

CANADIAN CHILDREN'S

# booknews

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SUMMER 2015  
VOL. 38 NO. 3



RECOMMENDED BOOKS + OPINIONS + PROFILES + NEWS + REVIEWS

**Graphic Novels:  
Versatile, layered  
reading for all**

Kyo Maclear's  
Big Themes in  
Small Packages

Bookmark!  
the latest  
graphic novels

Reviews of over 35 books by Cybèle Young,  
Janet Gurtler, Wesley King, Charles de Lint and more







# booknews

Summer 2015 Volume 38 No. 3

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**MEDIUM:** Gouache, watercolour and pencil crayon.

**ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR:** Julie Morstad is an author, illustrator and artist living in Vancouver, British Columbia. Books she has illustrated for children include *How To* (which she also authored), *When You Were Small*, *When I Was Small* and *Singing Away the Dark*. She has been a recipient of the Marilyn Baillie Picture Book Award, the Elizabeth Mrazik-Cleaver Canadian Picture Book Award and the Christie Harris Illustrated Children's Literature Prize. Her books have been shortlisted for many other children's literature awards.

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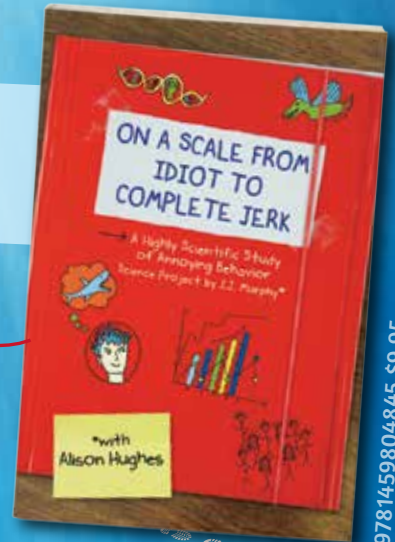
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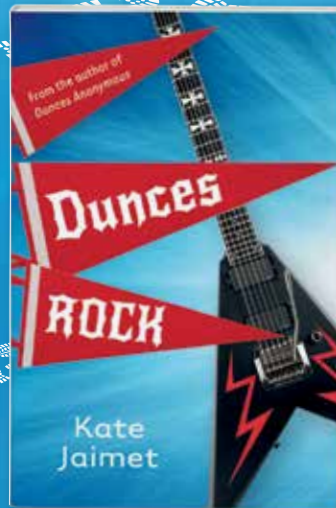
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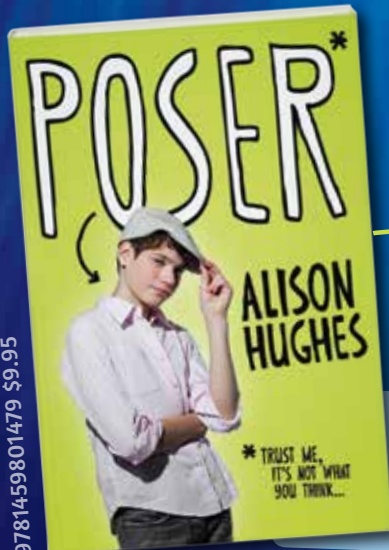


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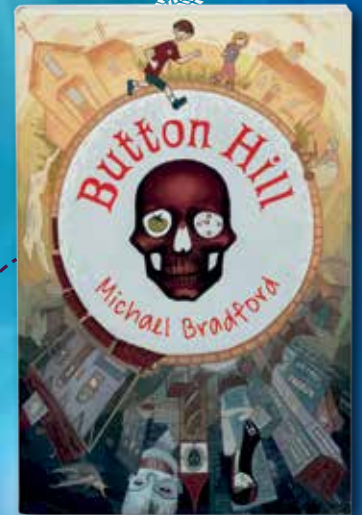
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—Quill & Quire, starred



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A funny thing about graphic novels, observed an editor at a seminar I attended many years ago, is that so many of them aren't novels — they are memoirs or biographies or interesting explorations of non-fiction topics. In recent years, however, the range of graphic novels has expanded to include all sorts of fiction and non-fiction for readers whose ages range from very young to adult.

At the same time, as you will see in our "focus" article, there has been a change in the attitude toward the audience for graphic novels. These books can no longer be pigeonholed as suitable for only certain types of readers. Dr. Beverley Brenna and her team at the University of Saskatchewan make a strong case that graphic novels work for many different kinds of readers. Their accompanying bibliography reminds us of the range and diversity that has developed in Canadian graphic novels in the last decade, and CCBC Library Coordinator Meghan Howe's "Bookmark!" adds some very recent titles to complement Dr. Brenna's list.

Have you ever wondered how graphic novel creators work? Who does what when? The team of Liam O'Donnell and Mike Deas offers us a glimpse into the process.

When it comes to linking any kind of reader with any kind of books, teacher-librarians play a vital role. Anita Brooks Kirkland, former president of the Ontario Library Association, presents a strong case for teacher-librarians, which should be read by all.

Plus, we have a profile of award-winning author Kyo Maclear and reviews of many new books.

Happy reading.

*Gillian  
O'Reilly*

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# Aspirations and Opportunities

## Advocacy for School Library Programs



At the recently held [OLA Superconference], I made the argument that we can get hung-up on the money when it comes to learning commons spaces. But it is first about mindsets — we need to embrace new ways of learning and find ways for our space to reflect these changes and be the gathering places for all our learners. The thinking around the learning commons is symbolizing the shifts we are seeing with learning throughout our schools.

Chris Kennedy, Superintendent of Schools / CEO,  
West Vancouver School District, British Columbia

There has never been a more exciting time to be a teacher-librarian. The foundations of teacher-librarianship have never been more closely aligned with the aspirations of today's education leaders and governments. New thinking about the school library as a learning commons, where collaboration and innovation drive learning within today's complex information environment, has particular relevance for today's learners.

I say all of this, fully realizing the challenges of advocating for school libraries in Canada. Too often, that advocacy dwells on crisis thinking, unwittingly creating a sense that it's all too little, too late. Frequently, advocacy for school libraries draws on nostalgia and the outdated notion that libraries are sacred and deserve to exist, just because. Today's libraries exist to help realize the aspirations of their constituent communities. Libraries in all sectors, including K-12 education, are reinventing themselves in powerful ways. School library advocates need to take their cue from current innovations in practice in order to make a strong case for the positive impact of libraries on learning.

The big challenge for K-12 educators today is to prepare learners to thrive in our increasingly complex society. Building capacity for creative problem solving and lifelong learning is more important now than ever in this era of fast-paced change. New thinking about the school library as a learning commons, envisioned in the Ontario School Library Association's *Together for Learning: School Libraries and the Emergence of the Learning Commons* (2010), captures the unique value proposition of learning in the library within this broader context.

Effective advocacy must help decision makers understand the potential for school library programs to have a positive impact on learning. A large and compelling body of research (Library Research Service, 2013) indicates that that impact is derived from the actions of the teacher-librarian. The mere existence of a school library is not enough. In order for school libraries to make a difference, they need to be perceived to be at the heart of learning in the school. The learning community needs to understand the unique value that the library program contributes to achieving the school's goals for its students. Teachers and school administrators need to be aware of the innovative practices that now characterize instructional approaches in the school library learning commons. Teacher-librarians can make those connections for the school as equal partners with their teaching colleagues.

The mere presence of a teacher-librarian is not enough, of course. It is when teacher-librarians collaboratively plan, co-teach and share in assessment with their colleagues that they have the most impact on student learning. When teacher-librarians take advantage of their unique cross-curricular and process-oriented expertise to facilitate professional learning, they have an influence on teaching practice across the school. The unique value proposition of the library is inexorably tied to the existence of a fully integrated and professionally led school library program.

A good school librarian is not a clerk or limited to maintaining a collection. He or she should be an active partner in learning. A good school librarian is a teacher who helps the subject area teachers improve. This librarian — the librarian you should expect in your schools — guides students through inquiry-driven learning free from the confines and limitations of too structured, too test-driven, too one-way “teaching.”

R. David Lankes (2012). *Expect More: Demanding Better Libraries For Today's Complex World*.

This is where advocacy efforts sometimes devolve into territorial squabbles. Advocating for teacher-librarians shows no disrespect for the critical role that other library staff members play. A good library support structure is critical in a school system, and that means professionals working behind the scenes, and library technicians performing critical functions for managing and maintaining resource collections and facilities and providing service excellence, either centrally or at the school level.

Staffing structures that leverage the different but complementary competencies of the teacher-librarian and library technician are optimum. Unsupported, the teacher-librarian's time is often consumed with administrative tasks. Likewise, unrealistic instructional expectations placed on library technicians show disrespect for their particular expertise.

We get what we expect from school libraries. The bottom line is that if the library is not understood to be part of the school's core instructional program, then it becomes an easy target for cuts. It is up to the people who work in school libraries and their supporters to work together in raising expectations and insisting that education decision makers consider the relevance of the school library learning commons within the broader context of current practices in education.

Over the past year, there have been two extremely important events in advancing the role of school libraries.

In June 2014, the Canadian Library Association released new standards for school libraries in Canada. *Leading Learning: Standards of Practice for School Library Learning Commons in Canada* is a remarkable document, setting a framework for program growth. The focus is on impact on learning: every school, no matter the status of its library program, can find itself in this framework and decide on tangible steps for improvement. The development of *Leading Learning* brought together input from every province and territory in the country and successfully developed standards for growth that are meaningful within this very disparate context. This is a remarkable achievement.

In November 2014, the Royal Society of Canada (RSC) released its expert-panel report on the future of Canada's libraries and archives. Amongst its comprehensive recommendations, the RSC addressed the status of school libraries. It called for a national vision for the school library learning commons — something that has to this point mostly eluded educational decision makers. The RSC report called for the

Council of Ministers of Education, Canada (CMEC), to frame a national policy consensus on the most appropriate model for school library learning commons to maximize their contributions to K-12 learning. It asked for ministries of education to work together with school boards to ensure sustainable funding for school library programs and made a call for faculties of education and librarianship to strive to produce graduates with the appropriate competencies to manage the new school library learning commons.

I write all of this as an appeal to those who understand the importance of school libraries. Please continue to be our advocates. Please do find every avenue open to you to influence decision makers. But as you do so, focus on the unique value of the school library learning commons within the context of current priorities for K-12 education. Please understand that it is teacher-librarians who are most at risk of being replaced or having their positions marginalized by inappropriate timetabling or inadequate support. And please position teacher-librarians as we understand ourselves: leaders in collaborative learning for the new century. 🙏

Anita Brooks Kirkland served for 12 years as Consultant for K-12 Libraries at the Waterloo Region District School Board. She is an instructor in school librarianship for the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, University of Toronto. She was the 2014 president of the Ontario Library Association. Her website is [www.bythebrooks.ca](http://www.bythebrooks.ca).

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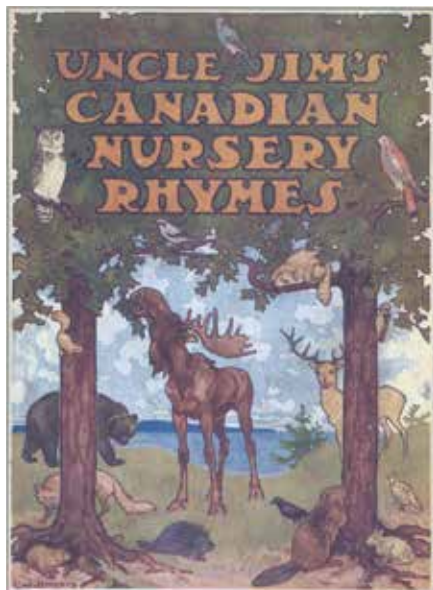
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# News Roundup

AWARDS, BOOK LAUNCHES, ANNOUNCEMENTS AND THE LATEST NEWS



## "Our Own Space": Changing Visions of Canada in Children's Books

For those in Toronto between June 13 and September 5, 2015, the Osborne Collection of the Toronto Public Library (TPL) offers a unique opportunity to look at how our country has been seen in children's books. "Our Own Space" reveals how Canada has been represented in children's books ranging from early 19th-century travelogues to First Nations' legends to modern picture books — including, of course, many works by this country's fine authors and illustrators.

[www.torontopubliclibrary.ca/osborne](http://www.torontopubliclibrary.ca/osborne)

Now accessible through the same website is the Osborne Online collection of digitized materials from the Osborne Collection. To date, over 200 items have been digitized, and, over the next two years, thousands of books will be added to the TPL's digital collection, making them available to readers everywhere. Available for viewing now are many fairy tales, 19th-century monthly magazines and school primers and books such as *Uncle Jim's Canadian Nursery Rhymes for Family and Kindergarten Use*, featuring verses on wild animals, Canadian cities and even the Great Lakes ("Erie! Erie! / Stormy but cheery! / Huron! Huron! / Fine to tour on!").

## Mark your calendars for Get Published! seminar

The CCBC is offering its third Get Published! seminar on October 24, 2015, from 9:30 AM to 12:30 PM. The event will be held in Room 224 of Northern District Library in Toronto (down the hall from the CCBC offices). Further details and registration information can be found at [www.bookcentre.ca](http://www.bookcentre.ca).

## Thanks to a retiring champion of Canadian books

At the age of 87, author and long-time book reviewer Maryleah Otto has decided to retire. For the past 15 years, she has covered children's books in *The Muskokan*, published by Metroland Northmedia (owned by the *Toronto Star*) in Ontario's Muskoka cottage country. Her column, called "Kids' Bookbag," appeared weekly from Victoria Day until Labour Day, with occasional seasonal appearances, covered mostly Canadian books, from toddlers to YA, and was available in the digital edition of the paper as well as the print edition.

Otto says, "The editor once told me that *The Muskokan* is the only small local paper in Canada with its own 'permanent' children's book reviewer. I don't know if this is true but I enjoyed hearing it!"

## Discover the Book Week Writing Contest Winners

TD Canadian Children's Book Week may be over but there is still much to enjoy. The Book Week website ([www.bookweek.ca](http://www.bookweek.ca)) is the place to find the winners and honourable mentions from the Book Week Writing Contest and to download their stories and poems. Over 900 entries were received, and the young winners come from Rossland (BC), Vancouver, Winnipeg, Hamilton, Ottawa, Scarborough and Toronto. Congratulations to all the fine writers in Grades 4 to 12.

With the recent release of the report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, there is much discussion on the way forward and the need for education about First Nations, Métis and Inuit (FNMI) history and culture. The CCBC's free downloadable theme guide, prepared for

Book Week, offers an excellent resource. It features many books by and about FNMI communities, as well as interviews with six noted writers and illustrators.

## Dawn Todd retires from CCBC; Sandra O'Brien becomes Outreach Education Coordinator

After four-and-a-half years at the CCBC and over 25 years in the children's book industry, CCBC General Manager Dawn Todd retired this spring. Dawn worked for many years with Greey de Pencier Books and its successors (Maple Tree Press and Owlkids Books) before joining the CCBC. Dawn has also been a weekly volunteer with the Toronto Zoo for nearly 40 years and plans to continue her work there as well as devoting more time to other interests and to travel.

Sandra O'Brien, who has been the Interim Program Coordinator for the last year while Shannon Howe Barnes was on maternity leave, is staying on at the CCBC office. She will be assuming some of Dawn Todd's office-management tasks as well as the new position of Outreach Education Coordinator.

CCBC Executive Director Charlotte Teeple says, "Dawn has had a long career in the Canadian children's book world, and we wish her well in her retirement. We are glad that Sandra is continuing to be part of the CCBC team, bringing her organizational talents and her background in education."

## Anne of Green Gables returns to the screen in 2016

A two-hour original movie, *Lucy Maud Montgomery's Anne of Green Gables*, will debut on Corus Entertainment's YTV in early 2016.

Now in production in several locations throughout Canada, *Lucy Maud Montgomery's Anne of Green Gables*, based on the classic Anne series of novels, has been reimagined by Breakthrough Entertainment of Toronto in association with the author's granddaughter, Kate MacDonalld Butler, who serves as an Executive Producer. Award-winning director John

*continued on page 8*



# Seen at ...

A PHOTOGRAPHIC LOOK AT CANADIAN CHILDREN'S BOOK EVENTS



Sarah Hoy



Mary Dalton



Melanie Fishbane



Erin Woods



Melanie Fishbane

**1.** Driving mayhem on the road home in *Up to Low*: the stage version of the Brian Doyle classic is a collaboration by Easy Street Productions and the Ottawa Children's Theatre. **2.** Authors for Indies Day (May 2, 2015) saw award-winning writer Charis Cotter (*The Swallow*) at Broken Books in St. John's, Newfoundland. **3.** Reading Town Canada in Charlottetown: Dave Atkinson (*Wereduck*) at the Tween Reading Café event during the National Reading Campaign's week of literary festivities. **4.** Authors for Indies Day in Halifax: authors Melanie Mosher (*Fire Pie Trout*) and Natalie Corbett Sampson (*Game Plan*) with bookseller Lisa Doucet at Wozzles. **5.** Illustrator Brian Deines and co-author Stephanie Innes celebrate at the book launch for *Bear on the Homefront* at the Canadian War Museum. **6.** Reading Town Canada in Charlottetown: Book Week touring author Bill Swan and editor Todd MacLean cross-promote during Reading at the Mall.



Keep Your Eye On ...

## Susan White

INTERVIEW BY GILLIAN O'REILLY

Kent Harrison will direct the movie special based on a script by noted writer and actor Susan Coyne.

As the President of family-owned Heirs of L.M. Montgomery Inc., Kate MacDonald Butler oversees all Lucy Maud Montgomery-related inquiries and projects, including publishing, film, television and merchandising ventures. Peter Williamson, a Breakthrough Entertainment Partner and Executive Producer, says, "As an Executive Producer and consultant, Kate MacDonald Butler is playing a pivotal role in helping to ensure the film's authenticity and author intent."

### Call for submissions: 18th annual Writing for Children Competition

CANSCAIP (Canadian Society of Children's Authors, Illustrators and Performers), in partnership with The Writers' Union of Canada (TWUC), is accepting submissions by unpublished writers for the 18th annual Writing for Children Competition.

A goal of the competition is to discover, encourage and promote new writers of children's literature across Canada. The deadline for submissions is September 30, 2015.

In previous years, the Writing for Children Competition awarded one cash prize. This year, there will be two \$1,000 winners: one for a picture book / early reader and one for a chapter book / middle grade / young adult novel. Eight additional finalists in these reading-age categories will also be selected.

The Writers' Union of Canada initiated the Writing for Children Competition in 1996. The competition has grown in popularity since its inception, and in 2014 CANSCAIP took on this initiative in partnership with TWUC.

For further information, visit [www.canscaip.org](http://www.canscaip.org).

### "IBBY Silent Books, Final Destination Lampedusa" comes to Canada

A remarkable exhibit of wordless picture books, assembled by IBBY Italia especially for the diverse population of child refugees on the Italian island of Lampedusa, will be touring in Canada this year. The tour, sponsored by the Italian Cultural Institute of Toronto, will stop at the Edmonton Public Library (Aug. 28 – Sept. 18); three locations in Vancouver (Oct. 1-23) and Toronto's North York Central Library (Nov. 2 – Dec. 11). For further information, visit [www.ibby-canada.org](http://www.ibby-canada.org)

**Tell us about your newest book.** *The Memory Chair* is a story about connection, connection between generations and also severed connections in a family that has been shattered by prejudices, stubbornness and pride. Thirteen-year-old Betony has always dreaded having to visit her great-grandmother. On one of those visits, Betony sits in an old armchair and is transported directly into a scene in Gram's childhood. Over the next few months, Betony continues to have first-hand memories of days in Gram's life, seeing things that help to create a strong bond with Gram and also lead her to a family secret. Little by little, Betony gets to the truth of that secret and works to bring about forgiveness, acceptance and a new beginning.

**Tell us about the process of writing.** For me the process of writing is a mystery, a joy and a privilege. After teaching full time and raising four children, the four days a week I now spend in my office, doing the work involved to craft the best story I can write, is a gift I never take for granted.

**How did you first get published?** Two of my four published books had their beginnings at least 20 years ago, but my first published book was written after the death of our oldest son, Zachary, in an automobile accident in 1999. In the next few years, as I struggled with the loss, the seeds of the book I needed to write were firmly planted. In the fall of 2006, I took a deferred leave from teaching and 10 months later I had the manuscript for *The Year Mrs. Montague Cried*. After sending it to five publishers and receiving five polite rejection letters, I submitted the manuscript to the YA category of the Writers' Federation of Nova Scotia's Atlantic Writing Competition. In August 2010, I was told I had won first place and I was quickly swept up with a proposal for publishing, the editing process and the eventual coming together of my first published book, which was released by The Acorn Press in May 2011. By that time, I had already decided to retire from teaching, a career I loved, to pursue my next career, which is that of a full-time writer.

**What do you like about writing for young people?** I believe that a good book defies age categories, even though my teaching background has led me to write for a young audience. I also do not believe in shying away from difficult subjects. Young people are not exempt from the tough things in life and need to be given stories that reflect their reality. Honest and open writing that respects the wisdom and compassion that kids possess is the writing that I think matters.

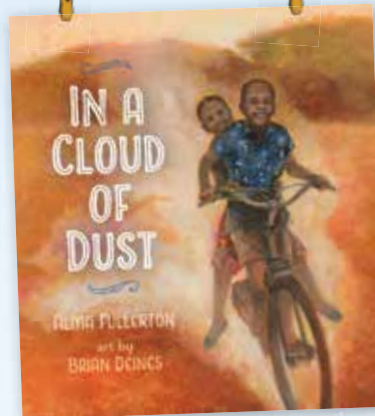
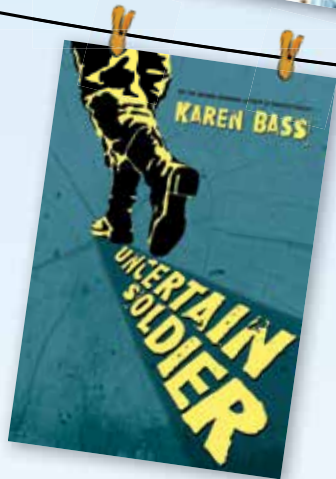
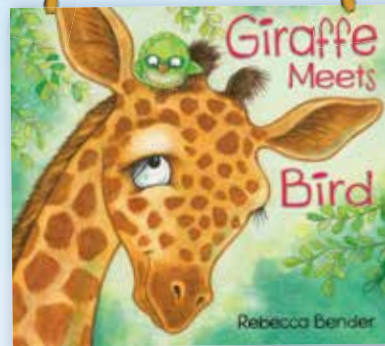
**Tell us about writers who inspire you.** I have been inspired by Lucy Maud Montgomery and I have just realized while re-reading *The Berenstain Bears* books to my granddaughters how hugely I was influenced by Stan and Jan Berenstain.





# pajamapress

## Spring 2015



**Bad Pirate**  
by Kari-Lynn Winters, illustrated by Dean Griffiths  
978-1-927485-71-2

**Giraffe Meets Bird**  
by Rebecca Bender  
978-1-927485-35-4

**A+ for Big Ben**  
by Sarah Ellis, illustrated by Kim La Fave  
978-1-927485-76-7

**Uncertain Soldier**  
by Karen Bass  
978-1-927485-72-9

**Princess Pistachio and the Pest**  
by Marie-Louise Gay  
978-1-927485-73-6

**In a Cloud of Dust**  
by Alma Fullerton, illustrated by Brian Deines  
978-1-927485-62-0



Illustration © Marie-Louise Gay, *Princess Pistachio and the Pest*

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# Big Themes in Small Packages

## Kyo Maclear walks the fine line between “the pat and the poetic”

BY AYA TSINTZIRAS



When Kyo Maclear was 10 years old, she fell in love with the woods at an overnight camp in northern Ontario. The smell, the various greens, the magical feeling of seeing a forest up close when she had only seen it in movies — she remembers it all. Decades later, on a 2010 trip to Half Moon Bay, California, her youngest son felt the same magic connection to the ocean. He called it “the specific ocean.” It didn’t matter how many times his family corrected him; he still used that phrase. He loved that particular sea so much that even upon returning to Toronto, he kept talking about wanting to see it again. It was this idea of falling in love with nature that inspired Maclear’s latest book and literally inspired the title, *The Specific Ocean*.

Maclear is the award-winning author of four previous children’s books. Her first, *Spork*, was published by Kids Can Press in 2010. Then came 2012’s *Virginia Wolf*, 2013’s *Mr. Flux* and 2014’s *Julia, Child*. Her books are beautifully poetic, from the elegant writing to the sophisticated themes. No matter the subject, whether it’s a girl who wakes up in a “wolfish” mood or a utensil that is part fork and part spoon, Maclear’s work marries the tension between two ideas, and brings poetry to the package of a picture book.

It’s fitting that Maclear has a background in art. After studying fine art and art history at York University, she received her Masters in Cultural Studies from the University of Toronto, and wrote about art for many years. She lives in Toronto with her musician husband, David, and their two sons — 10-year-old Mika and 14-year-old Yoshi — in a house whose first-floor acoustics make the perfect music studio. In 2000, she and her husband were continuing their holiday tradition of making homemade gifts for friends and family when they created a book. They made 20 copies on 8.5” x 11” pieces of paper folded in half. It was an early draft of *Spork*, or what Maclear calls “Spork 1.0.” As her friends started having babies of mixed backgrounds, the story stuck, and 10 years later, the book was published by Kids Can Press. And so began her writing career.

*The Specific Ocean*, which will be published in August, is about a girl who initially resists her family vacation until she falls in love with the ocean. Montreal illustrator Katty Maurey related to it, “like if this story had emerged from my own memories,” she says. The two met at a dinner and Maurey felt a connection since she also comes from “two places.” Over the course of a year of emails, the story came to life with Maurey’s muted, pastel illustrations. She praises Maclear’s writing for being “simple” and “evocative.”

The daughter of a British father and a Japanese mother, Maclear was influenced by poet Wendell Berry’s statement that even the most nomadic people can feel connected to a particular place if they decide to put down roots. “I love that idea. Because both my parents came from different countries, I’ve never really felt like I had an attachment to land,” she says. “If you feel connected to a place, you open yourself up to love that place. But you also open yourself up to lose that place in a different way.”

That theme of love and loss is present in Maclear’s sixth book, *The Good Little Book*, illustrated by Marion Arbona, which will also be released in August. When Tundra Books editor Tara Walker asked Arbona if she would consider working on the project, Arbona was thrilled, and over a period of six months, she and Maclear honed the details of the book. Arbona loves that her stories “always take an interesting angle” and that Maclear “gives life to objects.” The plot is at first glance simple: a boy loves one book, which he then loses. But it comes from a deeper idea: an expression in the birding community that a “spark bird” inspires a love of birding. As a birder, Maclear started wondering about spark books that inspire a love of reading. “I loved the idea that there is prob-

ably one book that was really meant for you," she says. That happened to her youngest son, who became an enthusiastic reader after discovering a graphic novel at Drawn & Quarterly, a bookstore in Montreal. The story was also inspired by two other subjects: the anxiety around the staying power of printed books, and the books that don't win awards but quietly wait on shelves for the right reader to see how special they are.

The seemingly small presentation of a picture book works for Maclear, whose writing process involves writing in small notebooks – "a way of flirting with an idea without committing," she says, compared to the white screen of an empty Word document. Over the course of a few weeks, she writes down thoughts until a draft forms. She describes it as setting up a tent and ensuring it is sturdy enough to use. She prefers to work on a few different projects at once so she can decide which one she feels like focusing on that day. "It's important to feel like I'm still playing," she says. When she's working on something that has a biographical bent – like *Julia, Child*, for example, inspired by the famous American champion of French cooking – she reads all she can about that person before writing. But too much planning never works out. "A plot outline would feel too predetermined," she says. "I like the feeling of exploration and adventure. I can't do something where it feels like the work's already been done, the questions have already been answered."

Although there is a huge, passionate children's book community, there are some who look down on picture books and feel they aren't as important as literary fiction aimed at adults. As the author of two adult books as well, Maclear has experienced that firsthand at festivals. But the condescension is unwarranted – just look at the numbers: sales of children's and young adult books continue to rise, resulting in countless articles proclaiming that the genre has saved the book industry.

Maclear infuses her small books with lots of big ideas, along with the tension between two ideas. *Ocean* is a meditation on how when we love something, it can be taken away from us. *Mr. Flux* has a boy being forced to embrace change and learn that it isn't so terrifying after all when a man named Mr. Flux (inspired by the Fluxus artists' movement) moves onto his perfect street. She always aims to write a story with drama and conflict, like any other story in any other genre. Maclear jokes that while in the middle of a draft a line can sound like a "bumper sticker" because the true challenge of picture book writing is an ending that ties up the emotion of the story without coming too simply: "There's this line between the pat and the poetic, or platitudes and poetry." As Kids Can editor Yvette Ghione, who worked on *Ocean* and *Mr. Flux*, says, "I love the empathy she has for her characters and, by extension, her readers. You see a great respect and appreciation for the child's experience in all of Kyo's stories."

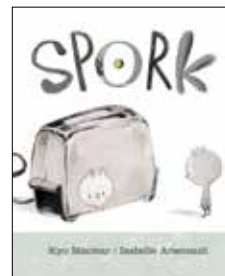
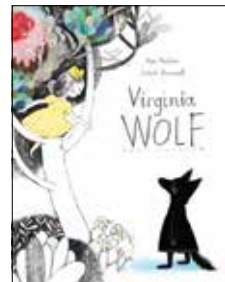
The life of any artist, but particularly that of a writer, is one full of tension. There's the tension between needing the time and space to create and needing to promote your work. There's the tension between creating for yourself and creating for others. Maclear is dealing with that in a unique way: by going back to school. Currently enrolled in a cultural studies PhD program at York, she's looking at the role of children in

environmental disasters. She's enjoying the satisfying experience of reading and talking about writing and literature.

Maclear enjoys the accessibility of children's books, which her mother, whose first language isn't English, can easily read. She mentions a PBS interview with Maurice Sendak where he talks about how being afraid led him to write picture books. "He felt it was his humble art and he could do it because it was modest and miniature," she says. "That's where the power is." In the same way, the form affects the content of Maclear's stories. They may be packaged in a picture book, but they are no by no means small. And that unquestionably makes them powerful. 🌱

Aya Tsintziras is a freelance writer and the author of the YA novel, *Pretty Bones* (Lorimer).

## Forthcoming and Recent Titles by Kyo Maclear



### **The Good Little Book**

illustrated by Marion Arbona  
Tundra Books, 2015

### **The Specific Ocean**

illustrated by Katty Maurey  
Kids Can Press, 2015

### **Julia, Child**

illustrated by Julie Morstad  
Tundra Books, 2014

### **Mr. Flux**

illustrated by Matte Stephens  
Kids Can Press, 2013

### **Virginia Wolf**

illustrated by Isabelle Arsenault  
Kids Can Press, 2012

### **Spork**

illustrated by Isabelle Arsenault  
Kids Can Press, 2010

# Different, Versatile, Layered

## Canadian Graphic Novels have evolved into a Staple for Young Readers

BY BEVERLEY BRENNAN, JING JIN, SHAUNE KOSHINSKY  
& JEFF BURTON

**The graphic novel is currently evolving** into a solid resource for Canadian children, based on a number of attributes. It has the potential to demonstrate multiple genres. It can support the teaching and learning of multiple comprehension strategies. It can delight readers with multimodal messages. Initially considered a book for struggling or reluctant readers, and pigeonholed as a resource for those learning English as an additional language or a resource to support male readers, the graphic novel has the potential to be a staple in the reading diets of many of our nation's young people.

The evolution of graphic novels in terms of popularity should not come as a surprise. Anime and manga have been part of the North American and European markets since the 1980s, and sales continue to rise. Their influence has resulted in a number of variations that can all be grouped under the heading of *sequential art narratives*, a term coined by James Bucky Carter. Graphic novels can be found in homes and online contexts as well as schools in addition to areas of bookstores and public libraries that are commonly clearly delineated. Youth have embraced graphic novels as more than a temporary fascination, deriving both information and enjoyment from their pages. Contemporary content, including increased attention to First Nations, Métis and Inuit characters, is now available (e.g., Drew Hayden Taylor's *The Night Wanderer: A Graphic Novel*; David Alexander Robertson's *7 Generations: A Plains Cree Saga* series).

Although consensus around a definition of the term graphic novel is still developing, Will Eisner's *A Contract with God* is often cited as the first novel in this form. Many variations on the partnership between words and art can be found in contemporary publishing. Such blends range from stories told almost completely through illustrations to stories that alternate between text and graphics, as well as many "standard" blends of the two communicative media. Graphic novel elements are also finding their way into books that have a substantial amount of regularly formatted text, such as *Viminy Crowe's Comic Book* (by Marthe Jocelyn, Richard Scrimger and Claudia Dávila) or *Gottika* (by Helaine Becker and Alexander Griggs-Burr).

Research into the use of graphic novels in secondary classroom settings tends to focus on the manner in which these texts might support students with reading challenges, and there has been little previous study on the role of graphic

novels in general secondary student populations or in elementary school classrooms. This lack of attention may be due to a perception of graphic novels as less academic or less worthy than other forms of reading material. It may also be that graphic novels have been labelled a special education resource, since that route is how they first evolved into school use, and thus educators may not have fully tapped the potential of graphic novels as regular classroom reading material.

People unfamiliar with the range of genres available in the graphic novel form may have incorrect notions about the amount of violence included. Perhaps their name, suggestive of edgy subject matter, is partly to blame for misconceptions. Perhaps a perceived relationship to comics, where glib content or violence have historically been common, casts a negative shadow. In addition, readers with less experience might label graphic novels "simple" or "easier" to read, without recognizing that key aspects of literary structure, such as setting and characterization, are just provided visually rather than through the inclusion of explicit vocabulary.

Rather than being "simple," we argue that a better descriptor for graphic novels is "different" – different in terms of how information is communicated, and different in terms of particular cues that engage understanding, such as the use of colour, font and other visual sign systems. Author and artist together have a versatile license for creativity, offering a rich breadth of interdisciplinary meaning that, if harnessed well, produces deep insight and layered meaning.

Previous elementary school-based studies with graphic novels attest to the medium's versatility in supporting critical literacy, where students independently critiqued and compared graphic novels with narrative texts. Other studies speak to the graphic novel form as encouraging interpersonal reading conversations within a community of learners. Graphic novels also have been identified as foundational texts through which to teach and practise reading-comprehension strategies in developing readers.

All ages of readers certainly benefit from discussions about strategic reading, and readers who become skilled at comprehending graphic novels may be able to speak explicitly about the kinds of reading cues to which they attend. This, in turn, creates a space for talk about new strategies to use with other kinds of texts. A conscious exploration of reading strategies against a background of diverse texts can be tremendously



insightful to readers who are learning to apply different types of strategies toward different reading purposes and settings.

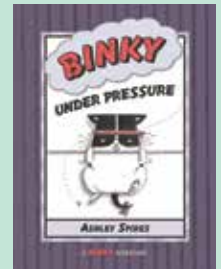
For example, if skimming and scanning are components of reading for enjoyment in terms of narrative texts, readers might struggle with graphic novels unless they learn to give more attention to the illustrations. Another example involves the literary technique of narrative distance, how an author zooms in and out in terms of a focus on a character. Readers can look at the ways illustrations in graphic novels similarly convey variations on narrative distance, where sometimes readers have a panoramic scene painted before them, and then the perspective changes to a close-up on a character. They can thus begin to understand and examine narrative distance and then apply this technique to other texts they read as well as to their own writing.

Although parents have at times been reluctant to support their children's participation in studies of graphic novels, it is clear that students' explorations of this resource have had no ill effects; for example, one study conducted by some of our research team indicates that while middle-grade newcomers to the form learned to appreciate graphic novels, this form did not displace previous preferences for reading narrative novels. In addition, students who enjoyed graphic novels did not necessarily favour comics and cartoons, and individual preferences for graphic novels among younger students in Grade 4 were most closely positioned to preferences related to regular narrative novels and non-fiction rather than other illustrated forms.

Graphic novels have a lot in their favour for a wide range of readers. While many previous studies have supported their flexibility in promoting reading in secondary school populations – where motivation or ability impede reading progress – we can now identify that graphic novels have the potential to support all students. The provision of age-appropriate ideas in a form accessible to both struggling and fluent readers offers a kind of internal reading scaffold for those who need it, resulting in a classroom text that all may access without the need to differentiate instruction. The form itself may speak to audiences with diverse abilities, as well – captivating learners who are strong visual thinkers as well as learners who are not.

The range of new graphic novel titles available from Canadian authors works to support reading in a variety of educational contexts. The following list, developed by approaching 113 Canadian publishers with queries for titles, as well as locating titles through word of mouth, identifies general audience age range. Additional titles were added, thanks to recommendations by staff at the Canadian Children's Book Centre. Further information regarding these titles is available through an annotated version of this bibliography available on the following website: [www.beverleybrenna.com](http://www.beverleybrenna.com). It is particularly interesting to note the numbers of Canadian titles for junior and intermediate age ranges compared to young adult materials, although in the junior age range, many of the titles will tend to operate for ages eight and older. ♻️

\*Special thanks to IBBY Canada for the research support of the Frances E. Russell Grant toward completing this project; also thanks to the University of Saskatchewan for Graduate Assistant Stipend Awards funding. Gratitude also to Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council for a larger funded project that facilitated insights into patterns and trends regarding the presentation of characters with disabilities within a more comprehensive group of books.



## BIBLIOGRAPHY OF CONTEMPORARY CANADIAN GRAPHIC NOVELS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

### Junior Graphic Novels (for ages 6 and up)

#### Adventures of Rabbit and Bear Paws series

written by Chad Solomon and Christopher Meyer

illustrated by Chad Solomon

Little Spirit Bear Productions

*Bear Walker* (2011)

*Tall Tale* (2010)

*True Hearts* (2009)

*The Voyageurs* (2008)

*The Sugar Bush* (2006)

#### Alison Dare series

written by J. Torres

illustrated by J. Bone

Tundra Books

*Little Miss Adventures* (2010)

*The Heart of the Maiden* (2010)

#### Almost Home: *The Sinking of the S.S. Caribou*

written and illustrated by Jennifer Morgan

Breakwater Books, 2012

#### Bigfoot Boy series

written by J. Torres

illustrated by Faith Erin Hicks

Kids Can Press

*The Sound of Thunder* (2014)

*The Unkindness of Ravens* (2013)

*Into the Woods* (2012)

#### A Binky Adventure series

written and illustrated by Ashley Spire

Kids Can Press

*Binky: License to Scratch* (2013)

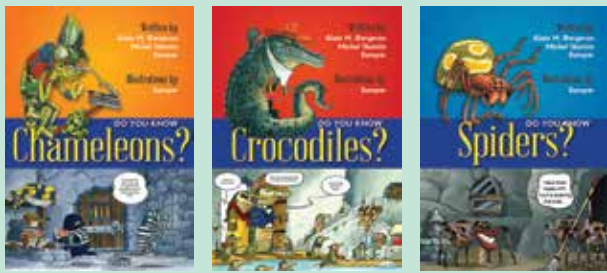
*Binky Takes Charge* (2012)

*Binky Under Pressure* (2011)

*Binky to the Rescue* (2010)

*Binky the Space Cat* (2009)

*continued on page 14*



#### **Claire Graphic Novels series**

written and illustrated by Janice Poon  
Kids Can Press

***Claire and the Water Wish*** (2009)

***Claire and the Bakery Thief*** (2008)

#### **Dalen & Gole: Scandal in Port Angus**

written and illustrated by Mike Deas  
Orca Book Publishers, 2011

#### **Do You Know? series**

written by Alain M. Bergeron, Michel Quintin and Sampar  
illustrated by Sampar  
translated by Solange Messier  
Fitzhenry & Whiteside

***Do You Know Tigers?*** (2015)

***Do You Know the Rhinoceros?*** (2015)

***Do You Know Dinosaurs?*** (2014)

***Do You Know Hyenas?*** (2014)

***Do You Know Komodo Dragons?*** (2014)

***Do You Know Praying Mantises?*** (2014)

***Do You Know Chameleons?*** (2013)

***Do You Know Crocodiles?*** (2013)

***Do You Know Crows?*** (2013)

***Do You Know Leeches?*** (2013)

***Do You Know Porcupines?*** (2013)

***Do You Know Rats?*** (2013)

***Do You Know Spiders?*** (2013)

***Do You Know Toads?*** (2013)

#### **The Future According to Luz series**

written and illustrated by Claudia Dávila  
Kids Can Press

***Luz Makes a Splash*** (2012)

***Luz Sees the Light*** (2011)

#### **Hocus Pocus series**

story by Sylvie Desrosiers  
illustrated by Rémy Simard  
Kids Can Press

***Hocus Pocus Takes the Train*** (2013)

***Hocus Pocus*** (2011)

#### **Sam & Friends Mystery series**

written by Mary Labatt  
illustrated by Jo Rioux  
Kids Can Press

***Witches' Brew*** (2011)

***Mummy Mayhem*** (2010)

***Lake Monster Mix-up*** (2009)

#### **That One Spooky Night**

written by Dan Bar-el  
illustrated by David Huyck  
Kids Can Press, 2012

### **Intermediate Graphic Novels (for ages 9 and up)**

#### **Elephants Never Forget series**

written and illustrated by Bill Slavin  
Kids Can Press

***Big Star Otto*** (2015)

***Big Top Otto*** (2013)

***Big City Otto*** (2011)

#### ***The Golden Twine (Cat's Cradle, Book 1)***

written and illustrated by Jo Rioux  
Kids Can Press, 2012

#### ***Good-bye Marianne: The Graphic Novel***

written by Irene N. Watts  
illustrated by Kathryn E. Shoemaker  
Tundra Books, 2008

#### **A Graphic Guide Adventure series**

written by Liam O'Donnell  
illustrated by Mike Deas  
Orca Book Publishers

***Power Play*** (2011)

***Food Fight*** (2010)

***Media Meltdown*** (2009)

***Soccer Sabotage*** (2009)

***Ramp Rats*** (2008)

***Wild Ride*** (2007)

#### **Harvey**

written by Hervé Bouchard  
illustrated by Janice Nadeau  
translated by Helen Mixer  
Groundwood Books, 2010

#### ***Lila & Ecco's Do-It-Yourself Comics Club***

written and illustrated by Willow Dawson  
Kids Can Press, 2010

#### ***No Girls Allowed: Tales of Daring Women Dressed as Men for Love, Freedom and Adventure***

written by Susan Hughes  
illustrated by Willow Dawson  
Kids Can Press, 2008

#### ***Project Superhero***

written by E. Paul Zehr  
illustrated by Kris Pearn  
ECW Press, 2014

#### ***The Silver Six***

written by A.J. Lieberman  
illustrated by Darren Rawlings  
Graphix/Scholastic, 2013

#### ***Stories of Our People: A Métis Graphic Novel Anthology***

written by Norman Fleury, Gilbert Pelletier,  
Jeanne Pelletier, Joe Welsh, Norma Welsh,  
Janice DePeel and Carrie Saganace  
The Gabriel Dumont Institute, 2008

*continued on page 16*

7th Annual

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# Telling Tales Festival



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- Alma Fullerton
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- Hamilton Youth Poets
- Carol-Ann Hoyte
- HPL Puppeteers
- Jude Johnson
- Jess Keating
- Wesley King
- Lynne Kittredge-Fox
- Adrienne Kress
- Monica Kulling
- Andrew Larsen
- JonArno Lawson
- John Lukasik
- Debbie Ridpath Ohi
- Gillian O'Reilly
- Pan Piper
- Neil Pasricha
- Richard Scrimger
- Patricia Storms
- TURKEY Rhubarb
- TVOKids' Ranger Kara
- Werner Zimmermann

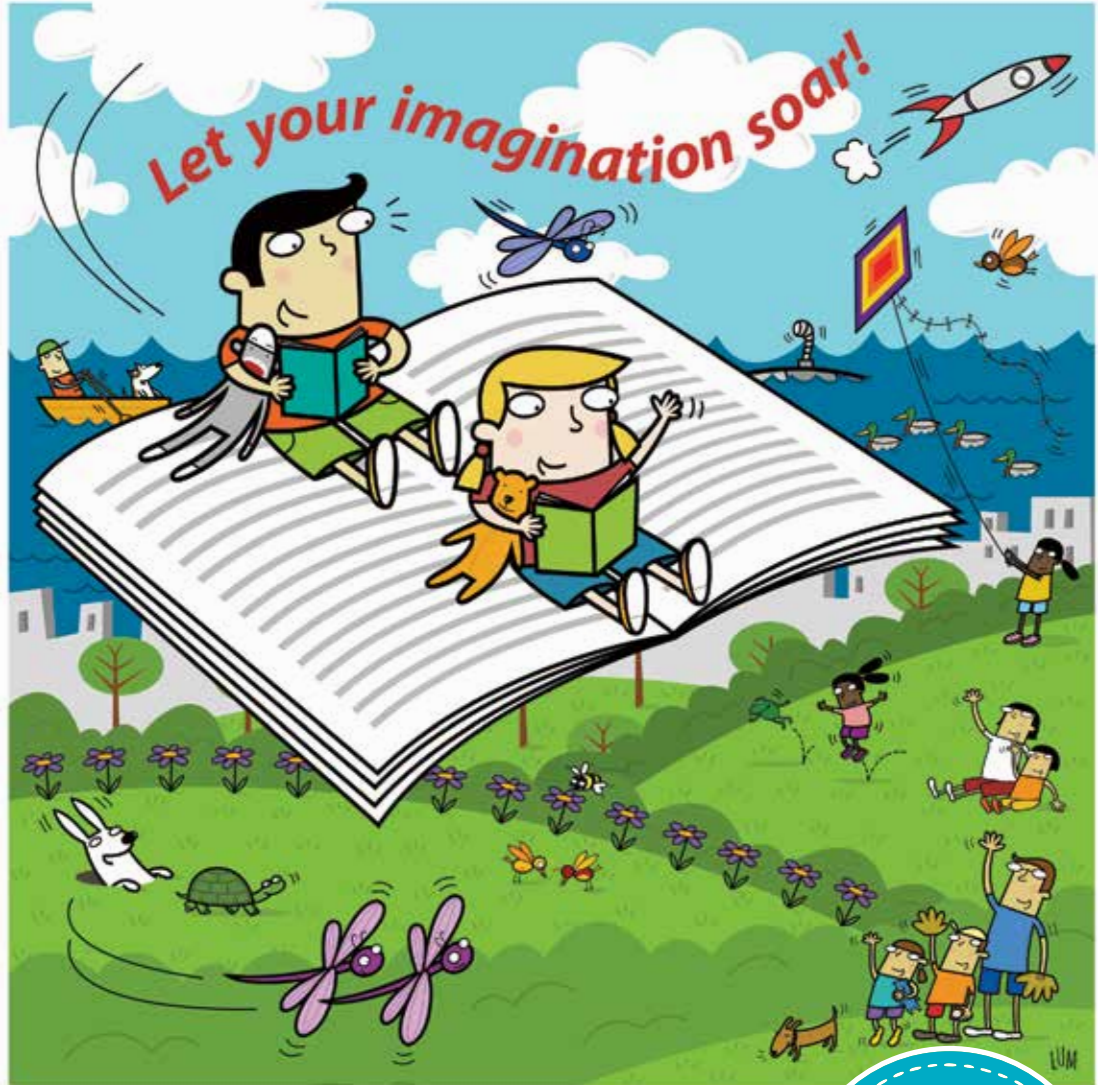


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### **Three Thieves series**

written and illustrated by Scott Chantler  
Kids Can Press

***The King's Dragon*** (2014)

***Pirates of the Silver Coast*** (2014)

***The Captive Prince*** (2012)

***The Sign of the Black Rock*** (2011)

***Tower of Treasure*** (2010)

### ***Viminy Crowe's Comic Book***

written by Marthe Jocelyn and Richard Scrimger  
illustrated by Claudia Dávila  
Tundra Books, 2014

### **Young Adult Graphic Novels (for ages 12 and up)**

#### ***7 Generations: A Plains Cree Saga***

written by David Alexander Robertson  
illustrated by Scott B. Henderson  
HighWater Press, 2012  
\*Mature content

#### ***Betty: The Helen Betty Osborne Story***

written by David Alexander Robertson  
illustrated by Scott B. Henderson  
HighWater Press, 2015  
\*Mature content

#### ***The Country of Wolves***

retold by Neil Christopher  
illustrated by Ramón Pérez  
additional work by Daniel Gies  
Inhabit Media, 2012  
\*Mature content (disturbing imagery)

#### ***Gottika***

written by Helaine Becker  
illustrated by Alexander Griggs-Burr  
Dancing Cat Books, 2014

#### ***Hyena in Petticoats: The Story of Suffragette Nellie McClung***

written and illustrated by Willow Dawson  
Puffin Canada, 2011

#### ***I, Witness***

written by Norah McClintock  
illustrated by Mike Deas  
Orca Book Publishers, 2012  
\*Mature content

### **Kill Shakespeare series**

written by Conor McCreey and Anthony Del Col  
illustrated by Andy Belanger  
IDW Publishing

***The Mask of Night*** (2014)

***The Tide of Blood*** (2013)

***The Blast of War*** (2011)

***A Sea of Troubles*** (2010)

### ***Lone Hawk: The Story of Air Ace Billy Bishop***

written and illustrated by John Lang  
Puffin Canada, 2011

### ***Look Straight Ahead***

written and illustrated by Elaine M. Will  
Cuckoo's Nest Press, 2013  
\*Mature content

### ***The Night Wanderer: A Graphic Novel***

written by Drew Hayden Taylor  
adapted by Alison Kooistra  
illustrated by Mike Wyatt  
Annick Press, 2013

### ***Red Power: A Graphic Novel***

written and illustrated by Brian Wright-McLeod  
Fifth House Publishers, 2011  
\*Mature content in this adult text may operate as crossover reading material for older teens

### ***Robert Louis Stevenson's Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde***

adapted by Alan Grant  
illustrated by Cam Kennedy  
Tundra Books, 2008

### ***Robert Louis Stevenson's Kidnapped***

adapted by Alan Grant  
illustrated by Cam Kennedy  
Tundra Books, 2006

### ***Skim***

created by Mariko Tamaki and Jillian Tamaki  
Groundwood Books, 2008  
\*Mature content

### ***Sugar Falls: A Residential School Story***

written by David Alexander Robertson  
illustrated by Scott B. Henderson  
HighWater Press, 2011  
\*Mature content

### ***Tyranny***

written and illustrated by Lesley Fairfield  
Tundra Books, 2009

### ***We Are On Our Own: A Memoir***

written and illustrated by Miriam Katin  
Drawn & Quarterly, 2006  
\*Mature content

For a list of Dr. Beverley Brenna's previous studies related to graphic novels, please see: [http://www.usask.ca/education/ecur/profiles/brenna/index.php#refereed\\_publications](http://www.usask.ca/education/ecur/profiles/brenna/index.php#refereed_publications)

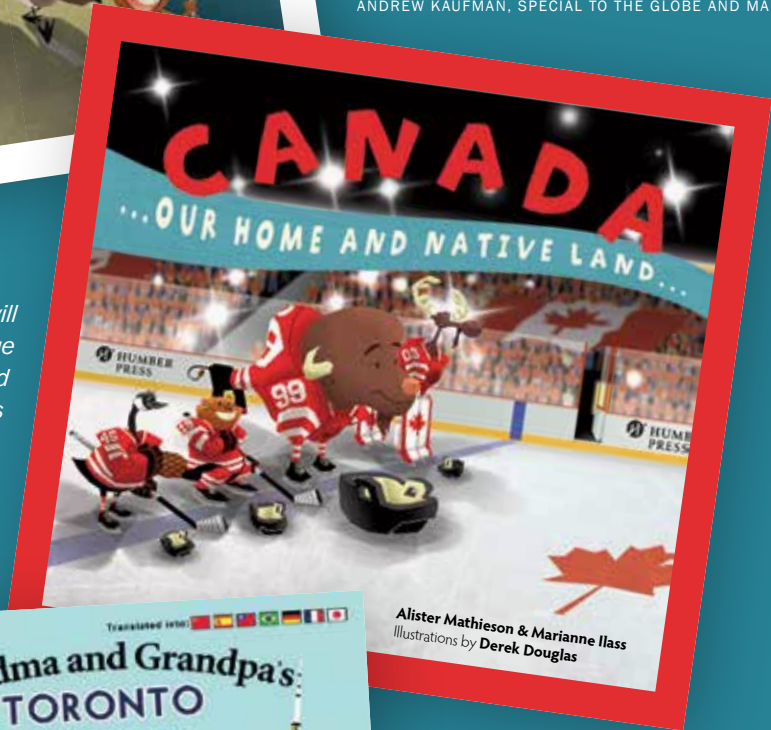


*"There's a creeping tendency within English Canada to believe that we're basically Americans from a colder climate, which is why every one of us should be forced to read this kids' book. An ABC book, this is an unapologetic examination of Canada's socialist leanings, presenting a cultural identity refreshingly free of hockey, doughnuts or beer."*

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*"This book and its delightful illustrations will make you smile as you appreciate how unique and special our country is, from A to Z and coast to coast. Through the journey, students will learn that inclusion and diversity are at the core of Canadian values."*

RICK HANSEN, CEO OF THE RICK HANSEN FOUNDATION



All net proceeds will be donated to the 'Blossom Fund', a special fund established to support awards and scholarships for students with disabilities and mental health challenges attending Humber College.

# Separately working together

## How Liam O'Donnell and Mike Deas team up to create graphic novels

BY GILLIAN O'REILLY

Liam O'Donnell



On the phone, talking from Toronto and Salt Spring Island respectively, Liam O'Donnell and Mike Deas display a real camaraderie and understanding of each other's work in creating graphic novels. So it's curious to think that they actually work quite separately on the books they have very successfully created together.

The team has produced six graphic novels in the Graphic Guide Adventure series for Orca Book Publishers and

recently embarked on a new series of "hybrid" novels with graphic novel elements. The *Tank & Fizz* series (also from Orca) details the investigative adventures of a technology-tinkering troll and a goblin with a taste for choco-slug cookies. In the first book, *Tank & Fizz: The Case of the Slime Stampede* (released in the spring of 2015), the pair solve a mystery that seems to begin in the janitor's office at their school. *Tank & Fizz: The Case of the Battling Bots* will appear in spring 2016.

Asked about the creative process for a graphic novel, O'Donnell answers, "As in all writing, it depends on the team. Mike probably works differently when he is doing both the writing and illustrating."

"Completely differently," interjects Deas, whose *Dalen & Gole: Scandal in Port Angus* was published by Orca in 2011.

"When Mike and I work together, I come up with the story idea and concept and go off and write as I would write any project. I studied media and television at Ryerson University... and when I first started writing graphic novels, I adapted how I wrote TV scripts. I describe the scene; I pop in the dialogue and use captions that tell the story. The script begins with a lot of description of action and then goes straight to dialogue."

Once the script is done, it goes to the editor for the back-and-forth process of polishing the text, working out holes in the plot and so on. "Once the story is nailed down, it goes to Mike."

Just as O'Donnell works with his editor in the writing stage, Deas works with the designer in the illustration stage. "Mike and I don't really talk to each other during the process."

"When I get it," says Deas, "it is pretty complete story-wise. I read through the whole thing. Sometimes I have a sketchbook

Mike Deas



with me; sometimes I don't. If I do, I jot down first impressions. [Either way] as soon as I can, I go through doing page sketches. Usually, I will outline what will go on each page (e.g., will there be four panels or three panels?) and jot down ideas of where the panels will go. I spend very little time on this, five minutes per page. Only then can I understand what it actually looks like. From there, I can dive into it."

He adds, "I learned through the Graphic Guide Adventures that there's a lot that can be done after the story is complete — the layout of the characters and the actual images."

Sometimes the pair find they have to make a last-minute change in the text to make sense of the story, or a change to the text because an illustration seems so apt that the text must be altered, but, says O'Donnell, "It's mostly pretty solid."

"I'm surprised how well it does work," adds Deas.

With the *Tank & Fizz* series, the duo is moving into a hybrid kind of book. The bulk of the story is text, but certain parts are told through the graphic novel format. These aren't illustrations the reader can skip over and look at later. It is essential to read the graphic novel segments to understand the plot.

O'Donnell explains that, when he had the idea for *Tank & Fizz*, he knew that it wasn't going to be a story to tell in a full graphic novel. He wrote the text for the most part as a regular novel, switching to scripts for the graphic elements.

It was a challenge and "definitely a learning process" for the pair to figure out the right way of combining the text and graphic novel sections. For the first book, Deas says, he wasn't as aware of how the panels would fit in with the text, and the designer had some real challenges in squeezing in the visual material. With the second book, they took a different approach. The designer laid out all the text, leaving appropriate gaps and, from that, Deas filled in the panels. "I'm doing the final draft right now."

O'Donnell observes, "With the first book, I didn't know if it was going to work. I was fumbling along as to how to do it. It sounds as if, Mike, it was the same on your side."

What is the appeal of a hybrid novel? For O'Donnell, who

Erik Lyon



works as a teacher in his day job, he knows the power of a comic element in grabbing readers, particularly reluctant readers. He confesses he also likes the visual possibilities of the story's goblins, trolls, elves, monsters and an eight-legged principal.

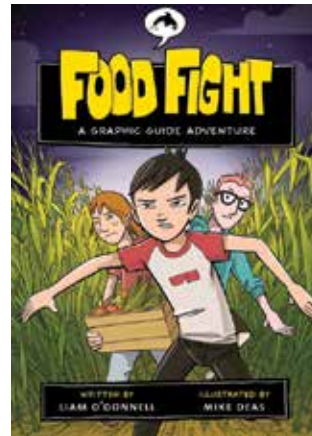
Deas also enjoys the appeal to reluctant readers (having been a bit of one himself.) The other perk is the way graphic elements can help build a scene or offer a surprise, adding a dramatic shift that reinforces the story. "There are a few areas in the book where the text sets up the scene. As you are reading, your mind is [anticipating what the next scene] will look like. When the surprise hits, the story turns into a visual format."

He points to a text passage describing a scene in the principal's office when someone mentions a character. "Then the door opens and the story starts being told in a graphic format."

O'Donnell observes that being able to change from text to graphics solves his problem of peppering his text with "suddenly" — a word he then has to remove as he edits his draft and replace with something that still gives a sense of suspense and surprise. "How can I make them hear a noise or suddenly see something? Put it in graphic format."

Deas points out that they can also use the pages to control the speed of the story, punctuating a scene by putting a graphic panel at the end of a page or running the text to the bottom of a page and making "the big reveal" in graphic form as the reader turns the page.

Whether it is the books they are working on together or other projects they do separately, both enjoy the growing

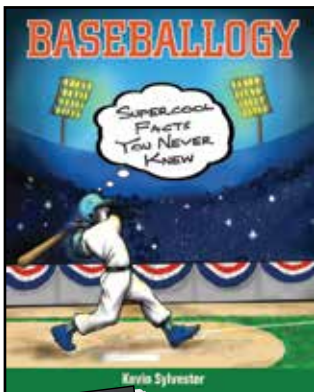


interest in and respect for graphic novels. O'Donnell remembers that when he wrote his first graphic novel in 2000, there was a real resistance to the genre and comments like "trash" and "these don't belong in our schools." He adds, "So it is wonderful to see a graphic novel (*Kung Pow Chicken #1: Let's Get Cracking!* by Cyndi Marko) winning the Ontario Library Association's Silver Birch Express Award in 2015."

Reviewers are already having fun with *Tank & Fizz: The Case of the Slime Stampede* — "monstrously imaginative" and "a slick subterranean caper." Readers can look forward to both the detecting adventures of the young troll-and-goblin team and the creative adventures of the team of O'Donnell and Deas. 🕸

Gillian O'Reilly is Editor of *Canadian Children's Book News*.

# TAKE ME OUT TO THE GAME!



The most unusual baseball facts you'll ever find.

"... a browser's delight ..."  
—Kirkus Reviews

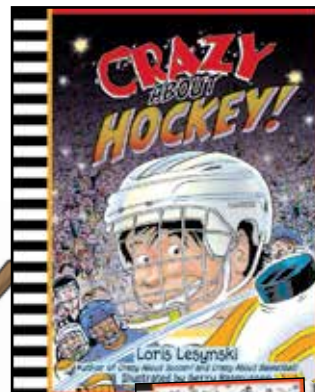
"Baseball fans will welcome this relevant, well-done title ..."  
—School Library Journal

Ages 9–12

Also by Kevin Sylvester

**GAME DAY**

★ Best Books for Kids & Teens, starred selection, Canadian Children's Book Centre



Catchy poems capture the silly and serious side of hockey.

"Fun, accessible verses, and terrific accompanying art will make this an often borrowed and read book for young fans."  
—Sal's Fiction Addiction

Ages 8–10

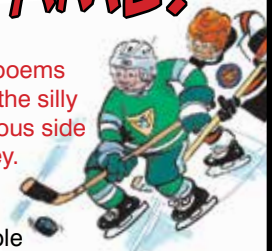
Also by Loris Lesynski and Gerry Rasmussen

**CRAZY ABOUT SOCCER**

★ Recommended Reads List, Canadian Toy Testing Council

**CRAZY ABOUT BASKETBALL**

★ Best Books for Kids & Teens, Canadian Children's Book Centre



annick press | [www.annickpress.com](http://www.annickpress.com) | available from your favourite bookstore

**“BOOKMARK!” HIGHLIGHTS BOOKS FROM A VARIETY OF GRADE LEVELS AROUND A PARTICULAR THEME.**

To follow up on our feature story on the increasingly widespread appeal of graphic novels to all kinds of readers, CCBC Library Coordinator Meghan Howe has compiled a list of recent titles to complement the bibliography created by Dr. Beverley Brenna’s team.

# Graphic Novels

## PICTURE BOOKS AND EARLY READERS FOR KINDERGARTEN TO GRADE 3

### A Cat Named Tim and Other Stories

written and illustrated by John Martz  
(Koyama Press, 2014)

A duck and a mouse go on a wild adventure, Tim the cat golfs on a whale and a girl named Connie goes through her day in a mechanical house! Every page is an adventure to be pored over again and again in this whimsical collection of mostly wordless comics for the young reader.

### Gubby Builds a Boat

written by Gary Kent  
illustrated by Kim La Fave  
(Harbour Publishing, 2012)

Gubby, a West Coast fisherman, commissions a new boat from a Japanese-Canadian boat builder in historic Steveston. The story illustrates all the stages involved, from selecting plans to preparing the wood to laying the keel to the launching. The book documents the rich traditions of the Nikkei fishing community, wooden-boat building on the West Coast and commercial salmon fishing in the 1970s. This is the companion to *Fishing with Gubby*.

### Odd Duck

written by Cecil Castellucci  
illustrated by Sara Varon  
(First Second, 2013)

Theodora is a perfectly “normal” duck. She may swim with a teacup balanced on her head and stay north when the rest of the ducks fly south for the winter, but there’s nothing so odd about that. Chad, on the other hand, is one strange bird. As the two of them get to know each other, they learn to appreciate one another’s oddities.

### A Trip to the Bottom of the World with Mouse

(Easy-to-Read Comics, Level 1)  
written and illustrated by Frank Viva  
(Candlewick Press/TOON Books, 2012)

A young explorer and his best friend, Mouse, go on a sea journey to Antarctica. There they make friends with penguins and a whale and have all kinds of fun. And just like Mouse, young readers will want to go back and read it again. This is a first comic for those who are just learning to read.

## JUNIOR & INTERMEDIATE FICTION FOR GRADES 2 TO 8

### The Ballad of Nancy April: Shawnadithit

(Tales from Big Spirit)  
written by David Alexander Robertson  
illustrated by Scott B. Henderson  
(HighWater Press, 2014)

Jessie’s shortcut home becomes an adventure when she is transported back to early 19th-century Newfoundland. There

she meets Shawnadithit who, as the last surviving member of the Beothuk, has witnessed the end of a once-great people. Tales from Big Spirit is a unique graphic-novel series that delves into the stories of Indigenous heroes from Canadian history. Other books in the series feature Tommy Prince, Pauline Johnson, Gabriel Dumont, John Ramsay and Thanadelthur.

### Cat Dad, King of the Goblins

written and illustrated by Britt Wilson  
(Koyama Press, 2014)

Miri and Lucy have a dilemma. Their dad’s been turned into a cat, and their closet is a garden full of goblins. There is only one thing for them to do: grab their friend Phil the frog and dive headfirst into a wild, woolly and wacky adventure.

### Horrendo’s Curse: The Graphic Novel

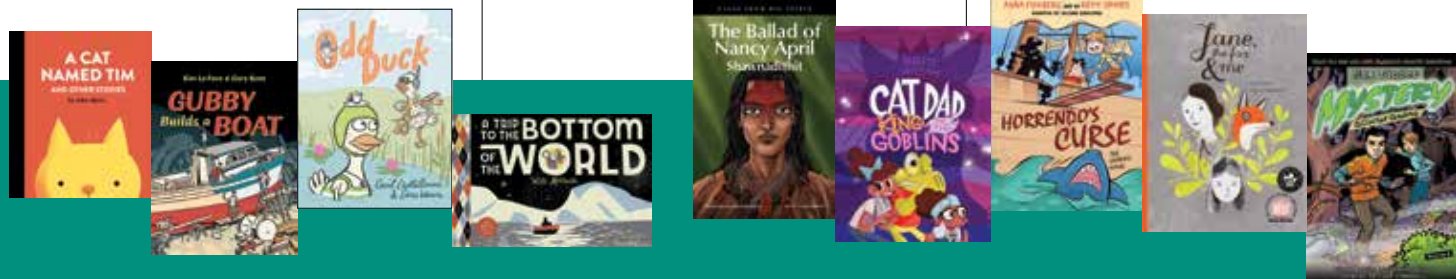
written by Anna Fienberg  
adapted by Alison Kooistra  
illustrated by Rémy Simard  
(Annick Press, 2013)

Cursed at birth, Horrendo can only be polite, gracious and helpful. When nasty pirates abduct all the boys in the village, Horrendo endures with typical good grace — and delectable cooking. But the captain and the crew work the boys to the bone and Horrendo hatches a plot to escape.

### Jane, the Fox & Me

written by Fanny Britt  
illustrated by Isabelle Arsenault  
translated by Christelle Morelli and Susan Ouriou  
(Groundwood Books, 2013)

Hélène has been inexplicably ostracized by the girls who were once her friends. Her school life is full of whispers and lies. Fortunately, Hélène has Charlotte Brontë’s Jane Eyre and, on a trip to nature camp, she makes a friend. This title is also available in French as *Jane, le renard & moi*.





### The Max Finder Mystery series

authors include Liam O'Donnell & Craig Battle  
illustrators include Michael Cho & Ramón Pérez  
(Owlkids Books, 2006-2012)

Follow the clues, analyze the data and solve the crimes with amateur detective Max Finder and his best friend, Alison Santos. Seven titles in the series.

### Modo: Ember's End

written by Arthur Slade  
illustrated by Christopher Steinger  
(Dava Enterprises, 2014)

This steampunk-infused graphic novel, set in the Wild West, was inspired by Arthur Slade's bestselling series, *The Hunchback Assignments*. Modó, a shape-changing secret agent, and fellow agent Octavia Milkweed encounter some nasty villains in the Wild West town of Ember's End.

### The Secret of the Stone Frog

written and illustrated by David Nytra  
(Candlewick Press/TOON Books, 2012)

When brother and sister Leah and Alan awake in a magical forest, they have only each other and their own wits to guide them as they meet pet bees and giant rabbits and befriend a group of refined lions. But danger also awaits them as they try to find the stone frogs that will guide them home.

## SENIOR FICTION FOR GRADES 7 AND UP

### In Real Life

written by Cory Doctorow  
illustrated by Jen Wang  
(First Second, 2014)

Anda loves playing the massively multi-player role-playing game where she can be a leader, a fighter, a hero. Gaming is, for Anda, entirely a good thing. Complications arise when she befriends Raymond, a poor Chinese kid who is a gold farmer collecting virtual gold to sell to rich players for real

money. Anda tries to help him — with disastrous results.

### Jamie's Got a Gun: A Graphic Novel

written by Gail Sidonie Sobat  
illustrated by Spyder Yardley-Jones  
(Great Plains Teen Fiction, 2014)

Jamie Kidding finds a semi-automatic handgun in an inner-city dumpster. An aspiring artist, Jamie initially resorts to his notebook to record the details of his complicated life. Gradually, the weapon takes over Jamie's life and his imagination, tantalizing him with deadly solutions to his personal troubles. A hybrid of novel, film noir and comic/graphic novel.

### Nothing Can Possibly Go Wrong

written by Prudence Shen  
illustrated by Faith Erin Hicks  
(First Second, 2013)

Nate and Charlie have an unlikely friendship. Charlie is the laid-back captain of the basketball team, and Nate is the neurotic, scheming president of the robotics club. When Nate declares war on the cheerleaders, they retaliate by making Charlie their figurehead in the ugliest class-election campaign the school has ever seen. What's at stake?

### This One Summer

created by Mariko Tamaki and Jillian Tamaki  
(Groundwood Books, 2014)

Rose and Windy are summer friends whose families have stayed at Awago Beach for as long as they can remember. But this summer is different, and they soon find themselves tangled in teen love and family crisis. This stunning and authentic story of friendship, illuminated by subtly heart-breaking moments and pure summer joy, is from the creators of the award-winning *Skim*.

### Three Feathers

written by Richard Van Camp  
illustrated by K. Mateus  
(HighWater Press, 2015)

Three young men who have vandalized their community are sentenced to live for nine months on the land. There they learn to take responsibility for their actions and acquire humility before returning home. But will they be forgiven for what they've done? This graphic novel explores the power of restorative justice.

### Through the Woods

written and illustrated by Emily Carroll  
(Margaret K. McElderry Books, 2014)

This sinister, compellingly spooky collection features five hauntingly beautiful, spine-tingling graphic stories, including webcomic sensation "His Face All Red." These chilling tales spring from the macabre imagination of award-winning comic creator Emily Carroll.

### Tru Detective

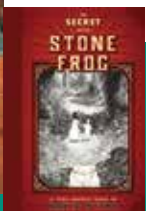
written by Norah McClintock  
illustrated by Steven P. Hughes  
(Orca Book Publishers, 2015)

Truman's parents are out of town, and he made plans with his girlfriend Natalia. When she doesn't show up, he is angry. But then Truman finds out she has been murdered, and he's the prime suspect. With no alibi, he must try to find the truth behind his girlfriend's violent death.

### War Brothers: The Graphic Novel

written by Sharon E. McKay and Daniel Lafrance  
illustrated by Daniel Lafrance  
(Annick Press, 2013)

Jacob and his friends are swapping stories in the school dormitory when they are attacked and abducted by rebel soldiers. Beaten, starved and forced to become child soldiers, the boys begin a long march through the African bush. Losing all hope of rescue, they make a desperate decision that will lead to freedom or to death.



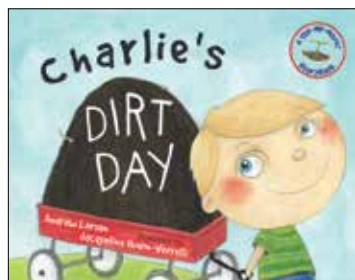


# The Classroom Bookshelf

## Science and Social Studies Fun in Picture Books

BY SANDRA O'BRIEN

The four non-fiction picture books featured in this month's Classroom Bookshelf cover a range of topics and would all make excellent additions to home or school libraries. Each uses storytelling combined with factual information to educate and entertain students in the primary, junior and intermediate grades. If you're looking for books to use in conjunction with your science or social studies curriculum, then look no further!



### **Charlie's Dirt Day** (A Tell-Me-More! Storybook)

written by Andrew Larsen  
illustrated by Jacqueline  
Hudon-Verrelli  
Fitzhenry & Whiteside, 2015  
978-1-55455-334-1 (hc) \$18.95  
for Kindergarten to Grade 3

*Picture Book | Gardening | Soil*

As Charlie and his dad follow their neighbours through the local park, they discover they are all headed toward a large pile of dirt. But this isn't just any pile of dirt — this is compost, and Charlie's neighbours are all here to take some home to their gardens. Mr. Martino grows tomatoes, Mrs. Lee grows onions, Mr. Patel grows herbs, and at the end of the summer Mr. Martino will make his marvellous spaghetti sauce. When the man in the green uniform gives Charlie his own pot of compost with a seed in it, Charlie takes it home, places it in the window and gives it a drink of water. As time passes, Charlie's seed grows and grows until it's finally time for Charlie to harvest his tomatoes and help Mr. Martino make his spaghetti sauce. The next year, Charlie decides he'll grow something new to add to Mr. Martino's Marvellous Spaghetti Sauce — maybe it will be garlic, or chili peppers or beans — the possibilities are endless!

In this latest book in the Tell-Me-More! Storybook series, readers are taken beyond the story and given interesting facts and fun activities that expand upon the subject addressed. The informative spread at the back of the book allows children to learn more about dirt, soil, compost and composting, worms and various types of gardens. Written for students in the primary grades (aged five to eight), this book, with its simple, yet sweet, illustrations, will encourage them to take part in environmentally friendly activities themselves. And children who enjoy this story might also be interested in *Bye, Bye, Butterflies!* by the same author and illustrator, published in 2012.



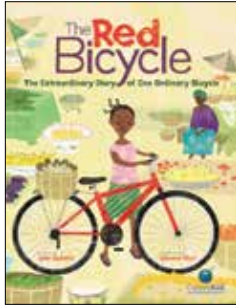
### **The Queen's Shadow:** **A Story About How Animals See**

written and illustrated by  
Cybèle Young  
Kids Can Press, 2015  
978-1-894786-60-7 (hc) \$18.95  
978-1-77138-439-1 (eBook) \$19.99  
for Grades 2 to 6

*Picture Book | Animal Vision | Animal Diversity | Mystery*

*The Queen's Shadow*, described as a "surrealist whodunit based on the science behind the way animals see," is a brilliant non-fiction picture book by acclaimed author-illustrator Cybèle Young. At the beginning of the story, we find ourselves at the Queen's ball with a cast of rather unusual characters. Each of the invitees is an animal with distinctive or unique visual abilities, and is a suspect in a most unusual crime — someone has stolen the Queen's shadow. Mantis Shrimp, the Royal Detective, questions each of the guests — Sir Chameleon, Captain Shark, Lancehead Snake, Goat, Dragonfly, Colossal Squid, Dr. Pigeon and the young sea urchins, Romanoff and Echino. As each character provides its unique perspective, the puzzle slowly unwinds to reveal a complete, yet unexpected, picture of the night's events.

In this wonderful blend of storytelling and non-fiction, Cybèle Young spins a humorous tale that will delight older readers with a fascination for science. Included at the back of the book are two spreads — one that tells the reader about the science behind vision and another that gives more details about the animals in the book. A glossary of terms is also included to further enlighten readers. Young's illustrations add another layer of interest to the story, making it one of the more unusual non-fiction books currently available. Recommended for junior or intermediate students, this intriguing book would make an excellent addition to any home, classroom or school library.



**The Red Bicycle: The Extraordinary Story of One Ordinary Bicycle (Citizen Kid)**

written by Jude Isabella  
illustrated by Simone Shin  
Kids Can Press, 2015  
978-1-77138-023-2 (hc) \$19.95  
978-1-77138-444-5 (eBook) \$18.99  
for Grades 3 to 6

*Picture Book | Bicycles | Transportation | Africa*

This story begins with a young North American boy saving his money to purchase a new bicycle. He rides his bicycle everywhere until he outgrows it and decides to donate it to an organization that transports bicycles to Africa. Once the bike arrives in Africa, it goes to a young girl who uses it to ride to her family's sorghum field to scare off the birds in the early morning, thus ensuring a greater sorghum yield than usual. When the girl gets a basket for the bicycle, she rides it to the village markets where she sells her wares, making extra money that allows her younger brother and sister to go to school. Sadly, Big Red gets trampled by a village pig, and she must let it go to a mechanic who is looking for bicycles to fix. The mechanic then turns the bike into an ambulance, which is used by a young woman to bring medical aid to neighbouring villages and to transport sick or injured people to the medical clinic. After a few years, the young woman also says goodbye to Big Red as she ventures off to a job in a town with a bigger clinic. She wonders where the bicycle originated, and knows she and the others who have used this bicycle will always remember it fondly.

In North America, bicycles are usually used for fun or exercise, but in countries like Burkina Faso, where this story takes place, they can make a big difference in people's lives. As seen in this picture book, Big Red helps one family earn more money so they can send their children to school and is used as an ambulance to improve health care in many communities. There are numerous organizations listed at the back of the book that either collect bicycles or raise money for programs that help people who need bikes but can't afford one. The author also lists activities that link use of the book with many aspects of the curriculum — writing, visual arts, science, social studies and health. This excellent resource can be used with primary or junior students to inspire them to make a difference and change lives around the world.



**A Ticket Around the World**

written by Natalia Diaz and  
Melissa Owens  
illustrated by Kim Smith  
Owlkids Books, 2015  
978-1-77147-051-3 (hc) \$17.95  
for Kindergarten to Grade 3

*Picture Book | World Travel |  
World Cultures*

In this introduction to cultures around the world, children aged five to eight are taken on a tour of 13 fascinating countries spanning all six populated continents, highlighting the diversity of our world. The young boy in the story introduces children to each friend's environment and customs, and shares interesting facts about each country's culture, language, food, geography, wildlife, landmarks and more. Each spread shows us a map of the country being visited and makes it easy to spot similarities and differences between the countries. A world map is also included at the beginning of the book, giving a global view of where each country is located. At the back of the book there is a brief quiz about the countries visited, which allows children to see what they've learned or to revisit the book to find the answers.

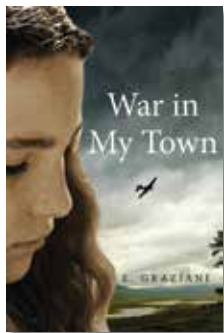
As an individual who loves to travel and has done so with her own children, I think this book, which introduces young children to many different countries in the world, is an excellent resource. Piquing a child's curiosity about other countries and cultures is an important function in Canadian classrooms as we live in a multicultural society and want to encourage children to learn about societies other than our own so as to develop empathy and understanding. This book could also be used to begin a unit in social studies to examine where the students and their ancestors originated, and to learn about countries not mentioned in the book.

Sandra O'Brien is the CCBC's Outreach Education Coordinator and has an M.Ed. in Children's Literature.

# World War II

## Love, Loss and Loyalty

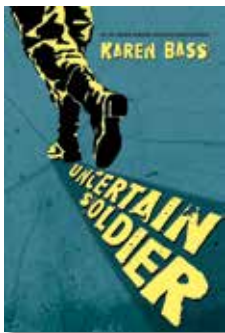
BY BRENDA HALLIDAY



### War in My Town

written by E. Graziani  
 Second Story Press, 2015  
 978-1-927583-71-5 (pb) \$11.95  
 978-1-927583-72-2 (eBook) \$8.99  
 for Grades 6 to 10

*Non-fiction | Memoir | World War II | Italy*



### Uncertain Soldier

written by Karen Bass  
 Pajama Press, 2015  
 978-1-927485-72-9 (pb) \$14.95  
 for Grades 7 to 12

*Fiction | Historical Fiction |  
 World War II — Canada | Bullying | Friendship*



### The Farmerettes

written by Gisela Tobien Sherman  
 Second Story Press, 2015  
 978-1-927583-64-7 (pb) \$12.95  
 978-1-927583-69-2 (eBook) \$8.99  
 for Grades 8 to 12

*Fiction | Historical Fiction |  
 World War II — Canada | Women | Friendship*

The spring publishing season brought us a memoir and two novels that explore the lives of young people caught up in and irrevocably changed by World War II. The protagonists are soldiers and civilians, victims and volunteers — overseas and on the home front. War comes in very different guises to small towns in Tuscany, in Alberta and in Ontario.

*War in My Town* is the clear and perfect title of the memoir, capturing the immediacy and the seeming impossibility of living with war at home. The author, a first-generation Italian Canadian, grew up in Canada with great food, warm family gatherings and rich family stories. A teacher and history major at university, Graziani had studied war, but “rarely focused on the people, the individuals who suffered and died.” In this book, she shares her own family’s painful, but also joyful, memories of World War II in Tuscany. *War in My Town* is a true story based on the accounts of her mother Bruna Pucci Guazzelli and father Edo Guazzelli.

Bruna is 11 years old in 1940, the adored youngest of seven children. Her family home is perched on a hillside in Eglío, northern Tuscany. Mussolini is in power, but Bruna leads a sheltered life, still in school, collecting chestnuts to be ground into chestnut meal, meeting her girlfriends for gossip at the town’s communal laundry fountain. In June, war is declared and Bruna’s older brothers are drafted: “We were told by Mussolini’s Ministry of Culture that we had an enemy and that the youth should learn to “believe, obey, fight.” In 1943, Nazi soldiers arrive in Bruna’s village, isolating the

village with land mines and taking over houses and restaurants. The local women are forced to cook for the soldiers and do their laundry, the men to help dig bunkers. Cut off from local hospitals, the ill and elderly die before their time. The villagers grow used to hunger and funerals.

Chapters sharing the story of Bruna’s life are interwoven with brief, clear chapters explaining the progress of the war, as the Nazis dig in and the Allies move inexorably toward Eglío. In the later years of the war, Bruna’s village, on the “Gothic Line,” is the target of Allied bombing.

Graziani describes the worry about family members missing for years, the panic and pain of taking shelter during bombing attacks and listening to the screams of friends without being able to help. But she also captures young love as Bruna blushes when a handsome young man winks at her: “He had winked at me and only me... young girls grow into young women, whether there is war or not.” The book celebrates not only the courage of the local priest who risks his own life to save the lives of several townspeople, but the quiet heroism of Bruna’s mother as she struggles to hold her family together. Rounding out the narrative are a helpful map and photographs of the author’s family.

*Uncertain Soldier*, by the award-winning author of *Graffiti Knight*, is a taut, adrenaline-fuelled novel of enmity and loyalty set in rural Alberta in the years 1943 and 1944. The conflicts and prejudices of World War II play out with violent consequences in Canada



as well as overseas. Having escaped into burning waters when his ship is torpedoed, and after treatment in England, 17-year-old Erich Hofmeyer finds himself in a German prisoner-of-war camp near Lethbridge, Alberta. In a new land, the war continues as Erich becomes the victim of Nazi soldiers in the camp. Fluent in English because of his English grandparents, Erich is both suspected of being a spy (by the Nazi prisoners) and ordered to spy on the Canadian guards.

To save themselves, Erich and his friend Nickel volunteer to work in a logging camp. They survive the deep cold and the back-breaking labour of felling and limbing trees on the winter prairie. The brothers who run the work camp are firm, but fair, allowing for soccer games outside the barbed wire fencing. But the Canadian loggers, having lost family members to the Germans, take out their grief and anger on the German workers. Mysterious accidents start to occur, injuring two of the POWs. And Erich is targeted not only by the Canadians but also once again by Nazis in the logging camp who question his loyalty: "Known enemies in his bunkhouse. Unknown enemies in the camp. And they all seemed to be closing in."

Erich befriends a young local boy, Max, who understands all too well what it is like to live on constant alert. As the son of the only German farmer in the small town, 12-year-old Max rarely makes it home from school without a beating by bully Richard and his eager friends. When Erich is almost lynched by an angry mob at a barn dance, and Max speaks out in his defense, Richard and his friends decide to teach Max a lesson. Bass writes with a visceral power. As she skilfully ratchets up the tension, both Erich and Max find the courage to stand up for their friends, and themselves, and to break the circles of bullying and prejudice that have held them (and their tormenters) prisoner. Wrestling with complex issues of friendship, loyalty, politics and violence, *Uncertain Soldier* would be an excellent choice for a teen boys' book club.

Like John Murrell's powerful play, *Waiting For the Parade*, Gisela Sherman's *The Farmerettes* focuses on young women on the home front in Canada during World War II. In their final years of high school, five young women volunteer to serve in the Ontario Farm Service Force (similar to Britain's Land Girls). With the men overseas, crops still have to be brought in from the fields and fruit picked. Helene and her friend Peggy (from Hamilton), Binxie (a private school girl from Toronto whose sister is a ferry pilot in England), Isabel (from Guelph and newly engaged to a soldier) and a girl known only as X (from Brantford) arrive in Winona, Ontario, in the summer of 1943. Each has her own reasons for volunteering, not all of them patriotic. Like the young men they saw off to war at the station, some are escaping home situations, some looking for adventure, independence, a fresh start. It also helps that they are exempted from year-end classes and final exams! The sixth young woman, Jean, is a local farm girl whose life is changed by the arrival of the "farmerettes" — and the handsome pilots in training at the local base.

The city girls rapidly learn the realities of farm work. Sherman's interviews with actual farmerettes shine in the vivid details of farm life: vicious roosters, the difficult birth of a calf, sunstroke, blisters, the aches of hot days filling berry baskets, the fuzz that clings to one's skin when picking peaches. Despite their long days in the fields and orchards, the girls hold talent shows and dance up a storm: square-dancing at barn parties or jitterbugging at Romeo's down by the lake, with its jukebox of latest hits. Their soundtrack is Peggy Lee, Sinatra and swing bands. But events unfolding in

Europe are also a constant accompaniment to the score of their lives. While many of the men in the novel talk about military strategies and successes, the women see the human cost of the conflict.

With the discovery of a mysterious cache of letters, Sherman weaves through her novel the mystery of a doomed love affair from the Great War that has implications for the next generation. Although things wrap up almost too neatly for one of the characters, others suffer losses of loved ones that change their (and their families') lives forever. But they also find strength, friendship and new directions. X, who always found herself drawn to other women, had hoped to change herself. For her, salvation may come, not in change, but in leaving her small town and being true to herself.

Second Story Press offers a series aimed at younger readers called *Gutsy Girl*. The farmerettes were definitely gutsy women. In capturing the spirit and camaraderie of these young women, Gisela Sherman has brought to life an important, and largely unheralded, part of Canadian wartime history in a way that will resonate with today's readers.

Though these three books are told from a variety of perspectives, the authors share similar insights. Their characters wonder when life will ever return to normal, when they will ever not be hungry, ever not live with constant tension, ever not fear for or mourn the deaths of loved ones. They struggle with questions of loyalty. And they learn, as Erich declares in *Uncertain Soldier*, that friends are "lifelines." Despite the war, the young people grow up, find friendship, find love, find themselves, but are forever changed.

Brenda (Millikin) Halliday is a former librarian at the CCBC and the daughter of Doris Hughes, a farmerette who married a local Winona boy.

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# We Recommend

## NEW AND NOTED BOOKS FOR TODDLERS TO TEENS



### Ready, Set, Kindergarten!

written by Paula Ayer  
illustrated by Danielle Arbour  
Annick Press, 2015  
978-1-55451-704-6 (hc) \$19.95  
978-1-55451-703-9 (pb) \$8.95  
for Preschool to Kindergarten

Picture Book | Kindergarten Readiness | Skills | Independence | Self-Esteem

In *Ready, Set, Kindergarten!*, “I’m ready” is repeated throughout by the newest of students as she showcases, among other skills, gross and fine motor abilities, an aptitude for imaginative play and a capacity to follow routines.

The simple declarative text quickly sets a pattern through rhythm and repetition. Bolded words on each two-page spread support the skill being highlighted. For example, “painting,” “cutting” and “strong fingers” confirm “I’m ready to work.” Action words are matched by the energy and movement of the artwork. The text’s pattern is broken effectively on pages featuring skills at which the child still struggles to be ready: regulating emotion and sharing. Other breaks are not as effective: the book begins with rhyme but does not continue it. It also starts by introducing skills, but changes at the end to showing the routines preceding a school day, which require some skills covered previously. These, however, are small quibbles.

Arbour’s artwork is sweet and expressive: the cat’s moue of distaste at being roped into the child’s tea party is amusing. The colourful, engaging pictures feature the red-clad heroine moving against pale grey blues, with splashes of mustard and chartreuse. Thoughtful additions enrich the story, like having two children carry similar stuffed mice to their first day of kindergarten, reflecting the balance between wanting independence and needing security.

With its dynamic illustrations and energetic protagonist, this story is a timely, helpful and upbeat introduction to the skills children need to be successful at school.

Aliki Tryphonopoulos is a literacy coordinator for Parkland Regional Library in Saskatchewan and a former children’s librarian.



### This Is Sadie

written by Sara O’Leary  
illustrated by Julie Morstad  
Tundra Books, 2015  
978-1-77049-532-6 (hc) \$19.99  
for Preschool to Grade 2

Picture Book | Stories | Books | Imagination

*This Is Sadie* takes us through a day in the life of a little girl who explores other worlds and her own through the power of stories and her big imagination. Sadie climbs trees and makes boats out of boxes and, when she jumps into the pages of her favourite books, she can be both a girl who lives under the sea and a boy raised by wolves. Sadie knows she has wings that can take her anywhere and that always bring her back home, and she wishes days were longer so that she could have more time to play and create. Above all else, she likes stories “because you can make them from nothing at all.”

This imaginative story was written by Sara O’Leary and illustrated by Julie Morstad, the team behind *When You Were Small*, *Where You Came From* and *When I Was Small*. Morstad’s beautiful artwork perfectly complements O’Leary’s minimalist but whimsical style of writing. The pages in which Sadie inserts herself into famous stories, such as *Alice in Wonderland*, feature lush illustrations that are particularly stunning and inspiring. The reverse of the book’s dust jacket features one of these illustrations and can be used as a poster — a nice little bonus that is customary with Tundra Books publications. A love letter to books, *This Is Sadie* would make for great story-time reading in the classroom or at home. Moreover, it will easily encourage young children to engage with books in new ways, and perhaps motivate them to tell their own stories.

Camilia Kahrizi is the CCBC’s Marketing and Website Coordinator.



### Song for a Summer Night: A Lullaby

written by Robert Heidbreder  
illustrated by Qin Leng  
Groundwood Books, 2015  
978-1-55498-493-0 (hc) \$17.95  
978-1-55498-494-7 (eBook) \$14.95  
for Preschool to Grade 2

Picture Book | Poetry | Bedtime & Dreams

Heidbreder’s latest title offers adults a quiet and gentle text with which to lead tired toddlers and tykes to dreamland. As dark falls, children nestle at their windows to watch the night’s show. Thick, whispering leaves hush (“shh-shh”), signalling the start of the after-dark performance. An array of winged creatures and furry, four-legged ones, species by species, enters the scene. The cast of nocturnal performers includes fireflies, raccoons, an owl, crickets, black cats, skunks and dogs. As the canines arrive, the young

windowsill spectators head outside for closer encounters with the frolicking nighttime menagerie. But when the moon appears, the creatures exit the scene and the children return home and head to bed to dream of the night's sights and sounds.

This lullaby unfolds across 17 quatrains (four-line rhyming verses) and features a cumulative refrain of the sounds associated with each of the featured creatures. Heidbreder employs inventive phrases (“earth-stars” and “eyes shut sleep-tight”). Stanzas such as “*In bounce some dogs / with happy leap-bounds. / Their drumming pound-pounds / round out the park sounds*” illustrate his use of internal rhyme and distinctive rhythm.

Qin Leng’s illustrations are suffused with the blue shades of twilight. Rendered with ink and brush and painted digitally, they serve as a soft and warm backdrop to the scenes enacted in the words of this sleepy-time song.

Carol-Ann Hoyte is a Montreal children’s poet and the editor of *Dear Tomato: An International Crop of Food and Agriculture Poems*.



### **Eat, Leo! Eat!**

written by Caroline Adderson  
illustrated by Josée Bisaillon  
Kids Can Press, 2015  
978-1-77138-013-3 (hc) \$18.95  
978-1-77138-457-5 (eBook) \$9.99  
for Preschool to Grade 2

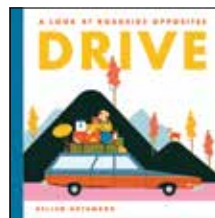
Picture Book | Grandparents & Grandchildren | Storytelling | Food Refusal | Pasta

“No!” is youngster Leo’s typical response to having his playtime interrupted by the “big, noisy, *delizioso*” Sunday lunches at Nonna’s house — that is, until his canny grandmother feeds him bits of an adventure story that have him, and soon his extended family, hungry for the next week’s instalment. With the help of a glossary and an appendix, readers learn, along with Leo, Italian terms for pasta, as well as some of pasta’s shapes, forms and ingredients. By the end, it is reluctant eater Leo behind the crank of the pasta maker, pinching the dough and wishing his family “*buon appetito!*”

Adderson’s tale of a loving family’s traditional weekend meal is brought to life by Bisaillon’s lively, colourful collages, where pink-nosed, pink-cheeked characters wear checks, polka dots, stripes and chevrons in a palette of teal, dijon, patina and browns. Unusual perspectives and expressive faces help convey the energy and bustle of the family gatherings. Tinged with magical possibility, Bisaillon’s pastoral interpretation of the grandmother’s economically worded story makes Leo’s ongoing interest in the weekly instalments more plausible.

This warm tale of luring reluctant eaters with patience, love and an appealing yarn will bring wry smiles to parents who have 3-to-7-year-old Leos of their own.

Aliki Tryphonopoulos



### **Drive: A Look at Roadside Opposites**

written and illustrated by Kellen Hatanaka  
Groundwood Books, 2015  
978-1-55498-731-3 (hc) \$16.95  
978-1-55498-732-0 (eBook) \$14.95  
for Preschool to Grade 2

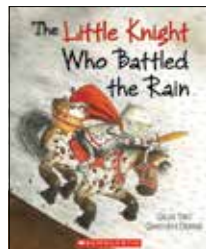
Picture Book | Concepts | Opposites | Transportation

Join author / illustrator Kellen Hatanaka on a summer road trip from the city to cottage country! Not only is the urban and rural scenery visually stimulating, but the reader is also led to spot many examples of opposites in a most creative manner. The station wagon, laden with beach ball, barbecue and cooler, makes its way through construction sites (short / long), onto bridges (over / under), past mountains (high / low), and through tunnels (in / out) during day and night in both wet and dry weather. The journey concludes with a map highlighting the route from beginning to end.

From “Start” on the first page to “Finish” at the last, the text primarily consists of one-word contrasts. Hatanaka’s digital illustrations, using hand-drawn patterns and textures, are delightfully distinctive. Abundant with absorbing details, each double-page spread offers young readers a surprise, especially when the worm’s eye view very cleverly opens up into a double fold-out offering the bird’s eye view.

The question “Are we there yet?” will not be uttered from the passengers on board. The panorama surrounding them is just too impressive!

Senta Ross is a former elementary teacher and teacher-librarian in Kitchener, Ontario.



### **The Little Knight Who Battled the Rain**

written by Gilles Tibo  
illustrated by Geneviève Després  
translated by Petra Johannsen  
978-1-4431-3382-1 (pb) \$8.99  
for Preschool to Grade 3

Picture Book | Fears | Knights | Emotions & Feelings

Several elements work together to make *The Little Knight Who Battled the Rain* an enjoyable read. Not the first book for either the prolific Tibo or Després, the story is of a little knight who fears nothing, except the rain. He worries his suit of armour will rust. When the otherwise quiet and peaceful kingdom experiences a wicked storm, the people flee to their homes high in the trees. The little knight hides in his closet with chocolate cake. Eventually, he must come out and, when he does, he sees that the rain has washed away all of the ladders that let people move around the kingdom. Without them, there is no way for them to get food. The little knight must face his fear or let his kingdom starve.

With fun and engaging pictures, this is a great classroom, bedtime or anytime read. Certain features make it stand out. The small details in the pictures are reminiscent of an I Spy book — where’s the cat? the mice? the chocolate cake? The tiny captions that accompany these pictures are funny (“Pay no attention to the mess.”) and help to tell the story as we get to know the villagers through these one-line snippets (“George Forester grumbles on his



rooftop.”). This is an amusingly creative book that will pull children back to its pages again and again.

Jody Holford is a teacher and author in Chilliwack, BC.



**My Family Tree and Me**

written and illustrated by Dušan Petričić  
Kids Can Press, 2015  
978-1-77138-049-2 (hc) \$17.95  
978-1-77138-461-2 (eBook) \$9.99  
for Kindergarten to Grade 2

Picture Book | Families | Genealogy | Heritage

What is the difference between a great-great-grandparent and a great-grandparent? The concept of family history may be challenging for children to understand. Fortunately, Dušan Petričić has come to the rescue with his ingenious *My Family Tree and Me*, which encompasses two stories in one regarding a young boy’s heritage. From the front of the book, one is introduced to four generations of the boy’s paternal side, beginning with his great-great-grandparents and moving, page by page, down to his father. One discovers the same process taking place on his maternal side if one begins from the back of the book. There is a double-page illustration in the middle of the book that features both sides of the boy’s entire family in the present day, including parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins and, of course, the boy himself.

The succinct prose accompanying the artwork primarily defines which generation is being depicted: “Without my great-grandfather and great-grandmother, I would never have had Pops, my grandfather, who met his match in Nana, my grandmother.”

With his detailed and energetic pencil and watercolour illustrations, Petričić has portrayed the essence of a present-day and culturally diverse family. Moving from past to present to past with each turning of the page, there is a reference to the preceding generation in a background photograph. The book resembles a family photo album, and it is interesting to note how each subsequent “photograph” of the boy’s forebears becomes more colourful with the passage of time. Readers will be intrigued by the physical resemblances and interests connecting all the generations in this celebration of the many nuances of family.

Senta Ross



**See You Next Year**

written by Andrew Larsen  
illustrated by Todd Stewart  
Owlkids Books, 2015  
978-1-926973-99-9 (hc) \$17.95  
for Kindergarten and up

Picture Book | Friendships | Summer Holidays

Every summer, a young girl and her family traverse familiar roads and pass through the same small towns en route to the same beach and the same motel where they spend one week every summer. “We’ve been coming to the same place since I was little. Nothing changes. That’s why I like it.”

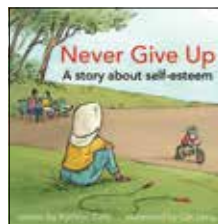
From the girl’s point of view, we witness the ebb and flow of a simple vacation at the beach: the early morning tractor raking

lines in the sand along the shoreline, the gathering of seagulls and people, the bandstand concert, the evening bonfire and the night sky covered with stars. But there is something different this year. The girl makes a new friend, a boy of similar age who teaches her how to dive under the waves, sight satellites in the evening sky and dig deep holes on the beach to the centre of the Earth. When the vacation ends, there remains the bittersweet anticipation that their friendship will continue as they part ways with the words “See you next year.”

Through his deceptively simple text, author Andrew Larsen has the exceptional ability to evoke a strong sense of time, place and emotion. His descriptions of the routine and uniformity of life’s seemingly insignificant pleasures encourage us to long for a less frenzied existence and to look deep into our selves.

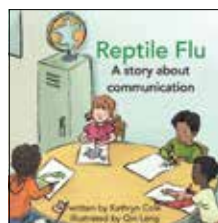
In his first picture book, Todd Stewart’s nostalgic digital artwork, inspired by the silkscreen process, conveys memories of those halcyon days of a summer vacation. The changing light, the lapping of waves, the foggy mornings, the heat of the bonfire and the toasting of marshmallows... we are there!

Senta Ross



**Never Give Up:  
A Story About Self-Esteem  
(I’m a Great Little Kid)**

written by Kathryn Cole  
illustrated by Qin Leng  
Second Story Press, 2015  
978-1-927583-60-9 (hc) \$15.95



**Reptile Flu:  
A Story About Communication  
(I’m a Great Little Kid)**

written by Kathryn Cole  
illustrated by Qin Leng  
Second Story Press, 2015  
978-1-927583-61-6 (hc) \$15.95  
for Kindergarten to Grade 3

Picture Book | Character Education | Self-Respect | Self-Esteem | Friendship & Family | Empathy | Courage | Bullying

Author Kathryn Cole volunteered for 13 years as a support to parents in crisis and court preparation groups with BOOST Child Abuse Prevention & Intervention ([www.boostforkids.org](http://www.boostforkids.org)). This Toronto community-based agency developed the I’m a Great Little Kid series, which aims to empower children to think and act in positive ways.

*Never Give Up* is the first title in the series. Though his two-wheeler is outfitted with training wheels, Shaun still struggles to ride it. Onlooking neighbourhood kids, with their teasing and taunts, only worsen his predicament. Shaun’s gal pal, Nadia, witnesses his mistreatment but fears confronting the pestering pack. To compensate for not standing up to the cruel kids, she enlists her father to help Shaun master riding his bike. Thanks to the father-daughter duo’s advice, Shaun succeeds in riding his two-wheeler, much to the delight of everyone, including the bullies. In turn, he expresses his gratitude by giving Nadia tips on how to run in while skipping rope.

# THE WORD ON THE STREET

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*Reptile Flu* is the second title in the series. Kamal, who is frightened of reptiles, dreads the upcoming class field trip to the museum's reptile exhibit. He wants to tell his teacher about his herpetophobia, though when he has the chance to do so he loses the courage to confide in her. After attempting to talk to his mother, father and sister about his fear, Kamal gives up trying to broach the subject with anyone as no one is listening. As his class readies to leave on the outing, he grabs their attention and makes his fear of reptiles known, loud and clear. He accepts his teacher's offer to be his partner on the field trip. During the visit to the exhibit, Kamal warms up to reptiles even to the point that he volunteers to hold a newly hatched alligator.

In *Never Give Up*, a commendable and refreshing touch is that Nadia's wearing of the hijab figures naturally and subtly. A cast of multicultural characters populates the supportive environments depicted in Qin Leng's sensitive illustrations.

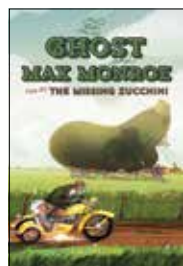
Though Cole employs a straightforward approach to telling the stories, their content is anything but simplistic. The author provides plenty of fodder for course content for character-education programs and thought-provoking and insightful classroom discussions about ethics, morals and values.

Carol-Ann Hoyte



**The Ghost and Max Monroe: Case #1, The Magic Box**

written by L.M. Falcone  
illustrated by Kim Smith  
Kids Can Press, 2014  
978-1-77138-153-6 (hc) \$12.95  
978-1-77138-017-1 (pb) \$6.95  
978-1-77138-251-9 (eBook) \$4.99  
for Grades 1 to 4



**The Ghost and Max Monroe: Case #2, The Missing Zucchini**

written by L.M. Falcone  
illustrated by Kim Smith  
Kids Can Press, 2015  
978-1-77138-154-3 (hc) \$12.95  
978-1-77138-018-8 (pb) \$6.95  
978-1-77138-450-6 (eBook) \$4.99  
for Grades 1 to 4

Fiction | Early Reader | Detective | Mystery | Ghost Story

A rainy start to the summer means eating popcorn and reading mysteries — that's what Max Monroe learns when he moves to Grandpa Harry's country home for the season. He'll soon do more than read mysteries: he'll solve them alongside the ghost of his great-uncle Larry. This bumbling detective never once solved a mystery and desperately wants to restore his family's honour. Unfortunately, there's only so much he can do without a physical body! Max's attention to detail and Larry's keen questions make for a great detective duo, not to mention a lot of laughs.

The series begins with *Case #1, The Magic Box*, in which Max and Larry help a magician find a birthday girl who disappeared during an act gone wrong. In *Case #2, The Missing Zucchini*, they must find a giant zucchini before the competition begins at the fair. Hilarity

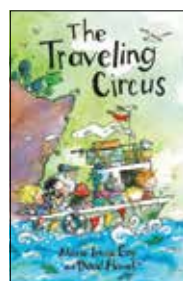
ensues as Max gathers evidence to solve each case: since only Max and Grandpa Harry can hear and see Larry, Max often answers questions others can't hear and stops objects from "floating" as Larry moves them.

After the first book's rapid-fire set-up in which the complexity of Max's home life and the ghost character are revealed, Falcone's stories are well paced. Each case takes place on a single day, allowing kids to focus on clues rather than on elaborate timelines. Suspects and motives are revealed steadily, and kids will be excited when Max jots down the same details they note. Falcone's clues piece together logically, and readers will feel satisfied when they solve the mystery in tandem with Max — or at least come close. Headings break up sections within chapters, creating useful pausing points for short reading sessions. These same headings may interrupt the flow of sustained reading, but they can be skipped over without consequence.

Smith's black-and-white illustrations often provide another layer of complexity for the reader. For example, in *Case #1, The Magic Box*, footprints are used to solve the mystery, and Smith depicts the feet of all three suspects. Both books end with a "Spot the Difference" spread where kids can find differences between images. In this way, Smith's visuals reinforce what Falcone has suggested in the text: attention to details is key when it comes to solving mysteries.

The Ghost and Max Monroe series will appeal to boys and girls who love the challenge of piecing together clues and who enjoy goofy, off-the-wall characters.

Jen Bailey teaches in the Professional Writing Program at Algonquin College, Ottawa.



**The Traveling Circus (Travels with My Family, Book 4)**

written by Marie-Louise Gay and David Homel  
illustrated by Marie-Louise Gay  
Groundwood Books 2015  
978-1-55498-420-6 (hc) \$15.95  
978-1-55498-784-9 (eBook) \$14.95  
for Grades 2 to 5

Fiction | Travel | European History and Culture |

Croatia | Families

Charlie and little brother Max are resigned to another rarefied vacation they'd rather avoid. Inspired by an ancient postcard found under the fridge, Charlie's adventurous parents plan a family jaunt to Croatia, a country Charlie has never heard of. Despite his initial cynicism, Charlie is soon engrossed in appreciating the sights and sounds of this new land and in making new friends. He is bewildered by strange customs (elderly ladies pushing luggage in wheelbarrows) and eager to experiment with a new language and delicious foods (*krumpir* and *blitva*). He learns firsthand the havoc war has wrought on this country and its people. But he still finds time to get into trouble with border guards, get lost in a labyrinth and annoy a reclusive hermit.

As in the other titles in this series, the reader is immediately caught up in this lighthearted but informative frolic through an amazing country. Despite his eye-rolling, sardonic views on his offbeat parents, Charlie's first-person narrative is entertaining and cheery. His observations are liberally interspersed with some



nerve-racking but humorous misadventures, especially on the part of endearing Max who has a penchant for mischief. Charlie is a well-developed character, keeping his sense of humour and upbeat approach to life throughout and demonstrating a loving tolerance of his brother.

The short, amusing chapters and hilarious situations are enhanced by the humorous black-and-white illustrations that completely match the mood of the narrative. This is a thought-provoking and entertaining title for beginning chapter-book readers.

Aileen Wortley is a retired librarian living in Toronto.



### The Incredible Space Raiders From Space

written by Wesley King  
Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers, 2015  
978-1-4814-2319-9 (hc) \$17.99  
978-1-4814-2321-2 (eBook) \$11.99  
for Grades 3 to 6

Fiction | Science Fiction | Adventure | Confidence | Humour

When Jonah wakes up on a spaceship known as the Fantastic Flying Squirrel, he's confused. One minute he was doing his homework at home, and the next he is waking up to a very strange girl staring at him. Her name is Willona the Awesome and she is there to welcome him to the Space Raiders — a group whose mission is to save the universe from the Entirely Evil Things. But when the Space Raiders start to disappear, it is up to Jonah to figure out what's going on.

In his first foray into middle grade, Wesley King, author of *The Vindico*, has created a fun and entertaining science fiction romp with underlying messages about family, friendship, courage and fitting in.

When readers meet Jonah, he's a shy and quiet boy who gets bullied at school and has few friends. He has no idea why he would have been selected to join the Space Raiders — especially when he discovers that the rest of the kids on board are orphans. When Willona gives him a notebook to use as a diary (to combat loneliness in space), he frames his entries as letters to his parents and sister, letters that reveal his initial self-doubt and insecurity. As he begins his training, Jonah starts to transform, and the letters display an increasingly confident boy who is finding a place amongst the motley crew.

While the explanation of the real story behind the Space Raiders, the ship and the entirely evil things feels somewhat anti-climactic, there is enough humour, suspense and adventure to make this a really fun read for emerging middle grade readers.

Rachel Seigel is Sales and Selection Strategist at EduCan Media.



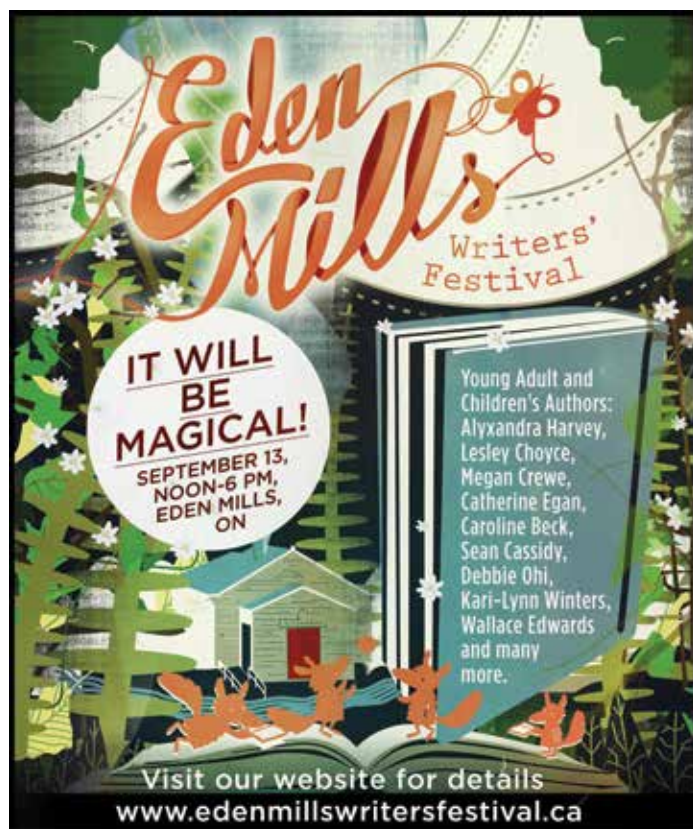
### The Case of the Missing Moonstone (The Wollstonecraft Detective Agency, Book 1)

written by Jordan Stratford  
illustrated by Kelly Murphy  
Alfred A. Knopf, 2015  
978-0-385-75440-8 (hc) \$19.99  
978-0-385-75442-2 (eBook) \$11.99  
for Grades 3 to 7

Fiction | Mystery | Historical Europe | Steampunk

First in a series of detective novels for middle graders, *The Case of the Missing Moonstone* is set in Jordan Stratford's re-imagined Victorian era. In 1826 London, the world's first computer programmer, Ada Byron (later Lovelace), and *Frankenstein* author Mary Godwin (later Shelley) meet as girls and create a detective agency named after Mary's late mother, feminist writer Mary Wollstonecraft. Ada, 11, and Mary, 14, team up to investigate the mystery of a stolen heirloom, a moonstone (based on Wilkie Collins's *The Moonstone*, the first great detective novel in English).

A bit steampunk in its content and a bit Lemony Snicket in its language, the novel also incorporates history, science, literature and mathematics, as well as a bit of girl power: Mary says, "... how are things to be the way they ought, unless we make them so ... why can't we be magistrates or the constabulary? In fact, we ought to be, if we so choose." While the mystery itself is somewhat simple, the characters are well defined, and the relationship between the two girls develops into a Holmes-Watson parallel that makes for an entertaining dynamic as the two question suspects, visit prisons



and chase down criminals in a hot-air balloon. The appearance of other historical figures, such as Percy B. Shelley and Charles Dickens, also adds a dimension of fun.

At the end of the book, information is given on the real Ada Lovelace, Mary Shelley, Mary Wollstonecraft, *The Moonstone* and other elements of the story. Short, concise chapters and Kelly Murphy's charming illustrations make it appropriate for middle graders. Stratford concludes the story with a set-up to Book 2 with the appearance of Ada's half-sister Allegra and Mary's step-sister Jane. Ada finishes the book with "We're going to need more crime."

Karri Yano is a Toronto writer and editor.



### The Missing Dog Is Spotted

written by Jessica Scott Kerrin  
Groundwood Books, 2015  
978-1-55498-726-9 (hc) \$14.95  
978-1-55498-728-3 (eBook) \$9.95  
for Grades 4 to 7

Fiction | Mystery | Self-Esteem | Friendship | Loss | Acceptance

Sixth-grader Trevor Tower, nothing if not a survivor after attending four schools, is certain he will not survive his community-service assignment of dog walking with Loyola Loudon. As remarkably diminutive as his classmate is tall, Trevor dreads the increased public scrutiny that standing beside Loyola will invite. Inconceivably, dog walking proves a sorely needed balm. Not only do the dogs teach the children self-acceptance and bring them positive attention, they allow the duo to form a friendship, discovering how much they have in common — like a passion for mystery and a susceptibility to guilt.

What distinguishes Kerrin's middle school novels, *The Spotted Dog Last Seen* and its prequel *The Missing Dog Is Spotted*, is that, despite what they are on the surface — stories with sensitive, preadolescent male protagonists, a mystery and a celebration of things literary — they can also work as guidebooks for children dealing with loss. The emotional situations that the protagonists face are the human conditions under which adults stagger: death, guilt and the transitory nature of all things. Yet small human kindnesses, gentle humour, the steadiness of love and the normalcy of routine cushion the reader from the full gravity of, for example, a protagonist making a decision, based on a false assumption, that causes a senior to be institutionalized.

Kerrin's novels are about human resilience, self-acceptance, forgiveness and recognizing the goodness that endures, even while accepting that loss is inevitable and some losses are irreplaceable. Treating these themes so honestly and, ultimately, hopefully for young readers deserves recognition.

Aliki Tryphonopoulos



### Between Shadows

written by Kathleen Cook Waldron  
Coteau Books, 2015  
978-1-55050-612-9 (pb) \$8.95  
for Grades 5 to 7

Fiction | Family | Grieving | Nature

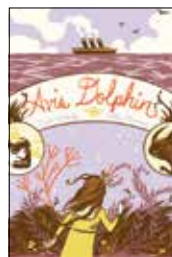
Ari Martin has big plans to spend the summer with his Gramps at his cabin on Canoe Lake.

When his Gramps dies in March, Ari finds himself going to the cabin with his father and Aunt Laurel to settle the estate instead. It turns out Gramps left the cabin to Ari, although his aunt and father are set on selling it. With the memories of Ari's mother dying during a past cabin visit, there are shadows haunting this beautiful piece of land, but Ari falls in love with it all over again and is determined to do anything to get his family to stay.

In this compact and heartfelt tale, 12-year-old Ari is caught between wanting a new start for his father and himself after the death of his mother and the seemingly good intentions of the grown-ups in charge of him. During his visit, Ari has the opportunity to get to know his Gramps even better through the cabin and land he left behind as well as all of the friendships he cultivated, allowing Ari a unique perspective on the situation. His aunt and father, however, have other agendas.

With her words, Waldron paints a strikingly vivid backdrop of the rainbow cabin and Ari's experience of nature. As Ari develops throughout the story, he is able to help his family find a deeper understanding of their grief over loved ones and opportunities lost, while also encouraging them to look past their sorrow and connect with life again.

Amy Mathers is a member of the CCBC and recently completed a year-long Marathon of Books.



### Avis Dolphin

written by Frieda Wishinsky  
illustrated by Willow Dawson  
Groundwood Books, 2015  
978-1-55498-489-3 (hc) \$16.95  
978-1-55498-490-9 (eBook) \$14.95  
for Grades 5 to 8

Fiction | Shipwreck | World War I | Power of Story

On her way to attend school in England and live with her grandparents, Avis Dolphin finds herself sailing across the Atlantic Ocean on the RMS *Lusitania* nearly a year after World War I has begun. Chaperoned by Hilda and Sarah, two young women avidly looking for suitors, Avis spends her time befriendng Professor Ian Holbourn, the laird of the Scottish island of Foula. As he spins a tale of a young girl named Jill washing up on Foula's enchanted shores, Avis is enthralled and happily distracted from the fact that their ship is drawing ever closer to the German U-boats waiting for them near the British shore.

With the use of historical names, a tragic event and the knowledge of a special friendship between 12-year-old Avis and Professor Holbourn, author Frieda Wishinsky sends her reader back to 1915, to experience the uncertain atmosphere of a world at war. Capturing the fear and arrogance of others through the eyes of a child, this serious tale foreshadows a fateful ending deftly, while still

maintaining a light-hearted aspect as Sarah and Hilda sort out their troubles with men.

Elegant prose on Wishinsky's part accompanied by illustrator Willow Dawson's detailed black-and-white graphic-novel-style drawings create a mixed-media story crossing back and forth between Avis's real life and the mythical world of Foula. The two stories contrast the lives of the girls as they each face their own crises. Wishinsky's book ends with powerful observations about the role of storytelling in our ability to survive.

Amy Mathers



**How to Outrun a Crocodile  
When Your Shoes Are Untied**  
(My Life is a Zoo, Book 1)

written by Jess Keating  
Sourcebooks Jabberwocky, 2014  
978-1-4022-9755-7 (pb) \$10.99  
for Grades 5 to 7



**How to Outswim a Shark  
Without a Snorkel**  
(My Life is a Zoo, Book 2)

written by Jess Keating  
Sourcebooks Jabberwocky, 2015  
978-1-4022-9758-8 (pb) \$10.99  
for Grades 6 to 8

Fiction | Making Friends | Being Yourself | Animals |  
Gaining Confidence | Humour

In *How to Outrun a Crocodile When Your Shoes Are Untied*, 12-year-old Ana has serious problems. She is named after a snake, her best friend moved halfway across the world, and her zoologist parents are about to relocate their family to live in a zoo. Can Grade 7 get any worse? Apparently yes, because Ana also has to deal with the Sneerers, a popular group of girls intent on making her life miserable. When her world-famous grandfather comes to town, Ana reluctantly agrees to do a zoo presentation on reptiles, hoping she can be as brave talking to a crowd as the rest of her family.

*How to Outswim a Shark Without a Snorkel*, the second book in the series, follows Ana throughout her summer at the zoo. Thanks to a substantial donation from her grandfather, Ana is helping to set up a new marine exhibit, complete with live sharks. It seems like it's going to be a great summer until Ana discovers her work partner is Ashley, one of the Sneerers! With added pressure from her best friend to kiss a boy before going back to school, Ana is left to figure out what she wants to do and if Ashley is out to get her or just needs a second chance.

Funny characters and unique situations are the backdrop for Ana's preteen struggles as she finds her place after her best friend moves away. Used to simply keeping her head down to avoid being noticed by the Sneerers or embarrassed by her larger-than-life twin brother, Dax, Ana considers taking chances and finds her efforts are rewarded in different ways.

Though the second book quickly follows the first time wise, Keating brings about a believable arc of developing maturity as Ana goes from dealing with issues of believing in herself to exploring what it means to make her own decisions. Her family, though often

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Saturday, November 14, 2015

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zany, is supportive and loving, giving her the room she needs to figure things out.

Keating's series is a launching point for important discussions about self-esteem, developing confidence and being true to who you are. As a result, Ana ends up being a wonderful role model for young girls as she consistently works through her problems in thoughtful ways, often finding humorous insight from her involvement with the animal world.

Amy Mathers



**Best Friends Through Eternity**

written by Sylvia McNicoll  
Tundra Books, 2015  
978-1-77049-710-8 (hc) \$19.99  
978-1-77049-712-2 (eBook) \$11.99  
for Grades 5 to 8

*Fiction | Regrets | Second Chances | Friendships*

When 14-year-old Paige takes a shortcut across the railroad tracks after school to avoid bullies, she is hit by a train and transported to a surreal world where she meets her childhood friend, Kim, who left suddenly seven years before. Unable to accept that she's dead, Paige begs for another chance to do things differently on earth. She's allowed to go back to the week leading up to her death, and this time she's determined not to make the same mistakes.

In this fresh new tween novel from author Sylvia McNicoll, themes of second chances, family, friendship and cultural identity are explored.

Paige, born Chinese but adopted by a white couple, has long resisted getting to know about any part of her Chinese identity. Her best friend, Jasmine, is of Indian heritage and is desperate to break away from her strict upbringing, but terrified of pushing too far. The girls have been best friends for years, but their friendship is tested by the appearance of a boy. The changing nature of female friendships in the tween / early teen years is too seldom covered in fiction, and the author handles this realistically and expertly. Paige, used to having Jasmine all to herself, naturally feels threatened taking second place to a boy. Jasmine's new beau, Cameron, is the ex-boyfriend of the Queen bee, and now the girls are subjected to relentless bullying at school and online.

Could Paige have saved Jasmine from the bullies had she not left by herself because she was jealous of her friend? Should she have told a teacher about the overheard plan to beat them up? Could she have been a better friend to Jasmine? These are all questions that Paige tries to answer during her do-over. In the process, she also learns that a second chance isn't a guarantee, and that some things just have to be left to fate.

In this book, which is thoughtful, engaging and full of surprising twists, readers will root for Paige to not only succeed in saving Jasmine, but to change her own outcome as well.

Rachel Seigel



**Off Pointe (Orca Limelights)**

written by Leanne Lieberman  
Orca Book Publishers, 2014  
978-1-4598-0280-3 (pb) \$9.95  
97801-4598-0282-7 (eBook) \$9.95  
for Grades 6 to 9

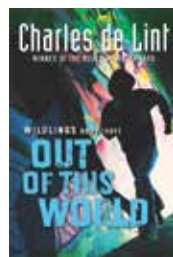
*Fiction | Dance Camp | Personal Growth*

Ballerina Meg struggles to learn new forms of dance when she's sent to dance camp over the summer. She experiences a crisis of confidence after learning that her ballet teacher questions her ability to connect with an audience and she feels betrayed by her teacher's support for sending Meg away to expand her dance horizons. Forced out of her comfort zone, far from friends and family, Meg struggles to connect with contemporary dancer Logan, who vies for fellow camper Neo's attention. In the end, Meg overcomes her fears, growing both as a dancer and a friend.

Dealing with ambition, jealousy, loneliness, insecurity and fear, the themes of this novel are well suited to Orca's series of performing arts novels. Author Leanne Lieberman's experience in writing for this demographic shows; the structure of the story flows nicely and the interpersonal dynamics between Meg, her new friend, Neo, and camp nemesis, Logan, rings true.

Less convincing, however, is Lieberman's account of the hopes and aspirations of a ballerina-in-training. Her portrait of Meg reads more like a caricature of a young dancer than an authentic account, and her descriptions of the art and technique of ballet are at times tedious. Nevertheless, the title would appeal to a reader engaging in dance for the first time or a reader who is enthused about the performing arts.

Jessica Rovito is a Children's Librarian living and working in Toronto.



**Out of This World (Wildlings, Book 3)**

written by Charles de Lint  
Razorbill Canada, 2014  
978-0-670-06535-6 (hc) \$21.00  
978-0-14-319317-3 (eBook) \$11.99  
for Grades 7 and up

*Fiction | Urban Fantasy*

*Out of This World* wraps up Charles de Lint's Wildlings trilogy about teenagers in a small California town who are suddenly and at random becoming Wildlings, shape-shifters able to transform between animal and human. No one knows why this change is happening, or why only certain kids are affected. All the young Wildlings know is that adults (often including their own parents) fear them, the federal government wants them to turn themselves in, and a US congressman would happily send them all to concentration camps.

*Out of This World* is told from the viewpoint of four teens: Josh, his best friends, Marina and Des, and their biker friend, Chaingang.

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by Philip Roy

The seventh volume in the “Submarine Outlaw” series follows Alfred in his homemade submarine to the Southern Ocean. Here he meets Paul Watson of the Sea Shepherd Society, and together they fight off the Japanese whalers.

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978-1-55380-347-8 (PRINT) ■ 978-1-55380-348-5 (EBOOK)  
232 pp ■ \$11.95

### The Journal

by Lois Donovan

Thirteen-year-old Kami, a Japanese-Canadian girl, is thrown back in time to 1929, where she encounters racism and ends up working as a domestic for Judge Emily Murphy of the “Famous Five” at the time of the “Persons” case. On her return to the present, Kami must come to terms with her own ideals after having found dark elements amid the most progressive actions.



978-1-55380-350-8 (PRINT) ■ 978-1-55380-351-5 (EBOOK)  
200 pp ■ \$11.95

 Ronsdale Press

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Southwest American native mythology and the theme of the Hero's journey underpin the series, but stand out most vividly in *Out of This World*. Josh has been tapped by some Wildling animal clan elders as a saviour, while other clan elders want him dead. A confused and unwilling hero, he tries to deny his destiny but is forced by circumstance into deadly intervention in both this world and the Otherworld, allowing him to discover and hone his shape-shifting powers. His friends, too, must make their own stand against hostile adults, both human and Wildling, in both worlds, but there's one given: they always have each other's back, even in the face of death.

While the book explores hatred, bigotry and death, its seriousness is lightened by a good dash of humour in the Everyman character of Des, the only non-Wildling in the group, and his madcap Wildling “girlfriend,” Donalita.

This series should be read in order to allow readers to make sense of the story arc. This final book in the trilogy offers betrayal and redemption, love lost and found, the ability of teens to find unexpected reserves of courage in face of seemingly insurmountable odds, and the discovery of the “why” behind Josh and the other Wildling kids — making *Out of This World* a must-read.

Cheryl Freedman is a freelance editor in Toronto.



### Mad Miss Mimic

written by Sarah Henstra  
Razorbill Canada, 2015  
978-0-14-319236-7 (pb) \$16.00  
978-0-14-319238-1 (eBook) \$10.99  
for Grades 8 to 12

Fiction | Adventure | Victorian England | Stuttering |  
Opium Trade

Words have never come easily to Leonora (Leo) Somerville, whose stuttering has long been a source of shame for her. She also suffers from another peculiar speech affliction: the unnatural ability to perfectly imitate voices, to repeat entire speeches precisely as they were first uttered. For this reason, she is often referred to as “Mad Miss Mimic.” Also for this reason, her sister despairs of ever finding a man who will marry Leo. But when rich and handsome Francis Thornfax begins to court her, it appears that Leo has finally met someone who is smitten with her in spite of her speech impediment. At last, she dares to believe that she might find love. But there are sinister goings-on in Victorian London, where an opium gang is spreading terror as they stage bombings throughout the city. Leo inadvertently finds herself in the midst of these dark machinations when she finds herself drawn to Tom Rampling, her brother-in-law's low-born assistant. As she slowly pieces together the terrible truth about those around her, she realizes that she must finally find a way to make her own voice heard.

First-time novelist Sarah Henstra has crafted a richly compelling tale filled with romance and intrigue. She brings Victorian London vividly to life, capturing the sights and sounds and smells of the

city as well as the dramatic contrast between the lifestyles of the upper crust and the lowly poor. Leo is a realistically rendered protagonist whose uncertainties and fears make her more believable, but whose growing determination to seek the truth demonstrates a courage and strength of spirit that will further endear her to readers. A colourful cast of secondary characters help set the stage for this highly engaging saga, and while the end may not be entirely unexpected, it is wholly satisfying.

Lisa Doucet is Co-Manager of Wozzles, the Halifax bookstore.



**Twist of the Blade**  
(The Shards of Excalibur, Book 2)

written by Edward Willett  
Coteau Books, 2014  
978-1-55050-599-3 (pb) \$14.95  
for Grades 8 and up



**Lake in the Clouds**  
(The Shards of Excalibur, Book 3)

written by Edward Willett  
Coteau Books, 2015  
978-1-55050-616-7 (pb) \$14.95  
for Grades 8 and up

Fiction | Fantasy | Arthurian Legends

In *Twist of the Blade*, the second book in The Shards of Excalibur series, Edward Willett intensifies the stakes for Ariane Forsythe and Wally Knight as they continue their quest (begun in *Song of the Sword*) against Rex Major, aka Merlin, to re-forged Excalibur and save the world. The search for the second shard takes them to ancient caves in France, where Ariane discovers new dimensions of her power and Wally makes a fateful decision that severely tests their friendship.

With *Lake in the Clouds*, Book 3 of the series, Willett brings Ariane, Wally and Rex Major to New Zealand to locate the third shard. Along the way, Wally attempts to repair the damage he has done to Ariane's trust in him, while also realizing that he is possibly more than merely a sidekick. Ariane, meanwhile, becomes Rex Major's prisoner in order to save her Aunt Phyllis from harm, and she must confront her anger at Wally as well as the effects of Excalibur and the power of the Lady of the Lake upon her sense of self.

The strengths of Willett's series really shine in these two recent books. Throughout both, the plot moves with enthralling velocity as Willett heightens the tension for Ariane and Wally. Not only does the race for the shards of Excalibur build momentum, but the challenges Ariane and Wally encounter from family, friends and enemies consistently deepen their characters and force them to grow in significant ways.

Moreover, Willett provides a wonderfully evocative sense of place. From Regina, Saskatchewan, to Lyon, France, to Queenstown, New Zealand, and the rivers and lakes and clouds through which Ariane and Wally travel, Willett crafts immersive locations that lend genuine vigour to the story. Especially powerful are the sequences in the caves of France in *Twist of the Blade*, as Ariane and Wally come upon drawings that are 35,000 years old and navigate dark, claustrophobic, treacherous tunnels to reach the second shard.

At the heart of these two novels, however, is the evolving relationship between Ariane and Wally. In a world of absent parents (Ariane is an orphan; Wally is left to the care of a housekeeper), they must rely upon themselves and upon each other. They must learn to trust each other, for they are being changed by their contact with and use of old magic steeped in old conflicts, desires and mysteries — all of which become particularly vital in *Lake in the Clouds*. How Ariane and Wally deal with such changes, and with the increasing responsibilities of their quest, makes them truly admirable characters.

Willett's *The Shards of Excalibur* series, planned as five volumes, gives fresh life to the Arthurian legends, and there is, indeed, much to look forward to in the next two instalments.

Mike Johnstone is a lecturer in the Department of English, University of Toronto, with a speciality in Science Fiction and Fantasy.



**The Truth About Us**

written by Janet Gurtler  
Sourcebooks Fire, 2015  
978-1-4022-7800-6 (pb) \$13.99  
for Grades 9 to 12

Fiction | Friendship | Identity | Poverty | Social Justice

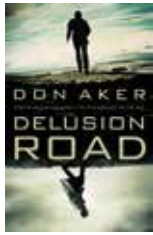
When Jess's father decides that her punishment for her most recent misdeeds will include volunteering at a local soup kitchen, she is furious. Although she knows that her life has gotten pretty out of control recently, and she isn't proud of the person she has become, she still thinks that her father's response is extreme. What she doesn't anticipate is making friends and actually enjoying her work at the shelter, or falling in love.

Helping grumpy old Wilf in the greenhouse reminds Jess of how much she had once loved working with her mother in the garden, before the accident that changed everything. In gruff and grumbly Wilf she finds a true friend. And then there is Flynn — who brings his little brother to the shelter for meals and whose life of poverty is so unlike her own life of privilege. As their friendship deepens, they must eventually face the question: can two people from such vastly different worlds find a way to make things work?

It is clear from the beginning that Jess has some things to work through as she wrestles with guilt and disappointment in herself. Nevertheless, readers will enjoy watching her growth and maturation as her work at New Beginnings gives her an opportunity to see the sorts of hardships that others endure. Her friendship with Wilf is heartwarming and lovely, while her relationship with Flynn is intense and a bit of a roller-coaster ride. Although both her personal transformation and her relationship with Flynn are somewhat predictable, Gurtler has written a satisfying contemporary teen romance and family drama that raises numerous provocative issues.

Lisa Doucet





### **Delusion Road**

written by Don Aker  
HarperTrophy Canada, 2015  
978-1-44342-416-5 (pb) \$15.99  
978-1-44342-418-9 (eBook) \$13.99  
for Grades 9 to 12

*Fiction | Suspense | Nova Scotia*

Senior year — a momentous time in the life of every teen. For Willa Jaffrey and her posse, senior year holds nothing but promise. For Keegan Fraser, new to the small community of Brookdale, Nova Scotia, the trials of senior year mean very little compared to the larger realities that he is facing. However, life holds numerous surprises for both Willa and Keegan. Despite Keegan’s belief to the contrary, what you see is not always what you get, and he and Willa discover this truth in myriad ways, both pleasant and painful. While the two teens form an almost instant dislike of one another, events conspire to change their initial impressions. And while one terrible secret ultimately brings them together, an even greater and more terrifying secret has much larger consequences for Willa, Keegan and everyone that he loves.

A tense, dramatic opening scene sets the stage for Don Aker’s latest work, a young adult page-turner. Aker tells the tale from three different points of view (those of Keegan, Willa and Griff, the ruthless would-be assassin who is hunting down Keegan’s family). By doing so, he creates a story that is much more than simply an action-packed thriller. As in his previous books, Aker creates compelling and highly credible characters as well as complex relationships, and he provides an authentic depiction of both high school and small town life. He powerfully demonstrates that there is always more to every story, and to every individual, than meets the eye.

Despite the fact that Willa’s transformation was surprisingly fast and a little too complete to be entirely believable, she and Keegan emerge as gutsy, realistically flawed and eminently likeable protagonists. The inclusion of Griff’s narrative not only heightens the tension but also creates a heart-rending portrait of a killer and the tragic events that can shape a life. Taut and emotionally charged, *Delusion Road* will earn Don Aker new fans while pleasing readers of his previous books.

Lisa Doucet



### **Dark Company**

written by Natale Ghent  
Doubleday Canada, 2015  
978-0-385-66733-3 (pb) \$15.95  
978-0-307-36819-5 (eBook) \$10.99  
for Grades 9 and up

*Fiction | Fantasy | Dystopia*

Seventeen-year-old Caddy is haunted by visions that take her to a desolate place where dispossessed souls struggle to be heard. When her father goes missing, she searches for him and is abducted into a cabalistic society called The Dreamers, who “dream” to sustain the light against the dark energies that threaten to take over the planet. As she falls deeper and deeper into the world of the Dreamers, Caddy discovers layers of deceit and treachery. She realizes it’s up to her to find a way to overcome the dark and prevent the light from being extinguished forever.

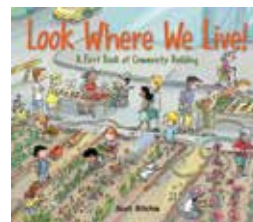
In her gripping new young adult fantasy novel, Ghent paints a picture of a resource-starved, near-future world on the brink of economic ruin and war. Food and money are scarce, the continents are fighting over what little is left and hope is dwindling.

While Caddy is being pulled deeper into the Dreamers, Meg, another girl from her school, is transformed into a light being named Skylark. She is eventually overtaken by darkness and becomes a servant to the demonic entity known as “Speaker,” whose goal is to destroy the Earth.

Good versus Evil is a popular theme in literature, and Ghent offers a unique twist on the topic, explored from the alternating perspectives of Caddy and Skylark. The girls are extremely different, and each has a particular role to play in the fight. Caddy is more closed and secretive, while Skylark is unable to fully suppress her emotions and let go of her human past, and as a result becomes more vulnerable to darkness. While the story does feel overly complicated at times, the book raises a number of questions about how darkness is created and spreads.

Overall, this is a fascinating read that definitely begs for a sequel.

Rachel Seigel



### **Look Where We Live! A First Book of Community Building**

written and illustrated by Scot Ritchie  
Kids Can Press, 2015  
978-1-77138-102-4 (hc) \$16.95  
978-1-77138-472-8 (eBook) \$11.99  
for Preschool to Grade 2

*Non-Fiction | Communities | Citizenship | Public Space | Urban Gardens*

*Look Where We Live!* is author/illustrator Scot Ritchie’s latest venture in his social studies series that includes *Follow That Map!* and *Look at That Building!* The story unfolds as a group of five children (plus a cat and a dog) take on the organizing of activities to raise money for the local library. Through this loosely held narrative, Ritchie manages to touch in a meaningful way on a broad range of topics related to the definition of community and community building.

Each section is made up of a short text, explaining a child-centred means to make money, which promotes reader discussion and questions. The illustrations play a significant role in the communication of the concepts and cover a broad range of gatherings (e.g., street fair), occupations (e.g., sanitation workers) and facilities (e.g., community centres). Readers will delight in exploring the details included in the pictures and enjoy the hunt for the whereabouts of all seven characters in every single illustration.

This book provides a fun and accessible resource to convey the concepts of community and community building. Throughout the text, the characters model the tenets of good citizenship: critical thinking and participation. The information is presented in a manner that will inspire readers as to what responsible citizens of any age can do to make a difference in their communities and why it matters. The overall message is clear: working together toward a common goal not only contributes to the community in a meaningful way but it is also enjoyable.

Nancy Rawlinson is an elementary teacher with the Toronto District School Board.



**A Brush Full of Colour:  
The World of Ted Harrison**

written by Margriet Ruurs and  
Katherine Gibson  
Pajama Press, 2014  
978-1-927485-63-7 (hc) \$22.95  
for all ages

Non-Fiction | Biography | Art | Artist's Life | Yukon

Ted Harrison, one of Canada's most recognized and celebrated artists, died in January 2015. Using a distinctive style that particularly resonates with children, he portrayed the Canadian west coast and Yukon landscapes in vibrant, non-traditional colours. *A Brush Full of Colour* follows the life and career of Harrison, from his youth in a coal-mining town in northeast England.

Harrison's imagination and desire to experience life in the Canadian north was markedly influenced by his reading of books written by Jack London and Robert Service. While travelling and working throughout the world, he studied each country's native art and then sketched and painted its people and scenery. He and his family moved to Alberta in 1962, and then to Carcross, Yukon, where he taught elementary school and continued with his painting. "But his heart yearned to use the free lines of nature around him. The northern lights danced in the sky for him, teasing him with their changing colours and shapes. Snow-capped mountains reflected themselves in crystal clear lakes, daring him to paint their outlines. 'I'm going to paint my Yukon!'" And so he did, in his own inimitable style. As he outlined figures and buildings in black and then added brilliant colours, his art gradually evolved and grew in popularity. He was also asked to illustrate several children's books, including the Robert Service poem, *The Cremation of Sam McGee*, which was a particular thrill in that it was these very words that had fuelled his desire to visit the north many years before.

This inspirational and informative biography includes many stunning examples of Harrison's luminous artwork as well as resources, sources and a foreword written by the artist himself: "I urge you to keep on reading, writing and painting. Develop your own style and keep it honest and true to who you are. Find inspiration in the world around you, and you will make the world a happier and more creative place."

Senta Ross



**Tuniit: Mysterious Folk of the Arctic**

written by Rachel Qitsualik-Tinsley and  
Sean Qitsualik-Tinsley  
illustrated by Sean Bigham  
Inhabit Media, 2015  
978-1-927095-76-8 (hc) \$16.95  
for Grades 4 to 7

Non-Fiction | Arctic History | Inuit Culture |

Dorset Culture

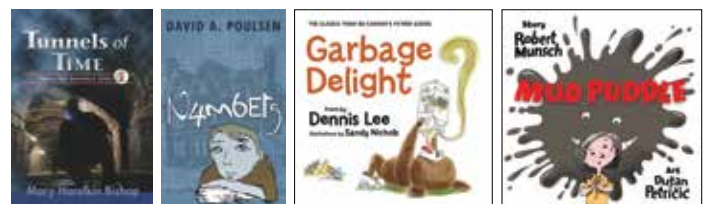
The Tuniit people, (a.k.a. the Dorset culture), now extinct, once lived in Arctic Canada and Greenland prior to the arrival of the Inuit (a.k.a. the Thule culture). This title combines anthropological evidence with traditional Inuit folklore in a compelling revelation of their behaviour and beliefs. The book is arranged in three

readable segments that compare the adaptations and values of the two societies, delineates the unique qualities of the Tuniit and assesses evidence for their existence and reasons for their disappearance. Oral stories about them, handed down by the Inuit, reveal how legends and evidence can corroborate and occasionally contradict each other.

*Tuniit* is a fascinating read. Inhabit Media's aim to "preserve and promote the stories and knowledge of northern Canada" has been achieved in this well-produced book by succinctly enhancing awareness of an intriguing culture about which little is known. The illustrations powerfully complement the text, the hazy background of the pictures adding a further sense of mystery to that which already surrounds this ancient people. The writers' enthusiasm for their topic shines through, recognizing that "If any of us want to be remembered it is through what we love." In pointing out what was important to the Tuniit so long ago, they have made the culture come alive for us, rich in all its humanity.

There is no timeline, but a good bibliography will allow readers to pursue further aspects of the information presented. Altogether, this is an attractive, informative and readable book suitable for all collections.

Aileen Wortley



**New Editions**

*Tunnels of Time* (A Moose Jaw Adventure, Book 1) by Mary Harelkin Bishop has been re-issued by Coteau Books with a new look and a free eBook edition available with purchase of the print book. Thirteen-year-old Andrea, forced to come to Moose Jaw for a family event, finds herself thrown back in time and into the mysterious tunnels under the city among bootleggers and gangsters.

In September, Dundurn Press is re-releasing *Numbers* by David Poulsen, first published by Key Porter Books in 2008. It is a welcome return for this award-winning novel about a 15-year-old boy who slowly realizes that his history teacher's version of World War II, Hitler and the Holocaust doesn't match everyone else's and that succeeding in this class may cost more than he's willing to pay.

Based on the title poem of Dennis Lee's classic collection, *Garbage Delight* is now a board book with illustrations by Calgary artist Sandy Nichols, who previously paired with Lee to create the board book, *Alligator Pie*.

Another classic making a new appearance in board book form is Robert Munsch's *Mud Puddle*, now with illustrations by Dušan Petričić. One of Munsch's first books (now in its 68th printing across all formats), the story gives us the irrepressible Jule Ann and her battle with a predatory mud puddle.



# Drop in for a look

## CCBC Collections Across the Country

Drop in for a look at the titles in the Centre's library collections at the national office in Toronto or at one of the four regional locations. Phone ahead for hours and availability.

### In Toronto

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40 Orchard View Blvd., Suite 217  
Toronto ON M4R 1B9  
416 975-0010 x 222  
Contact: Meghan Howe  
[meghan@bookcentre.ca](mailto:meghan@bookcentre.ca)

### In Vancouver

Education Library  
University of British Columbia  
Faculty of Education (Scarfe Building)  
2125 Main Mall  
Vancouver BC V6T 1Z4  
604 822-0940  
Contact: Jo-Anne Naslund  
[jo-anne.naslund@ubc.ca](mailto:jo-anne.naslund@ubc.ca)

### In Edmonton

Herbert T. Coultts Education Library  
Education South  
University of Alberta  
Edmonton AB T6G 2G5  
780 492-1460  
Contact: Katherine Koch  
[katherine.koch@ualberta.ca](mailto:katherine.koch@ualberta.ca)

### In Winnipeg

Elizabeth Dafoe Library  
University of Manitoba  
25 Chancellors Circle  
Winnipeg MB R3T 2N2  
204 474-9977  
Contact: Donna Masson  
[donna\\_masson@umanitoba.ca](mailto:donna_masson@umanitoba.ca)

### In Halifax

Mount Saint Vincent University Library  
166 Bedford Highway  
Halifax NS B3M 2J6  
902 457-6526  
Contact: Terri Milton  
[terri.milton@msvu.ca](mailto:terri.milton@msvu.ca)

## IN OUR NEXT ISSUE ...

**Getting real:**  
Illustrating non-fiction  
books with accuracy and  
imagination

### Plus

A profile of Tim Wynne-Jones,  
thoughts on diverse books, a selection  
of science titles, reviews of the latest  
books and more.



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How do booksellers pick the books they sell? Let  
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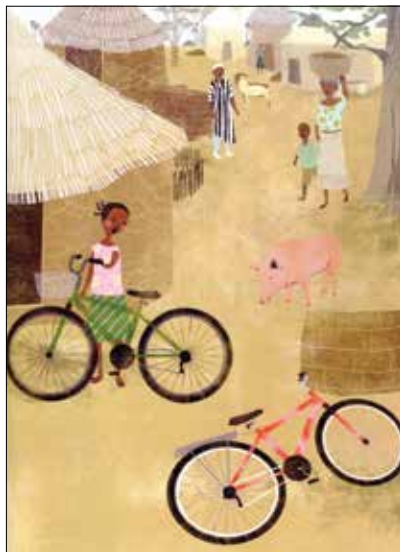
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from *Never Give Up*  
illustrated by Qin Leng



from *The Red Bicycle*  
illustrated by Simone Shin



from *See You Next Year*  
illustrated by Todd Stewart

## 22 THE CLASSROOM BOOKSHELF

**Charlie's Dirt Day** (A Tell-Me-More! Storybook)  
Andrew Larsen, Jacqueline Hudon-Verrelli

**The Queen's Shadow:  
A Story About How Animals See**  
Cybèle Young

**The Red Bicycle: The Extraordinary Story of  
One Ordinary Bicycle** (CitizenKid)  
Jude Isabella, Simone Shin

**A Ticket Around the World**  
Natalia Diaz, Melissa Owens, Kim Smith

## 24 BOOK BITS

**The Farmerettes**  
Gisela Tobien Sherman

**Uncertain Soldier**  
Karen Bass

**War in My Town**  
E. Graziani

## 26 WE RECOMMEND

**Avis Dolphin**  
Frieda Wishinsky, Willow Dawson

**Best Friends Through Eternity**  
Sylvia McNicoll

**Between Shadows**  
Kathleen Cook Waldron

**A Brush Full of Colour:  
The World of Ted Harrison**  
Margriet Ruurs, Katherine Gibson

**The Case of the Missing Moonstone**  
(The Wollstonecraft Detective Agency, Book 1)  
Jordan Stratford, Kelly Murphy

**Dark Company**  
Natale Ghent

**Delusion Road**  
Don Aker

**Drive: A Look at Roadside Opposites**  
Kellen Hatanaka

**Eat, Leo! Eat!**  
Caroline Adderson, Josée Bisailon

**The Ghost and Max Monroe: Case #1,  
The Magic Box**  
L.M. Falcone, Kim Smith

**The Ghost and Max Monroe: Case #2,  
The Missing Zucchini**  
L.M. Falcone, Kim Smith

**How to Outrun a Crocodile When Your Shoes  
Are Untied** (My Life is a Zoo, Book 1)  
Jess Keating

**How to Outswim a Shark Without a Snorkel**  
(My Life is a Zoo, Book 2)  
Jess Keating

**The Incredible Space Raiders From Space**  
Wesley King

**Lake in the Clouds**  
(The Shards of Excalibur, Book 3)  
Edward Willett

**The Little Knight Who Battled the Rain**  
Gilles Tibo, Geneviève Després, Petra Johannsen

**Look Where We Live!  
A First Book of Community Building**  
Scot Ritchie

**Mad Miss Mimic**  
Sarah Henstra

**The Missing Dog Is Spotted**  
Jessica Scott Kerrin

**My Family Tree and Me**  
Dušan Petričić

**Never Give Up: A Story About Self-Esteem**  
(I'm a Great Little Kid)  
Kathryn Cole, Qin Leng

**Off Pointe** (Orca Liminalights)  
Leanne Lieberman

**Out of This World** (Wildlings, Book 3)  
Charles de Lint

**Ready, Set, Kindergarten!**  
Paula Ayer, Danielle Arbour

**Reptile Flu: A Story About Communication**  
(I'm a Great Little Kid)  
Kathryn Cole, Qin Leng

**See You Next Year**  
Andrew Larsen, Todd Stewart

**Song for a Summer Night: A Lullaby**  
Robert Heidbreder, Qin Leng

**This Is Sadie**  
Sara O'Leary, Julie Morstad

**The Traveling Circus**  
(Travels with My Family, Book 4)  
Marie-Louise Gay, David Homel

**The Truth About Us**  
Janet Gurtler

**Tuniit: Mysterious Folk of the Arctic**  
Rachel Qitsualik-Tinsley, Sean Qitsualik-Tinsley,  
Sean Bigham

**Twist of the Blade**  
(The Shards of Excalibur, Book 2)  
Edward Willett

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