweat.
With trembling legs,
brush past the first car's face:

enter the metal maze,
feel the hot steel
crush you into a flower.
See the world like a
white square tower
turn into a haze.
Let your skin shed its brown
and instead become blue,
violet, pomegranate red.

3 *Scotland*

In my country:
I grew up in the Gorbals,
with Kwiksave, the Junkies,
and chucking snowballs;
watching fireworks
on the eighth floor of my council flat,
listening to the bangs and cracks;
watching the orange flames
flower out.

(Copyright © 2013 Azfa Ali)

Kraut Girl

(‘Kraut Girls’ were Dutch natives who sought relationships with invading German officers for safety during the Second World War and were treated as traitors after the Dutch liberation.)

‘When I played yahtzee, I would drop the die
to the floor so each turn I could help
mein Herr to an eyeful when I’d kneel
down
to pick it up. Then win. I knew his razor
burn from skin-on-skin, the rash of kissing
moustached men. The mouth-null of
tongue
when they left, the red that set
on upper-lip for days. Beyond the kiss,
my job was synonymous with sextonship.
Beyond the sex, I’d oversee my town-
cum-grave
those days Johann was gone away.

I tried to hide my Rhine diamond. Locals
hissed and chided my betrayal. They’d
spit.
And though my hands, weighted with ring,
had faith
when he was here, they grew agnostic
when he left. And then he did for good.
I bore his mandrake babies; hymned *das
Wort
war bei dem Mann und der Mann war das
Wort*.
But these were just the jots and tittles,
none
of which passed the law fulfilled: later,
they shaved my head and each red follicle
rose to the surface like a fresh love bite:
my baldness then synonymous with
justice.
That was more the point.’

(Copyright © 2012 Sarah Fletcher)

For further information or to follow, see the website at www.towerpoetry.org.uk/ or www.facebook.com/pages/Tower-Poetry/101808106554586?ref=hl on Facebook, or @TowerPoetry on Twitter, or on YouTube at www.youtube.com/christophertower1.

Royal Society Young People's Book Prize 2013

6–9 Carlton House Terrace, London. May 2013.

Publishers across the UK submitted their best recent books that communicate science to young people. An adult shortlisting panel has narrowed down the choice to a shortlist of six books. The winning book will be 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 six books shortlisted by the shortlisting panel for 2013 are:

Build the Human Body by Richard Walker (illus. Mark Ruffle and Galia Bernstein) (Templar)

‘A hands on, fun kit to help learn about the human body, accompanied by a well-illustrated, concise, clear book.’

Buzzing! by Anneliese Emmans Dean (Brambleby Books)

‘This book is buzzing with interesting science facts and wonderful poetry. Each page features a different British mini-beast that you might find in your back garden, with a funny poem about it.’

Discover More: The Elements by Dan Green (Scholastic Children's Books)

‘A good starting point for learning about the topic and full of rocking chemistry! Starting with what elements are and where they come from, the book goes through each element in turn with facts about its discovery and the science about how it impacts our everyday lives.’

Don't Flush: Lifting the Lid on the Science of Poo and Wee by Richard Platt, Mary Platt and John Kelly (Kingfisher)

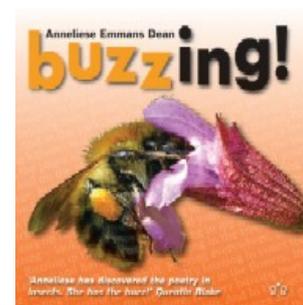
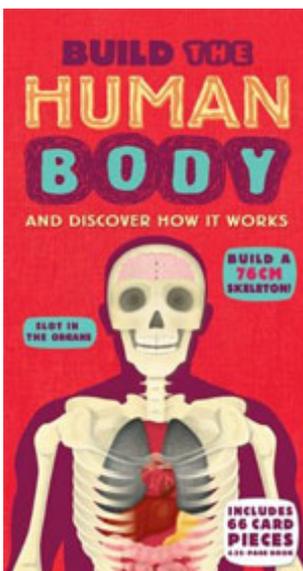
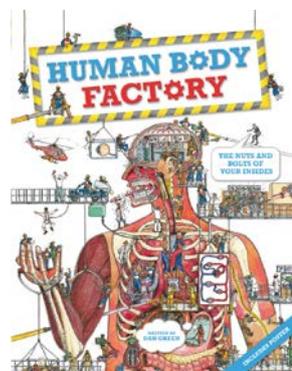
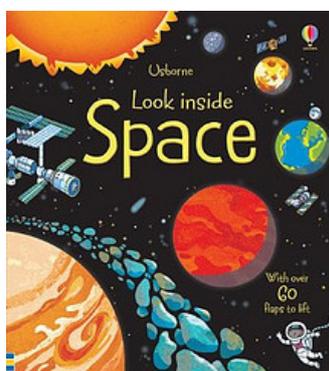
‘A light-hearted but informative look at the science behind the use of poo and wee throughout history – to build houses, wash and dye our clothes, fertilise crops, treat illnesses, solve crimes, control pollution and create fuel, energy and explosives. A perfectly disgusting book!’

Human Body Factory by Dan Green (Kingfisher)

‘This book is intricately illustrated with tiny factory workers who explain how each part of the body works. It is the “Where’s Wally?” of the human body – you keep noticing comic little details such as the workers in dinghies mixing gastric juices in the stomach with a giant whisk! As well as being fun, the panel was also impressed by the level of accurate scientific detail.’

Look Inside Space by Rob Lloyd Jones (Usborne Publishing)

‘A fantastically interactive book for younger children. Full of flaps to lift (and flaps under flaps) that reveal amazing facts about space.’



CONFERENCES, EXHIBITIONS AND EVENTS

Enid Blyton Exhibition: Mystery, Magic and Midnight Feasts

Seven Stories, National Centre for Children's Books. 3 May 2013 – March 2014.

Mystery, Magic and Midnight Feasts celebrates the life and work of Enid Blyton. Many exhibits will be on public display for the first time, revealing Blyton's creative imagination and the events that shaped her life and storytelling. Seven Stories fundraised to buy a large collection of Blyton typescripts and rare artefacts when they were auctioned in 2010. Many items from the Seven Stories and Enid Blyton Society collections will be on show including:

Original hand-corrected typescripts, including *Five have Plenty of Fun* (1954), *Last Term at Malory Towers* (1951), *Look Out, Secret Seven* (1962) and *Cheer Up, Little Noddy* (1960).

Blyton's personal and nature diaries spanning the 1920s, 1930s and 1960s.

Harmsen van der Beek's first Noddy illustration (1949) and letter to Enid Blyton.

Personal family photographs, including Blyton as a child.

Blyton's famous typewriter.

At the height of her 40-year career, from 1951 to 1954, Blyton produced 192 books – an average of one a week. Her books, which were often serialised, captivated children in the same way that Harry Potter has in recent times. Blyton, always keen to speak directly to her young readers, responded to this adoration by setting up the Famous Five Club and the Enid Blyton magazine. She was a complex person – a keen naturalist, progressive teacher, working parent and canny business woman.

Enid Blyton (1897–1968) was the bestselling English-language author of the twentieth century, and remains one of the most popular writers of all time. In polls of favourite childhood reading, she continues to be ranked in the top five authors, often above Roald Dahl and J.K. Rowling. Her first book was published in 1922 and her work has been in print ever since. In a career that spanned five decades, she wrote an astonishing 700+ books and some 4,500 short stories.

Mystery, Magic and Midnight Feasts is designed to be playful, interactive and immersive, for young audiences to enjoy. Children are invited to throw themselves into the worlds of the Famous Five and Secret Seven, Malory Towers, Magic Faraway Tree and Noddy's Toyland.

A digital exhibition will be available via Seven Stories website from summer 2013, see www.sevenstories.org.uk for details.

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

A Viking's Guide to Deadly Dragons with Cressida Cowell

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

This 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.

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 is 'Footprints on the Grass: Speaking of Gardens and Children's Books'.

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 is at www.pearcelecture.com/lectures/2012.

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

The Story Museum

Rochester House, 42 Pembroke Street, Oxford.

Nick Cope's Songbook

Every Saturday 10.30–11.30 a.m. £5 per child, adults £3. Siblings under 1 year free.

'Monkeys, bears, socks and mud! Nick Cope (former Candyskins frontman) sings about everything children are REALLY interested in. Sit back and relax, or get up and dance!' For more information: www.storymuseum.org.uk/the-story-museum/events/songbook.

Alice's Day

Saturday 6 July 2013.

'Nonsense' is the theme of this year's Alice's Day, which celebrates the first telling of Lewis Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* on the River Thames in Oxford. More than 20 of Oxford's historic locations will be taking part. Join Alice, the Mad Hatter and the Owl and the Pussycat. [Restaurants and cafes](#) will also be getting into the spirit, with Alice-themed refreshments.

The list of forthcoming events is updated monthly at www.storymuseum.org.uk/events.

For general information, see www.storymuseum.org.uk/ or contact Cath Nightingale cath@storymuseum.org.uk, 01865790050.

NEWS

Children's Laureate

Kings Place, London. 4 June 2013.

Malorie Blackman, the bestselling author of the highly acclaimed and award-winning *Noughts & Crosses* teen series, has been appointed the Waterstones Children's Laureate for 2013–2015. As the Children's Laureate, Blackman will call on teachers and parents to spend at least 10 minutes per day sharing a book with their pupils and children in an impassioned bid to get 'more children reading more'. Drawing on her years of experience talking to her teen readers, Blackman will be working to make reading 'irresistible' for teenagers, encouraging them to explore a range of literature genre and forms, from short stories to graphic novels. She will also be encouraging them to make their own creative responses to books using a range of expressive mediums including music, art, film, drama, animation, poetry and spoken word. As a former computer programmer, Blackman is enthusiastic about the role that technology plays in making literature come alive for a generation of digitally-aware young people.

See more on the children's laureate website, www.childrenslaureate.org.uk.

Young People's Laureate for Wales, 2013–2015

'A poem for everyone; a poem in everyone.'

Literature Wales has appointed the award-winning live performer and poet Martin Daws as the new Young People's Laureate for Wales, 2013–2015.

The Young People's Laureate initiative gives youth communities across Wales an important platform from which to develop their own creative voices and discuss the issues relevant to young people today. Martin Daws will use a wide range of disciplines, from sonnets to soundscapes, and beatboxing to broadcasting, to engage the next generation with literature. Forthcoming projects will include working with young people to create their own poetic manifestos, a summer day school for writers and youth leaders on delivering accessible literature activities and a pop-up poetry tour of Wales' more rural communities.

Daws will be tweeting daily via the Young People's Laureate Twitter account, @YPLWales, giving young people and adults the opportunity to converse with him and take part in an interactive twitter poem that will grow in multiple directions each day.

In his role as Young People's Laureate, he joins the new Bardd Plant Cymru. The Bardd Plant Cymru (Welsh-language Children's Poet Laureate) works closely with children all over Wales to inspire and promote a love of literature in the Welsh language.

Visit www.youngpeopleslaureate.org for more information and to take part, or contact Literature Wales: www.literaturewales.org/.

Irish Children's Laureate

The second Laureate na nÓg is Niamh Sharkey. She is in post until May 2014. Her current initiative is Pictiúr.

Pictiúr, an exhibition of the work of some of Ireland's leading children's book illustrators that has been curated by Laureate na nÓg, Niamh Sharkey, will visit four venues in Europe during Ireland's presidency of the EU before returning to Ireland to tour. Irish tour dates are:

Draóicht, Blanchardstown: 5 September – 5 October 2013

Babaró Festival, Galway Arts Centre: 13–31 October 2013

The Museum of Modern Art Ireland (IMMA), Kilmainham, Dublin: December 2013.

Pictiúr features the work of 21 children's book illustrators:

Lily Bernard
Adrienne Geoghegan
Anita Jeram
Donough O'Malley
Alan Clarke
Olivia Golden
Chris Judge

Niamh Sharkey
Michael Emberley
Chris Haughton
P.J. Lynch
Steve Simpson
Tatyana Feeney
Paul Howard

Oisín McGann
Kevin Waldron
Marie-Louise Fitzpatrick
Oliver Jeffers
Mary Murphy
Olwyn Whelan
Andrew Whitson

The exhibition comprises 42 art pieces and will include illustrations from books written in English and Irish.

A special web page for the full Pictiúr catalogue will be set up shortly.

You can read about Laureate na nÓg at www.childrenslaureate.ie.

Fenland Young Poet Laureate 2013

Although the Fenland District Council no longer wishes to support the project, Atelier East with support from the Wisbech and Fenland Museum went ahead on a shoestring. However only the Young and Adult awards were run, the Junior award was not.

Elaine Ewart, the Fenland Poet Laureate, ran two community workshops to give inspiration to aspiring young laureates (age 10–16). Aspirants submitted a poem on the theme of 'Fenland' in its widest interpretation. The poem had to be no longer than 40 words. The shortlisted entrants performed their poems at the award ceremony on 1 March 2013 at Wisbech and Fenland Museum. The shortlisted poets were James Horsburgh, Bonnie Scott and Kristina Tunnard, with James Horsburgh being the winner and therefore the new Fenland Young Poet Laureate.

His poem is about a hare that lives in the Fens and it describes the things the hare likes about his life in Fenland.

The Fens by James Horsburgh

I am a hare,
And this is where I live, the Fens.
All my friends and family moved away,
For the reason that it is misty and cold.
But I chose to stay,
Not to look strong or noble,
But to explore the vast, flat fields.
There is plenty of food,
With acres of crops to choose.
I have no problem with that,
But I am rather lonely and that's a fact,
Surrounded by openness as far as the eye can see.

After the cold, hard winter, spring appears.
This brings happy times for me.
Oh, how fun it is to run along the miles of dykes.
The huge sky of blue touches the fields of yellow and green.
I look at the daffodils dancing in the sun.
As the sun sets, I hear a barn owl's hoot from afar.
I look up at the never ending blackness,
Thousands of stars that shine so bright.
I wonder what the next day will hold.
I am a hare, and I love the Fens.

For photographs and the winner's reply to the award, see www.atelier-east.co.uk/2013/03/fenland-poet-laureate-awards-poems-and-words-from-the-amazing-poets/. For general information on the award, email Karen Harvey on info@karen-harvey.co.uk.

NCRCL News

Two new prizes for students on the Roehampton University MA in Children's Literature are to be awarded. The Pinsent Prize will be awarded for outstanding work on the onsite MA in Children's Literature. The Hancock Prize will be awarded for outstanding work on the distance learning MA in Children's Literature.

[Lisa Sainsbury, Director NCRCL]

National Poetry Centre at CLPE

In April 2013, the Centre for Literacy in Primary Education launched the new National Poetry Centre for Primary Schools. The poetry centre offers a Poetryline website (www.poetryline.org.uk/) with films of poets reading and talking about their poetry; downloadable poems by poets and children; animated poems and book lists; and teaching resources.

Courses and projects include poetry projects with Michael Rosen, Shakespeare poetry and drama days, and conferences on poetry. A poetry library with a selection of the best new poetry books for children, and an historical collection of significant poetry anthologies and single-poet collections has been set up. Publications for teachers and anthologies by children are available at <http://shop.clpe.co.uk/department/poetry/>.

For more information: info@clpe.co.uk ; www.clpe.co.uk; 020 7401 3382/3; CLPE, Webber St, London, SE1 8QW.]

[Ann Lazim]

The Story Museum

Rochester House, 42 Pembroke Street, Oxford.

A Small Capital Grant of £465,000 from Arts Council England has been secured. An additional £7.5m is still required for the transformation of the building. Planning permission has been granted for the first phase of development which will start this year. This includes a café and shop, plus improvements to the existing facilities and the building's accessibility.

The museum has launched its first book, *The Storytelling School: Handbook for Teachers* by Chris Smith and Adam Guillain with a foreword by educationalist Pie Corbett. The book can be ordered online at www.storymuseum.org.uk/shop or by phone (01865 790050) or email (sarah@storymuseum.org.uk).

There are now many stories for all ages in Michael Rosen's The Thousand and One Stories project. They can be listened to at www.storymuseum.org.uk/1001stories/. The text of each story is also presented.

Website: www.storymuseum.org.uk/. For information on forthcoming events and to book tickets, see www.storymuseum.org.uk/the-story-museum/events or email Cath Nightingale: cath@storymuseum.org.uk.

IBBY NEWS

IBBY Section Newsletters

The latest newsletters uploaded to www.ibby.org/index.php?id=932 and <http://www.ibby.org/index.php?id=1266>:

[European Newsletter April 2013](#)

[Asian Regional Newsletter February 2013](#)

[IBBY France, April 2013](#)

[IBBY Ireland, February 2013](#)

[IBBY Canada, February 2013](#)

[IBBY Australia 16, February 2013](#)

[IBBY Bolivia, December 2012](#)

[IBBY UAE, October 2012](#)

[IBBY South Africa, December 2012](#)

Extracts from the President's Annual Letter, 25 February 2013

Dear Friends

The IBBY General Assembly took place during the London Congress. Fifty-four sections were represented as voting members, as well as five voting by proxy. During the assembly, the new Executive Committee (EC) for the period 2012–2014 was elected: Marilar Aleixandre (Spain), Gülçin Alpöge (Turkey), Hasmig Chahinian (France), Nadia El Kholy (Egypt), Azucena Galindo Ortega (Mexico), Angela Lebedeva (Russia), Kiyoko Matsuoka (Japan), Akoss Ofori-Mensah (Ghana), Linda Pavonetti (USA) and Timotea Vrablova (Slovakia). We shall continue to provide leadership and support all National Sections in pursuing IBBY's objectives and plans. Hasmig Chahinian and Linda Pavonetti will serve as vice presidents during this term. María Jesús Gil (Spain) was re-elected as president of the Hans Christian Award jury and Ellis Vance (USA) was reconfirmed as IBBY treasurer. Executive Director Liz Page and Administrative Assistant Luzmaria Stauffenegger are working for you at the Secretariat in Basel.

Just before the end of the year, the EC approved and welcomed the National Section of Armenia. Hasmig Chahinian and Liz Page visited Yerevan in April 2012 in conjunction with the city's recognition as the UNESCO Book Capital of the World. They held meetings with the National Children's Library and other interested parties and we are very pleased to see this positive result.

In November, Liz Page and I attended the annual IBBY Turkey award ceremony for children's book writers and illustrators in conjunction with the International Istanbul Book Fair. I would like to thank EC member and IBBY Turkey president Gülçin Alpöge for the wonderful hospitality accorded to us and the opportunity to meet the members of IBBY Turkey.

In early December, IBBY Foundation President Patsy Aldana, Liz Page and I attended an IBBY/Asahi Shimbun symposium in Tokyo, which was organised by IBBY and the Asahi Shimbun. The symposium focused on the IBBY-Asahi Reading Promotion Award and highlighted the significant role that the Asahi Shimbun has played in supporting reading programmes all over the world since the award started in 1986. At the same event, the Jella Lepman medal was presented to the Asahi Shimbun in recognition of its excellent work in this programme. We also had the opportunity to travel north to visit the areas devastated by the 2011 tsunami. We journeyed to Morioka to meet the volunteers for the Ehon Project and then to the coast to visit a kindergarten and bunko home library. It was a memorable trip.

With over 75 National Sections, IBBY commands a strong voice in the world of children's books and literature.

The following recommendations were presented to and accepted by the membership at the General Assembly:

- 1 It was firmly recommended that National Sections include in their practice transparent and democratic elections of their governing bodies. Elections for officers every two years were recommended.
- 2 Members of National Sections requested that guidelines for constitutions, which were inclusive and transparent, be made available.
- 3 The Sections should be more inclusive and encourage groups across the country to become members. Local, regional or state committees should be established.
- 4 Twinning should be encouraged.
- 5 Improvement of internal communications within the Sections was highly recommended.
- 6 The members recognised the importance of regional meetings as well as attendance of the biennial IBBY International Congress.

It is my wish to see these six recommendations followed by all National Sections, not only new sections, but also by the existing and long-standing members.

For many years, IBBY has made every possible effort to assist the children in areas of conflict, but still a sustainable solution for peace does not seem possible in the near future. We continually call upon those in power for the sake of children to put to an end once and for all to acts of aggression. To make this an official and meaningful call, the Executive Committee proposed that IBBY introduces a formal commitment to the principles of the International Convention on the Rights of the Child as ratified by the United Nations in 1990 to its statutes. This amendment to the current statutes was approved and the clear statement that IBBY will protect and uphold the Rights of the Child especially concerning reading and literacy will extend IBBY's mission.

The current financial crisis inevitably affects IBBY's ability to raise funds for our programmes, such as Children in Crisis and the Solidarity Fund. Therefore, we remain grateful to the continuing support from our generous sponsors and supporters: the Asahi Shimbun, Nami Island Inc, the Yamada Bee Farm, the Government of Sharjah, and the many individuals who support our activities. Still much more needs to be done and we will continue to seek more funders and supporters for your work. Literacy and a love of reading is a key component that will never diminish in its importance for greater understanding and peace.

IBBY members can benefit from each other's strengths and realise many objectives, which otherwise may not be achieved alone. Collaboration between sections could also encourage new ideas, practices, technology and expertise. Therefore, I urge all National Sections to work closely within their regional groupings to support one another. Twinning initiatives can be another effective platform that enables close rapport amongst IBBY members and will bring many benefits. It not only supports cultural exchange that leads to a deeper understanding, twinning can also bring training and development and joint publishing, as well as strengthening both partners by encouraging long-term projects. Economic support is also very necessary for the less wealthy nations, as they can receive assistance in their efforts to promote their culture and diversity within their own country. Both partners can benefit from a better understanding and appreciation.

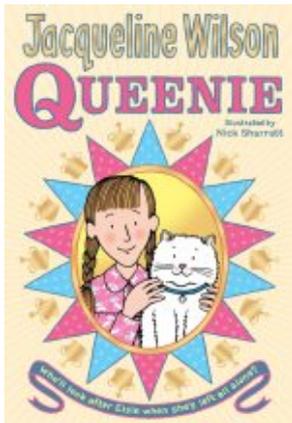
In April 2012 the Sharjah/IBBY Fund for Children in Crisis was launched with the aim of enhancing cooperation and support for national sections in the Central Asia, Middle East and North Africa regions for their work in the development of a reading culture for children through meetings and training workshops. The government of Sharjah has very generously agreed to fund these projects for ten years, allowing IBBY to annually invite the sections in the region to submit proposals for suitable projects. The first Central

Asia, Middle East and North African regional conference will take place in Sharjah in April 2013 and will focus on enhancing understanding and cooperation within the region as well as providing support for IBBY's activities (see page 66). This initiative is certainly welcome and necessary in a region that has so many challenges that affect so many children and young people. I am excited that this fund and cooperation will bring about a significant and sustainable impact for children and literature in the region.

The annual Bologna Children's Book Fair will take place in March 2013 when the IBBY EC will meet for its traditional two-day meeting. IBBY will be present at the fair with its usual stand and press conference.

Best wishes to all,

Ahmad Redza Ahmad Khairuddin
IBBY President



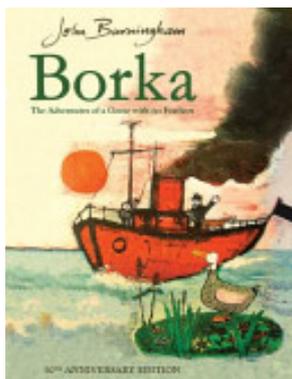
IBBY UK Hans Christian Andersen Awards 2014

Press release 4 March 2013.

Dame Jacqueline Wilson, the most borrowed author of the last decade, and John Burningham, the multi-award-winning illustrator have been nominated for the international Hans Christian Andersen Awards 2014. The awards are the highest international distinction given to an author and an illustrators of children's books. Given every other year by IBBY, they recognise lifelong achievement and are given to an author and an illustrator whose complete works have made an important, lasting contribution to children's literature.

Dame Jacqueline Wilson is a former children's laureate and best-selling author who has sold 35 million copies of her books in the UK and is also translated into 34 different languages. Ten of her books are being submitted to the international jury, including *The Illustrated Mum*, *Hetty Feather* and her most recent title, *Queenie*.

John Burningham won the Kate Greenaway Medal for his first picture book *Borka* (1963) and went on to win the award again with *Granpa* (1984). Both books, along with eight other titles covering a span of 50 years of illustrating, will be submitted to the international jury. He was nominated for the illustration award of 2012 and was shortlisted.



The international jury was confirmed at the Bologna Children's Book Fair in March 2013 (see below) and the winners will be announced the following year at the same event. The awards will be presented at the next biennial IBBY International Congress, which will be in Mexico City in September 2014.

[John Dunne]

2014 Hans Christian Andersen Awards Jury and Nominees

Press release 27 March 2013.

The 2014 jury, selected by IBBY's Executive Committee from nominations made by its national sections, comprises the following ten members. Jury President María Jesús Gil (Madrid, Spain) will lead the jury to select the winners of the 2014 awards.

- **Anastasia Arkhipova** Illustrator, chair of the board of the Association of Moscow Book Illustrators and Designers, Moscow, Russia.
- **Faniel Hanan Diaz** Editor, author and researcher, Caracas, Venezuela.
- **Sabine Fuchs** University lecturer in children's literature, Graz, Austria.
- **Sang-Wook Kim** Professor in children's literature at the Chuncheon National University of Education, Seoul, Korea.
- **Enrique Pérez Díaz** Author and publisher, Havana, Cuba.
- **Deborah Soria** Bookseller and promoter of children's literature, Rome, Italy.

- **Susan M. Stan** Professor of children's literature at the Central Michigan University, USA.
- **Sahar Tarhandeh** Independent researcher in children's literature, freelance graphic designer and art director, Tehran, Iran.
- **Erik Titusson** Publisher and former director of the ALMA, Stockholm, Sweden.
- **Ayfer Gürdal Ünal** Writer, critic, and lecturer at the Bosphorous University, Istanbul, Turkey.

Former IBBY Vice President **Elda Nogueira** (Rio de Janeiro, Brazil) and IBBY Executive Director **Liz Page** are ex officio Jury members.

The following nominees have been submitted for the awards by the National Sections of IBBY. Twenty-nine authors and 31 illustrators have been nominated from 34 countries.

- Argentina: author **María Cristina Ramos**; illustrator **Isol**
- Australia: author **Nadia Wheatley**; illustrator **Ron Brooks**
- Austria: author **Renate Welsh**; illustrator **Linda Wolfsgruber**
- Azerbaijan: author **Sevinj Nurugizi**
- Belgium: author **Frank Andriat**; illustrator **Carll Cneut**
- Brazil: author **Joel Rufino dos Santos**; illustrator **Roger Mello**
- Canada: author **Kenneth Oppel**; illustrator **Philippe Béha**
- China: author **Hongying Yang**; illustrator **Liang Xiong**
- Croatia: illustrator **Svjetlan Junaković**
- Denmark: author **Lene Kaaberbøl**; illustrator **Charlotte Pardi**
- Estonia: author **Aino Pervik**
- Finland: author **Kirsi Kunnas**; illustrator **Pekka Vuori**
- France: author **Jean-Claude Mourlevat**; illustrator **François Place**
- Germany: author **Mirjam Pressler**; illustrator **Rotraut Susanne Berner**
- Greece: author **Sofia Madouvalou**; illustrator **Daniela Stamatidi**
- Iran: author **Houshang Moradi Kermani**
- Ireland: author **Eoin Colfer**; illustrator **PJ Lynch**
- Italy: author **Bianca Pizzorno**; illustrator **Fabian Negrin**
- Japan: author **Nahoko Uehashi**; illustrator **Ken Katayama**
- Republic of Korea: author **Jin-Kyung Kim**; illustrator **Byoung-Ho Han**
- Latvia: illustrator **Reinis Petersons**
- Netherlands: author **Ted van Lieshout**; illustrator **Marit Törnqvist**
- Norway: author **Bjørn Sortland**; illustrator **Øyvind Torseter**
- Portugal: author **António Torrado**; illustrator **Teresa Lima**
- Russia: author **Vladislav Krapivin**; illustrator **Igor Oleinikov**
- Serbia: author **Ljubivoje Ršumović**; illustrator **Dobrosav Zivković**
- Slovakia: author **Daniel Hevier**; illustrator **Peter Uchnár**
- Slovenia: author **Polonca Kova**; illustrator **Alenka Sottler**
- Spain: illustrator **Javier Zabala**
- Sweden: illustrator **Eva Lindström**
- Switzerland: illustrator **Albertine**
- Turkey: author **Serpil Ural**; illustrator **Saadet Ceylan**
- UK: author **Jacqueline Wilson**; illustrator **John Burningham**

- USA: author **Jacqueline Woodson**; illustrator **Bryan Collier**

The Jury President will guide the judging process and preside at the jury meeting 15–16 March 2014. The shortlist will be disseminated immediately following the jury meeting. The winners will be announced at the IBBY Press Conference at the Bologna Children's Book Fair on Monday, 24 March 2014.

Call for papers IBBY UK/NCRCL MA Annual Conference

Roehampton University, London. Saturday 9 November 2013.

'Feast or Famine: Food and Children's Literature'

As a focus for imaginative gratification, food has a long-standing relationship with children's literature.

Sinclair's jam-filled 'coach-wheel' in *The Holiday House* (1839) revolutionised Evangelical writing, as culinary reward overshadows recrimination; marmalade sandwiches and honeypots are as iconic as the Paddington and Pooh bears who favour them; and the delights of feasting reach from the comic visualisation of *The Beano* to the excessive wizardry of Hogwarts banqueting.

Darker shadows also trouble this relationship though. Brenda's philanthropy in *Froggy's Little Brother* (1875) witnesses the starvation of mice and children, while Andy Mulligan's *Trash* (2010) condemns capitalist greed.

Moving beyond the immediate concerns of children's literature, the rise of cup-cake culture in the early twenty-first century and the recent success of the BBC's *The Great British Bake Off* point to an on-going fascination with food that extends beyond sustenance to creation, image and consumption. This evident cultural fascination draws in adults and children alike and thus it seems timely to consider the rich complexity of the relationship between food and children's literature.

The conference will include keynote presentations by well-known writers, publishers and academics. Proposals are welcomed for workshop sessions (about 20 minutes) on the following or other relevant issues and areas from any period in the history of international children's literature:

- the metaphoric treatment of food in children's books;
- the visual representation of food in comics, film and picture books;
- the lack of food – famine, hunger, starvation and rationing;
- overindulgence and greed;
- food writing and culinary trends related to childhood;
- global cuisines – national, ethnic, etc.;
- the historical representation of food in children's books (non-fiction or fiction);
- environmental, historical and political concerns with food distribution, farming, waste management or consumption, e.g. in dystopian fiction;
- the impact of body image in youth culture, e.g. literary engagement with diet, health issues or eating disorders;
- oral fixations of early childhood;
- the consumption of flesh, body or blood: vampirism, cannibalism, etc.;
- food in fairy tales, fantasy literature and myth, e.g. animate and magical food;
- food and power – the giving and withholding of food;
- bad food or poison;
- gender issues, e.g. feminist engagement with nurture, nature and mothering;
- food and celebration or socialising – birthday cake, honorary banquets and feasts, and tea parties.

The deadline for proposals is 19 July 2013. Email a 200-word abstract (for a 20-minute paper), along with a short biography and affiliation to Erica Gillingham, gillinge@roehampton.ac.uk.

IBBY on Facebook

At last IBBY has launched its Facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/ibby.international>. On the page we hope to share international news about IBBY and children's literature around the world. You are free to post information that you think others would be interested in. IBBY reserves the right to remove any posts that we deem to be unsuitable in this context. We look forward to your comments and please 'Like' us!

[5 May 2013, IBBY HQ: Luzmaria Stauffenegger, luzmaria.stauffenegger@ibby.org]

Sharjah IBBY Fund: Two New Projects in Afghanistan and Pakistan

The Advisory Committee of the Sharjah IBBY Fund has announced the approval of two new projects in Afghanistan and Pakistan to be financed by the fund. These two projects aim to provide underprivileged children in these areas with access to books and to support their 'Right to Become Readers', in line with the goals of IBBY.

Through these projects, children living in refugee camps in Kabul, Herat and Mazar-i-Sharif in Afghanistan will benefit from long-term reading programmes; while children living in South Waziristan, Swat, Pakistan will benefit from the 'Hope Libraries'.

Run by ASCHIANA (Afghanistan's Children – A New Approach), the project in Afghanistan will focus on encouraging marginalised children in the region's many internally displaced person (IDP) camps to read. With the vast majority of people in this segment of the community never having undergone any formal education, literacy rates in IDP settlements tend to be extremely low. The project aims to increase literacy through training reading assistants, library assistants and storytellers, and providing reading materials via mobile libraries. The project will provide training for three teams of one library assistant, three reading assistants and one storyteller per team, in addition to funding a mobile library in each of the three cities.

The 'Hope Libraries' project in Pakistan aims to create a cross-country network of small community children's libraries. The project will be initiated through the organisation of a two-day national conference on various aspects of bibliotherapy, which will bring together various international non-government organisations (INGOs), government officials, representatives from the corporate sector, media, experts, community-based organisations (CBOs) and volunteer groups from all over the country. The three best low-cost community library ideas put forward during the conference will receive start-up grants, and further five-book bundles will also be awarded. The goal of the project is to promote strong, vibrant and self-sustained community reading programmes by enabling CBOs and NGOs to establish small-scale children's libraries that will promote a reading culture at the grassroots level.

The Sharjah IBBY Fund Advisory Committee approved the funding of these two six-month projects during its second meeting, held in Bologna on the site of the Bologna Children's Book Fair, which took place from 25–28 March 2013 in Bologna, Italy.

During the meeting, the Advisory Committee discussed the projects that were approved in the committee's first meeting, which had been held in London in August 2012, the latest developments in those projects and the timeline of their implementation. A number of new projects and initiatives were suggested by the committee members, and the possibility of their implementation was considered.

Furthermore, the committee reviewed the programme of the first IBBY regional conference in the region of Central Asia to North Africa, which is also being supported by the fund. It discussed the possible ways in which the objectives of supporting

children's books, and enhancing the culture of reading among the region's children, could be met through the organisation of the conference.

The Sharjah-IBBY Fund was established by the emirate of Sharjah and IBBY in early 2012. The Emirate agreed to contribute one million Swiss Francs towards the objectives of the fund, over a period of 10 years. The fund aims to ensure that less privileged children, whose lives are in disarray due to social, economic or political upheavals in their home countries have access to books.

[Liz Page, IBBY Secretariat, Executive Director]

Call for Papers 34th IBBY International Congress in Mexico City, 2014

Central topics

- The idea of inclusion
- Inclusion in children's and young adult literature
- Literature as a hospitable house
- Literature that excludes
- Inclusion in the promotion of reading

Refer to www.ibby.org/fileadmin/user_upload/Central_Topics.pdf for more details.

Requirements for presentations at the seminar sessions

- Title of proposed presentation
- Main topic presented
- Summary of presentation in no more than 250 words

Requirements for presentations at the poster sessions

- Title of proposed poster
- Main topic presented
- Summary of presentation in no more than 100 words

Requirements for all proposals

- The presentation can be in English or in Spanish.
- Deadline for submitting all applications is **31 August 2013**.
- Each submission must be accompanied by the applicant's full name, nationality, title, postal address, telephone and fax numbers and email.
- The congress committee will select the seminar speakers by 30 November 2013 and will reply to all accepted applicants before the end of the year.
- The congress committee will select the posters by 30 November 2013 and will reply to successful proposals before the end of the year.
- It is understood that all seminar speakers and poster presenters will pay the congress registration fee.

Applications should be addressed to:

34th IBBY International Congress 2014
Goya núm. 54
Colonia Insurgentes-Mixcoac, C.P. 03920
México, D.F.

Tel. 5563 1435 / 5211 0492. vinculacion@ibbymexico.org.mx.

IBBY UK Annual General Meeting 2013

Story Museum, Oxford. Saturday 27 April 2013.

After business matters, we were given a presentation on the work of the museum by its co-director, Kim Pickin, and then taken round the premises.

Kim began her talk by paying tribute to the work of Jella Lepman, the founder of IBBY and with her belief that the work of the museum was very much in Lepman's spirit, reflecting a conviction that stories were a powerful means of personal and social development.

Oxford is an excellent venue for the museum. It is home to many storytellers, children's writers and illustrators, many of whom have given active support to the museum. The museum's patrons are Philip Pullman, Michael Morpurgo, Michael Rosen and Jacqueline Wilson. Its trustees include publisher David Fickling and children's playwright David Wood. Oxford, of course, has strong associations with classic children's literature through Lewis Carroll and Tolkien. It is also home to children and families from a range of social backgrounds.

The museum was founded as an organisation in 2003 and began outreach work in schools and the local community in 2005. Having identified one of the major problems in schools as being children's 'word poverty', it works both with teachers and children on developing children's language skills, particularly through oral storytelling. It has recently published a handbook for teachers, based on the experience of its programmes, entitled *The Storytelling School*. From the beginning, the museum saw itself as establishing a strong presence in the Oxford community, staging an annual Alice's Day, and building up funds to eventually lease a building in the centre of the city to act as a physical focus. The range of buildings that it now occupies was leased in 2009, through an anonymous donation of £2.5 million, and has been used as a base for activities since then, although it will not open to the public until 2014, after the first phase of its remodelling, and with a café, a shop and workshop spaces.

Kim took us on a fascinating tour of the range of buildings that the museum occupies, which have had a variety of past uses, including a pub and telephone exchange. At the moment, some of the space is leased out to other uses, including a community bicycle repair shop. In the other spaces, we were introduced to some of the museum's highly imaginative use of some of the furniture and fittings left behind by former tenants, including the entirely convincing construction of a story-making machine, complete with its history of a love-struck Victorian inventor. Kim emphasised that the museum sees its growth and activities as collaborative and interactive, and there was incidental evidence everywhere of the involvement of children and families.

Kim also told us about one of the museum's latest projects in which children's authors and illustrators have been invited to dress up as their favourite character from a children's story and to be photographed, whetting our appetite with the news that Terry Pratchett will appear as Richmal Crompton's William.

Our thanks to Kim and to her colleagues at the Story Museum for providing the venue for the AGM, refreshments and a fascinating introduction to the work of the museum. For more information, visit the Story Museum's website at www.storymuseum.org.uk.

[Clive Barnes, Chair IBBY UK]

IBBY Documentation Centre of Books for Disabled Young People

The new catalogue *Outstanding Books for Young People with Disabilities 2013* can be ordered at the IBBY Secretariat: Nonnenweg 12, Postfach, CH-4003 Basel, Switzerland. Tel [int. +4161] 272 29 17. Fax (+4161) 272 27 57. Email: ibby@ibby.org.

IBBY Regional Conference for Central Asia, the Middle East and North Africa

The first such conference took place in Sharjah, UAE on 21–23 April 2013. Most of the presentations from this year's conference will be available in early August through YouTube, other social websites and the UAEBBY newsletter.

Website: www.uaebyy.org.ae. Youtube channel: www.youtube.com/user/UAEBBY
Twitter: @UAEBBY. Instagram: www.instagram.com/uaebyy/. Facebook:
www.facebook.com/pages/UAEBBY/186433738131012

Silent Books: From the World to Lampedusa and Back

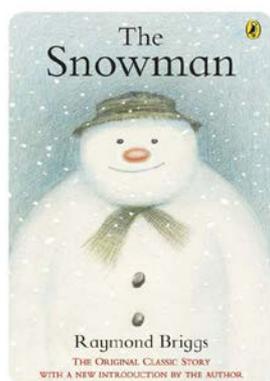
Thanks to the cooperation of many IBBY sections, IBBY Italia has succeeded in putting together a project that shows the pleasure that wordless or 'silent' books can give, as well as the diversity they offer.

The launch of the exhibition took place on 7 May 2013, at the Palazzo delle Esposizioni in Rome, Italy, and will be open until 21 July 2013.

The project has collected the best in books without words to donate them to Lampedusa, the remotest island in the Mediterranean and the first port of call for those arriving from across the sea.

The exhibition showcases over a hundred silent books from four continents and more than twenty countries, including the first ever honour list of books without words, selected by an international jury. The list comprises ten works remarkable for their originality, complexity, historical value and subject matter, with three special awards.

After Rome, the exhibition will be travelling around Italy and throughout the world, with Lampedusa its final destination, to build a library for Italian and immigrant children with the support of the Lampedusa local authority. The journey will be accompanied by an author's notebook in which Chiara Carrer's creative vein and the art of Sara Verdone's dialogue with the images and characters of the books.



Honour List

Daniel Defoe and Ajubel, *Robinson Crusoe*. Media Vaca, 2008. [Spain]

Ara Jo, 로켓 보이 [The Rocket Boy]. Han soo book, 2011. [Korea]

Raymond Briggs, *The Snowman*. Puffin, [1978] 2011. [UK]

Katy Couprie and Antonin Louchard, *Tout un monde* [A Whole World]. Thierry Magnier, 1999. [France]

Suzy Lee, 파도야 놀자 [Wave]. BIR Publishing, [2008] 2009. [Pakistan]

Madalena Matoso, *Todos Fazemos Tudo* [We All Do Everything]. Planeta Tangerina, 2011. [Portugal]

Gonzalo Moure Trenor and Alicia Varela, *El arenque rojo* [Red the Herring]. SM, 2012. [Spain]

Shaun Tan, *The Arrival*. Lothian Children's Books, 2006. [Australia]

Marije and Ronald Tolman, *De boomhut* [The Tree House]. Lemniscaat, 2009. [The Netherlands]

David Wiesner, *Flotsam*. Clarion Books, 2006. [USA]

Nicole De Cock, *Aan de overkant* [On the Far Side]. Gottmer Publishing, 2006. [The Netherlands] (Amnesty International special award)

Iela and Enzo Mari, *La mela e la farfalla* [The Apple and the Butterfly]. Babalibri, [1969] 2004. [Italy] (IBBY Italia special award)

Bente Olesen Nyström, *Hr. Alting* [Mr Everything]. Gyldendal, 2006. [Denmark] (Palazzo delle Esposizioni special award)

IBBY UK Selection

Edward Ardizzone, *Johnny's Bad Day*. Nissan, [2007] 2008.

Jeannie Baker , *Belonging*. Walker Books, [2004] 2008.

Quentin Blake, *Clown*. Red Fox, [1995] 1998.

Raymond Briggs, *The Snowman*. Puffin, [1978].

Owen Davey, *Foxley's Feast*,. Templar Books, 2010.

Tao Nyeu, *Wonder Bear*. Templar Books, 2008.

Jan Ormerod, *Sunshine*. Frances Lincoln, [1981] 2005.

For more information, contact IBBY Italia at ibbyitalia@gmail.com.

Astrid Lindgren Memorial Award 2013

Stockholm, Sweden. 23 March 2013.

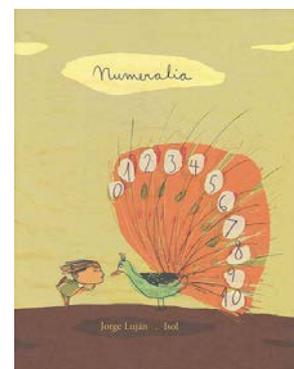
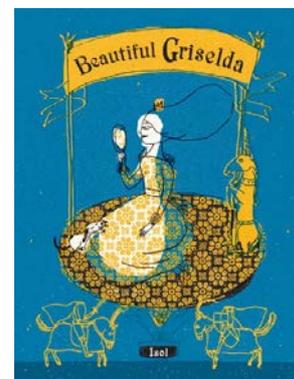
Argentinian illustrator Isol, born Marisol Misenta in Buenos Aires in 1972 and an illustrator, cartoonist, graphic artist, writer, singer and composer, was chosen by a jury of 12 international children's literature experts as the 2013 Astrid Lindgren award winner. 207 candidates from 67 countries were nominated, including IBBY UK's nomination of author/illustrator Michael Foreman. The £500,000 prize is awarded annually by the Swedish government to an individual or organisation working 'in the spirit of Astrid Lindgren' to 'safeguard democratic values'.

Isol is the writer and illustrator of about 10 published titles and has illustrated a similar number of published works by other authors. She made her debut in 1997 with *Vida de perros*, the story of a little boy who sees clear similarities between himself and his dog. Some of the characteristic features of Isol's art were already present in this work: an expressive, sometimes explosive style with a muted colour palette, double outlines and deliberate misregistration in the colour printing of the motifs, where the lines and colours are not completely aligned.

The stories are humorous with surprising twists, occasionally philosophical and always subtle. Isol is constantly exploring new formats and forms for the books themselves. Her great talent as a picture-book author is apparent in the overall experience created by the dramatic composition, the choice of colours and the intensity of the drawn line.

Her long-standing collaboration with Argentinian poet Jorge Luján has produced a large number of books where Isol, through her illustrations, is the story's co-author rather than an illustrator in the conventional sense. Her works have been published in some 20 countries. English translations include *It's Useful to Have a Duck*, *Petit the Monster* and *Beautiful Griselda* (Toronto: Groundwood Books), available on Amazon UK.

For further details of the award, see www.alma.se/en/.



The 20th Annual IBBY UK/NCRCL MA conference will take place at Roehampton University, London, on Saturday 9 November 2013. The subject is food with the title: 'Feast or Famine: Food and Children's Literature'. A call for papers has been sent out – see under 'IBBY News'.

For more information contact Ann Lazim (annlazim@googlemail.com) or Laura Atkins (L.Atkins@roehampton.ac.uk).

The next issue of *IBBYLink* is *IBBYLink* 38, Autumn 2013 (copydate 30 July 2013) and will be on the topic of picture books for older readers. The editor is looking for a wide range of items on this topic.

Articles on other subjects, reports, information about conferences and similar items are also welcomed. Contributions to Ferelith Hordon: fhordon@aol.com.

If you are interested in becoming a reviewer for *IBBYLink*, contact Sue Mansfield: mansfield37@btinternet.com. New reviews are always welcomed.

Titles for Review

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

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To sponsor a future issue of *IBBYLink*, contact Ferelith Hordon, fhordon@aol.com. 8 Terrapin Court, Terrapin Road, London SW17 8QW.

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