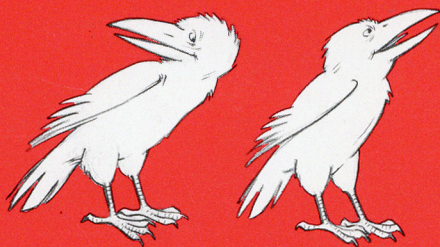


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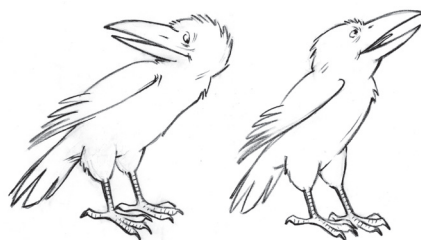
A Selection of International Children's and Youth Literature



Internationale Jugendbibliothek

The White Ravens 2012

A Selection of International Children's and Youth Literature



Internationale Jugendbibliothek

Symbols

- ★ Special Mention – book to which we wish to draw particular attention
- ◆ book whose content is found to contribute to an international understanding among cultures and people
- book whose text is judged to be easily understandable, i.e. easy-to-read text, and yet dealing with topics of interest to older readers; well-suited to foreign-language readers and for inclusion in foreign language collections of public and school libraries

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für Familie, Senioren, Frauen
und Jugend

Bayerisches Staatsministerium für
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The White Ravens 2012

A Selection of International Children's and Youth Literature

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Contents

Preface.....	4
--------------	---

East Asian Languages

Japan (Japanese)	6
People's Republic of China (Chinese)	10
Republic of Korea (Korean)	11

English Language

Africa	
Ghana	13
Asia and Oceania	
Australia	13
India	15
New Zealand	16
Europe	
Great Britain	16
Ireland	19
North America	
Canada	19
USA	21

German Language

Austria	24
Germany	25
Switzerland	31

Romance Languages

Africa	
Morocco (French)	32
La Réunion (France) (French)	32
Europe	
Belgium (French)	32
France (French)	33
Italy (Italian)	38
Portugal (Portuguese)	41
Romania (Romanian)	41
Spain (Spanish)	41
Spain (Catalan)	43
Switzerland (French)	44
Latin America	
Argentina (Spanish)	44
Brazil (Portuguese)	45
Chile (Spanish)	46

Colombia (Spanish)	46
Mexico (Spanish)	47
Venezuela (Spanish)	48

North America

Canada (French)	48
------------------------------	----

Scandinavian Languages

Denmark (Danish)	50
Finland (Finnish)	51
Finland (Swedish)	51
Norway (Norwegian)	52
Sweden (Swedish)	53

Slavic and Baltic Languages

Croatia (Croatian)	54
Czech Republic (Czech)	55
Estonia (Estonian)	56
Latvia (Latvian)	56
Lithuania (Lithuanian)	57
Poland (Polish)	57
Russia (Russian)	58
Slovakia (Slovak)	59
Slovenia (Slovenian)	60
Ukraine (Ukrainian)	60

Other Languages

Belgium (Dutch)	61
The Netherlands (Dutch)	62
The Netherlands (Frisian)	64
Ireland (Irish)	64
Hungary (Hungarian)	65
Cyprus (Greek)	66
Greece (Greek)	66
Turkey (Turkish)	68
Lebanon (Arabic)	69
Palestine (Arabic)	69
Iran (Persian [Farsi])	69

Name Index	71
------------------	----

Subject Index	75
---------------------	----

Reading Age Index	79
-------------------------	----

Preface

The annual catalogue »The White Ravens« features 250 new and notable titles of children's and young adult literature from over 40 countries. The language specialists of the Internationale Jugendbibliothek (International Youth Library – IYL) selected these books in the course of the previous year from the incoming donations to acclaim the most noteworthy and remarkable ones. In the case of a few countries and languages, we once again were helped by befriended experts and organisations, whom we heartily thank.

»The White Ravens« are at the core of the collection management and mediation activities of the IYL – the largest library for international children's and young adult literature in the world, with holdings of nearly 600,000 books. Our main tasks include cataloguing, making accessible, and creatively promoting the books, which have been kindly donated by publishing houses, institutions, organisations, and individuals from around the world for decades. This catalogue, put together by our team of language

specialists, who have excellent knowledge of the international children's and youth book market, is part of our effort to promote these books.

Every year, the catalogue »The White Ravens« is published in time for the Bologna Children's Book Fair, the world's leading international event dedicated to children's publishing, where it is presented together with the books themselves.

This selection, which features books in more than 30 languages, has gained international recognition because it highlights the trends of contemporary children's and young adult literature on an international scale. It serves as a list of recommendations for parents, teachers, and librarians, and inspires publishing houses to acquire translation rights. Public and school libraries or international bookstores use the catalogue as a basis for making their purchases. Since 1996, the »White Ravens« selections are also registered in a database, which can be found on our website at www.ijb.de. Furthermore, thanks

to the much appreciated support of the International Children's Digital Library (ICDL), the full information is also available at www.icdlbooks.org.

Because the collections of the International Youth Library consist exclusively of books we receive from our friends around the world, only review and donation copies become part of the »White Ravens« selection. Therefore, the range and quality of »The White Ravens« is contingent on the books donated. To offer a broad variety of publications, we make an effort to present titles from as many publishing houses as possible. Unfortunately, not all publishing houses that consistently and generously supply the IYL can be featured every year. Nonetheless, we extend our sincere gratitude to each and every one of them for their continued shipments of books!

We can confidently assure our donors that their books will be catalogued, indexed by subject, and included in our permanent collection. In this way, they are available to international specialists who

visit our study library, make use of our reference services from abroad, or consult our catalogues on the Internet. Over the years, many books also find their way into specialised travelling exhibitions, exhibition catalogues, teacher recommendation lists, and activity programs for children.

Last but not least, we renew our request to all publishers: Please continue to send us your new titles! As for our part, we shall continue to live up to the reputation of Munich's International Youth Library as the home of the most comprehensive collection of international literature for children and young people.

Dr. Christiane Raabe
February 2012

East Asian Languages

Japan (Japanese)

(Romanisation according to the Hepburn system)

1

Arai, Ryōji (text/illus.)

Mokemoke <coinage>

Tōkyō: Ferishimo Shuppan (Felissimo), 2010. – [36] p.

(Series: Ohanashi no takarabako; 32)

ISBN 978-4-89432-521-0

Senses – Imagination – Spontaneity

Is there a »primal feeling« of the five senses that could be illustrated? To the highly imaginative and spontaneous mind of Ryōji Arai, there is. According to him, »moke-moke« is that which slumbers in our mental chaos prior to using the five senses. Arai shows in his picture book a locomotive, which approaches from a distance. In it, there are a horde of odd little creatures. They disembark and investigate all sorts of things, including toys, musical instruments, sweets, etc. What they see, they touch, they hear, they smell, or they eat. In the process, they sense hard and soft, loud and soft, light and dark, near and far, and so on. Adults might be of divided opinion regarding the sense-interpretation of these pictures. To children, however, this lively, unencumbered picture world offers a free and inviting space. (Age: 2+)

2

Hamada, Keiko (text/illus.)

Heiwa tte donna koto?

(What is peace?)

Tōkyō: Dōshinsha, 2011. – 36 p.

(Series: Nitchūkan heiwa ehon)

ISBN 978-4-494-01964-9

Peace – Values education – Peace education

The impulse behind this highly notable co-production between Japan, China, and South Korea goes back to the publication of an anti-war picture album, in which 103 Japanese illustrators brought to expression their wishes for world peace. Inspired by that project, some of them took the initiative to create a twelve-volume picture book series together, on the topic of coming to terms with the past. Each country will contribute four volumes. This picture book's message of peace stands as exemplary for already published volumes and those still to come. The abstract word »peace« is successfully parsed out in both image and text at the level of children's everyday lives. Values like freedom of opinion and religion, tolerance, and the preciousness of life are thus made comprehensible even to pre-schoolers. (Age: 4+) ♦ ●

3

Hasegawa, Shūhei (text/illus.)

Torigorasu no gyakushū

(Torigorasu ounterattack)

Ōsaka [et al.]: Bunken Shuppan, 2010. – [32] p.

(Series: Ehon no mori)

ISBN 978-4-580-82123-1

Falling in love – Puberty – Sexual fantasy – Emancipation

Shūhei Hasegawa was already writing about the fantasies of a pubescent boy in the 1970s, when sexuality still was a taboo topic in children's and young adult literature. Since then, his first picture book »Torigorasu« (1978) has invariably found a young male readership. The story is about a boy who is in love with a girl and who is sometimes overwhelmed by his intense desire for her. His repressed urges become aggressive. His longing transforms itself into a monstrous bird, which violently destroys its surroundings in order to capture the girl. Hasegawa has created the present picture book as a counterpart to this first work; in this version, the girl brings the boy to her beautiful island with the help of the giant bird. The bold, exciting pictures strongly psychologise male desire. (Age: 12+)

4

Iwase, Jōko (text)

Ueji, Naoko (illus.)

Matsurichan

(The little girl named Matsuri)

Tōkyō: Rironsha, 2010. – 164 p.

ISBN 978-4-652-07977-5

Childlikeness – Neighbour – Family

A house in the neighbourhood appears to be uninhabited. In fact, five-year-old Matsuri unobtrusively lives there with a cat. Her father only stays on weekends. When some neighbours happen to meet Matsuri, they are attracted by her charming manner and want to become her friends. This poetic book, with its apt cover image and illustrations, comprises eight self-contained chapters, in which different people tell of their encounters with Matsuri against the background of their own life troubles. The last chapters speak of Matsuri's parents, who for a bitter reason live apart. The question is left open whether the somewhat implausible central character of this book is meant to be the embodiment of that which is child-like, of innocence as adults would wish it. An interesting, age-transcending book for young adults. (Age: 15+)

5

Iwase, Jōko

Itsu Vireiji

(Peace Village)

Tōkyō: Kaiseisha, 2011. – 192 p.

ISBN 978-4-03-643090-1

Town/Military base – Friendship – Growing up

»Peace Village« is open to all the inhabitants of a garrison town. American soldiers, other foreigners, and native Japanese people all socialize there. Twelve-year-old Kaoru, whose parents run a snack bar, goes there a lot. Having grown up in this social milieu, she has no trouble with everyday life, but she does have a nightmarish fear of war. The girl is gradually learning to understand adults and their life circumstances. Interacting with relatives and older friends also help her develop her independence. Jōko Iwase portrays the growing up of his sensitive protagonist in a very literary way sure to stay with the reader a long time. While the secondary characters are only sketched, they exert a presence of their own and radiate personality. (Age: 12+)

6

Katō, Yukiko (text)

Sakai, Komako (illus.)

Kusahara

(Water meadow)

Tōkyō: Fukuinkan Shoten, 2011. – [24] p.

(Series: Yōji ehon Fushigina tane shirizu)

ISBN 978-4-8340-2684-9

Nature – Excursion – River – Butterfly – Becoming lost

Little Yū heads to the river with her family for a picnic. It's gorgeous there. Suddenly a butterfly flutters by, sits on a rock and is gone again in an instant. Spell-bound, Yū follows it and soon ends up amongst thick grasses, where she loses her bearings. In her delicate pictures, Komako Sakai reflects the ephemeral devotion typical of children fascinated by something. Yet the meadow landscape with its high-growing grasses is the true protagonist. The reader senses the plants breathing and the wind blowing over them. The picture book is awash in light green. The text centers around the girl when she is found by her mother and senses safety. (Age: 3+)

7

Matsumura, Masako (text/illus.)

Uma no oinori

(The horse's prayer)

Tōkyō: Shikōsha, 2011. – [24] p.

(Series: Bukku kurabu kokusaiban ehon)

ISBN 978-4-7834-0308-1

Horse – Animal care – Love of animals

A work horse has requests for his new owner: He wants food and water, a warm place to sleep, especially when it's cold outside. He wants to be shaded from the strong sun, which trees can do. The horse is a sensitive animal and a living creature just like a human being. That's why his owner should care for him lovingly and understand his language. This is how human being and animal can learn to trust one another and be friends. The horse will also be grateful for not being given away to strangers when he is no longer needed. Masako Matsumura depicts the horse's habitat, including stall, pasture and meadow, streets and so on alongside the life of the farm family in large-scale, atmospheric pictures. Conveyed in the warm-coloured hues of wax crayons, the animal's inner desires become prayer-like. (Age: 3+)

8

Miki, Taku (text)

Hingan (= Kyōan) (illus.)

Hitoribotchi no kaeru

(Frog, are you lonely?)

Tōkyō: Kogumasha, 2011. – 37 p.

ISBN 978-4-7721-0203-2

Frog – Life – Nature – Harmony – Gratefulness

Frog has lived alone from the start, since all frog mothers leave their children as soon as they lay their eggs. Fully grown and sitting alone on a rock, he is asked by the morning sun, by a rain cloud, by the earth, and by the wind and moon whether he is very lonely. The frog replies that to him, the warmth of the big sun is his father and the rain that waters the pond and shelters him his mother. The wind is his playmate, and the moon, to whom he dedicates his singing, a gentle goddess. And there is no life at all without earth! The frog, whom the natural elements perceive as lonely, is instead grateful and joyful for their presence in his life. In a tender and fairy-tale-like way, the book's Mongolian illustrator depicts the frog sitting on his rock and conversing against the backdrop of a wide mountain range. (Age: 5+)

9

Motonaga, Sadamasa (text/illus.)

Okii chiisai

(Big and small)

Tōkyō: Fukuinkan Shoten, 2011. – [16] p.

(Series: 0.1.2. Ehon)

ISBN 978-4-19-863279-3

Big/Small – Size – Visual perception – Language acquisition

»0.1.2 Ehon« is a cardboard picture book series for children aged 0 to 2, which consistently publishes linguistically and aesthetically exceptional works. They are often innovative, as this volume is with its abstract pictorial elements, which are derived from stones, potatoes, clouds, cars, tools, and so on. The Japanese avant-garde artist Sadamasa Motonaga (1922-2011) conveys the concepts of »big« and »small« to very young readers in a manner far different from the genre's conventional naturalistic representation. The pictures' vivid forms and colours are as appealing as is the busy typography. The two oft-repeated words occur in rich variation and encourage little word games. The layout imbues the entire work with liveliness. (Age: 1+)

10

Narumi, Fū (text) / Takayama, Kenta (illus.)

Hoshizora ni miserareta otoko

Hazama Shigetomi

(Hazama Shigetomi, the man fascinated by stars)

Tōkyō: Kumon Shuppan, 2011. – 318 p.

(Series: Kumon no jidō bungaku)

ISBN 978-4-7743-1933-9

Japan/1756-1816 – Astronomy – Calendar – Reform – Biography

As the son of a rich merchant in Osaka, the talented Hazama Shigetomi (1756-1816) received a good education and discovered astronomy when he was just eleven. As the successor in the family business, his study with the famous astronomer Asada Gōryū began rather late. Together with his classmate Takahashi Yoshitoki, he enacted the »Kansei Calendar Revision«. Even though little European knowledge came into Japan due to its isolationism, Shigetomi was able to develop modern mechanical measuring instruments, which drastically improved stellar observation. In recognition of his contributions, the Shogunate appointed him astronomer in the court in Edo (Tokyo). This biography extensively describes his indefatigable life as scientist, merchant, and patron for the development of astronomy in Japan. (Age: 11+) ♦

11

Ōki, Satoko

Chikyū no koe ni mimi o sumasete.

Jishin no shōtai o shiri, inochi o mamoru

(Let us listen to the voice of the Earth! Know the causes of earthquakes, in order to save life)

Tōkyō: Kumon Shuppan, 2011. – 143 p.

(Series: Kumon Junia saiensu)

ISBN 978-4-7743-2025-0

Japan/2011 – Earthquake – Tsunami

On March 11, 2011, a severe earthquake measuring a magnitude of 9.0 shook the sea floor off the north-eastern shore of the Japanese main island. This caused 10 to 30 meter high tidal waves, which reached the coast in a half hour and took the lives of approximately 20,000 people. It was the strongest earthquake in Japan's history and globally the fourth strongest since measurement began. The author, a scientist in this area, carefully and comprehensibly describes the cause of this natural catastrophe. The reader is transported to a deep-sea research boat and travels with her to the depths of the ocean, all the way to the centre of the earth. Through this pedagogically vivid method, the reader comes to understand complex natural connections. At the same time, the author shows great compassion for the victims and in so doing weaves in her own biography. (Age: 11+)

12

Osada, Hiroshi (text) / Arai, Ryōji (illus.)

Sora no ehon

(Picture book of the sky)

Tōkyō: Kōdansha, 2011. – [32] p.

(Series: Kōdansha no sōsaku ehon)

ISBN 978-4-06-132487-9

Sky – Storm – Landscape – Nature – Colour

Illustrator Ryōji Arai's new work captures nature over the course of a storm. One bright afternoon, a rain drop falls from the sky. Heavy rain and wind follow, and soon there is lightning, thunder, and storm weather. Afterwards, everything returns to calm; the rain drops sparkle in the clean air, and the golden setting sun appears. As night encroaches, the stars begin to glitter. Poet Hiroshi Osada recounts nature's display with a text worth reading aloud. Arai unexpectedly interprets the text in the style of oil paintings, making his pictures seem like stage sets. But his unmistakable style is still visible in the playful depiction of dew drops and the inconspicuous animals and objects. The metamorphosis of colour in the sky and on the mountain is striking. (Age: 8+)

13

Shimada, Yōshichi (text)
Hata, Kōshirō (illus.)

Saga no gabai bāchan. Bāchan tonō deai

(My awesome nan in Saga. Encounter with grandmother)

Tōkyō: Tokuma Shoten, 2011. – 140 p.

(Series: Saga no gabai bāchan; 1)

ISBN 978-4-19-863279-3

Japan/1958-1970 – Grandson – Grandmother – Poverty – Art of life – Childhood memories

The author of this book is a beloved comedian in Japan. Since its first publication in 2004, the story – based on autobiography – has been enthusiastically embraced and variously re-worked for film, television, play, and manga. This four-volume children's book is its newest incarnation. In it, Shimada describes how his eight-year-old self was taken in by his grandmother living in the country, in the face of his mother's existential distress in 1958. But what a nana she is! Living in direst need, she knows how to master her poverty with finesse and integrity. For the boy, these years of deprivation form his life's most beautiful time. The author writes with great respect for this original and inventive woman, without patronizing children of today's consumer society. He entertains with a hyperbolic rhetoric. (Age: 10+)

14

Tang, Yaming (= Tō, Amei) (text)
Yu, Dawu (= U, Taibu) (illus.)

Nanatabi mōkaku o toraeru.

Sangokushi ehon

(Meng Huo is captured seven times. A picture book about »The history of the Three Kingdoms«)

Tōkyō: Iwanami Shoten, 2011. – [72] p.

(Series: Ōgata ehon; Sangokushi ehon)

ISBN 978-4-00-111224-5

China/220-280 – Chancellor – War – Conquest – Strategy – Cleverness

This is the second volume of the picture book trilogy in which Luo Guanzhong adapts the historical novel »History of the Three Kingdoms« for children. It deals with the unsurpassed intelligence of the legendary Shu kingdom chancellor and strategist Zhuge Liang. His opponent is Meng Huo, the tribal chieftain of the Nanman, the »southern barbarians«. Huo leads constant attacks against the Shu realm. He is captured seven times, and seven times he is released, until he finally comes to see reason and agrees to peace. The belligerent conflicts

and the well thought-out diplomacy are portrayed by Yu Dawu in turbulent scenes that are at once artistic and witty. The inventive battle conduct and the exotic landscape of the Chinese Southwest are especially well captured in finely tuned pictures. The third volume appeared at the same time. (Age: 9+) (The first volume was presented in »The White Ravens 1998«.)

15

Yamashita, Haruo (text)
Hasegawa, Yoshifumi (illus.)

Kawauso mura no hinotamabanashi

(The story of the ghost lights in otter village)

Ōsaka: Kaihō Shuppansha, 2011. – [32] p.

(Series: Eru kurabu)

ISBN 978-4-7592-2256-2

Japan/Oral tradition – Social status – Discrimination – Prejudice – Hatred – Murder

Because of their social background, people like Saizō live ostracized in the »dirty otter village« at the edge of town. They are also forbidden to step into the temple grounds, since they would soil the purity of the sacred space. When the villagers' annual sumō match takes place, Saizō, who is mad for sumō, cannot stop himself from breaking the taboo. He even defeats the strongest ring-fighter of the village. But when it turns out that he is one the »otter fishes«, he is beaten to death. This old tale from Fukuoka on the island of Kyūshū ends with the strange death of Saizō's misanthropic opponent, who, after having been led astray by ghost lights, dies at the gravestone of Saizō's deceased grandfather. The story shows how social prejudices lead to hatred and violence and how innocent people can become victims. With his unique folkloric drawing style, Yoshifumi Hasegawa represents the injustice of the »better folk« and the suffering of the under-privileged. Text and images form an expressive unity. (Age: 6+) ★ Special Mention ♦

People's Republic of China (Chinese)

(Romanisation according to the Pinyin system)

16

Gerelčimeg Heihe (= Gerelqimuge Heihe)

Heigou Hala Nuohai (= Hei gou qar-a noqai)

(The black dogs Hara and Norhe)

Nanning: Jieli Chubanshe (= Jieli Publishing House), 2011. – 282 p.

(Series: Heihe dong wu wen xue xi lie)

ISBN 978-7-5448-1651-9

Herding dog – Wildness – Modernity

Hara and Norhe are two black herding dogs born in the Greater Khingan Range. They were the only two puppies to survive in a life-and-death struggle, and both have grown up to be excellent herding dogs. However, the two brothers have quite different destinies. While Hara becomes a member of a traditional shepherd family, Norhe, while trying to protect his group of sheep from being butchered in an urban slaughterhouse, loses his own life there. The Mongolian author bases the story on his own life experience. His animal fiction presents a powerful and melancholy memorial to the disappearing wild prairie culture in Northeast China. (Age: 10+) ♦

17

Li, Shanshan

Jintian Mingtian

(Today and tomorrow)

Chengdu: Sichuan Shaonian Ertong Chubanshe (= Sichuan Juvenile and Children's Books Publishing House), 2011. – 204 p.

(Series: Wan dou hu luo bo shu xi)

ISBN 978-7-5365-5135-0

Family – Everyday life – Philosophy – Worldview

This book is about a pre-school boy. The short stories all deal with the little child's everyday life and his feelings towards it. Using the first-person narrative voice, the author delves deeply into the protagonist's mind and presents readers with a vivid account of what a child thinks and feels when confronted with new things every day, and how he learns to understand the world and to interact with it. Many stories in this book reveal the philosophical thoughts which naturally arise in a child's mind. (Age: 4+)

18

Lin, Xiusui (= Lin, Cookie) (text)

Liao, Jianhong (= Liao, Chien-Hung) (illus.)

Jin cheng

(Going to the marketplace)

Jinan: Mingtian Chubanshe (= Tomorrow Publishing House), 2010. – [36] p.

ISBN 978-7-5332-6412-3 (originally published in Taiwan, Republic of China: Taibei: Xinyi Jijin Chubanshe [= Hsin-Yi Publ.], ISBN 978-986-161-414-4)

Folk tale

This picture book presents a postmodern version of a well-known Chinese folktale. A peasant father and his son go into town with a donkey. While they try to treat the donkey in ways the townspeople approve of, everyone they meet is critical of their actions. The book's black-and-white illustrations are cut-and-paste collages brimming with visual references, including famous characters from classic Chinese literary works such as the Monkey King of »Journey to the West«, Lin Tai-yu of »A Dream of Red Mansions« and others. These myriad details add to the pleasure of discovery in reading the story and build up to the final epiphany the father and son experience. (Age: 5+) (Prize for Excellence of the 2011 Feng Zikai Chinese Children's Picture Books Award)

19

Ren, Rongrong

Wo xiao de shihou

(When I was a child)

Shanghai: Shaonian Ertong Chubanshe (= Juvenile and Children's Books Publishing House), 2011. – 135 p.

(Series: Ren Rongrong mei wen yue du; Tao tao cong shu: mei hui ban)

ISBN 978-7-5324-8502-4

Childhood memories – History – Folk culture

This is an autobiographical essay collection of Ren Rongrong, one of the most famous translators, poets and writers of contemporary Chinese children's literature. Ren is the esteemed Chinese translator of H. C. Andersen's fairy tales, »Pippi Longstocking«, »Winnie-the-Pooh«, »Peter Pan«, the »Moomin« books, and many other children's literature classics. The texts collected in this book are all about the author's childhood memories, which can be traced back to the 1920s and reflect a certain period of China's history as well as much folk culture now extinct. The author writes the essays in an easy colloquial style, drawing young readers into a conversation about childhood in different ages and cultures. (Age: 8+)

20

Zhang, Zhilu

Qianwen zhi wu

(The dance of words)

Beijing: Zhongguo Shaonian Ertong Chubanshe
(= China Juvenile and Children's Books Publishing
House), 2011. – 248 p.

(Series: Crown Classic)

ISBN 978-7-5007-9986-3

Fantasy – Culture – Language

The story of this novel begins during the Qing Dynasty in China. A girl named Qianwen comes upon a mysterious inn while searching for more books for her library and finds herself trapped in a dark plan for revenge. Like thousands of other innocent people who entered the inn before her, she is transformed into a tiny living Chinese character. After that, she lives only in books, until hundreds of years later, when Sangnan, a modern young librarian who turns out to be the reincarnation of Qianwen's long lost love, comes to save her and all the other character-people. The novel deftly integrates the culture and history of Chinese characters into its detective-story flavour, and explores the vital tie between language and life. (Age: 10+)

Republic of Korea (Korean)

(Romanisation according to the
McCune-Reischauer system)

21

Hwang, Sŏn-mi (= Hwang Sun-mi)

Hŭimang ŭi tanji DMZ**(= Heuimangeui Danji DMZ)**

(A time capsule from 2026 for the DMZ children)

Sŏul-si (Seoul): Chosŏn edyuk'eisŏn (= Chosun),
2011. – 120 p.

(Series: Nuguna aljiman amudo morŭnŭn tongsŏ
nambuk uri ttang; 1)

ISBN 978-89-93499-81-0

Korea – Division

There has always been a tense atmosphere existing in the DMZ (Demilitarized Zone) between the South and the North of the Korean Peninsula. It is legally prohibited for ordinary people to enter the Zone. However, a village called Tae Sung Dong is located there, one of the only two inhabited villages in the DMZ, governed and protected by the United Nations Command. Yong, Haneul, Sujeong, and Myeong-woo, four sixth-grade students

living in DMZ, write their hopes on pieces of paper and place them in a big pot (a Year 2026 time capsule), as a special event to commemorate their graduation. In this fact-based fictional story, these four children not only express their hopes for the future, but also talk about their lives, security, ecology, history, and the reunification of South and North Korea. (Age: 8+)

22

Hwang, Suk-kyŏng (= Hwang, Sook-kyung) (text/illus.)

Paem i choa (= Baemi Joa)

(I like snakes)

P'aju-si: Porim Ch'ulp'ansa (= Borim Press),
2011. – [36] p.

(Series: Porim changjak kŭrim ch'aek kongmojŏn
susangjak; 15)

ISBN 978-89-433-0861-2

Snake – Prejudice – Dislike

This compelling yet funny picture book portrays the conflict between a child who loves snakes very much and wants to keep one, and his parents, who are absolutely against the idea, saying things like: a snake can hurt people, just looking at it makes them feel bad, and it is sticky and smelly. The boy doesn't back down and instead rebuts them. Since his arguments are plausible and persuasive, they change his parents' minds. They also make the reader think about the many things we just dislike without even knowing them very well. The book ends with someone carefully placing a snake in the child's room before quietly leaving, though it is difficult to know whether this happens for real or only in the child's imagination. This picture book shows how the eyes of a child can change the stubborn prejudices of the adult world. (Age: 3+)

23

Kim, Hae-wŏn (= Kim, Haewon) (et al.)

Kajok imnikka (= Gachokipnika)

(Are you a family member?)

Sŏul-si (= Seoul): Param ŭi Aidŭl (= Paramui Aidle),
2011. – 224 p.

(Series: Param Tanp'yŏnjip; 6; Panollim; 24)

ISBN 978-89-94475-09-7

Family – Diversity

This novel takes a look at what family means and gives readers a chance to ask themselves what family represents to them personally. Each of the four authors of this book writes about a single character. The different characters share the fact that they are all actors in a cell

phone advertisement. In the advertisement, they play the roles of mother, father, son, and daughter respectively, but in reality they have their own families, individual problems and specific situations that they must face. They all have different familial backgrounds and expectations. Thus, as they shoot the advertisement, they come to test their own beliefs. What is a family? What do I think a family is? The four separate episodes can be read as a continuous novel. (Age: 14+)

24

Kim, Sug-yŏng (= Kim, Sook-Young) (text/illus.)

Appanŭn Komdori ya (= Appanun Gomdori)
(Teddy Bear, Daddy Bear)

Sŏul-si (= Seoul): Ch'aek ingnŭn kom

(= Bear Books), 2011. – [28] p.

(Series: Kŭrimch'aek i ch'am choa; 004)

ISBN 978-89-93242-48-5

Teddy bear – Family – Father – Child – Children's needs – Role as a father

One weekend, a father is lying in the living room as usual, watching television. His children want to go outside with him to play, but he is reluctant. A man who looks exactly like him suddenly appears and takes the children outside. In a mirror, the real father sees he has turned into a teddy bear. He wants to shout out that he is the real father, but in the eyes of his children, he is just a teddy bear. Watching his children having fun with the fake daddy, the real daddy feels disappointed, but also guilty. Will he ever return to his human form? This picture book imaginatively combines the children's longings with the reality of their busy and tired father. The detailed pictures, which capture the changes in teddy bear's facial expressions, are well drawn and very attractive. (Age: 3+)

25

Sin, Su-hyŏn (= Shin, Su-hyeon) (text)

Kim, Sŏng-hŭi (= Kim, Sung-hee) (illus.)

Ppalgong yŏnp'il (= Bbalgong Yeonpil)
(The red pencil)

Sŏul-si (= Seoul): Piryongso (= BIR Publishing),
2011. – 212 p.

(Series: Ilgong ilsam; 71)

ISBN 978-8-9491-2133-8

Loneliness – Self-confidence – Divorced parents

This is the story of a red pencil with the power of making words flow easily, no matter what it is supposed to write down. One day, the magic pencil accidentally falls into the hands of Minhø, a lonely fifth grader who lives

with his single mother. He is a timid and quiet student at school. He has felt uneasy ever since his parents had a quarrel three years ago and his father left. With the pencil's help, he finds himself: »It is very interesting that there are so many things to write in the journal. No matter when and what I write, there is always more to write about. I am so thrilled. I can't even go to bed if I don't write in my journal.« Thanks to the red pencil, Minhø opens up his mind, and finds his true happiness after all. (Age: 10+)

26

Yi, Kyŏng-hwa (= Lee, Gyeong-hwa) (text)

Kim, Hye-jin (illus.)

Saemi wa P'uri

(Saemi and Puri <proper names>)

Sŏul-si (= Seoul): Param ūi Aidŭl

(= Barambooks), 2011. – 143 p.

(Series: Tolgae param; 29)

ISBN 978-89-94475-16-5

Dream – Self-confidence – Fairy

Saemi is always being scolded by her teacher and makes her parents worry at home. Her head is full of intriguing ideas, but she's so shy that she can't even speak to someone she wants to be friends with; and even though she has a great imagination, no one really cares about her. One day, a tiny fairy with wings appears before her! This book depicts in a simple and clear way how the shy, unassuming girl goes through dramatic changes after the fairy makes her wishes come true. When good fortune falls from the sky out of the blue, will it really turn out to be good? In any event, Saemi uses her good fortune to become a better person. In fact, Puri, the fairy, feeds off Saemi's imagination, so he's actually a part of her. Remarkable for its boundless imaginativeness and sound ideas, this book will work wonders for timid children. (Age: 6+)

English Language

Africa

Ghana

27

Asare, Meshak (text/illus.)

The canoe's story

[Accra]: Sub-Saharan Publishers, 2010. – 63 p.

ISBN 978-9988-647-99-5

Tree – Canoe – Deforestation – Environmental awareness

In this reworked and newly illustrated version of his powerful tree tale (1st ed. 1982), Asare amplifies the environmental message and lends even more weight to the towering tall Wawa tree. The story of one of the oldest trees of the Ghanaian hinterland forest, which is cut down and carved into a majestic canoe to serve as a traditional fishing boat, is told by the tree itself in a dignified, almost sacred tone of voice. The tree's understanding and generosity as well as the reversal of our common anthropocentric perspective will cause (especially Western) readers to rethink their relationship to nature as well as to objects made from nature. The new watercolour illustrations underscore the delicate and often threatened symbiotic relationship between Man and Nature. (Age: 6+)

Asia and Oceania

Australia

28

Beckett, Bernard

August

Melbourne Australia: Text Publ. Company, 2011. – 204 p.
ISBN 978-1-921758-04-1

Car accident – Fear – Memories – Augustine of Hippo – Free will – Predestination

Popular New Zealand author Bernard Beckett is well known for confronting his readers with complex and challenging topics. In his latest novel, he contemplates the question of free will versus predestination, »one of the great Christian questions«, as the author states. Beckett deftly weaves this existential discussion into a fast-paced tale of the horrendous fate (or self-inflicted drama?) of two young people in a dystopian society. While being trapped upside-down inside a crashed car, seriously injured and waiting to be rescued, Tristan and Grace reluctantly disclose their life stories to each other.

The flashbacks reveal hardship, grief, despair, a strict religious education, and a cruel experiment that makes Tristan – and the novel's readers – ponder the meaning of life, destiny, freedom, moral, and love. (Age: 14+)

29

Blabey, Aaron (text/illus.)

The ghost of Miss Annabel Spoon

Melbourne [et al.]: Penguin / Viking, 2011. – [32] p.

ISBN 978-0-670-07474-7

Ghost – Fear – Loneliness – Friendship

The poor people of Twee, »seven miles from the sea«, are in uproar. A frightful ghost is haunting the village. Be it morning, midday, or the middle of the night, whenever the spooky spectre of Miss Annabel Spoon appears, she creates havoc among the population. How can they get rid of her? Young Herbert Kettle, elegantly clad in grey jacket and top hat, bravely sets out to save his neighbours and finds an unusual solution. Aaron Blabey's exquisite picture book is told in six-line tail-rhymed stanzas and in gothic illustrations rendered in acrylics, pencil, and pen in shades of grey, brown, and olive. Both the catchy text and the dark pictures (in particular the pale ghost-lady with her dark-rimmed eyes and rigid posture) will remind readers of the classic nonsense poetry of Edward Lear and Edward Gorey. (Age: 4+)

30

Burke, J. C.

Pig boy

North Sydney, N.S.W.: Woolshed, 2011. – 322 p.

ISBN 978-1-74166-312-9

Bullying – Aggression – Secret – Fear – Protection – Prejudice

This thought-provoking teenage novel features a cast of complex characters who are not particularly likeable at first glance. Overweight Damon – or Damoink as he is cruelly nicknamed by the bullies at school – is in trouble. Labelled a gun-crazy psycho prone to violent outbursts, he is thrown out of his school on his eighteenth birthday. Determined to get his revenge and protect his mother, he secretly takes a job with another social outcast, the »Pigman«, to learn shooting. Yet, as the story unfolds, readers cannot but wonder about the angry narrator's real motives, his feelings, and his true character. In this book, full of suspense and contradictions, J. C. Burke repeatedly challenges stereotypes. She easily manages to make her audience sympathise with the protagonist and re-consider their ready opinions. (Age: 16+)

31

Crew, Gary (text)
Hill, Aaron (illus.)

Damon <proper name>

Sydney, NSW: Lothian Children's Books /
Hachette Australia, 2011. – [32] p

ISBN 978-0-7344-1027-6

Boredom – Imagination

Renowned Australian author Gary Crew's second collaboration with Aaron Hill is an imaginative all-age story with stunning pictures. The short, evocative text is enhanced by the partly realistic, partly surrealistic illustrations that offer ample space for the readers' own interpretations. Teenage protagonist Damon is bored stiff. On a trip with his parents, the boy is dragged through art galleries and museums but – in typical teenage »can't be bothered« attitude – doesn't relate to anything. He escapes back to his hotel room, watches commuters and joggers, which he considers freaks, and even his computer games have lost their appeal. Yet when he falls asleep, a powerful tiger roars into his dreams and tickles his imagination »with what could be«, adding colour to his hitherto black-and-white world. (Age: 10+)

32

French, Jackie (text)
Whatley, Bruce (illus.)

Flood

Lindfield, N.S.W.: Scholastic Australia, 2011. – [32] p.
ISBN 978-1-74283-072-8

Flood – Danger – Rescue – Hero

When in January 2011, Queensland was hit by the worst rainfall in about thirty-five years, the ensuing flood left many people homeless and desperate. Based on the events in the author's hometown Brisbane, Jackie French and Bruce Whatley's latest cooperation depicts how soothing gentle rains suddenly become torrential downpours that turn the nearby river into a dangerous enemy. Streets are flooded, homes swallowed, and a huge wood-and-metal boardwalk is torn from its moorings. Meanwhile, thousands of volunteers heroically brave nature's forces to help their fellow citizens. Bruce Whatley has turned the sparse poetic text into atmospheric pencil-and-acrylic-wash illustrations that – created vertically on an easel to get the paint running – ingeniously mirror the wetness of the flood. (Age: 6+)

33

Green, Susan

The truth about Verity Sparks

Newtown, N.S.W. [et al.]: Walker Books, 2011. – 297 p.
ISBN 978-1-921720-27-7

Poverty – Scheme – Psychic powers – Experiment – Mystery

Young Verity Sparks, a poor apprentice trimmer at a fashionable milliner in nineteenth-century London, falls victim to foul play and is tossed out onto the streets. Luckily enough, the orphan girl's exceptional talent for finding lost objects – called »teleagtivism« by the Professor – secures her a job with the Confidential Inquiry Agency where she finds a new home and caring friends. While she helps them solve various mysteries and is subjected to increasingly unsettling experiments, she eventually realises that her own past could do with some demystification, too. With its plucky and curious heroine, and an equal share of evil villains and gold-hearted rescuers, this historical tale with a paranormal touch proves to be an amusing and exciting page-turner. (Age: 10+)

34

Keighery, Chrissie

Whisper

Richmond, Vic.: Hardie Grant Egmont, 2011. – 249 p.
ISBN 978-1-92175932-1

Meningitis – Deafness – Loneliness – Friendship – Self-confidence – Audism

Watching a film, listening to music, chatting to friends in the dark – Demi always took these things for granted. Yet when the doctors declare her profoundly deaf following an almost fatal bout of meningitis, her life as a »normal« teenager ends suddenly. Eighteen months later, a growing feeling of isolation and frustration among her hearing former friends drives her to switch to a school for deaf pupils and make a fresh start. Yet sometimes, juggling the two worlds of hearing and deaf people threatens to overwhelm the sixteen-year-old. Without even a hint of preaching, Chrissie Keighery manages to provide a wealth of information about and different viewpoints concerning deafness, sign language, lip-reading, and audism. Readers are immediately sucked into the engaging story and witness the young girl's rollercoaster ride of emotions bouncing between anger, fear, insecurity, disappointment, and ultimately hope. (Age: 14+)

35

Millard, Glenda (text)

Bentley, Jonathan (illus.)

And red galoshes

Pahran, Victoria: Little Hare Books /

Hardie Grant Egmont, 2011. – [24] p.

ISBN 978-1-921541-46-9

Rain – Galosh – Imagination – Fun

Galoshes are very useful items to wear on a rainy day – but that's not the only thing you can do with them. If you let your imagination roam, there are plenty of other uses for this rubbery footwear, too: For example they can serve as kites, mini-lifeboats, signal flags, oars, or surf boards. Rather than being deterred by the wet weather, two little children and their spotted dog engage in one fun activity after the other with lots of enthusiasm »... and red galoshes.« Glenda Millard's short, poetic, rhyming text evokes joyful adventures that are presented by Jonathan Bentley in zappy outlines and mellow watercolours, with the protagonists whooshing around energetically. This amusing picture book with its repetitive note is a perfect read-aloud for toddlers to join in. (Age: 2+)

36

Ord, Mandy

Sensitive creatures

Crows Nest, N.S.W.: Allen and Unwin, 2011. – 292 p.

ISBN 978-1-74237-216-7

Everyday life – Sensitivity

»Sensitive Creatures« is an awesome 300-page collection of spotlights on everyday life in an urban environment. In thirty-two black-and-white graphic stories varying in length between one and twenty pages, Mandy Ord's quirky female narrator shares funny, embarrassing, irritating, and heartbreaking situations with her readers. Faced with rude guys in the train, bored teenage students in a comic course she teaches, congested roads at rush hour, or a dead rat in the toilet, the black-haired, one-eyed girl reflects on the ups and downs of life as well as her own sensitivities and insecurities. Though clearly set in Ord's hometown Melbourne, the moving and authentic stories drawn in black ink have a universal appeal that will ring a bell with teenage readers everywhere. (Age: 14+)

India

37

Clay, Judith (text/illus.)

Thea's tree

Chennai: Karadi Tales Company, 2010. – [28] p.

no ISBN

Tree – Dream

Young Thea grows up in a city of cold and high brick buildings. Her parents tell her about the trees of their childhood: »trees to climb, to hide in, or to sit under and dream.« One day, a leaf comes floating past her; Thea yearningly follows it until she is drawn up into the air. The leaf transports her into a magical moonlit landscape, where a tall tree with white leaves gives her a seed to plant and to nurture with water, love, and conversation. Thus, a tree takes root in the urban desert and delights Thea, her children, and grandchildren. This magical tale of longing is illustrated with expressive mixed-media art prints on cotton rag using real leaves; the well-designed text is set off against a delicate print of an enlarged leaf, revealing its intricate pattern of veins. (Age: 4+)

38

Natarajan, Srividya / Anand, S. (text)

Vyam, Durgabai / Vyam, Subhash (illus.)

Bhimayana. Experiences of untouchability.**Incidents in the life of Bhimrao Ramji****Ambedkar**

New Delhi: Navayana Publ., 2011. – 104 p.

ISBN 978-81-89059-35-4

Cast system – Untouchables –**Social discrimination – Biography**

Marrying traditional tribal art forms with the (post) modern narrative art of the graphic novel has established itself as an exciting trend in current Indian children's and young adult literature (see, for example, the Patna graphics series of Tara Books). In this remarkable book telling the story of Ambedkar (1891-1956), one of the (forgotten) founding fathers of independent India, Pardan Gond artist couple Vyam takes both art forms to a new level. Defying the conventional grammar of the graphic novel by refusing to use »boxes« because no one should be boxed in, the Vyams developed an expressive form of panelling inspired by »dignas«, traditional floor or wall design patterns. The result is a dense, yet open account of the life of one of India's foremost revolutionaries and of what it means to be an untouchable. The suggestive and often symbolic visual language allows for

a complex, stirring, and thought-provoking portrayal of what the editor calls »India's hidden apartheid« (Age: 12+)

★ Special Mention

New Zealand

39

Else, Barbara (text)

Broad, Sam (illus.)

The travelling restaurant. Jasper's voyage in three parts. A novel for children

Wellington, New Zealand: Gecko Press, 2011. – 295 p.

ISBN 978-1-87746-777-6

Kingdom – Machinations – Secret – Rescue – Sailing ship – Adventure – Magic

Ever since the Great Accident, all magic has been banned from the Kingdom of Fontania, and Lady Gall rules as Provisional Monarch. Yet when the ambitious lady seems to concoct some sinister plan for more permanent power, Jasper's family hastily flees the City of Spires, losing him on the way. On board the strange sailing ship, the Travelling Restaurant, the twelve-year-old boy embarks on a perilous journey. Jasper and the book's eager readers encounter fierce pirates, a treacherous whirlpool, a sneaky journalist, a wayward uncle, and other dangerous surprises. In Barbara Else's fast-paced and entertaining novel, a cast of peculiar and strong-minded characters stumble from one hair-raising adventure to the next trying to save Jasper's baby sister as well as the entire kingdom. (Age: 9+)

40

McRae, Jacquie

The scent of apples

Wellington, N.Z.: Huia Publishers, 2011. – 183 p.

ISBN 978-1-86969-477-7

Granddaughter – Grandparents – Death – Grief – Self-mutilation – Reconciliation

Growing up on an apple orchard, thirteen-year-old Libby loves nothing more than climbing trees and helping her beloved grandfather with all aspects of the cider production. Yet when Poppa suddenly dies and shell-shocked Nan is whisked off to a nursing home, the desperate teenager plunges into deep depression and starts self-harming. Her cold and distant mother seems more disgusted with than worried about her daughter's self-inflicted injuries and conveniently dumps her at a boarding school – or so it seems to Libby. Luckily enough, her new friend

Charlie, a bubbly and positive Maori girl, helps her to eventually let go and start healing. This heart-wrenching account of a girl (and her family) devastated by grief captures readers right from the beginning and doesn't release them until the very last page. (Age: 12+)

41

Sommerset, Mark (text)

Sommerset, Rowan (illus.)

Two little bugs

Waiheke Island, N.Z.: Dreamboat Books, 2011. – [32] p.
ISBN 978-0-9864668-3-0

Insect – Loneliness – Fear – Friendship

Dreamboat Books is a small publishing house founded by Mark and Rowan Somerset, committed to creating beautiful picture books that »entertain grown-ups as much as the kids.« Their latest offering is the endearing tale of two little bugs living on the same leaf. But while Little Bug Red enjoys the sunshine on top munching away hungrily, Little Bug Blue feels lonely and depressed in the dark shade underneath. No amount of coaxing from energetic Red can move anxious Blue to overcome his fears and self-pity and climb up to the top, until there is nothing left but the leaf's stalk... Bite-sized holes and chomped-away edges allow the bugs to communicate with each other, and provide readers with glimpses of the next page. The humorous illustrations with the two bright bug protagonists placed against a background of black and pale green, the witty rhyming text, and the appealing design make for a winning combination. (Age: 3+) ★ Special Mention

Europe

Great Britain

42

Boldt, Claudia (text/illus.)

Uuggghh!

Swindon [et al.]: Child's Play, 2011. – [32] p.

ISBN 978-1-84643-372-6

Slug – Appearance – Beauty – Self-image – Sadness

It is generally agreed that slugs are ugly and – as most avid gardeners would state – a pest. Yet people who utter this devastating opinion don't seem to give a fig that they are hurting the poor slimy animals' feelings. Luckily enough, in this book, desperately sad Slug meets

another winner of the ugliness contest: Spider. And Spider couldn't care less what people think of her; she simply knows that she is beautiful and is determined to boost her new friend's confidence. Claudia Boldt's witty picture book encourages readers to discover beauty in unexpected places. Her pictures are drawn in a graphic retro style dominated by matt shades of red, green, and gray. Sometimes deliberately ugly, the bold mixed-media illustrations clearly show that »Beauty is in the eye of the be[e]-holder.« (Age: 3+)

43

Bonwill, Ann (text)

Rickerty, Simon (illus.)

I don't want to be a pea!**(The story of Hugo and Bella)**Oxford [et al.]: Oxford University Press, 2011. – [28] p.
ISBN 978-0-19-278017-1**Friendship – Costume party –****Disagreement – Reconciliation**

Hugo and Bella are best friends – even if they have widely differing opinions on almost every thing. Therefore it is hardly surprising that they cannot agree on the perfect costume to wear to the Hippo-Bird (excuse me: Bird-Hippo) Fairytale Fancy Dress Party. Whereas »Princess and the Pea« serves hippo Hugo extraordinarily well, bird Bella is less than delighted with playing a small, green vegetable. She'd rather go for mermaid or Cinderella; yet Hugo simply can't see himself as the mermaid's blobby grey rock or Cinderella's fat orange pumpkin. Is this the end of their friendship? This highly amusing picture book, with its perky, heated dialogue and the reduced graphic illustrations with forceful lines, features two amiable animal protagonists with lots of personality. (Age: 3+)

44

Castor, H. M. [=Harriet Castor]

VIII

Dorking: Templar, 2011. – 399 p.

ISBN 978-1-84877-499-5

Henry <England, King, VIII.> – Biography

There is a wealth of material about the life and reign of King Henry VIII of England. The ruthless sixteenth-century Tudor monarch is notorious for his six marriages and for creating the breach between the Church of England and the Roman Catholic Church. However, in H. M. Castor's meticulously researched novel, which spans Henry's entire lifetime, readers are presented with a different person at first: True, little Hal (as he is called as

a young boy) is ambitious but he is also caring, musical, and eager to learn. His greatest pain is the contempt and neglect with which his father treats him, the second-born »backup« for his older brother Arthur. The gripping first-person narration paints a vivid picture of a young man haunted by strange visions, struggling to be loved, and convinced that his fate is to be a great ruler. (Age: 12+)

45

Cottrell Boyce, Frank (text)

Berger, Joe (illus.)

Chitty Chitty Bang Bang flies againLondon [et al.]: Macmillan Children's Books,
2011. – 216 p.

ISBN 978-0-230-75773-8

Family – Adventure trip – Magic car

»Chitty Chitty Bang Bang, the magical car« is a popular children's book by »James Bond«-inventor Ian Fleming, written for his son in 1964 and turned into a successful musical film in 1968. To write a sequel bringing the wondrous car alive again is no mean feat, which Frank Cottrell Boyce has carried off brilliantly. He has moved the setting into the twenty-first century and created a hilariously potty story featuring an entirely new cast of characters – even the classic racing car of the title has (temporarily) turned into a rusty, broken-down 1966 VW campervan. Yet when the newly unemployed father of the Tooting family drags his reluctant offspring on a trip around the world, they soon learn that their customised vehicle has an agenda of her own that includes returning to former glory and fighting an evil villain. (Age: 9+)

46

McGinness, Suzanne (text/illus.)

My bear GrizLondon: Frances Lincoln Children's Books, 2011. – [26] p.
ISBN 978-1-84780-113-5

(Janetta Otter-Barry books)

Friendship – Imagination

Billy and Griz do everything together: When they go exploring, the boy rides proudly on the grizzly bear's back; when they play hide-and-seek, Griz couldn't be more conspicuous curling himself around a ridiculously thin tree trunk; and when they take an afternoon nap, the boy snuggles comfortably against his massive friend's furry body. Suzanne McGinness's stunning debut, with its sparse text chronicling the activities of the slightly unusual pair of friends, describes the joys of friendship – nothing new there. However, it is the way in which the

impressive biro-and-watercolour illustrations portray the towering reddish-brown grizzly next to the tiny boy that make this book such a convincing and enchanting fare for young and old readers alike – with a delightful twist at the end. (Age: 3+)

47

MacRae, Tom (text)
Collins, Ross (illus.)

When I woke up I was a hippopotamus

London: Andersen Press, 2011. – [28] p.

ISBN 978-1-84939-073-6

Imagination – Metamorphosis – Fun

The young protagonist of this humorous picture book is blessed with an extremely active imagination. From the moment he awakes, the boy starts pretending: He turns from a sluggish hippopotamus too lazy to get out of bed into a multi-armed robot carefully analysing the contents of his breakfast, a scary sharp-toothed monster devouring the outraged teacher for lunch, and a noisy giant »crashing round [his] bedroom«. And that's the last straw for his poor parents; they turn into dangerous dragons ... and suggest a nicer pretence. The witty rhyming text is accompanied by brightly coloured cartoon-like illustrations that perfectly transport the vigour and craziness of the story and the immense fun and satisfaction that the mischievous boy feels. (Age: 4+)

48

Pitcher, Annabel

My sister lives on the mantelpiece

London: Indigo, 2011. – 234 p.

ISBN 978-1-78062-029-9

Terrorism – Death – Daughter – Father – Grief – Alcoholism – Racism

»My sister Rose lives on the mantelpiece. Well, some of her does.« Quite a macabre way to introduce one's dead sister, but ten-year-old Jamie can't fully understand why five years after a terrorist bomb killed Rose, their parents are still raw with grief. To him, Rose is only a distant memory. When their mother leaves and their (now alcoholic) father moves Jamie and his fifteen-year-old sister Jasmine, Rose's twin, to the Lake District to make a fresh start, the children are hopeful at first. Told from Jamie's sometimes slightly naïve point of view, this honest and touching story follows the surviving siblings' struggle to rebuild their lives and put the past tragedy behind them. Both sad and funny but never sentimental, the convincing debut novel easily captivates its readers. (Age: 8+)

49

Robert, Na'ima bint

Far from home

London: Frances Lincoln, 2011. – 347 p.

(Janetta Otter-Barry books)

ISBN 978-1-84780-006-0

Zimbabwe/1964-1976/2000 – Civil war – Racism – Prejudice – Violence – Reconciliation

This heart-wrenching novel about love and hate, racism and friendship, violence and reconciliation follows the lives of two very different girl protagonists. Tariro and Katie grow up on the same farm, yet decades apart; they both feel a deep love for their homeland – Rhodesia until 1979, Zimbabwe since its independence – and they share a similar fate of brutal eviction. Proud, courageous Tariro, the daughter of a Karanga (Shona) chief whose ancestors have farmed the land for generations, is forced from her home in 1964 at the age of fourteen when white officials claim the arable land and violently remove all black people to specially designated, barren reservation camps. Thirty-five years later pampered Katie's white family is driven from their prosperous farm when President Mugabe decides on the redistribution of the land to black people. Embedded in a gripping and moving story of two particular families whose fates are linked, the history of Zimbabwe during the past century comes alive for young readers. (Age: 14+) ★ Special Mention ♦

50

Shelton, Dave (text/illus.)

A boy and a bear in a boat

Oxford: David Fickling Books, 2012. – 293 p.

ISBN 978-0-385-61896-0

Boat trip – Adventure – Survival

When the boy gets into the little boat, his idea is merely for the bear to take him to the other side. A simple enough request one would suppose. And they would surely have arrived within one or two hours if it hadn't been for the »unforeseeable anomalies in the currents«, the scary sea monster, a little squall, the ghost ship, and other tiny problems. Luckily enough, the bear captain never gets lost and can adapt to any situation; and there is even on-board entertainment (I Spy). Cartoonist Dave Shelton's illustrated children's novel includes everything an entertaining read needs: two quirky protagonists, dangerous adventures, witty dialogues, an alluring book cover, and engaging cartoon-like illustrations in (mostly) black-and-white. (Age: 8+)

51

Young, Moira

Blood red road

London: Marion Lloyd Books, 2011. – 492 p.

(Series: Dustlands trilogy; 1)

ISBN 978-1-407124-25-4

Dystopian society – Twins – Abduction – Quest – Survival – Freedom – Love

Saba and her family have scraped a meager existence at isolated Silverlake for years. When a vicious dust storm carries a group of strange hooded riders who kidnap her twin brother Lugh and kill her father, the devastated eighteen-year-old girl sets off across a dangerous desert and through treacherous mountains to rescue him. On her epic quest she encounters (with her stubborn little sister tagging along) cruel villains, fierce beasts, a band of amazon-like girl warriors, and a mysterious adventurer. This fast-paced dystopian novel is brimming with action scenes and is told in a raw poetic voice. Canadian-born debut author Moira Young keeps her readers on the edge of their seats as her heroine fights for survival and gradually learns to negotiate her own fierce temper and to trust in new friends. (Age: 12+) (Costa Children's Book Award 2011)

Ireland

52

Bennett, Veronica

The broomstick bike

Dublin: Little Island, 2011. – 120 p.

ISBN 978-1-908195-03-6

Magic – Grandmother – Kidnapping

Eleven-year-old Zack Mosel is not thrilled that he has to stay with »Mag the Hag«, his eccentric grandmother. When his parents, who have flown off to Slovodnia to reclaim a family motorcycle factory, send no news at all, the two unequal partners decide to go on a rescue mission. Their way of transport: the factory motorbike Zack's grandparents used fifty years ago to escape the Communist regime. This bike proves a most loyal ally in what turns out to be a true gangster hunt. Along the way, Zack and Mag make new friends, meet old family members, and discover that magic works in many different ways. Full of word play and clever ideas, this mostly off-road novel will entertain and inspire young readers, who, unawares, will learn something about the struggles post-Communist societies face. (Age: 9+)

North America**Canada**

53

Andersen, Hans Christian (text)

Maguire, Thomas Aquinas (illus.)

The wild swans

[Vancouver]: Simply Read Books, 2011. – 15 + [102] p.

ISBN 978-1-897476-36-9

Swan – Metamorphosis – Redemption – Fairy tale

This emotionally dense graphic-novel version of Andersen's classic tale of metamorphosis and redemption will lead teenagers to rediscover the timeless appeal of fairy tales. The plot unfolds without words on 102 accordion book pages (there is a separate text booklet), and the characters move through a more than 60 feet long continuous landscape. But »moving through« does not capture Maguire's powerful art of visual storytelling. The characters merge with the landscape, the hair of the female protagonist, for example, intertwining with the tall grass and the nettles from which she weaves the shirts that will eventually break the evil spell. These graphic fusions and mutations perfectly correspond to the physical and emotional metamorphoses of the characters, driving along the plot from within. (Age: 6+)

54

Dunklee, Annika (text) / Forsythe, Matthew (illus.)

My name is Elizabeth!

Toronto [et al.]: Kids Can Press, 2011. – [24] p.

ISBN 978-1-44340-620-8

Name – Nickname – Identity – Respect

What's in a name? The delightfully self-confident protagonist of this accomplished picture book sure knows the answer to this: everything. Especially if your name is nine letters long, does neat things in your mouth, and you have a queen named after you. But people do not seem to understand this and instead call her Lizzy, Liz, Beth, or, worst of all, Betsy. Elizabeth finally resolutely but politely claims her name. Forsythe's retro-style two-tone illustrations give life to this bold and memorable picture book character all children (and many adults) will identify with. A crowned pet duck, not mentioned in the text, serves as Elizabeth's perfect companion – chamber maid, royalty, and pet dog all in one, offering a whimsical visual commentary and narrative of its own. (Age: 3+) (Winner of New York Times Notable Children's Books 2011)

55

Jordan-Fenton, Christy / Pokiak-Fenton, Margaret (text)
Amini-Holmes, Liz (illus.)

A stranger at home. A true story

Toronto [et al.]: Annick Press, 2011. – 124 p.

ISBN 978-155451-361-1

Inuit – Residential school – Family – Alienation – Biography

In this sequel to the moving memoir »Fatty Legs« (2010), ten-year-old Ouleman returns to her Arctic home after two years of catholic residential school where she was baptised Margaret. Instead of finding a warm welcome, she is met with alienation. »Not my girl!« her mother exclaims, and her beloved sled dogs growl at her. The Inuit girl realises that she has forgotten her people's language and cannot stomach the food her mother cooks. She has become an »outsider«. The only good thing she has brought back from school is the skill of reading. Margaret not only finds solitary solace in her books, she also reads to her family and secretly teaches her mother to write. Gradually, she emerges from this painful coming of age as a strong young woman. A compelling biography about a clash of cultures. (Age: 9+)

56

Phillips, Wendy

Fishtailing

Regina, Sask.: Coteau Books for Teens, 2010. – 196 p.

ISBN 978-1-55050-411-8

Teenage angst – Coming of age – Bullying – Abuse – Poetry

This award-winning free verse novel demonstrates the power of poetry both in its form and content. Thanks to poetry assignments from English class, four Vancouver high school students give voice to their conflicted inner lives: to their dreams and nightmares, their hopes and disappointments. These short, intense poems address issues of abuse, bullying, racism, violence, fitting in, love, and following your dreams. Far from presenting abstract musings, they use tangible imagery to develop the cruel plot, which seems to unfold from the characters' inner turmoil. The interspersed e-mails between a concerned guidance counselor and the old-school English teacher as well as comments the teacher makes on her students' assignments show adults largely out of touch with the tough teenage world. (Age: 14+) (2010 Governor General's Award for Children's Literature)

57

Viva, Frank (text/illus.)

Along a long road

Toronto, Ontario: HarperCollins, 2011. – [36] p.

ISBN 978-1-44340-620-8

Bicycling

In his much acclaimed picture book debut, Frank Viva, graphic designer and cover artist for »The New Yorker« magazine, takes readers on a delightful bicycle ride along a shiny yellow road, which winds its way through a striking 35-foot-long landscape. Viva has a feel for perfect pacing: Racing downhill or slowly trudging up a steep slope, suddenly disappearing into the blackness of a tunnel and re-emerging from it with a well-timed page turn. All of these laps of the journey turn into engaging events through brief text in careful typographic design, skilful layout of the double spreads, and a clever overall book design. Children can dive back into the fun by tracing the bright bike path back along the endpapers, over the back and front covers to start back at the beginning. (Age: 4+)

58

Yee, Paul

The secret keepers

Vancouver: Tradewind Books, 2011. – 133 p.

ISBN 978-1-896580-968

Ghost – San Francisco/1906 – Earthquake – Immigration – North-American Chinese – Chinatown

In a compelling mix of historical fiction, mystery, ghost-story, and coming-of-age novel, Governor-General's-award-winning author Paul Yee brings to life San Francisco Chinatown at the beginning of the twentieth century. The devastating earthquake of 1906 robs the Leong family of their pillars of emotional and financial well-being: The eldest son and provider, Lincoln, dies, and their movie theatre, a nickelodeon, collapses. It is now up to Jackson, who is haunted by the ghost of his brother and that of an unknown young woman, to rebuild the life of his family and to find his own place in a shattered world. Rich with Chinese folklore and historical detail, this masterful novel transports readers to a fascinating world still in touch with the supernatural. (Age: 13+) ♦

59

Young, Cybèle (text/illus.)

A few blocks

Toronto [et al.]: Groundwood Books / House of Anansi Press, 2011. – [38] p.

ISBN 978-0-88899-995-5

Imagination – Siblings – School

In recent years, paper designers have come to the forefront of picture book art, literally exploring new expressive dimensions of the craft of storytelling. For this enchanting picture book, Governor-General's-award-winning artist Cybèle Young created intricate 3-D paper sculptures made from Japanese paper printed with etched copperplates to bridge the gap between the ordinary streetscape of Ferdie's and Viola's way to school and the fantastic worlds they imagine. When Ferdie, deeply immersed in play, refuses to go to school, his big sister Viola calls on the power of imagination to draw her little brother along from one imaginary adventure to the next: Super-hero rescue, naval treasure hunt and knightly exploits keep Ferdie on track until it is his turn to give wings to his sister's imagination. (Age: 4+)

USA

60

Ashman, Linda (text)

Davenier, Christine (illus.)

Samantha on a roll

New York: Farrar Straus Giroux, 2011. – [34] p.

(Margaret Ferguson books)

ISBN 978-0-374-36399-4

Rollerskating – Disobedience – Danger

Little Samantha, eager to try out her beautiful new roller skates, doesn't heed her mother's warning to stay put. The disobedient girl straps the skates on, sneaks outside, and suddenly finds herself flying down a steep slope unable to steer or stop, crashing into various people on her way. The rhyming couplets, which may remind (adult) readers of classic cautionary tales, pick up pace to mirror Sam's speedy descent into mayhem and her breathless escape from disaster using plenty of dry humour and understatement; eventually they slow down again, just like the action itself. The exaggerated, energetic illustrations rendered in colour-pencil and watercolours perfectly visualise the naughty girl's stealth and self-satisfaction and the slapstick-like roller-skate adventure. (Age: 4+)

61

Cheng, Andrea

Where do you stay?

Honesdale, Pennsylvania: Boyds Mills Press,

2011. – 134 p.

ISBN 978-1-59078-707-6

Mother – Son – Death – Grief – Friendship – Adoption – Piano playing

Jerome and his mother always were a great team; they trusted each other, discussed their ideas, and played piano together. Now that she has died of cancer, the introverted boy has moved in with his aunt, uncle, and two cousins. Despite his relatives' best intentions, their noisy household doesn't feel like home to him. Silently rebelling against decisions being made without consulting him and desperately longing for a place where he belongs, eleven-year-old Jerome seeks time alone and is drawn towards a poor old neighbour who shares his passion for classical music and the piano. In a calm and poetic yet powerful narrative, Andrea Cheng perfectly portrays the boy's emotional retreat following his traumatic loss and the slow process of healing that is aided by music and his new friend. (Age: 9+)

62

Engle, Margarita

Hurricane dancers. The first Caribbean pirate shipwreck

New York: Henry Holt & Co., 2011. – ix p., 145 p.

ISBN 978-0-8050-9240-0

Caribbean/1510 – Pirate ship – Shipwreck – Island – Native population – Love – Arranged marriage – Runaway

Set in the Caribbean in 1510, this engaging verse novel follows the fate of young Quebrado, a boy of mixed Taíno-Indian and Spanish heritage. From a very early age on, the bilingual orphan toils away as a slave at sea until the day when the vessel of cruel pirate captain Bernardino de Talavera goes down in a hurricane. Quebrado is rescued by a young Ciboney fisherman and, after a fateful encounter with his former tormenter, eventually returns to a free, peaceful island life. Renowned Cuban-American author Margarita Engle seamlessly interweaves the story of her fictional main protagonist with those of a number of famous and infamous historical characters. She has all of them voice their thoughts in short atmospheric poems that introduce readers to a distant era of exploitation, piracy, and island culture. (Age: 12+) (Pura Belpré Award 2012 Honor Book)

63

Gantos, Jack

Dead end in Norvelt

New York: Farrar Straus Giroux, 2011. – 341 p.

ISBN 978-0-374-37993-3

Summer holiday – Punishment – Chores – Death – Mystery

Renowned author Jack Gantos has a knack for telling weird and whacky stories. In his latest offering set in the 1960s in the author's Pennsylvanian home town, the young hero called Jack Gantos is having a hard time. Not only does his nose spew streams of blood every time he is upset. Through a series of mishaps not entirely his fault, he earns himself a »lifelong« grounding from his mother; thus his summer holidays are spent with the chore of helping his elderly arthritis-ridden neighbour, Miss Volker, write the obituaries for an alarming number of newly-dead fellow citizens. Told in a witty first-person narrative, the possibly semi-autobiographical book radiates an authentic small-town atmosphere paired with historical details, nonsensical happenings, and idiosyncratic characters. (Age: 10+) (Newbery Medal 2012)

64

Gerstein, Mordicai (text/illus.)

Dear hot dog. Poems about everyday stuff

New York, NY: Abrams Books for Young Readers, 2011. – [32] p.

ISBN 978-0-8109-9732-5

Anthropomorphism – Everyday object – Poetry

Bear and books, cup and crayons, socks and scissors have one thing in common: They are all inanimate everyday objects. Not so in this colourful collection of poetic poems! The quiet, pondering texts written from the viewpoints of two boys and a girl directly address the objects as if they were people or animals; e.g. a toothbrush turns into a close friend: »All night / dozing in your holder / you wait for me. / I give you toothpaste / for breakfast / mint / your favourite...« Clearly enjoying their daily routines and small adventures, the three young protagonists in award-winning author and illustrator Mordicai Gerstein's book breathe new life into familiar things. The bright acrylic illustrations with thin wriggly outlines add an atmosphere of exuberance and joy to the calm poems. (Age: 4+) ●

65

Meyer, Marissa

Cinder

New York: Feiwel & Friends, 2012. – 390 p.

(Series: The Lunar Chronicles; 1)

ISBN 978-0-312-64189-4

Cinderella – Cyborg – Android – Kingdom – Disease – Threat – Rescue

In this riveting debut novel, Marissa Meyer transports the popular fairytale heroine Cinderella into a future world ravaged by a plague-like disease. This new sci-fi Cinder, a deft mechanic cyborg, lives in the city of New Beijing years after the end of World War IV. Despised by her cruel adoptive mother Adri, the social outcast dreams of escaping with her android friend Iko. Yet before she can carry out her plans, her beloved younger stepsister falls ill, and Cinder meets charming prince Kaito and uncovers sinister plans for a brutal takeover by the power-hungry lunar Queen Levana. In a cleverly written science-fiction fantasy, the author creates a resourceful and convincing new heroine while weaving in entertaining snippets of the original fairy tale, which keep readers hooked. (Age: 12+)

66

Nelson, Kadir (text/illus.)

Heart and soul. The story of America and African Americans

New York: Balzer + Bray, 2011. – 108 p.

ISBN 978-0-06-173074-0. – ISBN 978-0-06-173076-4

USA – African Americans/History

In this lavishly illustrated volume, renowned author and illustrator Kadir Nelson provides a fascinating introduction to the history of African Americans and their often-neglected role in the history of America. In a unique mixture of fact and fiction, Nelson focuses on important events and key figures from the mid nineteenth century to the present day. Starting with the forced transportation of her grandfather to the New World on a slave ship when he was a six-year-old boy, the book's narrator, an unnamed elderly woman, recalls her ancestors' lives in a personal, conversational tone that breathes life into history. The glowing, photograph-like full-page and double-page oil paintings add authenticity and visual splendour to this engaging large-format work. (Age: 10+) ◆ ●

67

Salas, Laura Purdie (text)
Bisaillon, Josée (illus.)

BookSpeak! Poems about books

Boston [et al.]: Clarion Books / Houghton Mifflin
Harcourt, 2011. – [30] p.
ISBN 978-0-547-22300-1

Book – Poetry

Books are usually there to be read. They affect their readers through their stories – but never speak out loud. In this colourful collection of poems, however, books and everything book-related finally get their say: The Index stresses its singular importance; the Book Plate poses a kind of riddle; the Cliffhanger demands »... Please, author, write / a sequel fast!«; and the book's Middle complains about its current state trying to persuade either The Beginning or The End to trade places with it just this once – all in vain. Accompanied by Québécoise illustrator Josée Bisaillon's versatile mixed-media illustrations created from collages, drawings, and digital montage, the quirky poems will fascinate and amuse young book aficionados and inspire them to compose their own bibliophile odes and ballads. (Age: 6+) ●

68

Sepetys, Ruta

Between shades of gray. A novel

New York: Philomel Books, 2011. – 344 p.
ISBN 978-0-399-25412-3

Lithuania/1939-1945 – World War II – Occupation – Family – Deportation – Forced labour camp – Fight for survival – First love

In English language children's literature, there is no shortage of books about World War II. So far however, hardly any of them have followed the fate of the Lithuanian people after the Soviet Union's occupation of the Baltic States in 1939. Ruta Sepetys's powerful first novel does just that. Based on extensive research and interviews with witnesses to history, the book relates the heartbreaking (fictional) story of fifteen-year-old Lina and her family, who in 1941 are taken from their home by the Soviet secret police force. Together with hundreds of other innocent captives, they are herded into railway carriages and cattle trucks and have to endure degrading conditions for many months while being transported to forced labour camps in distant Siberia. During their struggle to survive, Lina documents the atrocities, along with the thin rays of hope and love that sustain her, through letters

and drawings that she eventually buries in the ground hoping that later generations may find them and learn of their fate. (14+) ★ Special Mention ♦

69

Smith, Clete Barrett (text)
Slade, Christian (illus.)

Aliens on vacation

New York: Disney/Hyperion Books, 2011. – 251 p.
(Series: The intergalactic bed & breakfast)
ISBN 978-1-4231-3363-6

Guesthouse – Alien – Travel – Friendship – Responsibility

When David, aka Scrub, is sent to his grandmother's »Intergalactic Bed and Breakfast« in rural Washington, he is resigned to suffering through a summer holiday of boredom and sci-fi freaks. What he doesn't expect, however, is true aliens, rooms with portals, and a grandmother-gatekeeper who anxiously tries to keep her alien »tourists« vacationing on Earth secret from the natives in general and from the suspicious small-town sheriff in particular. Soon, the good-natured boy finds himself lending a helping hand and making unexpected friends – human and otherwise. This hilarious holiday story told in the first person (the first in a planned series) makes an entertaining read about responsibility, friendship, bullying, wilderness camping, and alien peculiarities for fans of friendly life forms from outer space. (Age: 8+)

Austria

70

Göschl, Robert (text/illus.)

Die Geschichte vom Zyphius

(The tale of Zyphius)

Wien: Luftschacht, 2011. – [64] p. + 3 paper sheets

ISBN 978-3-902373-69-4

Monster – Imagination

Terror awaits in the deep! Mysterious Zyphius lives on the ocean floor. No one has ever seen him, but everyone can imagine him. He has giant claws and smoky palm trees sprouting from his head, and he breathes fire – for a start! What is true of all this? Well, actually, not very much, since Zyphius turns out to be a harmless fishy. But the basis for a legend is all that counts in the end. Robert Göschl's picture book deals in spine-tingling fun and opens up the realm of the possible. Concise rhymes and bold pictures zoom in on one part of the monstrous creature at a time, letting the imagination run amok. Skillfully laid out, Göschl uses the medium of the book to its fullest potential. The story, for instance, already starts up on the book cover. The accompanying poster and stickers are a special treat. (Age: 3+)

71

Hammerl, Elfriede (text)

Haderer, Gerhard (illus.)

Meine Schwester ist blöd

(My sister is dumb)

Wien [et al.]: Ueberreuter, 2011. – 71 p.

ISBN 978-3-8000-5640-8

Siblings – Rivalry – Dog – Wish

Anyone with a brother or sister is bound to agree: siblings are daft. The first-person narrator of this story is hit with this fate. Her irritated expression on the cover speaks volumes. Yet no one in the family understands her wish to have a dog rather than siblings. She is given an armada of stuffed toy dogs – which are really no genuine replacement. Then hope shines forth unexpectedly: With her family moving to the country, her request for a dog will be reconsidered. Even her daft sister catches on: if sister gets a dog, she should get a pony... Close to life and boisterously told, this book will prove fun for all children – whether they have siblings or not. (Age: 6+)

72

Rassmus, Jens (text/illus.)

Rosa und Bleistift

(Pink and Pencil)

St. Pölten: Residenz, 2011. – [36] p.

(Series: Nilpferd in Residenz)

ISBN 978-3-7017-2096-5

Picture – Adventure – Friendship – Metafiction

»Does that car there work?«, Pink and Pencil wonder while they are looking at Irma's drawing. Spontaneously, Pink jumps into the picture, and Pencil follows her despite his reservations. They immediately race through colourful scenery in the car, meeting a girl and the Eraser. This comes in very handy because, when a dangerous great grey Something appears, Eraser simply erases its pointy teeth, and Pink can draw a friendly smile onto the Something's face. Jens Rassmus's picture book tells a »together-we-are-strong« tale, in which he plays with different fictional levels. This is reflected in the style of his illustrations, for which he combines a variety of materials and techniques. (Age: 3+)

73

Roher, Michael (text/illus.)

Zu verschenken

(To give away)

Wien: Picus-Verl., 2011. – [28] p.

ISBN 978-3-85452-159-4

Generosity – Present

These days, rising star Michael Roher is causing quite a stir within the Austrian scene of illustrators. In this picture book, he tells the story of the Josef family who turn old things into something new and then give them away as presents. A lot of people, or rather a lot of adults, shake their heads and wrinkle their noses at this. Yet when a little girl offers her cuddly toy to be used as a recycled gift, her act breaks the ice, and the exchange of objects creates a feeling of closeness among the people. Michael Roher's collages in shades of brown and rust are slightly reminiscent of the picture book aesthetics of the 1970s, thus also reflecting the topic of recycling on an additional level. Moreover, at a time when »swapping« and »recycling« are the words of the moment, a picture book like this couldn't be more fitting. (Age: 3+)

74

Schawerda, Elisabeth (text)
Bansch, Helga (illus.)

Das Geheimnis ist blau

(The secret is blue)

Wien: Wiener Dom-Verl., 2011. – [26] p.

ISBN 978-3-85351-228-9

Colour – Association – Poetry

The fat toad on the cover notwithstanding, this book is not about amphibians. It is filled with poems about colour. The first, »Colour play«, reveals a spectrum subsequently differentiated. It describes turquoise water, yellow lemons, and a green garden: »Lift your head up, / under linden, beech and pine, / you can see, touch, smell, hear / all that which is green and fine«. Synaesthesia and personification occur frequently in the texts, while verse and rhyme forms vary. The illustrations are collages made from maps and newspaper clippings, and often also water-coloured pencil drawings. While the poems are about vibrant colours, the pictures themselves are slightly muted by the greyish undertone typical of Helga Bansch's style. This lends them a delicate patina. (Age: 5+)

Germany

75

Bonnke, Jens (text)
Urbach, Stefanie (illus.)

Flugsaurier = Gaulfriseur.

Tierische Anagramme

(Pterosaur = horse barber <pun>. Animal anagrams)

Rostock: Hinstorff, 2011. – [48] p.

ISBN 978-3-356-01415-0

Animals

This book marvellously demonstrates the fun one can have with letters of the alphabet. Just as its nutty title portends, the book is about anagrams made from animal names. The makers of this book are convinced that anagrams are more than switched-around letters – they are out to show the true natures and the real passions of the animals they name: a tapir is a pirate (»Tapir = Pirat«), for instance, and a woodpigeon loves crooks (»Ringeltaube liebt Gauner«). The book readily inspires its readers to make up their own anagrams, and the little word games offer a wonderful opportunity for further imagining, which the illustrations also encourage. Digitally edited prints portray what the text says, but they also enhance it by means of intricate little details. (Age: 5+) ●

76

Damm, Antje (text/illus.)
Koppe, Susanne (ed.)

Kindskopf

(Silly head)

Hildesheim: Gerstenberg, 2011. – 26 p.

ISBN 978-3-8369-5331-3

Imagination – Inventiveness

»What's in that head of yours?« is a question which parents often pose to their offspring. In »Silly head«, papa wonders what goes on inside the head of his daughter. Why, she can tell him! There is earth with fertilizer, to make her hair grow. And there are rain clouds for tears, and volcanoes for temper tantrums. Sometimes her head is like a balloon, then it is empty again, like a soup bowl. Antje Damm has often shown how well she can transport herself into a child's mind: her cardboard picture books hit the mark perfectly, leaving enough room for readers and listeners to think, too. In her newest book she wonderfully captures children's moods in word and image, along with the little girl's invented explanations. (Age: 3+)

77

Deistler-Kaufmann, Petra (ed.)

Zu Hause ist, wo ich glücklich bin.

Neu in Deutschland

(Home is where I am happy. New in Germany)

Hamburg: Carlsen, 2011. – 206 p.

ISBN 978-3-551-35994-0

Immigration – Interculturality –

Generational conflict

The people whose voices are heard in this book come from different nations and have different cultural roots. Today, they all live in Germany. The volume brings together texts from professional authors like Veronika Rothfuß and Nina Blazon and from adolescent immigrants. Poems appear beside short stories. The texts often treat the fragmentation characteristic of living between two cultures, which often expresses itself in acute generational conflict, with the younger generation rebelling against traditions and strict principles. The tone varies from serious to humorous to ironic, and tells of longing, frustration and alienation, but also of success. (Age: 12+) ♦

78

Fischer, Susanne (text)
Wilharm, Sabine (illus.)

Der Aufstand der Kinder

(The children's revolt)

Frankfurt am Main: Fischer, 2011. – 301 p.

(Series: Die Bücher mit dem blauen Band)

ISBN 978-3-596-85424-0

Children's gang – Dictatorship – Dystopia

One day, Lila's mother vanishes without a trace. The girl sets off on an adventurous journey that finally leads her into derelict »Feuerland« (Land of Fire), a shabby and abandoned suburb. There she joins a gang of children.

When she comes to realise that she lives in a police and surveillance state where repression and ostracism are common, Lila starts fighting against the injustice together with the other children. Written in a captivating and empathetic voice, »Der Aufstand der Kinder« tells a story that could be seen as both realistic and dystopian; after all, in many parts of the world, the harsh conditions described in this novel are all too real. (Age: 10+)

79

Grimm, Jacob / Grimm, Wilhelm (text)
Thuswaldner, Werner (adapt.)
Schenker, Sybille (illus.)

Hänsel und Gretel

(Hansel and Gretel)

Bargteheide: Minedition, 2011. – [48] p.

ISBN 978-3-86566-041-1

Poverty – Siblings – Forest – Witch – Cannibalism – Fairy tale

In connection with the 2012 Grimm Brothers anniversary year, the publishing house Minedition, known for its unusual picture books, has come out with various newly illustrated Grimm fairy tales. Illustrator Sybille Schenker's debut is a particular stand-out. Her illustration of »Hansel and Gretel« combines diverse techniques such as cut-out, collage, and (digitally edited) silhouettes, which make reference to fairytale editions from the early nineteenth century. The use of both normal and tracing paper increases the haptic materiality of the book and creates a spatial dimension, which at once anticipates and undermines the storyline. Schenker additionally works with sharp contour lines and vivid contrasts, as well as diffuse colour and light effects. As a result, the illustrations make the oppressive atmosphere of the text both visible and tangible. (Age: 6+)

80

Heinrich, Finn-Ole (text)
Rán Flygenring (illus.)

Frerk, du Zwerg!

(Frerk, you dwarf!)

Berlin: Bloomsbury, 2011. – 87 p.

ISBN 978-3-8270-5476-0

Self-awareness – Imagination – Emancipation

Rebellion. Anarchy. Both distant destinations for Frerk, who is so used to an overprotective mother and an accommodating father. A neat side-part and the most boring clothes define him. He is a textbook loser. But Frerk compensates for all this with his fertile imagination, and he even finds a mysterious egg from which five cheeky dwarfs emerge. They mess around with Frerk's life, relieving themselves in his cereal and snipping away at his hair. Frerk's hair wanes, but his self-awareness grows and grows. This book's linguistic and artistic construction is charming. The boisterous, variously formatted illustrations mirror Frerk's wild side, which forges ever onward. (Age: 5+)

81

Lembcke, Marjaleena (text)
Harjes, Stefanie (illus.)

Eine Blattlaus wandert aus

(An aphid emigrates)

Berlin: Tulipan, 2011. – [32] p.

ISBN 978-3-939944-72-0

Wanderlust – Trip – Homecoming

Marjaleena Lembcke's plain language forms an exciting contrast with Stefanie Harje's delicate brush stroke, which is always somewhat reminiscent of Jugendstil and Art Deco. Together, they poetically convey longing, coincidence, and happy strokes of fate. An aphid is fed up with her colony life because she never gets time alone. She flees and sails to America in the rose bouquet of an opera singer. There she first lands in a trash heap and then in a California flower meadow. When a girl picks flowers for her mother and takes them on board a ship, the aphid secures her ticket home. Back again, she is glad for the sociality of the bustling aphid colony. (Age: 4+)

82

Ludwig, Sabine (text)

Göhlich, Susanne (illus.)

Die fabelhafte Miss Braitwhistle

(Fabulous Miss Braitwhistle)

Hamburg: Dressler, 2011. – 207 p.

ISBN 978-3-7915-1239-6

School – Non-conformism – Teacher – Behaviour modification

The books »Die schrecklichsten Mütter der Welt« (The world's most terrible mothers) and »Der 7. Sonntag im August« (The seventh Sunday in August) are ample proof for Sabine Ludwig's unfailing instinct for splendid ideas. Her latest coup, »Die fabelhafte Miss Braitwhistle«, wins readers over with its perky style and witty notions. At the same time, the novel is deeply rooted in children's everyday reality – another typical feature of Ludwig's books. Grade 4a is every teacher's nightmare; until Miss Braitwhistle arrives, a young exchange teacher from England. In no time at all, she tames the wild horde of pupils with a few enchanting tricks. This book reads like »Le Petit Nicolas« meets »Mary Poppins«. A seemingly naïve, child-like perspective is enhanced by magic and some German-English linguistic stumbling – with truly delightful results. (Age: 8+)

83

Mattheis, Philipp

Irgendwann passiert alles von allein. Roman

(One day, everything just falls into place. A novel)

München: Deutscher Taschenbuch Verl., 2011. – 216 p.

(Series: dtv; 24887: Premium)

ISBN 978-3-423-24887-7

Nihilism – Money – Search for identity – Drugs – Death

Four boys living in a bleak suburb indulge in their pubescent can't-be-bothered nihilism – smoking dope, drinking, skating, and hanging out. One day, they make a discovery in an abandoned house: money, more money, and even more money. They spend it on pizza, beer, drugs, and designer clothes. However, the unexpected wealth does not bring good luck. Leo is arrested for drug dealing, Sam is committed to a psychiatric hospital, and Schlenz dies in a car accident. Only Johannes, the narrator, appears to have escaped largely unharmed. The narrative tone often seems strangely uninvolved and lethargic, maybe because Johannes tries to distance himself from the past. Nevertheless, he is fully aware that he won't be able to shake it off completely. (Age: 14+)

84

Mohl, Nils

Es war einmal Indianerland. Roman

(Back when there was Indian country. A novel)

Reinbek bei Hamburg: Rowohlt-Taschenbuch-Verl., 2011. – 345 p.

(Series: Rororo; 21552: Rowohlt-Paperback)

ISBN 978-3-499-21552-0

Search for identity – Love

This novel is like a puzzle: Rejecting linear plot development and temporal sequencing, it calls causal connections into doubt. This is underscored by the general unreliability of the seventeen-year-old, nameless first-person narrator. The seemingly out-of-touch narrator casts himself as an underdog, while at the same time being very eloquent, creative, and reflective. Despite its incoherent structure, the novel borrows from the coming-of-age genre, since by the end the protagonist seems to have (tolerably well) come to grips with his identity crisis and out-of-sync life. It is street-smart Edda, rather than the virtuous girl that he has a crush on, who in the end fills the key »therapeutic« function. An excellent book! (Age: 16+)

85

Pantermüller, Alice (text)

Göhlich, Susanne (illus.)

Bendix Brodersen. Angsthasen erleben keine Abenteuer

(Bendix Brodersen. Scaredycats don't have adventures)

Würzburg: Arena, 2011. – 228 p.

ISBN 978-3-401-06660-8

Orphan – Island – Dinosaur – Bullying – Friendship

As the son of a well-known palaeontologist, Bendix knows all there is to know about dinosaurs. But in the orphanage that he has lived in since his parents' death, that doesn't mean much. Mean loudmouth Chris bullies him on a daily basis. One day, Thekla Salmonis appears in search of a brave child who loves animals. Bendix recommends himself. Unfortunately, Thekla takes Chris too, having been persuaded by the head of the orphanage, who wants to be rid of him. After a long journey, they arrive on a paradisiacal island where Bendix can hardly believe his eyes. Real live dinosaurs! While the dinosaur expert can hardly believe his good luck, Chris becomes homesick. In the end, the two boys become more mature. Original and thoughtful, this children's novel thematises sadness and solidarity. (Age: 8+)

86

Pressler, Mirjam

Ein Buch für Hanna. Roman

(A book for Hanna. A novel)

Weinheim [et al.]: Beltz & Gelberg, 2011. – 348 p.

ISBN 978-3-407-81079-3

World War II – Persecution of Jews – Escape – Terezín concentration camp – Israel/Founding of the State <1948>

In this novel, Mirjam Pressler narrates the odyssey of a young Jewish girl, in memory of her friend Hanna. In 1939, Hannelore leaves Germany with other girls in the Jewish youth movement Habonim. In Denmark, Hannelore, now called Hanna, finds lodging first in a tent camp, then in Copenhagen, and ultimately on a farm. In 1943, she is captured and deported to the concentration camp in Terezín. There she overcomes hunger, cold, and typhus. Shortly before the end of the war, she is brought to safety in Sweden by the »White Buses«. In 1948, Hanna finally reaches her originally intended destination of Palestine and the newly founded State of Israel. Mirjam Pressler powerfully portrays Hanna's fate. The personal narrative style and the inner monologues scattered throughout of Hanna and her fellow female sufferers produce a linguistic density and emotional depth sure to deeply touch the reader. (Age: 12+) ♦

87

Richter, Jutta (text)

Müller, Hildegard (illus.)

Ich bin hier bloß der Hund

(I am just the dog here)

München: Hanser, 2011. – 116 p.

ISBN 978-3-446-23792-6

Dog – Family

Anyone who ever wanted to know what goes on in dogs' heads should read this book. In a trusting and naive voice, Hungarian sheepdog Anton describes his life with a German family – including obedience school and cat troubles. The discrepancy between Anton's perspective and that of the reader creates comical moments and unexpected insights, for instance when Anton speaks of his generous tolerance of the odd habits of his bipedals. Sometimes, though, his temper gets away with him and he must recall Uncle Ferenc's wisdom. But when the little daughter of the family breaks through ice and is close to drowning, Anton's shepherding and protective instincts lead not to scolding, but to great praise. (Age: 6+)

88

Schmeißer, Frank (text)

Mühle, Jörg (illus.)

Schurken überall! Die streng geheimen, ultra- wahren Aufzeichnungen des Superhelden Das Gehirn alias Sebastian von Nervkötter und der Unglaublichen Dreieinhalb

(Scoundrels everywhere! The strictly secret, super-true notes of Brain the superhero aka Sebastian Gadfly and the Incredible Three-and-a-Half)

Ravensburg: Ravensburger Buchverl., 2011. – 207 p.

ISBN 978-3-473-36825-9

Hero – Intrigue – Friendship

Everyone of course knows that superheroes only act in secrecy. But since the hidden identity of the Incredible Three-and-a-Half is as good as given up due to unfortunate circumstances, Sebastian Traugott von Nervkötter is free to report on the deeds of the superheroes. The slightly paranoid tone of »Scoundrels everywhere!« in the report's title is no exaggeration – Sebastian is indeed utterly surrounded by nasty, scheming contemporaries. These the superhero friends defy using crazy and foolish stunts, which lead to slapstick-like situations. »Scoundrels everywhere!« parodies the classic superhero genre, mixing comic-book graphics with Sebastian's often unintentionally comic language. All the same, a must-read for all superheroes, aspiring and otherwise. (Age: 8+)

89

Schmitz-Kuhl, Martin (text)

Kuhl, Anke (illus.)

Alle Kinder. Ein ABC der Schadenfreude

(For all children. An ABC of schadenfreude)

Leipzig: Klett Kinderbuch, 2011 – [56] p.

ISBN 978-3-941411-42-5

Schadenfreude – Poetry

They aren't the cream of the crop morally speaking, and they aren't quite above board pedagogically speaking – but that's exactly why these twenty-six malicious little stories, compiled in picture book form by Martin Schmitz-Kuhl and Anke Kuhl, are so much fun. A small taste?: »All the kids jump through the hoop / except Pat – he is too fat.« The short couplet with internal rhyme is not a new verse form, but with the help of their children, the Kuhl couple has conjured up fresh and surprising sayings. Anke Kuhl, who was awarded the Deutscher Jugendliteraturpreis (German Children's Literature Award) in 2011 for her book »Alles Familie!« (Everyone is family), translates their mischievousness into image-form.

Big and little alike will laugh aloud and want to think up their own mean little stories, because ultimately he who laughs last still laughs best. (Age: 5+)

90

Schneider, Antonie (text)
Pin, Isabel (illus.)

Kartoffeln in Pantoffeln

(Potatoes in slippers)

Berlin: Aufbau, 2011. – [32] p.

ISBN 978-3-351-04134-2

Vegetables – Word play – Poetry

In »Kartoffeln in Pantoffeln«, the protagonists are asparagus, artichokes, and – oh crumbs – spinach. True, greens may not be the favourite food of little chip lovers; yet Antonie Schneider and Isabel Pin serve their miniature vegetables so lovingly and passionately that even fervent advocates of junk food cannot but devour them. The anthropomorphic vegetables often find themselves in unexpected situations. Thanks to a sophisticated dramatic arc, the texts oscillate between tragedy and partly absurd comedy. The same is true for Isabel Pin's carefully composed illustrations. Carrot- and broccoli-adventures tempt readers to gaze at the pictures, create their own poems, and maybe even re-enact the tales; and the prospective protagonists can simply be cast on the readers' plates at lunchtime. (Age: 4+)

91

Schubiger, Jürg (text)
Bernert, Rotraut Susanne (illus.)

Als der Tod zu uns kam

(When death came to us)

Wuppertal: Hammer, 2011. – [30] p.

ISBN 978-3-7795-0312-5

Death – Siblings

How does one talk about death? In Jürg Schubiger and Rotraut Susanne Bernert's picture book, a girl talks about death finding its way into an innocent (children's) world. Grey and sad-eyed, Death enters the village one day. No one recognises him at first; the children even make light of his clumsiness. Then Death falls asleep with a cigarette in his hand, and the girl's brother dies in the ensuing house fire. Everyone – even Death – mourns him. Text and pictures operate allegorically in this book. Jürg Schubiger's language establishes a subtly bivalent voice, by blending the girl's voice with that of an adult. Rotraut Susanne Bernert's characteristic coloured-pencil illustrations replicate medieval techniques by emphasising

individual elements and richly encoding meaning through colour symbolism. (Age: 5+)

92

Sigg, Stephan

Zehn gute Gründe für Gott.

Die Zehn Gebote in unserer Zeit

(Ten good reasons for God.

The Ten Commandments today)

Stuttgart [et al.]: Gabriel, 2011. – 188 p.

ISBN 978-3-522-30237-1

The Ten Commandments

The Ten Commandments in a short story collection?

Those who now expect dogmatic biblical hermeneutics are wrong. Instead, Stephan Sigg creates situations in his texts that are instantly recognisable. The tale on the subject of »Honour thy father and thy mother«, for example, seems to be taken directly from everyday life. Let's be honest – is there a teenager who does not regularly consider his or her parents embarrassing? In most cases, however, the parents' behaviour isn't all that bad whereas the teenagers themselves can sometimes be quite mean. Even if this is all a natural part of growing up, teenage readers might realise that occasionally it wouldn't hurt to be a little more forgiving and respectful. Although these stories are based on Judeo-Christian traditions, they actually deal with universal humanistic principles. (Age: 12+)

93

Stemm, Antje von (illus.)

Unser Schiff. Eine Bilderbuch-Reise mit Suchspiel

(Our ship. A picture book journey with hidden object game)

München: cbj, 2011. – [16] p.

ISBN 978-3-570-15291-1

Ship

It's obvious that Antje von Stemm is from Hamburg. Her picture book, impressive not only in terms of its dimensions, portrays the massive cruise liner »Anna Nass« (»Wet Anna«). Opening the solid pages from both sides of the book reveals ever more cross-sections of the ship. One sees passengers, crewmembers, and the ship's kobold, who must of course make an appearance, going about their various affairs from the sun deck to the boiler room. What they are doing depends on whether it is night or day and whether the steamship is moving through calm waters or is being tossed about in a storm.

Antje von Stemm, successful as an author of original pop-up books, this time uses two-dimensionality to create a teeming picture book not weighed down by its innumerable details. (Age: 3+)

94

Stürzer, Anja (text)

Dürr, Julia (illus.)

Somniavero. Ein Zukunftsroman. Eine Geschichte, fünf Blickwinkel

(Somniavero. A novel of the future.

One story, five angles)

München: Mixtvision, 2011. – 64 p., 64 p., 64 p., 64 p., 64 p.
ISBN 978-3-939435-36-5

Dystopia – Time travel – Chase

Publishing house Mixvision is blossoming into an increasingly less well-kept secret – books like »Somniavero« are ensuring this. The book is not just a dystopian science fiction, time travel, and chase novel; it uses the medium book itself to narrative ends: The story is told from five different perspectives, each contained in its own volume. The five protagonists do not all report the same events, though, but instead introduce new material that moves the plot forward. »Somniavero« contains the whiff of social critique characteristic of dystopian literature and at the same time offers a »narratology for beginners«. The novel is therefore especially appropriate for use in literature classes. (Age: 10+)

95

Uschmann, Oliver

Nicht weit vom Stamm. Roman

(Not far from the tree. A novel)

Bindlach: Script 5, 2011. – 521 p.

ISBN 978-3-8390-0120-2

Rebellion – Search for identity – Generational conflict – Drugs – Prison

This story's drinking, pot-smoking, aggressive narrator wears the same old jogging suit day after day and is anything but a sympathetic character. A son from a supposedly good home, Sven is rebelling against everything and in the process particularly provokes his dominant father. Sven hates his father's very orderly life, but wouldn't be happy if his father ceased to exist, either. His caustic cynicism cannot hide how unhappy he really is with himself. But after external circumstances force him to make an about-face – hours of community service, a sojourn in prison and a modest ruse that awakens Sven's sense of responsibility – Sven finally begins to live up

to his potential. Oliver Uschmann's writing is brisk and gives the story, ultimately classical and moralising in essence, a new varnish. (Age: 14+)

96

Werner, Brigitte (text)

Müller, Birte (illus.)

Denni, Klara und das Haus Nr. 5.

Eine Geschichte über eine besondere Freundschaft, das Entdecken des Anders- seins und die Freude daran und über viele Wunder zum Staunen

(Denni, Klara, and the house at No 5. A tale about a special friendship, the discovery and the delight of being different, and many astonishing wonders)

Stuttgart: Freies Geistesleben, 2011. – 145 p.

ISBN 978-3-7725-2146-1

Disability – Down Syndrome – Friendship – Neighbourhood

New tenants are moving into Klara's house: Denni, toy rabbit Rübe, and Denni's dad. Denni, who has Down syndrome, and Klara quickly become friends and turn the house upside down. Denni's cheerfulness and unconditional openness even manage to bring one or two smiles to Mrs Schönege's squinched face. Yet it ain't all sunshine and roses. Suddenly they get into trouble and Denni is sent away. The two friends suffer terribly until, luckily enough, everything is cleared up and the whole house celebrates a brilliant party on Denni's return. Told in a laid-back manner and accompanied by resolute pencil illustrations, the story does deal with the topic of otherness but in the end, it mainly describes a wonderful friendship and the importance of reaching out to one another. (Age: 6+)

Switzerland

97

Calvert, Kristina (text)

Dittmer, Sabine (illus.)

Wolkenbilder und Möwendreck.

16 Geschichten und 16 Bilder zum

Philosophieren mit Kindern

(Cloud pictures and seagull droppings. 16 Stories and 16 pictures for philosophising with children)

Baar: Aracari, 2011. – 44 p.

ISBN 978-3-905945-18-8

Philosophy – Thought experiment

The concept behind this interactive book is as clever as it is simple. Every double page contains a short story starring a seagull in the main role, as well as a coloured pencil drawing that emphasises certain aspects of the story. There are two questions at the bottom of each page, which sometimes directly, sometimes indirectly refer to the story, and there is also a yellow, green, blue, or red dot. The dots mark which domain of philosophy is being touched on: theory of knowledge, ethics, metaphysics, or philosophical anthropology. In reflecting, questioning, and playing around with ideas one will undoubtedly move fluidly from one domain to the next, thus blurring their borders. This book for little and big philosophers alike helps initiate discussions about God and the world. (Age: 5+)

98

Pauli, Lorenz (text) / Schärer, Kathrin (illus.)

Pippilothek??? Eine Bibliothek wirkt Wunder

(Lieberry??? A library works wonders)

Zürich: Atlantis-Verl., 2011. – 26 p.

ISBN 978-3-7152-0620-2

Library – Reading

That books can save lives is true not only in the metaphorical, but also in the literal sense: a mouse leaps through the basement window of a library, escaping from a fox who would like her for dinner. The fox follows her, but the clever mouse distracts her pursuer with a picture book – and because this book is about chickens (also a favourite dish of foxes), the notion of mouse for dinner soon dissipates. Instead, the mouse shows the fox the fascination of books – the power of stories, pictures, and language. In their new collaborative book, Lorenz Pauli and Kathrin Schärer once again allow text and image to mingle in very charming ways. The illustrations echo the narrative dynamic and play with perspective, cleverly picking up on the punchlines. (Age: 4+)

99

Stuhrmann, Jochen (text/illus.)

Die große Rallye

(The big rally)

Zürich: Bajazzo, 2011. – [28] p.

ISBN 978-3-905871-28-9

Race – Animals

A book as a race course! Karlo Kandinsky reports live for Animal Radio from the world's largest rally. Only the best teams are allowed to participate, and the track goes right across the globe and all through the book. Unfortunately, one hot favourite after the other is disqualified: Kai Mann and Ali Gator take the wrong path and get lost; Stanislaus Schnäble's vehicle collides with a tree; in the end, Einar Edmundsen is the only one who eventually crosses the finish line in his truck – with all the other disqualified participants in the back. Jochen Stuhrmann's expressive acrylic pictures and his clever text turn »Die große Rallye« into a fast-paced picture book that is great for sharing and for reading aloud. With such a book, who needs a slot-car track? (Age: 3+)

100

Wells, Benedict

Fast genial

(Almost genius)

Zürich: Diogenes, 2011. – 321 p.

ISBN 978-3-257-06789-7

Single mother – Depression –

Sperm donation – Paternity search –

Genius – Search for identity

Goals? Plans for the future? Nothing much. Francis Dean, just twenty, is leading a miserable life in a trailer park. He doesn't know his father, but before her suicide attempt, his mother writes him a letter explaining that his father was a sperm donor in the »genius sperm bank«. At once euphoric and shocked, Francis heads across America in search of his father, along with his best friend and Anne-May, whom he is in love with. The journey as classic motif ushers along the protagonist in Benedict Well's novel about finding one's identity. That said, the author uses the motif in an ironic way, since the result of the search for his father is more than disillusioning. Francis's story is a long way from finished, however... (Age: 16+)

Romance Languages

Africa

Morocco (French)

101

Le Guen, Laurence (text)

Lennoz, Raphaële (illus.)

Kahina, reine des Berbères

(Kahina, Queen of the Berbers)

Agdal, Rabat: Yomad Éd., 2011. – 143 p.

(Series: Raconte-moi l'histoire)

ISBN 978-9954-531-11-2.

North Africa/Seventh century – Berber – Kahina – Queen

Laurence Le Guen tells the exciting life story of Dihya, also known as »Kahina« (the priestess), a legendary Berber queen and brilliant strategist who in the seventh century organized the Berber people's military resistance against Islamic colonizing forces in the North African hinterland. The reader follows the journey of this extraordinarily independent woman from her childhood in the Aurès mountains to her last stand, the battle of Taharqa, at which she loses her life after she and her forces are overcome – thanks to her own adopted son's betrayal – by a stronger Islamic power. Despite the scarcity of extant sources, the book can give a young audience important insight into the biography of a great woman in North African history and can awaken the desire to further investigate her story. (Age: 10+) ♦

La Réunion (France) (French)

102

Clavelet, Magali (text/illus.)

Les petits pots d'Adèle

(Adele's little pots)

Saint-André (La Réunion): Océan-Éd., 2011. – [32] p.

(Series: Océan Jeunesse)

ISBN 978-2-36247-030-1

Sea – Whale – Friendship – Age

Adèle lives alone and is as strong as she is eccentric. She lifts heavy weights and follows a strict algae diet. She also drives a boat to sea every day, to gather plankton and algae. One day after a big storm she finds an exhausted whale on the beach. She schleps the sick animal to her home and takes care of it. There it regains its strength – thanks in part to Adèle's algae purée – but soon grows too big for the house and literally bursts out of it. Heavy

of heart, Adèle takes the whale back to the sea, comforted by the knowledge that they will remain friends. The subtle humour of author-illustrator Magali Clavelet is a great pleasure! (Age: 5+)

103

Various authors (text)

Lesquelin, Charly (illus.)

Contes de la Réunion et de Madagascar

(Tales from Réunion and Madagascar)

[Saint-André, Réunion]: Epsilon Jeunesse,

2010. – [36] p. + CD

(Series: Dans mon soubik; 1)

ISBN 978-2-912949-35-6

Fairy tale

This special book from Réunion presents two magical fairy tales. The first tells of a poor fisherman who meets a siren named Zavavirano, who brings love, sparkle, and riches into his life. However, because he reveals the secret of her origins to his jealous neighbours, he loses everything. The witty trickster tale »Godfather Rabbit« describes how the clever rabbit fools all the other animals and in the end is beat by the turtle. Especially worth mention is that these wonderfully told fairy tales, illustrated by Charles Lesquelin, are here presented not only in French, but also in Madagascan, in the Creole of the Island of Réunion and the language of the Sakalava people in the north of Madagascar, and that they come with a CD (all versions recorded). (Age: 6+)

Europe

Belgium (French)

104

Béziat, Julien (text/illus.)

Mäko <proper name>

Bruxelles [et al.]: École des Loisirs, 2011. – [36] p.

(Series: Pastel)

ISBN 978-2-211-20527-6

Walrus – Sea – Artist – Climate change

Mäko the walrus dives down into the depths of the North Sea every day looking for new fish species on the sea floor. Then he makes artwork, placing fish sculptures on the ice above to mark where the fish live below. This ice sculpture park aids Mäko's animal friends who, like him, rely on catching fish, as it serves as a helpful map for finding food. One day the pack ice cracks, and the

sculpture park drifts apart, the orientation points floating into the distance. What is worse – the panoply of fish disappears! Luckily, Mäko knows magic... the filigreed double-page panorama pictures and poetic text give striking testimony to the far-reaching climate change in the Arctic. (Age: 4+) (Prix Pépète du 1er Album; 2011)

105

Deutsch, Xavier

Onze! Roman

(Eleven! A novel)

Namur: Mijade, 2011. – 141 p.

ISBN 978-2-87423-060-8

Football – European Football Cup – Team spirit

March 1983: The Flemish football club Eendracht Winterfeld faces the greatest challenge of its club history. In the semi finals of the European Cup, it will play against AC Mailand, one of the world's best clubs. To meet this challenge, the team's trainer goes for broke: His strategy is to place eleven players on the field – and leave no single relief player on the bench. Every player is in it for the long haul, totally dependent on his team mates, he has no choice but to give it his all! In this gripping novel, Xavier Deutsch tells the tale of a young team overcoming its own limits over the course of just a few hours and describes how, for each player, this match was the game of his life. A successful and suspenseful football novel! (Age: 12+) (Prix du roman belge, Libbylit; 2011)

106

Roger, Marie-Sabine (text) / Serprix, Sylvie (illus.)

Le roi sans terre

(The king without a country)

[Bruxelles] [et al.]: Casterman, 2010. – [32] p.

(Series: Les Albums Casterman)

ISBN 978-2-203-03607-9

King – Homeland – Search – Fairy tale

A king spends his entire life looking for his own kingdom. On his travels, he collects colours, scents, animals, music, and flower seeds from all the regions he visits and weaves them into his magic red cloak. He looks high and low for a place where he will feel at home, yet he cannot find it. In the end, he reaches a mysterious city by a hill. He fills it with the splendid treasures gathered during his travels and finally finds his heart's desire. Marie-Sabine Roger has created a magical story that shows how every person has his or her own kingdom and his or her own home. The universal reach of the fairy tale is perfectly captured by Sabine Serprix's magnificent pictures. (Age: 6+)

107

Weishar-Giuliani, Valérie (text)

Legeay, Chloé (illus.)

Hugo, un héros ... un peu trop gros

(Hugo, a hero, a little too fat)

Bruxelles: Âlice jeunesse, 2011. – [28] p.

(Series: Histoires comme ça)

ISBN 978-2-87426-138-1

Obesity – Bullying – Friendship – Costume

Hugo's classmates tease him about his weight. This leads to great frustration, which in turn makes Hugo stuff himself with more food. His friend Sophie sticks by him and defends him against the awful mob. But how can she really help Hugo? She tries to get to the bottom of their classmates' meanness. Why do the others always pick on Hugo? Only because he is »different« and looks like he literally doesn't fit in – or are there other reasons? In the end, Sophie throws a costume party at her house and forces the troublemakers to back down, giving Hugo a chance to show himself in a new and different light. A triumphant and funny picture book about bullying at school. (Age: 5+)

France (French)

108

Azimuth, Bernard (text)

Galeron, Henri (illus.)

Le chacheur

(The dunter <wordplay>)

Paris: Ed. des Grandes Personnes, 2011. – [16] p.

(Series: Les Grandes Personnes)

ISBN 978-2-36-193115-5

Hunting – Dog – Rabbit – Role reversal – Tongue twister

This wonderfully off-kilter picture book from the works of newly founded publishing house Les Grandes Personnes guides the reader along continuous offshoots of this self-standing, generative first line: »Un chasseur sachant chasser doit savoir chasser sans son chien« (A hunter who knows how to hunt knows how to hunt without his hound). The interesting and absurd questions and variations that emerge from this traditional tongue twister and its central characters of hunter, hunting dog, and hunted (rabbit) lead to mad-cap developments, role reversals, and astounding situations – both linguistically and pictorially. Henri Galerons's hilarious illustrations casually yet craftily call to mind landscape painting of

the seventeenth century and congenially populate the extra-wide horizontal pages of this at once ingenious and eccentric picture book. This text comes from a sketch of well-known French comic Bernard Azimuth. (Age: 4+)

★ Special Mention

109

Dedieu, Thierry (adapt./illus.)

L'Arche de Noé

(Noah's Ark)

[Paris]: Seuil, 2011. – [14] p.

ISBN 978-2-02-103957-3

Noah's Ark – Animals – Bible

In six theatrical scenes, multi-faceted picture book artist Dedieu meticulously sets to stage the biblical drama of the Flood. God wishes to extinguish his creation, increasingly rife with evil, with forty days of continuous rain. Only virtuous Noah and his family, as well as the animal species of his choosing, will survive this all-destroying flood and make a new start on Earth. Dedieu takes the Book of Genesis text as his basis, but »poeticises« it, concentrating on the essential. In this pop-up book, Dedieu staggers the salient characters, objects, and settings in front of a clearly closed-off background, thus creating the effect of a proscenium stage and achieving the depth of a stage set with only a few ingredients. The very delicately cut, coloured four-ply cut-outs invite close inspection. (Age: 4+)

110

Diallo, Muriel (text/illus.)

Toclo toclo et la fille Tête-en-l'air

(Toclo toclo and the girl that-holds-her-head-up-high)

La Roque-d'Anthéron: Vents d'ailleurs, 2011. – [30]p.

(Series: Les Petits métiers)

ISBN 978-2-911412-96-7

Ivory Coast – Big city – Informal sector – Street craftsman – Tailor

Young, somewhat clumsy street tailor Toclo toclo often trips himself up. Again and again, he botches good earning opportunities because he gets orders wrong. Not infrequently, his angry patrons chase him off and pay him nothing. One day, however, he sews himself an outstanding creation – made of fabric remnants culled from all the area's tailors – and in this way catches the attention of his lady love. The book gives a playful glimpse into the life and survival skills of the many young people in Africa who work in the informal sector. Further careers practiced on the street are depicted on a special page.

Illustrator Muriel Diallo taught art on the Ivory Coast and already published numerous books before coming to Paris. (Age: 8+)

111

Elzbieta (text/illus.)

L'écuyère

(The trick rider)

[Rodez]: Ed. du Rouergue, 2011. – 53 p.

ISBN 978-2-8126-0239-9

Child neglect – Orphan – Circus – Life affirmation

Irma, a single parent and fortune teller, gives birth to a second child whom she abandons. However, Little Titine is able to see that her fate contains more than just bad things like the orphanage or her monstrous relatives, who include a cannibal uncle, a witch aunt, monster cousins, and an absent mother. She has a knack for uncovering the wondrous and making connections with those who can »carry« her, such as her »circus family«, for instance. In this autobiographically-based fairy tale, Elzbieta describes how Titine escapes the orphanage and becomes a trick rider in a circus. The imaginative pictorial panels sustain the suspense between tragedy and comedy by employing short, succinct sentences and a quick pace (one sentence, one picture) until the end. (Age: 6+)

112

Gay-Para, Praline (ed./adapt./transl.)

Heugel, Louise (illus.)

Les sept crins magiques et autres contes de Palestine

(The seven magical horse hairs and other Palestinian fairy tales)

Paris: Syros, 2011. – 91 p.

ISBN 978-2-74-851157-4

Palestine – Fairy tale

Five fairy tales in this excellent anthology were collected in the region of Bethlehem in 2008. Lebanese storyteller and ethnolinguist Praline Gay-Para translated them into French and edited them literarily. Three additional Palestinian fairy tales were translated from English anthologies. All of the texts carefully preserve elements of their oral character. The stories attest to Palestine's ancient literary tradition in which fairy-tale ingredients from different languages and cultures met and mingled. The fairy tale lover will recognize certain familiar motifs to be sure, but will nonetheless be charmed by their clever and unique form. Young illustrator Louise Heugel furnishes sophisticated illustrations for the stories. (Age: 7+)

113

Gouchoux, René (text)

Neuhaus, Julia (illus.)

Moi, Ivan, crocodile!

(Me, Ivan, Crocodile!)

Le Puy-en-Velay: Atelier du poisson soluble,
2011. – [32] p.

ISBN 978-2-35871-013-8

Disability – Outsider – Bullying – Integration – School

Ivan is six years old and »different«; He is a boy with a disability. But who or what actually »disables« him? Is it in fact his »different« perspective on the world, wherein he »feels like a crocodile«? Or is it the other children's awful games, which he seems powerless to stop? Inside, Ivan knows that he is a mighty animal and skilled hunter. But does that help him in the outer world? His integration being so difficult, Ivan's teacher makes an effort to support him. The subtle text merely hints at the tensions and covert and overt violence that Ivan experiences. It is superbly complemented by Julia Neuhaus's powerful collages. »Moi, Ivan, crocodile!« is an outstanding book that tastefully leaves many questions open-ended. (Age: 7+)

114

Kheirieh, Rashin (= Hairīya, Rāšīn) (text/illus.)

Les fées jalouses

(The jealous fairies)

[Nîmes]: Grandir, 2010. – [28] p.

ISBN 978-2-84166-417-7

Iran – Village – Baker – Mirror – Fairy – Jealousy

Morad the young baker's biggest treasure is a magic mirror inhabited by two fairies. Morad provides the magical creatures with delicious bread every day; in return, they run his household. And so they live as a harmonious threesome – until the day he falls in love with beautiful Gol Bahar. The fairies react with jealousy to Morad's wedding plans and try to postpone it out of existence, through trickery and conniving. In the end, though, love triumphs and the mirror breaks. Against the backdrop of an almost illusory village ideal, awarded Iranian illustrator and author Rashin Kheirieh pairs bright colours with gentle irony to portray how the young man barely overcomes the fairies' intrigues. (Age: 6+)

115

Maret, Pascale

Vert jade rouge sang. Roman

(Jade green, blood red. A novel)

[Paris]: Magnier, 2011. – 187 p.

ISBN 978-2-84420-918-4

Myanmar (Burma) – Mine – Rivalry – Siblings – Corruption – Drugs

High school graduate Ko Myo travels to Rangoon in the north of Myanmar. There he hopes to find his lost older brother, who sought quick earnings as a jade miner. He finds him in a rundown mining town close to the Chinese border: prematurely aged and utterly broken. When his drug-addicted brother steals the money intended to pay their way back, Ko Myo is forced to work in the jade mines himself – a hell where everyone betrays one another. Pascale Maret worked in Myanmar for several years. Her ambitious, socially critical novel is outstandingly researched. It unflinchingly describes the social injustices of this military dictatorship and the growing power of the Chinese economic lobby. (Age: 12+) (Prix de la Nouvelle revue pédagogique) ♦

116

Norac, Carl (text)

Poulin, Stéphane (illus.)

Au pays de la mémoire blanche

(In the land of lost memory)

Paris: Éd. Sarbacane [et al.], 2011. – 123 p.

ISBN 978-2-84865-468-3

Dictatorship – Exclusion – Resistance – Conception of the enemy – Forgetting – Memory

A being (named Rousseau) wakes up in a hospital, bandaged and with no memory at all. His most pressing question – who am I? – boils down to: Am I a dog or a cat? This is the vital question, because he is living in a terrible dictatorship in which dogs rule and cats are the supposed enemies. Whoever dares even dream of an alternative society is brutally eliminated. Rousseau does not attach himself to the war; instead he develops magical powers in his isolation. Carl Norac presents an impressive parable on racism, exclusion, and state control. The text, at times surreal, accompanies Stéphane Jorisch's intense pictures, which often seem like dream sequences and carry the reader wordlessly through the parable. (Age: 13+)

117

Payet, Jean-Michel

Mademoiselle Scaramouche

(Miss Scaramouche)

Paris: Éd. des Grandes Personnes, 2010. – 381 p.

(Series: Les Grandes Personnes)

ISBN 978-2-36193-011-0

Paris/1672 – Girl – Theatre – Escape – Adventure

After Jean Rousselières is killed in a duel, fourteen-year-old Zinia discovers that the man was not really her (biological) father. The plucky girl starts out on a search for her origins. Soon she finds herself in grave danger, because the enemies of her family are pursuing her in the belief that she inherited the last piece of an alchemical secret. Going under cover, Zinia takes the alias Scaramouche and becomes a member of a theatre troupe. In the court of Louis XIV, she suddenly recognises her adversaries and ends up saving even the king from a threatening plot. This turbulent yet literarily outstanding cloak-and-dagger novel provides great reading pleasure. (Age: 12+)

118

Proust, Marcel (text)

Bone, Betty (adapt./illus.)

La madeleine de Proust

(Proust's Madeleine)

Paris: Éd. Courtes et longues, 2011. – [42] p.

ISBN 978-2-35290-074-0

Proust, Marcel / À la recherche du temps perdu – Childhood memories

For the first time ever: Marcel Proust in a children's book! Betty Bone has selected three fragments from Proust's »In Search of Lost Time or Remembrance of Things Past« dealing with childhood memories: »La Madeleine«, »Le drame de coucher«, and »Gilberte«. With a keen eye for relevant detail, she condensed them and added masterful illustrations. Proust's art of associative connection unfolds on large-format coloured pages, accompanied by Betty Bone's powerful images. Young readers achieve here a first sense of Proust's ease with describing emotions, and his magical capacity to create a »suffused present« in the process of recollection. The original versions of all three texts are supplied at the end of the book. (Age: 8+)

119

Rutten, Mélanie (text/illus.)

Öko. Un thé en hiver

(Öko. A tea in winter)

[Nantes]: Éd. MeMo, 2010. – [60] p.

ISBN 978-2-35289-086-7

Death – Mourning – Funeral – Memories

Öko the frog and his animal friends mourn the loss of their friend Madeleine, an elderly grasshopper who was a grandmother figure for all the animals in the village. All the friends meet again in Madeleine's house, to remember her and tell stories about her. They find solace in this exchange. Afterwards, Öko wants to be alone, but he also uses that time to make new friends and to prepare a small celebration. In six very persuasive episodes, the young Wallonian illustrator Melanie Rutten describes how one can – taking small steps – find one's way from grief back into life and to others. Her lovingly created water colour paintings somewhat recall the style of Kitty Crowther, a one-time instructor of hers. (Age: 8+) (Prix Sorcières; 2011)

120

Strady, Sophie (text)

Boisrobert, Anouck / Rigaud, Louis (illus./idea/concept)

Dans la forêt du paresseux

(In the forest of the sloth)

Paris: Hélium, 2011. – [14] p.

ISBN 978-2-35851-052-3

Forest – Clear-cutting – Ecology – Environmental protection – Animal protection

This book is a little gem produced by the laureled French pop-up book specialists Boisrobert and Rigaud: A forest is home to many animals and people, but when bulldozers and saws threaten the paradise, everyone flees! Only a sloth remains, swaying amongst the branches, clearly feeling unthreatened by the danger. Is he behaving like us readers for whom »the forest of the sloth« – the tropical rain forest – is so far away? On the second to last page, the saving transformation occurs. When everything seems destroyed, a wise man sows tree seeds. Trees sprout from the earth, and a new forest (with sloth) is generated that even blankets the destructive machines. This winning story, combined with surprising and sophisticated pop-up pages, represents the destruction of forests and its consequences in a simple, expressive way for readers of all ages. (Age: 3+) ★ Special Mention

121

Valckx, Catharina (text/illus.)

Haut les pattes!

(Paws up!)

Paris: École des Loisirs, 2010. – [36] p.

ISBN 978-2-211-20546-7

Father – Son – Upbringing – Education – Bandit

A hamster father and widely feared bandit is very concerned about the future of his young son Billy. In his opinion, Billy is wayward and simply too nice to become »a tough guy« like himself. Somewhat frustrated, he equips his little son with all the tools of the thieving trade and an (unloaded) revolver and sends him on a »trial run«, where he must learn the first lesson in robbery – yelling »Paws up!« and causing fear in his victims. Billy is unsuccessful, but in virtue of his amiable nature he makes many friends. When he faces the mean fox, though, Billy is able to transcend his natural inclination. With trenchant dialogue and wonderful illustrations, Catharina Valckx succeeds in creating a brilliant persiflage (not only on the topic of education!). (Age: 4+)

122

Vénuleth, Jacques (text)

Rébéna, Frédéric (illus.)

Toussaint Louverture <proper name>

Arles: Actes Sud junior, 2011. – 79 p.

(Series: T'étais qui, toi?)

ISBN 978-2-7427-9511-6

Haiti/1743-1804 – Independence –

Toussaint Louverture, François D. – Human rights – African diaspora – Emancipation

Without omitting his miscalculations and conflicts, this short but substantial biography describes the crucial periods of the life of Toussaint Louverture, black Haitian national hero, visionary, and father of Haiti's independence. Louverture, the unbending Republican, delivers a first crushing defeat to Napoleon's army in his country's liberation struggle, and thereby ends slavery and the Code Noir in Haiti. He brings Haiti to renewed military confrontation and in the end is arrested. Napoleon sees that his feared opponent freezes to death while imprisoned in French exile. Jacques Vénuleth's book, free of moralising subtext, seamlessly ushers in a stimulating discussion on the indivisibility of human rights. (Age: 9+) ♦

123

Vidal, Séverine

Lâcher sa main

(Let go of her hand)

[Paris]: Grasset-Jeunesse, 2011. – 111 p.

(Series: Lampe de poche; 128)

ISBN 978-2-246-78060-1

Psychological disorder – Dementia – Mother – Daughter

Fifteen-year-old Fleur has been helping her mother cope with her severe psychological illness and incipient dementia for years. When her mother one day no longer recognises her daughter, Fleur recalls the pact they formed at an earlier time and settles her mother in a long-term care facility. She then goes on a nine-month sailing trip with a crew of other young people. She is not running away, but rather gaining a critical distance to reflect on her new relationship with her mother. This outstanding novel perfectly captures the young protagonist's voice and respectfully and compassionately describes her ill mother as a »special person«. (Age: 14+)

124

Wiéner, Magali

Les carcérales

(Prison worlds)

Toulouse: Milan, 2010. – 273 p.

(Series: Macadam)

ISBN 978-2-7459-4254-8

Rape – Guilt – Responsibility – Imprisonment

Rod, a shy high schooler, dreams of a career as a swimmer. Aside from that, he is utterly in love with his seductive classmate and rock singer Aurélie, who toys with him but also keeps him at a distance. After a concert Aurélie, already quite drunk, invites Rod to accompany her home. Their versions of the night's events after that point are irreconcilable. What Rod experiences as the culmination of his pubescent romantic desires, Aurélie perceives as rape. Rod is brought to court and is sentenced to juvenile detention. Magali Wiéner's notable novel on the topics of guilt and responsibility (and the untenable conditions of imprisonment) precisely observes and persuasively details Rod's transition from denying the facts to recognising his responsibility. (Age: 14+)

Italy (Italian)

125

Corda, Tullio (text/illus.)

L'uomo con il cappello

(The man with the hat)

Cornaredo (Milano): La Margherita Ed., 2011. – [26] p.

ISBN 978-88-6532-025-9

Impartiality – Prejudice – Surprise

The pace of this picture book's story is set using just a few words, and its content is enriched by the illustrations. Should a man fail to tip his hat as a sign of greeting, is one therefore permitted to think him guilty of harbouring secrets, horrible secrets worth fearing? Would the omission of this small sign immediately invite reservations about the stranger, the other, and would thoughts be formed to justify that prejudice? This book invites one to remain impartial, to take new experiences as a source of knowledge, a chance for exchange, and an opportunity to change. The pictures and words, perfectly attuned to each other, convey the idea that it is always possible to find opportunities for positive astonishment. (Age: 5+)

126

D'Angelo, Carolina (text)

Paci, Marco (illus.)

H.H.

Faella (Arezzo): Principi & Principi, 2011. – [44] p.

ISBN 978-88-9682-732-1

Father – Son – Interculturality – Living together

The House Hotel in Porto Recanati is a giant concrete hulk created for the bourgeoisie of Marche in the 1960s. Today it is almost entirely inhabited by non-EU citizens: more than 2,000 people from 32 countries reside there, having moved around extensively before ending up in the concrete monster. They speak various languages and could tell very different stories. Carolina D'Angelo knows the seventeen-storey house well and portrays it as a meeting point for different cultures and lives. The book tells of escapes, encounters, and globalisation, and is enhanced by the clear, self-assertive illustrations of Marco Paci. The message of this picture book is that fears and walls can be overcome – one can open oneself up to true living together. (Age: 8+) ♦

127

Del Tufo, Chiara (ed.)

Vairo, Arianna (illus.)

Un paese bambino. Poesie per il 150° dell'Unità d'Italia

(A fledgling country. Poems for the 150th anniversary of Italy's unification)

Bologna: Stoppani, 2011. – [48] p.

ISBN 978-88-86124-78-2

Italy/1861-2011 – Children's rights – Poetry

Young illustrator Arianna Vairo's original style sets the tone of this beautiful poetry anthology. Fifteen of Italy's most important poets were invited to put dreams, freedom, war, rights, immigration, good etiquette and friendship to paper. With great care, they select special words: hushed words, words of recollection, of trains and of hopes, of expectations and movement – words lined up next to each other, dedicated to the children, their country and their future. Notable names in the table of contents include Roberto Piumini, Janna Carioli, Matteo Marchesini, Alessandro Riccioni, Giusi Quarenghi, Bruno Tognolini, Giovanna Zoboli and all others. (Age: 8+)

128

Nava, Emanuela (text)

Gon, Adriano (illus.)

Bambini del mondo

(Children of the world)

San Dorligo della Valle (Trieste): Einaudi Ragazzi /

Ed. EL, 2011. – 126 p.

(Series: Storie, storie)

ISBN 978-88-7926-937-7

Courage – Curiosity – Difference

The children portrayed here by Emanuela Nava are curious, adventurous, alert, and sometimes startled, too. This anthology contains thirty-two stories, set in Japan or Morocco, Rajasthan (India) or Italy, Gambia, Turkey, Mexico, Moldova, Peru, Burkina Faso and elsewhere, and they tell of children from all over the world. Besides being about children's emotions, their life experiences, their dreams, and their relations to the adult world, the stories are also about the traditions and cultures of various peoples. The words overcome geographic limits and transport young and old readers to other places, other peoples, other children. (Age: 6+) ♦

129

Orvieto, Laura (text)
 Vinci, Vanna (illus.)

Leo e Lia. Storia di due bambini italiani con una governante inglese

(Leo and Lia. The story of two Italian children and an English governess)

Firenze [et al.]: Giunti Junior, 2011. – 139 p.
 ISBN 978-88-09-75916-9

Florence/1900 – Upbringing – Family – Siblings

The first edition of this book appeared in 1909; in 1929, it fell prey to fascist censure, which caused it to be placed on the list of »revised« and consequently »innocuous books« in 1939. Today it returns in all its freshness in a cultivated yet straight-forward language. The book describes a mother and her two children, whose questions she answers as a skilful storyteller who wants the best for them and supports them in their thirst for knowledge, their search for truth and their openness towards the world. The new edition reproduces Laura Orvieto's text in its entirety and is accompanied by special illustrations by the comic artist and picture virtuoso Vanna Vinci. These depict the two personable children and their loving mother alongside images from a world of imagination, in which history, myth, and reality meet. (Age: 6+)

130

Palumbo, Daniela (text)
 Battello, Clara (illus.)

Le valigie di Auschwitz

(The suitcases from Auschwitz)

Milano: Piemme, 2011. – 192 p.
 ISBN 978-88-566-1726-9

Auschwitz – Concentration camp – Persecution of Jews

These are not the suitcases that accompany us on vacations, nor the heavy suitcases of those searching for a new home. These are the suitcases of those who knew no return. These are the suitcases of those whose hope was lost after being extinguished by the horror of the death camps. The book centres its various stories around Carlo, Jacob, and Hannah, Émeline and Dawid – children from Italy, Germany, France, Poland, whose fate is sealed by atrocious racial laws. Their suitcases today stand, together with thousands of others, in the museum room in Auschwitz, which leaves visitors stunned and speechless. These suitcases stand witness to a time past, memorial pieces that cannot be extinguished. (Age: 10+) ♦

131

Piazza, Serena (text)
 D'Altan, Paolo (illus.)

Fratelli d'Italia. L'inno nazionale

(Brothers of Italy. The national anthem)

Milano: Rizzoli, 2010. – [28] p. + CD
 ISBN 978-88-17-04408-0

Italy/National anthem

The festivities celebrating the 150th anniversary of Italy's unification took place in 2011. This book tells the story of the creation of the Italian national anthem. It is written by Serena Piazza and illustrated with great poetic force by Paolo d'Altan, who alternates masterfully between black-and-white and colour illustrations. The book describes the passion and wish for change in the lives of young intellectuals, musicians, writers, of men and women from the people, who were willing to dedicate their lives to the renewed blossoming of their country. Aldo Novaro, the little-known composer who wrote the anthem to the words of the poet Goffredo Mameli, is justifiably emphasized. Two beautiful different versions of the hymn are performed on the accompanying CD. (Age: 7+)

132

Riccioni, Alessandro (text)
 Baladan, Alicia (illus.)

Cielo bambino

(Children's sky)

Milano: Topipittori, 2011. – [28] p.
 ISBN 978-888-92107-2-7

Poetry

Alessandro Riccioni is a masterful, sensitive and profound poet. His words skip lightly across the page. The emotion-laden pictures of Alicia Baladan at times are wonderfully child-like and at times full of allusion. For instance, they variously refer to the films of Georges Méliès, to the extraordinary journeys of Jules Verne, to the novel »Saturnin Farandoul« by Albert Robida and to a wonderful, fanciful amusement park. With a sophisticated simplicity, this poetry collection describes a sky rife with encounters, a magical sky that changes with the decades, a sky in which clouds and sheep chase each other, where space shuttles and moored balloons circulate, thousands of stars shine, and the sun and moon, light and darkness alternate. (Age: 5+)

133

Rodari, Gianni (text)
Kostantinov, Vitali (illus.)

Giacomo di cristallo

(Glass Jacob)

San Dorligo della Valle (Trieste): Emme Ed. /

Ed. EL, 2011. – [25] p.

ISBN 978-88-6079-721-6

Transparency – Authenticity – Freedom

This story, which is from the collection »Fairy tales over the phone«, is about a see-through child. Giacomo is made of flesh and blood like other children, but he's as transparent as glass. Everyone can thus see the emotions, moods, secrets, and fears of the earnest and sincere boy. He is imprisoned when a tyrant seizes power, since his contempt for violence and injustice shines out from his body. But even from prison his thoughts are observed, because truth is »more terrible than a hurricane«. This book is illustrated by Vitali Konstantinov and was selected for the international exhibition »The Grammar of Fantasy«, presented on the occasion of the Bologna Children's Book Fair 2010 to commemorate the 30th anniversary of Gianni Rodari's death. (Age: 5+)

134

Sgardoli, Guido

The frozen boy

Cinisello Balsamo: San Paolo, 2011. – 203 p.

(Series: Narrativa San Paolo ragazzi)

ISBN 978-88-215-7098-8

Shipwreck – Death – Scientist – Greenland – Atomic bomb

This powerful, suspenseful, unusual novel is a page-turner. Even though it is not science fiction, it takes the reader on a voyage through time and space. Guido Sgardoli tells of a boy and a shipwreck that occurred in the middle of the nineteenth century; then he takes us to a research station in Greenland in 1946 and into the light of the Arctic summer. The protagonist of the story is a scientist who contributed to the invention of the atomic bomb; a man ruined by remorse and suffering who left the American desert to enter the isolation of eternal ice. Only there does Doctor Warren regain the ability to feel alive. The book's pages contain wonderful reflections on life and death, on emotions and relationships, on hope and the future. (Age: 13+)

135

Silei, Fabrizio (text) / Quarello, Maurizio A. C. (illus.)

L'autobus di Rosa

(Rosa's bus)

Roma: Orecchio acervo, 2011. – [40] p.

ISBN 978-88-96806-13-5

USA/1955 – Parks, Rosa – Discrimination – Courage – Racial segregation – Role model

This book impresses with its straight-forward, concise text and apt words, pregnant with memory and pain, which turn to pictures that pass before the eyes of the young protagonist. They take the form of bloodied batons, of white hoods that hide identity, and of refused seats in the bus. Grandfather tells a story: On December 1, 1955, he was in the bus in which Rosa Parks sat down – the black woman who bravely defended herself against encroachment, who resisted giving white people her seat in the bus, was incarcerated and became a symbol in the fight against racial segregation. This beautiful and movingly illustrated book for the whole family, which was published in collaboration with Amnesty International, offers readers a chance to come to terms with historical facts and form an independent opinion. It portrays injustice and dark moments of American history by means of scenic images, which are influenced by Edward Hopper and photography. (Age: 9+)

★ Special Mention ◆

136

Zuffi, Stefano

Le parole dell'arte. Per capire e amare i pittori e le loro opere (Words of art. Learning to understand and to love painters and their works)

Milano: Feltrinelli Kids, 2011. – 186 p.

ISBN 978-88-07-92173-5

Painting – Art history

The subtitle of this book states the intention of its author, art historian Stefano Zuffi, to bring children into contact with artworks and artists, so that they learn to understand and love art. So, on the pages about Edvard Munch, for instance, one sees the sunset's colours over the fjords, made more vivid by distorted perception, alongside the reasons why the artist decided to express the hardship of life on canvas. Aside from Munch, there are De la Tour's light, Klimt's gold, Monet's visual impressions, Pollock's flecked mess, the expressive power of Friedrich's landscape, Balla's dynamism, and the city Urbino in the pictures of Piero della Francesca. An outstanding book to travel through the history of art, led on by a desire for discovery and new impressions. (Age: 10+)

Portugal (Portuguese)

137

Martins, Isabel Minhós (text) / Kono, Yara (illus.)

A manta. Uma história aos quadradinhos (de tecido)

(The quilt. A story about [fabric] squares)

Carcavelos: Planeta Tangerina, 2010. – [28] p.

ISBN 978-989-8145-22-2

Childhood – Memory – Security – Story-telling – Grandmother – Granddaughter

In an affectionate way, this picture book shows that the value of material possessions pales in comparison to that of memories. The narrator's grandmother was a wealthy woman; yet after her death, the heirs are less interested in her money than in her colourful old quilt because it brings back invaluable memories of cosy hours spent in grandmother's bed listening to her tales. Just like the pages of a diary, each fabric square of the quilt tells a story. A colourful scrap from a dress, the remains of an old tablecloth, etc. – they are all pieces of the puzzle of a life full of happy moments, sad moments, and a wide spectrum in between. Thanks to their deliberate two-dimensionality and the reduced, ornamental shapes, the beautiful colour illustrations perfectly match the memento to that this book is about. (Age: 6+)

138

Vieira, Alice

Meia hora para mudar a minha vida

(Half an hour to change my life)

Alfragide: Caminho, 2010. – 154 p.

ISBN 978-972-21-2105-7

Theatre – Mother – Daughter – Death – Search for identity – Coming of age

Branca was born and feels most at home in the »Feira« Theatre. Her family is her mother – she does not know her father – and the theatre troupe. Officials cannot tolerate this »disorderly« life, however, and one day Branca is taken away from her mother. After this, she lives in a hostile environment with her grandparents, whom she cannot connect with, and soon learns that her mother has died. On her sixteenth birthday, her father unexpectedly appears and offers to take care of her. But Branca is determined to go her own way, which will eventually take her back to her true family in the theatre. With empathy and her signature sense of humour, Alice Vieira portrays the protagonist's happy as well as painful childhood experiences and her search for her place in life. (Age: 14+)

Romania (Romanian)

139

Cărtărescu, Mircea (text)

Banuș, Tudor (illus.)

Enciclopedia zmeilor

(The dragon encyclopedia)

București: Humanitas, 2010. – 163 p.

ISBN 978-973-50-2791-9

Dragon

In this imaginatively illustrated volume about fantastical creatures, we encounter a world believed long forgotten. Twelve dragon species are presented in their »natural habitat«. The descriptions cover everything from anatomical characteristics to language, history, science, art, from professions and tools to the placement of every single member within the dragon world. The connections between them unfold over the course of ten dragon fairy tales. Upon longer inspection, the illustrations of the dragon's anatomical characteristics, conceived with much humour, seem like picture puzzles. The world of these fantasy creatures has many parallels to the human one and thus gives readers a chance to poke fun at their own shortcomings. (Age: 10+)

Spain (Spanish)

140

Abad, Arturo (text)

Concejo, Joanna (illus.)

Zimbo <proper name>

Pontevedra: OQO, 2011. – [28] p.

(Series: Colección Q)

ISBN 978-84-9871-316-9

Freedom – Autonomy – Emancipation – Happiness – Loss

This parable-like picture book is about the desire for freedom and the difficulty of letting someone go. Zimbo the marionette wishes nothing more than to sever his strings and leave the sheltered doll chest to venture into the world. In the end it is the invisible puppeteer who, heavy of heart, supplies Zimbo with the necessary tool. The sensitive story does justice to the perspectives of both marionette and puppeteer, showing departure and loss, happiness and grief to be inextricably linked. The poetic text is accompanied by dream-like drawings in grey and beige tones with colourful accents, which in a nuanced way represent the protagonist's psychic states.

Romance Languages

The book admits of various readings, in which son and father, subject and ruler, or man and god respectively inhabit the roles of the two protagonists. (Age: 8+)

141

Alcolea, Ana

La noche más oscura

(The darkest night)

Madrid: Anaya, 2011. – 278 p.

ISBN 978-84-667-9515-9

Holidays – First love – Norway/World War II – Prisoner of war

Valeria and her mother spend the summer holidays at a lighthouse just off the coast of northern Norway. The girl soon befriends William, who lives in the nearest town and whose late grandfather Erlend used to live on the tiny island as the last lighthouse keeper. A summer love with lots of butterflies in the stomach develops between the two teenagers. At the same time, Erlend repeatedly appears to Valeria in her dreams and tells her more about the history of the town, where during World War II the German occupation army kept a camp for Russian prisoners of war. Ana Alcolea cleverly combines the flash-backs to these historically events with her narration of a summer's holiday romance. The result is an enjoyable novel, in which the two different parts are well balanced. (Age: 14+) (VIII Premio Anaya de Literatura Infantil y Juvenil; 2011)

142

Alonso, Ana / Pelegrín, Javier (text)

Ginard, Pere (illus.)

La ciudad transparente

(The transparent city)

[Madrid]: El Jinete Azul, 2010. – 238 p.

(Series: Novela gráfica)

ISBN 978-84-937902-8-8

Information society – Privacy – Social regulation – Control – Dystopia

This illustrated novel, dystopian and interspersed with elements of film noir, is apropos for a time in which ever more elaborate technologies are determining and controlling everyday life, and the social media are becoming ever more influential. The story portrays a see-through society in which nothing is private. Every human life follows a script. The better the script-writer and script, the more viewers and followers one has and therefore the more sponsors and money. This is an utterly media-saturated and commercialised world in which social

status is measured according to popularity and other people's rankings. This dismal vision of a not all too distant future is paired with comic-style black-and-white illustrations, which successfully capture the oppressive atmosphere of this merciless success society. (Age: 16+)

143

Arjona, Juan (text)

Lluísot (illus.)

Antonino contra el tiempo

(Antonino versus time)

[Barcelona]: A buen paso, 2011. – [28] p.

978-84-938036-8-1

Helpfulness – Courage

With his chequered pants, sturdy shoes, impressive moustache, and smart little hat, Antonino will surely win his readers' hearts in no time flat. The little gentleman bursts with energy and thirsts for action. He prefers to move at a clip, cutting across the countryside, over stick and stone, hill and dale. One day he discovers a trapped bear. Without further ado, he hoists up the baffled animal and carries him piggy-back to the hospital, stopping for nothing and no one. Lluísot transforms the simple, short-sentenced text into equally simple, joyful, comic-like pictures. Energetic, fun and full of loving detail, they embrace the rhythm of the fast-paced story. Two »Antonino« picture books have been published, of which this is the first; both leave one eager for more. (Age: 3+)

144

Barba, Andrés

Arriba el cielo, abajo el suelo

(Sky above, earth below)

Madrid: Ed. Siruela, 2011. – 87 p.

(Series: Las tres edades; 219)

ISBN 978-84-9841-514-8

Void – Gravity – Happiness – Selflessness – First love

Lavarito lives in a town that is hurtling through empty space, as are innumerable other towns. Spherical humps instead of feet sprout from the human inhabitants' legs to establish necessary equilibrium. The word »falling« is unknown in Lavarito's town, which makes the shock all the greater when it is learned that the town is inexorably careening toward Earth. The looming impact creates great concern, but even more so the unheard-of thought that soon people could find themselves bound to the laws of gravity. Lavarito is sent to the neighbouring town to warn its inhabitants. In the end, the humans land safely

on the ground, thanks to altruism and their ability to be happy. This book is a highly enjoyable read, since Andrés Barba successfully extends the basic original idea using much imagination and fun detail. (Age: 8+)

145

León Barreto, Martín (text/illus.)

El camino de Olaj

(Olaj's walk)

Pontevedra: Kalandraka, 2011. – [44] p.

ISBN 978-84-8464-768-3

Walk – Animals

This picture book takes the form of a cumulative tale, and its circle-like plot perfectly corresponds with the story's setting. Olaj, who lives in a spacious house on a tiny planet, has grown weary of being on his own. Therefore, he sets off on a journey, on which he meets all kinds of animals and invites them to join him. After having orbited the entire planet, Olaj is back home and happy that his house is now filled from top to bottom with guests such as the elegant elephant, the rainbow tiger, the winged horse, and others. The illustrations are pure form and a true buzz of rainbow colours. Glowing, energetic, and playing with geometrical shapes, they turn the book into an ornamental feast for the eyes. (Age: 3+) (IV Premio Internacional Compostela para álbumes ilustrados 2011)

146

Pérez, Sonia (text/illus.)

¿De pie o de cabeza?

(Standing or upside down?)

Barcelona: Thule Ed., 2011. – [28] p.

(Series: Trampantojo)

ISBN 978-84-92595-98-3

Perspective

»I have met a rather odd creature« – is how this picture book begins, and we see a girl looking up at a spider-like (or like something else, in any case not exactly confidence-inspiring) creature looking down at her. This tête-à-tête is an invitation to think about space: What if above were below? Where would the branches be, where the roots? The clouds and the puddles? The birds and the bugs? Taking for granted that a child is the narrator of this children's book, in the end the reader is surprised to realise that even in this respect the normal state of affairs has been turned upside down. It's all just a matter of perspective! The simple idea behind this picture book is appealing and also wonderfully realised in the witty and dynamic illustrations and the 90-degrees-rotated pages. (Age: 4+)

Spain (Catalan)

147

Ricart Leal, Raquel

El quadern d'Àngela

(Àngela's notebook)

València: Tàndem, 2011. – 126 p.

(Series: La bicicleta negra; 28)

ISBN 978-84-8131-902-6

Adoption – Search for identity – Writing – Storytelling – Mother – Daughter

Àngela, born in China and adopted into Spain as an infant, is given a notebook by her parents as a birthday gift. From then on, the twelve-year-old girl's experiences, thoughts, and dreams, her hopes and cares all end up on its pages as she works them into her own imaginative stories. In her writing, she reflects on her everyday life, asks what family is and entails, and quests after her familial and cultural roots. Writing is her tool for self-discovery and self-assurance and also enables her to create something new using her imagination. Raquel Ricart's literary self-portrait of a girl is notable for its poetic, multi-layered language. (Age: 11+) (V Premi Vila de Paterna de Narrativa Infantil Vicenta Ferrer Escrivà)

148

Sala i Vila, Carles (text)

Andrada, Javier (illus.)

Cornèlius i el rebost d'impossibles

(Cornèlius and the shop of impossible things)

Barcelona: La Galera, 2011. – 173 p.

(Series: Grumets +10; 208)

ISBN 978-84-246-3676-0

Values – Selflessness – Happiness – Mistrust

One day, young Tobies and old Cornèlius, who looks like a wise old wizard, arrive at the mountain village of Tort, where they open a shop with a difference. There, customers can buy things that are not normally for sale anywhere – immaterial goods that do people good. One person gets something to cure his timidity, another one something to cure her tendency to brood, and a third one something to cure her reticence. In return for it, they are expected to leave something in the shop that they don't need anymore. Everyone could be happy if it wasn't for some mistrustful sceptics, who observe this unusual business with suspicion and rejection. This award-winning book stands out for both its witty ideas and details and for the affectionate description of the sympathetic characters. (Age: 10+) (Premi Josep M. Folch i Torres 2009)

Switzerland (French)

149

Paille (i.e. Veyser, Paille) (text/illus.)

Faire, pour eux, ça voulait dire fabriquer

(Doing for them means making it themselves)

Genève: Ed. Drozophile, 2011. – [48] p.

ISBN 978-2-940275-46-5

Work – Globalisation – Craft – Cooperation – Friendship – Fairy tale

Elna, Grégoire, and Robert are craftspeople and Louison is an architect. They sew, do wood-working, build houses, and work as smiths. The four friends work at their dream jobs and are proud of the results. Suddenly their world is turned upside down because they can't find any more clients (in part due to the competition from industrial production). After a tortuous time of unemployment and loneliness, the four combine their creative powers and together build a ship. Paille (Veyser) serves up a modern fairy tale in this tri-coloured picture book with silk-screen illustrations. It creates an impressive parable of friendship and collaboration, while taking on the topics of the changing industrial work world and the new challenges posed to the world of craftsmanship. (Age: 8+)

Latin America

Argentina (Spanish)

150

Andruetto, María Teresa

La niña, el corazón y la casa

(The girl, the heart and the house)

Buenos Aires: Sudamericana, 2011. – 92 p.

(Series: Sudamericana Joven: Novela)

ISBN 978-950-07-3526-1

Family – Siblings – Down Syndrome

As with María Teresa Andruetto's other works, this book is characterised by simplicity and clarity. The language is gentle, reticent, sometimes even sparse. At the same time, it is poetic and possesses great sensitivity in the representation of characters' feelings and thoughts. The book describes a family's life from the perspective of the daughter Tina. She lives with her father and grandmother, while her older brother Pedro, who has Down Syndrome, lives with his mother in another city. The family members see each other every weekend, during which a certain sadness and loss for words between the parents cannot be overlooked. Why the family doesn't live together remains a mystery to the end. The author purposely leaves this gap open and invites her readers to fill it in – or not. (Age: 10+)

151

Canela (= Zecchin, Gigliola) (text)

Roldán, Daniel (illus.)

La silla de imaginar

(The chair for imagining)

Córdoba: Ed. Comunicarte, 2011. – [32] p.

(Series: Cola de ratón)

ISBN 978-987-602-156-2

Imagination – Wish

Little does Julián the wood carver know how special his chair is. One day, he leaves the chair sitting out in the rain, and it sprouts roots overnight. A grand tree promptly grows from it whose shiny red fruits have tiny wooden chairs at their centres. They soon turn into full-grown chairs – or, better: chairs for imagining. The people of the village come to love spending their evenings sitting on the chairs, envisioning beautiful things and dreaming of the coming true of a great variety of wishes: to fly, to be Zorro, to travel to the city, to have the circus perform in the village, or to get a visit from grandma. This poetic story about wish-making and the power of the imagina-

tion is accompanied by colourful illustrations whose liveliness nicely convey the sentiment of the text. (Age: 5+)

Brazil (Portuguese)

152

Brenman, Ilan (text)

Moriconi, Renato (illus.)

O alvo

(The goal)

São Paulo: Ed. Ática, 2011, 85 p.

(Series: Clara luz)

ISBN 978-85-08-14263-7

Storytelling – Imagination

Telling, listening, and reading stories have always been memorable tasks. They refer back to our ancient and ancestral ways of life, through words and experiences that may seem outdated yet are, in reality, continually relived. Ilan Brenman certainly leads us to rediscover the value of written and spoken words, made relevant to our everyday lives through the art of storytelling. The protagonist – a school teacher by trade and master storyteller by inclination – listens to the doubts, complaints, and fears of an entire town and seems to perform magic as he proposes solutions to the community by telling stories from the repertoire of his life. »O alvo« hits the target by bringing together high-quality illustrations and a smart boy protagonist: a character that inspires the teacher to train his (the teacher's) ability to use well-aimed words to get to the core of the problems. From this boy, the master learns the power of transformation – as the author Guimarães Rosa says, »A master is not the one who teaches, but the one who spontaneously learns.« (Age: 5+)

153

Castanha, Marilda (text/illus.)

Mil e uma estrelas

(A thousand and one stars)

São Paulo: Ed. SM, 2011. – 43 p.

(Series: Comboio de Corda)

ISBN 978-85-8072-008-2

Sky – Star – Night

This is the story of a girl who is in the habit of counting the uncountable: the stars in the sky. A task that may seem impossible, unnecessary, or valueless to some, stands as proof for the little girl, who has admired the infinite from an early age on, that difficult tasks do not mean impossible realisations. This is because her aim is

not the completion of a task but rather the mere nightly habit of doing what's endless. Marilda Castanha bewitches us with the story of a girl who counts the stars that light up the night sky of an ogre scared of darkness and comforted by the girl's stories. The ordinary fears of childhood – darkness, giants – are confronted with courage, a touch of audacity to face the unknown and with spoken words. A thousand and one stars wake up the Scheherazade in each and every one of us. (Age: 5+)

154

Luiz Antonio (text)

Carpenter, Biel (illus.)

Uma princesa nada boba

(A not at all dumb princess)

São Paulo: Cosac Naify, 2011. – 64 p.

ISBN 978-85-405-0104-1

Brazil/History – Slavery – Gender role – Cultural identity

»Uma princesa nada boba« tells the story of a girl who very much wants to be a princess. In the process of finding herself, she asks her father, her mother, her grandmother: why is it that she cannot be a princess? It doesn't matter that everybody tells her she is already a princess. Luiz Antonio addresses the essential issue of forming one's cultural identity in Brazil, using the example of the country's African ancestry and the important political role played by some of the African princesses who were forcibly expatriated to Brazil during the time of slavery. Brief biographies of these personalities complete the book. Alongside the evocative and poetic text, the book's illustrations and graphic design capture the protagonists' restlessness. (Age: 5+)

155

Maltez, Manu (text/illus.)

Meu tio lobisomem. Uma história verídica

(My uncle werewolf. A true story)

São Paulo: Ed. Peirópolis, 2011. – 63 p.

ISBN 978-85-7596-206-0

Uncle – Nephew – Country life – Werewolf – Imagination

Those who believe entrust a truth to their soul. The existence of folkloric beings – werewolves or sács – is not the issue. Living to tell of their existence is what matters. Manu Maltez's »Meu tio lobisomem« plays out this truth in describing the experience of a boy whose weekends are spent with an uncle on a farm in Brazil's countryside. As the boy explores, a discovery occurs and

Romance Languages

a world of adventure and dream is unveiled. All the boy wants – a boy who marvels by day at a world different from his own and who is scared of the idea of a werewolf as companion – is to experience this world. The joy in the boy's heart does not suffice to make him fearless, yet his dreamworld nevertheless becomes real. Readers are treated to striking illustrations, which are true works of art. (Age: 7+)

156

Neves, André (text/illus.)

Maroca e Deolindo e outros personagens em festas

(Maroca and Deolindo and other people at festivals)

São Paulo: Paulinas, 2011. – 78 p.

(Series: Espaço aberto)

ISBN 978-85-356-2884-5

Brazil/Festivity

André Neves thrills us with an unmatched flair. This book of twelve stories – one for each month of the year – is centred around popular festivals from Brazil's five regions. The characters mingle with the flavours, music, and rituals practiced during the festivities, processions, and pilgrimages. Maroca and Deolindo are protagonists in one of these tales; they show us that, amidst Brazil's unique São João (St. John) celebration, impossible love stories may happen. Fleshing out the characters in the stories, the colloquially-styled language, tinged with a poetic sensibility, expresses characteristics particular to each region, such as vocabulary and customs. This beautiful book includes a glossary with straightforward information about the festivals presented in the tales. (Age: 8+)

157

Pimentel, Marcelo (text/illus.)

O fim da fila

(The end of the line)

Rio de Janeiro: Rovel, 2011. – [32] p.

ISBN 978-85-61521-49-3

Animals – Standing in line

This book by Marcelo Pimentel, renowned for his oeuvre addressing Brazil's culture, already rouses the reader's curiosity with the title. On the cover, animals standing in single file convey the idea that the story has already started. On each new page, one discovers another reason why they are so happy standing in line, day in and day out. However, the reader's desire to get to the end of the queue may cause crucial details to be overlooked. Distinctive drawings emphasise each animal's indigenous

characteristics. Simple and fun, the book is made of brown recycled paper which, together with a black and red colour scheme, are used to symbolically express the animals' expectations for each step along the line. (Age: 5+)

Chile (Spanish)

158

Beuchat, Cecilia (ed./text)

Hojas, Isabel (illus.)

Palabras, regalo palabras

(Words, I give away words)

Santiago, Chile: Liberalia Ed., 2011. – 141 p.

ISBN 978-956-8484-12-5

Poetry – Language

Compiled by Chilean children's book author and expert Cecilia Beuchat, this volume contains a marvellous selection of Spanish-language poems wonderfully well suited to reading aloud or to oneself. Beside examples of well-known poets such as Rafael Alberti, Pablo Neruda and Gabriela Mistral, one predominantly finds contemporary poems, which document the diversity and richness of the genre that plays such a crucial role in Latin American children's literature. The editor is especially concerned to sensitise readers to the beauty and playful character of language. She has organised the poems into chapters and prefaces each chapter with an everyday word or a less usual, special one. Building on these, she binds images, feelings, and memories together, which she shares with readers in a short personal introductory text. Isabel Hojas illustrates the book in a wide range of manners. Her pictures, rich in form and colour, reveal very well the mood of each text. (Age: 8+) ★ Special Mention

Colombia (Spanish)

159

Dipacho (= Sánchez, Diego Francisco) (text/illus.)

El viaje de los elefantes

(The elephants' journey)

Bogotá: Ed. Gato Malo, 2011. – [32] p.

ISBN 978-958-44-8513-7

Journey – Love

By telling the story of five miniature elephants that embark on a journey to an unknown destination, this picture book illustrates that travelling is very much like loving. To set off, to pause, to get lost, to start all over again, and

to eventually arrive and stay – all these are facets of both travelling and loving. The few lines of text are poetic, philosophical, succinct, and easy to understand thanks to their imagery. The illustrations are executed in warm, earthy colours and give off an atmosphere of great lightness. The tiny protagonists, who perch in a raptor's nest, are carried by ants, and trek under birds' legs, almost disappear in the vastness of the world. In a delicate and affectionate way, they symbolise the danger that travellers and lovers face as well as their vulnerability. (Age: 7+)

Mexico (Spanish)

160

Armstrong Olea, Magdalena (illus.)

Trapo y Rata

(Rag and Rat)

México, D. F.: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 2011. – [28] p.
(Series: Los Especiales de A la Orilla del viento)
ISBN 978-607-16-0696-9

Solidarity – Ruse – Inventiveness

An urban area of trash-covered backyards serves as the stage for this textless story. It is the place where Trapo lives, a mysterious ragged figure, and where heaps of cats roam the streets and make the life of Rat hell. Trapo expresses some solidarity with the anguished rodent, maybe because he, too, has a long pointy nose. With great creativity and perseverance, the two soul mates collect junk such as boxes, boards, bottles, tins, etc. and start constructing a terrifying creature that, once the cats glimpse it, makes them dash away in fright. With her confident, energetic stroke, the Chilean illustrator has put down sketch-like pictures in shades of grey. Brimming with original ideas, the book invites its audience to discover new details with every reading. (Age: 4+) (Premio A la orilla del viento 2010)

161

Mateo, José Manuel (text) / Martínez Pedro, Javier (illus.)

Migrar (Migrating)

México, D.F.: Ed. Tecolote, 2011. – [20] p.
ISBN 978-607-7656-55-5

Migration

Driven by the hope for a better life, hundreds of thousands of Latin Americans cross the infamous border fence between Mexico and the USA every year. In this book, the anonymous statistics are given shape by an individual fate. A family leave their home village – the

father first, his wife and children following later. After a dangerous journey, they eventually arrive in Los Angeles as illegal immigrants. In addition to the text, told from a boy's perspective, the book consists of an almost 1.5 metre high single black-and-white illustration that is reminiscent of Pre-Columbian codices in both its style and the accordion-book-format. The readers are offered a breath-taking panorama of a landscape cluttered with innumerable figures and objects. It simultaneously shows all parts of the story and depicts the protagonists on their odyssey as small and somehow lost. This gorgeous, exceptional book is pitch-perfect from its initial idea down to its careful and attractive production. (Age: 6+)

★ Special Mention ♦

162

Sáez Castán, Javier (text/illus.)

La venganza de Edison

(Edison's revenge)

México, D. F.: Nostra Ed., 2010. – 102 p.
(Series: Mirador)
ISBN 978-607-7603-67-2

Edison, Thomas Alva – Inventing – Science

Spanish illustrator and author Javier Sáez Castán once again shows himself to be a master of nonsense and absurd humour. This story, a kind of chamber play with two protagonists, tells of José Carlos Pradera's entering into the services of eccentric Professor Vonderbuttis. Vonderbuttis, permanently oscillating between genius and insanity, wants to destroy Edison's light bulb once and for all with his »de-invention machine« and purge it from the memory of humanity. In the end, he distances himself from that project and instead annihilates his own work. The book, eluding all categorisation, is notable for its reflective dialogues, its skilled play with language and logic and its sophisticated juggling of intertextual references. (Age: 12+) (Premio Inventiones 2009)

163

Solís, Víctor (photogr.)

Centígrados y paralelos

(Centigrades and circles of latitude)

México, D.F.: Ed. Océano, 2011. – [60] p.

(Series: Océano Travesía)

ISBN 978-607-400-343-7

America – Migration – Rootlessness

At first glance, this book seems to be a photo album containing 30 double-pages of landscapes from Tierra del Fuego to Northern Mexico. Sea, ice, forest, mountains, desert – the volume captures the rich diversity of the continent. There are also penguins to be seen in every photo. Very cute! – one thinks at first – how they meld into the landscapes and seem to waddle steadfastly northwards. By the time (if not sooner) that the penguin caravan reaches the infamous metal fence at the US border and disappears into the desert, though, the observer realises that this wordless photo story is anything but innocuous and admits of multiple interpretations. The pictures ingeniously convey a highly political message on migration and rootlessness. An intelligent, unusual book. (Age: 8+)

Venezuela (Spanish)

164

Espinoza, Gerald (text/illus.)

Abcirco

(Abscurus <pun>)

[Caracas]: Camelia Ed., 2010. – [28] p.

ISBN 978-980-6450-44-8

Circus – Alphabet – Word play – Alliteration

This volume is an attractive example of the beloved genre of artistic alphabet picture books, which takes on ever new thematic and formal variations. As suggested by the wordplay in the title, the Venezuelan illustrator here presents a circus of a somewhat different sort. A member of the unusual troupe can be seen on every page, including a »flowery fakir«, »robotic rats«, »Siamese saxophonists«, and a »unique unicorn«. The pages are constructed in a uniform style reminiscent of the advertisement posters of yesteryear. The monochromatic dark blue circus creatures stand in front of big yellow letters. Expressive, with corners and edges, they bear a resemblance to wood cuts. A fine book that encourages word invention and alliteration. (Age: 5+)

165

Kurusa (text)

Ruifernández, Leticia (illus.)

Picuyo <proper name>

Caracas [et al.]: Ed. Ekaré, 2011. – [52] p.

ISBN 978-84-937212-5-1

Sea – Fishing – Bird – Nature – Respect – Siblings

This story combines fairy-tale elements with a realistic portrayal of life in a fishing village. Juan meets a little bird on the beach whose feathers shimmer vividly and mysteriously in the colours of the sun. Juan catches him, injuring him in the process and brings him home. His two older brothers believe the animal will bring them bad luck, so they demand that it disappear. After they have thrown the bird into the sea to drown him, a swallow, sunless, stultifying grey descends on the world and the sea. Only when Juan finds the bird alive does life return to normal. This tale, told with a calm, poetic language, is about freedom and the respect human beings must show for nature. It is accompanied by colourful illustrations, which aptly capture the story's various moods. (Age: 5+)

North America

Canada (French)

166

Bottin, Isha (text)

Brassard, Pierre (illus.)

Papa est parti

(Papa is gone)

Montréal (Québec): Courte Échelle, 2010. – [32] p.

ISBN 978-2-89651-277-5

Father – Daughter – Death – Mourning

How does a four-year-old cope with the loss of her father and life thrown into turmoil? She only slowly grasps what (final) separation means. Aside from coming to terms with her own bewildering feelings, she must deal with her mother's grief, who is expecting a second child. So many changes at once: her little sister is born, they move to another country, and in the end a new man enters the family. Gradually, life goes on. The touching autobiographical text from Isha Bottin, enhanced by the illustrations of well-known French-Canadian humourist Pierre Brassard, successfully broaches the topic of death and is therefore well suited for a very young audience. (Age: 4+)

167

Pascal, Jani (ed./retelling)

**Contes populaires du Canada français
à lire à haute voix**

(Folk tales from francophone Canada for reading aloud)
Montréal (Québec): Planète rebelle, 2011. – 228 p. + CD
ISBN 978-2-923735-26-9

Folk tale – Fairy tale

Jani Pascal has been well known across Canada for decades as an actress, storyteller and folktale specialist. In recent years she has become especially interested in the legend and folktale tradition of francophone Canada. After careful research in old anthologies and various research locations, she now presents this beautiful volume of seventeen French-Canadian folk tales, nine of which are being published for the first time. The attractively designed book is accompanied by a CD. Jani Pascal brings to the book not only her long experience as an actress and storyteller, but also her talent for comedy, poetry, and pointed dialogue. As a result, these texts are filled with zest for life and vitality. A wonderful discovery! (Age: 8+)

168

Rivard, Sylvain (text/illus.)

Moz en cinq temps

(Moose in five acts)
Québec: Cornac, 2011. – 79 p.
ISBN 978-2-89529-174-9

**Moose – Mythology – First Nations –
Abenaki Indians**

The five legends in this Abenaki anthology transport the reader all the way to mythical times when moose were still giants endowed with the gift of speech and back again to the only seemingly less mysterious present. The boundaries between gods, animals, and humans – even between animate and inanimate nature – had not yet been clearly defined in those early days, and it is these boundaries that the first four myths negotiate in enticing ways. The legends still breathe with the teller's breath, testifying to the liveliness of Abenaki oral storytelling tradition. Multi-disciplinary artist Sylvain Rivard creates awe-inspiring and intriguing collages using different materials, including cut paper, bark, fur, feathers, and grass, which infuse still more life into these timeless tales. (Age: 8+)

169

Various authors (text)

Rogé (illus.)

Haïti, mon pays. Poèmes d'écoliers haïtiens

(Haiti, my country. Poems by Haitian students)
Montréal (Québec): Éd. de la Bagnole, 2010. – [42] p.
ISBN 978-2-923342-50-4.

Haiti – Poetry

These powerful, evocative poems about Haiti, written by young people from the Southwest of that country, were written in 2008/2009 – before the severe earthquake of January 2010. They celebrate the beauty of the country, its (immaterial) riches and magic, yet also deal with poverty and the uprooted population. The striking large-format portraits of Haitian children and adolescents by Franco-Canadian illustrator Rogé accompany these hopeful texts. Dany Laferrière, the well-known Haitian author, justly writes in his introduction that »in Haiti, poets grow faster than trees from the earth«, and it is this youth that embodies the future of the sorely stricken country. (Age: 8+) ♦

Scandinavian Languages

Denmark (Danish)

170

Aakeson, Kim Fupz (text)

Bregnhøi, Rasmus (illus.)

De grimme børn

(The ugly children)

[København]: Carlsen, 2011. – [42] p.

ISBN 978-87-11-40122-4

Topsy-turvy world – Loneliness – Solace – Family

The Kim Fupz Aakeson / Rasmus Bregnhøi duo is a sure-fire means to strange, sometimes even caustic and borderline grotesque picture books. »De grimme børn« is about ugly children, whose parents have run away. A man from the unemployment office comes to give them comfort. He is soon on duty non-stop; a woman is hired to assist him. In the end, they all turn into a real family, so that for the »The Ugly Duck« – a perfect reference to H. C. Andersen printed on the t-shirt of the ugly boy – all ends happily, in sync with fairytale convention. Hints of social critique are packaged in Aakeson's dryly laconic narration, and Bregnhøi's illustrations are not only reference-heavy, but also reveal his typical closeness to comics and caricature. (Age: 6+)

171

Jensen, Louis (text)

Dickmeiss, Otto (illus.)

Rejsen til Gud

(The journey to God)

[København]: Gyldendal, 2011. – [28] p.

ISBN 978-87-02-09764-1

God – Quest

An illustrious group composed of a talking blade of grass, a jubilant finch, a boy, and a foul-tempered duck set off to find God and thank him. The book is not a naive glorification of divine creation, but it is still clearly founded in Christianity. For, when the group comes upon a dead soldier, the boy hoists him on his shoulders and continues to carry him even once they reach the sea and must swim day and night. At some point, the boy grows exhausted and gives up. Now the soldier takes the boy on his back and the boy realizes: »Så er det deg der er Gud« (»So you are God«). Despite this salvation scene, the allegory avoids sliding into the melodramatic, thanks especially to the illustrations. On the one hand they reflect the naive aspect of the story, but on the other hand create surreal intrusions. (Age: 6+)

172

Johnsen, Zenia (text)

Slocinska, Kamila (illus.)

Hunden der ikke troede på op

(The dog who didn't believe in upper spheres)

[Århus]: Turbine, 2011. – [28] p.

ISBN 978-87-7090-609-8

Dog – Change of perspective

Flæske always keeps his sniffing nose close to the turf, since in the end everything exciting and interesting is to be found on the ground: snails, lady bugs, and rocks. Flæske's mistress tries in vain to interest him in things that are not crawling around down there. But neither a flying dragon nor a space ship with little green men arouse Flæske's attention. But when it suddenly starts to rain and wet drops fall on his head, Flæske looks up inquisitively and from then on can't stop looking up, until in the end he flies away. Changing one's point of view can do a lot... This picture book charmingly describes how good it can be to leave the beaten path, to think outside the box and to dare to try new things. (Age: 3+)

173

K., Oscar (i. e. Dalgaard, Ole) (text)

Karrebæk, Dorte (illus.)

Lejren

(The camp)

København: Høst & Søn, 2011. – [76] p.

ISBN 978-87-638-1642-7

Childhood – Concentration camp

Oscar K. and Dorte Karrebæk's »Idiot« (2009) certainly counts as a controversial picture book. »Lejren« now further shakes up common conceptions of what children's literature is. The book's form and especially its content are startling; it is about children in a camp that is reminiscent of Terezin. »Lejren« is not primarily about the Shoah, however, but is intent on drawing a link between the indignity of camp life and childhood. This is extremely provocative. The book makes a univocal reading impossible, however, among other things by means of conflicting intertextuality. One can certainly accuse the book of exaggeration and irreverence. On the other hand, its undeniable potential lies in its ability to incite debate, since it prompts wide-ranging aesthetic as well as socio-political questions, and in a much more rigorous way than children's literature normally dares to. (Age: 12+) ★ Special Mention

174

Krumbach, Anita

Den som Fanden lytter til

(The one who listens to the devil)

København: Høst & Søn, 2011. – 83 p.

ISBN 978-87-638-2187-2

Death – Guilt – Winter

Every word of »Den som Fanden lytter til« is carefully chosen and brims with meaning, as do the empty spaces between the words. Much is only hinted at, bringing out a marked contrast between the story's sparse form and the intensity of the emotions, the spiritual and bodily anguish it tells of. Vina feels guilty for the death of her brother, while Tejs is tortured by the appearance of his face, deformed through an accident. Left alone with their grief, the children start a careful friendship, and it is vaguely implied that they will be able to free themselves of their pain. With her book »Et mærkeligt skib« (2009), Anita Krumbach already proved her mastery of quiet sounds and sparseness – which she has perfected in »Den som Fanden lytter til.« (Age: 9+)

175

Wung-Sung, Jesper

Tretten tynde teenagere. Noveller

(Thirteen skinny teenagers. Short stories)

Frederiksberg: Dansk lærerforeningens Forlag, 2011. – 124 p.

ISBN 978-87-7996-524-9

Search for identity

Dansk lærerforeningens Forlag has been of note for its extraordinary books in recent years, which, it must be added, are initially intended for the classroom. Jesper Wung-Sung's short stories collection fits perfectly into the publisher's catalogue. The thirteen texts deal with the desire for recognition, loneliness, and the search for love, as well as rebellion and thoughtless stupidity. Varied in narrative pacing, the texts switch between realism, surrealism, and absurd grotesque, which often comes unexpectedly and casts events in a new light. This narrative technique, which inherits from modernist authors such as Peter Seeberg, entices readers to reflect and discuss. (Age: 12+)

Finland (Finnish)

176

Autio, Maria

Ajatustenlukija

(The mind reader)

Hämeenlinna: Karisto, 2011. – 210 p.

ISBN 978-951-23-5258-6

Self-mutilation – Alcoholism – Mother – Daughter

Secondary school student Tiuku lives alone, because there is no more room for her with her family. She at first manages quite well and makes friends at school and on the Internet. When, during a visit to her family, her alcoholic parents become violent, Tiuku flees, taking her younger sister into safety with her. Plagued by her conscience, her mother alleging that the youth welfare office will come take her sister away, Tiuku starts cutting herself. Her friendship with Iida helps stabilise her. To overcome her desperation, she painfully separates herself from her past. In her first novel for young adults, Maria Autio authentically portrays both the multi-layered mother-daughter relationship that wavers between hope, affection, and disappointment, as well as the emotional dependency that the young woman frees herself of. (Age: 15+)

Finland (Swedish)

177

Lindeberg, Minna (text)

Bondestam, Linda (illus.)

Allan och Udo

(Allan and Udo <proper names>)

[Helsingfors (Helsinki)]: Söderström, 2011. – [32] p.

ISBN 978-951-52-2851-2

Friendship – Love – Homosexuality – Old age – Imaginary trip

An unusual mixture of rhymed text, which occasionally sounds old-fashioned due to its syntax, and the caricatured illustrations lends this little book its special charm. Allan and Udo, both retirement age, are a couple in crisis: Udo, a highly decorated fighter pilot, is bitter because no one admires him anymore. When the two fall asleep on the sofa one day, they have the same dream, in which Udo finds Allan to be the cause of his misery. The situation becomes more tense, but in the end the two find their way back to each other. This book is about, among

other things, depression in old age and homosexuality; most generally, though, it is about the power of community, worth more than fame and honour. (Age: 6+)

Norway (Norwegian)

178

Berg, Sunniva Relling

Uffor (Left out)

Oslo: Samlaget, 2011. – 205 p.

ISBN 978-82-521-7902-6

Loneliness – Bullying – Secret – Coming of age

Lea moves with her parents to Ysteøya, an island far out at sea. It is a new beginning for her after having been assaulted by bullies in the city. Mats, Mia, and Arne live on Ysteøya, as well as her neighbour Jonas. Lea tries to befriend all four of them, but quickly finds herself in a conflict – Jonas is being ostracised by the others. No one tells her why. Only months later and shortly before he leaves the island, does Jonas tell her what happened. With its symbolically charged depiction of nature, its concise language, and its focus on the topics of loneliness, keeping silent, trust, and guilt, »Uffor« is a typical Nordic novel. It is also Sunniva Relling Berg's debut work and was quickly nominated for the Brage Prize. Justifiably so. (Age: 14+)

179

Eeg, Harald Rosenløw

Gyldig fravær

(Excused absence)

Oslo: Aschehoug, 2011. – 293 p.

ISBN 978-82-03-25410-9

Explosion – Search for identity

Linguistically, stylistically, and thematically, this book is a genuine Eeg production: fast-paced and dynamic, filled with unusual pictorial language and characters that readers come to like. Initially realistic, but increasingly drifting into the surreal, »Gyldig fravær« tells of five youths' search for identity, of their fears and dreams. The novel opens with a catastrophe: After an explosion, Anjo, Sherpa, Bruno, Ida, and Albert are stuck inside a waggon of the Oslo underground. In this nightmarish, existentialy threatening situation all five young people, as different as they are from one another, become insecure and disoriented. This in turn means that, though temporarily pushed into close contact, in the end each must fend for him – or herself. (Age: 14+)

180

Kaldestad, Per Olav / Bramnes, Hanne (ed.)

Various artists (illus.)

Sølvbåt og Stjernevind. Den nye barnediktboka

(Silverboat and Starwind. A new children's book of rhyme)

Bergen: Mangschou, 2011. – 183 p.

ISBN 978-82-8238-020-1

Poetry

Small but mighty: in recent years Bergen publishing house Mangschou has distinguished itself through its ambitious projects. It is certainly an ambitious idea to produce a companion to the collection of verse »Den store dikt- og regelboka«, an old favourite in Norway. Well-known artists like Hilde Myklebust and Cathrine Grøndal, Øyvind Torseter and Inger Lise Belsvik were enlisted for »Sølvbåt og stjernevind«. The book thus makes possible a stroll through the landscape of current Norwegian authors and illustrators. First and foremost, though, this is an exceptional compendium of illustrated children's verse, at once modern and timeless. Its scope reaches from two-line poems to ballads, from coloured pencil drawings to collage. Thanks to its diversity, it has what it takes to become a classic. (Age: 4+)

181

Moursund, Gry (text/illus.)

Bibbi og Katten

(Bibbi and Cat <proper names>)

[Oslo]: Cappelen Damm, 2011. – [36] p.

ISBN 978-82-02-33411-6

Homecoming – Waiting

This book is a smash! In »Bibbi og Katten«, Gry Moursund presents an everyday situation – waiting for something to occur – in a new, sensational pictorial language. The vivid and flamboyant marker illustrations show the influence of both Walt Disney and Asian art. Bibbi and Katten anxiously await Babba, who is supposed to come home today. They tidy up in a tizzy, bake a cake, and wait. And wait. And think: perhaps Babba is not green anymore, but red? Or perhaps he's married? Bibbi and Katten almost eat up the whole cake from sheer excitement, so that when Babba finally arrives only a few crumbs remain. That doesn't matter to him, though; he gives out his gifts anyhow. Oh yes, and he has hardly changed. Only his tie is new. (Age: 3+)

182

Sætre, Inga H. (text/illus.)

Fallteknikk

(Fall technique)

[Oslo]: Cappelen Damm, 2011. – 230 p.

ISBN 978-82-02-32915-0

Pregnancy – Coming of age

Graphic novels are becoming a trend in Norway, too.

»Fall technique« is about just what the title suggests: how to land well when life throws one out of whack.

The book tells of Rakel, who has just moved away from home to pursue her post-secondary education. At some point she realises that she is pregnant – even though she is not one of those girls who »parties constantly and has slept with 2079 guys«. Rakel's »mothering instinct« does not set in right away, but because no one in her environment judges her harshly, she is able to adjust to her novel circumstances. Rakel's thoughts and her dialogues with others seem authentic and unfiltered. Nothing is exaggerated or melodramatic. The black ink drawings cast onto the page seem sketch-like and unfinished – which suits the protagonist's emotional life. (Age: 14+) (Bragepris 2011)

183

Svingen, Arne

Litt av en plan

(A sort of plan)

[Oslo]: Gyldendal, 2011. – 212 p.

ISBN 978-82-05-40847-0

Dysfunctional family – Siblings

Håkon's casual narrative style masks a story that's in fact very serious: He and his sister Ida find a succinct note stating that their father has found the love of his life and has gone away. They decide to initially not inform the »Dragon« – their grandmother. At first it's paradise being all alone, and life is finally going really well – better at least than it ever did with Papa around. At the same time, though, problems keep arising. Things become increasingly hard, despite the fact that Håkon and his endless talent for excuses always seem to sort things out. Thus, while it might seem that kids are better off alone, in reality it is clear that parents are needed. Parents, however, must also play their proper part. (Age: 9+)

Sweden (Swedish)

184

Adbåge, Lisen (text/illus.)

Stor-Emma

(Big-Emma)

Stockholm: Natur & Kultur, 2011. – [28] p.

ISBN 978-91-27-12958-0

Family – Childhood – Visit

Who hasn't experienced this: One's parents are invited over to a friend's house, so one has to put on a strange outfit and deal with children one hardly knows. Lame! Little-Emma, too, would prefer to stay home and eat chips than play with Big-Emma. No wonder, seeing as how mean Big-Emma is: She plays the boss, gets an extra sausage at dinner, locks Little-Emma in her room, and tells her the house could catch on fire. Not fair! Yet the little one is not defeated so easily, and in the end things are so nice with Big-Emma that she doesn't even want to go home. Lisen Adbåge wholly sides with Little-Emma in this picture book, so that the text and especially the illustrations believably convey how annoying being a kid can sometimes be. (Age: 3+)

185

Lindström, Eva (text/illus.)

Apan och jag

(The monkey and I)

Stockholm: Alfabet, 2011. – [23] p.

ISBN 978-91-501-1293-1

Abandonment – Jealousy – Friendship – Imagination

Suddenly the monkey is gone. At first it was a lark, but now the first-person narrator thinks the matter is serious, since he misses his friend. He imagines all that the monkey could be doing – perhaps he has even found a new friend who suits him better? Eva Lindström's mark – pencil contours and pastel colours – is just as unmistakable as is her sensitive treatment of a topic that big and small people alike are familiar with, namely the fear of abandonment and jealousy. Lindström often pairs text and image in a complementary manner, allowing the first-person narrator to know less than what is revealed in the picture, thereby creating dramatic irony. It is just this discrepancy that lays bare the subjective emotional world of the narrator. (Age: 3+)

186

Nilsson, Frida (text)

Bergting, Peter (illus.)

Ryska Kyssen och den fasansfulla brännaren

(Russian Kiss and the horrible pyromaniac)

Stockholm: Rabén & Sjögren, 2011. – 197 p.

ISBN 978-91-29-67608-2

Pyromania – Criminality – Corruption – Dog

A pyromaniac has the city of Broborg on edge. The police are in the dark, but superhero Ryska Kyssen (Russian Kiss) aka dog-lady Harriet is on the case – after an accident left her equipped with croissant-wings and superpowers. Harriet tracks down the fire starter and uncovers a counterfeit-ring complete with corrupt detective superintendent along the way. The book's back cover promises a »dog-noir detective story«, and indeed, the plot and illustrations have a certain 1940s flair. Frida Nilsson references film noir in her characters and settings and juggles quite well between literary and film genres. The book is not entirely noir, though, since more crazy ideas, original characters, and surprising twists make for a wild and witty story. (Age: 8+)

187

Ohlsson, Sara

Jag är tyvärr död och kan inte komma till skolan idag

(Sorry, I'm dead today and can't come to school)

Stockholm: Gilla Böcker, 2011. – 298 p.

ISBN 978-91-86634-06-3

Love – Sex – Coming of age

John and Olivia are the dream couple, until John breaks up with her. Olivia nearly succumbs to a broken heart, but once her vital spirits return she has fun again – especially with boys. In a self-deprecating, fresh, and also at once slightly hyper and self-conscious way, Olivia talks about her being torn this way and that: On the one hand, she is fascinated by her new crush, who seeks only sexual satisfaction. On the other hand, she has her doubts, since in her social scene, »nice girl« is more acceptable than »slut«. Sex without love – does it work? Olivia gradually comes to see that both can exist apart and that this is alright. (Age: 14+)

Croatia (Croatian)

188

Huseinović, Kašmir (text)

Petrlik Huseinović, Andrea (illus.)

Pice

(Birds)

Zagreb: Kašmir Promet, 2011. – [28] p.

ISBN 978-953-301-018-2

Bird – Ornithology

Two of the most important Croatian picture book makers and publishers here prove that ornithology books dealing with owls, chickens, toucans, flamingos, storks, or penguins can be entertaining and appropriate for children. Each double page introduces a bird with an incisive text and cheerfully hued images that highlight some of the typical traits of the animal, alongside. The text mentions the bird's distribution area, flight characteristics, and the style and purpose of its beak, making each bird simple to distinguish and compare. The easy-to-understand descriptions also mention special characteristics of each bird species: that the owl can turn its head almost full circle, for instance, or that the stork is suspected of delivering babies. Chirp. (Age: 3+)

189

Pilić, Sanja (text)

Barun, Niko (illus.)

Hej, želim ti nešto ispričati!

(Hi, I want to tell you something!)

Zagreb: Mozaik knjiga, 2011. – 120 p.

(Series: Biblioteka Sanja Pilić za mlade)

ISBN 978-953-14-0885-1

School – Everyday life – Siblings – Parents

Croatian children's literature would be poorer without Sanja Pilić's many works and good stories. More than twenty-five books for children and teenagers as well as numerous awards are among her achievements. In 2011, she once more received the Kiklop award in the picture book category and her children's book »Hej, želim ti nešto ispričati!« was also nominated. This volume is a collection of pithy two-page short stories, which disclose partly amusing, partly touching events from children's everyday lives: school, annoying parents, even more annoying siblings, or a secret first love. Short, succinct phrases and catchy staccato-dialogues aptly mirror children's sometimes droll and distorted perception of the world, which makes reading them and particularly reading them aloud such great fun. (Age: 8+)

Czech Republic (Czech)

190

Fučíková, Renáta (text/illus.)

Krolupperová, Daniela (text)

Historie Evropy. Obrazové putování

(Europe's history. A journey in pictures)

Praha: Práh, 2011. – 447 p.

ISBN 978-80-7252-339-9

Europe/History – Europe/Cultural history

Europe is old, large, and multi-faceted. Therefore it seems daring to initiate a book about the entire history of Europe from its stone-age beginnings to the 1990s. In order to create this informative, varied, and exceptional volume of 447 pages, the project needed an illustrator as talented as Renáta Fučíková. The book's seventy chapters highlight special achievements in the political, clerical, cultural, and scientific history of Europe as well as its everyday reality. They are accompanied by illustrations rendered in Fučíková's trademark style of rich colours and a wealth of details with speech bubbles and continuous text alternating. Short blocks of information and a continuing timeline complement this concise and enthralling »journey in pictures«. (Age: 10+) ♦ ●

191

Ježková, Alena (text)

Ikkarin (= Nikkarin) (illus.)

Dračí polévka

(Dragon soup)

Praha: Albatros 2011. – 93 p.

ISBN 978-80-00-02757-9

Immigration – Foreignness –

Search for identity – Single-parent family

Eleven-year-old Long has adjusted well to his situation: he is growing up as an immigrant child with his mother and grandfather in Prague. At home, he watches Vietnamese television and loves the dragon legend his mother tells him. At school, Long is called »Lada« and well integrated. When suddenly the boy's estranged father shows up, everything changes. Overwhelmed, Long runs away – to search for his own identity. A master of the fairytale genre, Alena Ježková weaves together in this novel mythical narrative moments with the current topic of immigration in the Czech Republic. The sensitive and poetic drawings attest to Nikkarin's rank as a star of the comics scene, wonderfully reflecting contemporary European life as well as Asian legendary tradition in terms of both motifs and colours. (Age: 10+) ♦

192

Pilátová, Markéta (text)

Michalík, Daniel (illus.)

Kiko a tajemství papírového motýla

(Kiko and the secret of the paper butterfly)

Praha: Meander 2010. – 67 p.

(Series: Modrý slon; 35)

ISBN 978-80-86283-81-4

Language barrier – Ostracism – Interculturality

Kiko and her father have moved to the Czech Republic. They live at Kroměříž Archbishop's Palace, where her father works in the library. In the Czech Republic, the Japanese girl gets acquainted with different family structures and unfamiliar everyday life and is confronted with a foreign language, which, despite some tentative friendships, alienates her from others. Thus Kiko's origami art and imagination turn into an important anchor for her and eventually become a wonderful key for understanding. Markéta Pilátová has written a sensitive story about otherness and how to overcome it. The author weaves a fantastical legend connected to the castle of Kroměříž into the plot set in today's globalised world, and makes her protagonist Kiko grow emotionally through experiences in both worlds. (Age: 10+) ♦

193

Rezková, Milada (text)

Urbánek, Lukáš (illus.)

Babočky

(Butterflies)

Praha: Raketa/Labyrint, 2010. – [68] p.

ISBN 978-80-86803-19-7

Superhero – Summer – Holidays

In 2010, an astonishing new animal species was discovered in the Czech Republic: super butterflies! The equally astonishing illustrator Lukáš Urbánek has meticulously documented and portrayed these heroic insects' character and behaviour. Following their successful post-modern-ish crossover titles featuring »Doktor Racek«, Urbánek and Milada Rezková in their latest cooperation now focus on butterflies that work as superheroes. By keeping the kiosk at the swimming pool bug-free, for example, or tying cherries together so that children can easily dangle them from their ears, they make the summer, and above all the school holidays, more enjoyable for everyone. It's the colourful and cheerful illustrations in particular that explain why summer is the best season and who is responsible for it. (Age: 3+)

194

Škállová, Alžběta (text/illus.)

Pampe a Šinka

(Pampe and Šinka <proper names>)

[Řevnice]: Arbor vitae, 2010. – [72] p.

ISBN 978-80-87164-46-4

Friendship – Social behaviour – Community

Illustrating books with colour pencils? In this book, young Alžběta Škállová, who managed to rake in the most important Czech awards in 2010/2011, proves that telling stories with children's favourite »scribbling tools« works perfectly well. The illustrator creates her mouse-like protagonists, Pampe and Šinka, in an enchantingly naïve style. The miniature creatures, who have been issued with cute fur-overalls, live in a drawer. Short episodes recount how much fun it is to share life with others and become friends, but they also show the meaning and importance of fights. Škállová devises their world within the confines of a single room and includes innumerable visual details, some of which readers will only discover when reading the book for the second or third time. (Age: 4+)

Estonia (Estonian)

195

Jancis, Kaspar (text/illus.)

Seiklus Salamandril ehk Morten Viksi uskumatud juhtumised lollide laevas

(Adventure at Salamander or Morten Viks on the Ship of Fools)

[Tallinn]: Menu, 2010. – 96 p. + CD

ISBN 978-9949-9049-7-6

Maritime traffic – Miniature boy – Expedition

Kaspar Jancis is a jack-of-all-media: Enjoying an international reputation as creator of animated cartoons, he has created his very own maritime fairy tale starring tiny Tom-Thumb-like Morton Viks. Jancis has not only written the tale, illustrated it, and recorded a CD for it with his band; he has also put it on stage. Both the illustrations and the Dixieland music accompanying the book evoke a nostalgic atmosphere reminiscent of the humour and slapstick of silent movies that provides the frame for Morten's ludicrous adventures at sea. The boy, clad in a sailor shirt, sips from the magical drink of a weird tailcoat-wearing wizard cockroach and shrinks to the size of a finger nail. Thus he suddenly fits perfectly on his toy ship and embarks on an expedition with the harebrained crew of insects. (Age: 8+)

196

Mildeberg, Jüri (text/illus.)

Putkamissu

(Putkamissu, the kiosk)

Tallinn: Tallinna Raamatutrukikoja, 2011. – [26] p.

ISBN 978-9949-21-559-1

Hat – Head covering – Pun

This award-winning picture book is secretive. The text and the illustrations pull the reader in, without revealing what they are really about. In this way, they create a wide realm for musing. That said, »Putkamissu« is about all manner of head coverings ... and also about Jüri, who likes hats and gives them special names. For instance, the »kioskap« in the book's title suggests reconceiving the tip of a beret as a little house in which an entire life unfolds. Wordplays such as this one on the one hand and a pictorial zoom-in technique on the other are the tools Jüri Mildeberg, one of Estonia's most important illustrators, uses to direct our gaze to the diverse ways in which the world may be perceived. In the process, that world is also opened up to the absurd and the mystical. (Age: 7+)

Latvia (Latvian)

197

Zvirgzdiņš, Juris (text)

Pētersons, Reinis (illus.)

Mufa. Stāsts par Āfrikas balto degunradzēnu

(Mufa <proper name>. The tale of a White Rhinoceros)

Rīga: Liels un mazs, 2011. – [93] p.

ISBN 978-9984-820-32-2

Zoo – Rhinoceros – Friendship – Courage – Adventure trip – Africa

White Rhino Mufa leads a miserable life in the zoo as an orphan until student Ibu starts looking after him. The temporary zoo keeper teaches the animal how to read and speak, and when they both set off on a journey to Mufa's home country Kenya, he even shows him how to ice skate on the Baltic Sea. After a stopover in France, the little rhino eventually arrives in Africa. Using all the skills he learned from Ibu, he bravely stands up for the local animals and finds his place in the world. As one of Latvia's most renowned writers, Juris Zvirgzdiņš serves as guarantor for the tale's high quality. The gouache illustrations by award-winning young artist Reinis Pētersons add a modern drive to the story, visible for example in the specially created »road map« of Mufa's journey. (Age: 9+)

Lithuania (Lithuanian)

198

Palčinskaitė, Violeta (text)

Eitmantytė-Valužienė, Lina (illus.)

Muzika troliui. Apysaka, skirta visiems, kurie ilgisi nuotykiu

(The music of the trolls. A tale for everyone who is longing for adventure)

Vilnius: Nieko Rimto, 2011. – 94 p. + CD

ISBN 978-609-441-004-8

Troll – Music – Grieg, Edvard – Self-confidence

»Muzika troliui« by Violeta Palčinskaitė, one of the most well-known children's book authors in her home country, was published to wide acclaim in Lithuania and is considered one of the most important new releases. The tale of a small, fearful piano player in distant Norway breathes a mystical musicality that touches readers. The power of music is not only the tale's topic. Rather, by moving the setting of the story to Norway with its trolls, fjords, its sublime landscapes, and its loneliness, the author creates a visual sounding box that makes the readers' imagination resonate and invites them to explore this magical world. Edvard Grieg's music provides the ideal access to this world – as is suggested both in the text and on the accompanying CD, which contains some of the Norwegian composer's piano pieces. (Age: 8+)

Poland (Polish)

199

Chmielewska, Iwona (text/illus.)

Pamiętnik Blumki

(Blumka's diary)

Warszawa: Media Rodzina 2011. – 64 p.

ISBN 978-83-7278-572-5

(German parallel ed.: Blumkas Tagebuch. Hannover: Gimpel Verlag)

Poland/1911-1940 – Korczak, Janusz – Orphanage – Pedagogy

Poland's 2011 picture book of the year flows from the quill of the wonderful Iwona Chmielewska, an illustrator celebrated in Poland and Korea and decorated with international awards. In simple, softly coloured, moving drawings, Blumka's diary tells the story of a/the? Jewish orphanage in Warsaw managed by doctor and pedagogue Janusz Korczak beginning in 1911. Little Blumka's

fictional diary entries concisely, carefully, and lovingly convey the personalities of the orphaned children and warmly and naïvely describe Korczak and his pedagogy. Chmielewska's pictures are especially powerful in their fragility and innocence, quietly alluding to the tragic fate of Korczak and the children, murdered later on in the gas chambers of the Nazis. (Age: 9+) ♦

200

Papuzińska, Joanna (text)

Krygowska-Butlewska, Elżbieta (illus.)

Krasnoludki pucybutki

(The boot-polishing elves)

Poznań: Mila, 2011. – [36] p.

(Series: Perełki mili)

ISBN 978-83-926565-6-2

Elf – Helpfulness – Imagination

Small editions with short tales such as »The Boot-polishing Elves« are often the ones that stay in people's minds as their favourite childhood read. Joanna Papuzińska's tale, in which little Antek takes in a group of shivering elves he found on the streets, is quiet and therefore particularly attractive. In return for Antek's favour, the elves secretly polish the boots of his family. It is Antek's sister Olenka who eventually discovers how the little folk manage to get the shoes so shiny: They use them as slides and play on them until they are clean. Plenty of interspersed rhyming verses and a witty, metaphorical language – plus the small pointy-hatted elves that climb all over the text – result in an enchanting and entertaining tale. (Age: 4+)

201

Szczygielski, Marcin

Czarny młyn

(The black mill)

Warszawa: Stentor, 2011. – [246] p.

(Series: Kora)

ISBN 978-83-61245-64-3

Country life – Remoteness – Decline – Social criticism – Mysticism

Marcin Szczygielski, one of the most promising authors of Polish children's literature, wrote Poland's young adult novel of the year in 2010, the computer game odyssey »Omega«; in addition, he also received an award for his manuscript of »Czarny młyn«. In his teenage books, Szczygielski imbues the seemingly normal world with uncanny, inexplicable, and fantastic elements that inevitably draw readers into the story. »Czarny młyn« is the

sociocritical horror story about a bleak, isolated village where a group of teenagers are the only people to notice and observe some strange and increasingly dangerous goings-on. The novel's atmosphere of derelict factory grounds and claustrophobic wasteland becomes more and more frightening for the readers but also makes them read on breathlessly. (Age: 12+)

202

Wechterowicz, Przemysław (text)

Ignerska, Marta (illus.)

Alfabet

(Alphabet)

Kraków: Znak 2011. – [52] p.

(Series: Emotikon)

ISBN 978-83-240-1532-0

(French parallel ed.: L'Alphabet des gens.

Rodez: Ed. du Rouergue)

Alphabet – Body – Body language

Following their cooperation for the picture book »Wielkie marzenia« (Big dreams), Przemysław Wechterowicz and Marta Ignerska have now joined forces to create an ABC book. Each double page of this »human alphabet« shows a letter on the left hand side and the transformation of this letter into a (mostly) human pose or movement on the right hand side. B is turned into a pair of buttocks, H into two hand-shaking people, and K into a wolf's gaping jaws. Typically unorthodox and sweeping in the representation of figurative proportions, Marta Ignerska develops a »body language« in its literal sense. This inspires readers to take a special look at the visual shape of the letters, while at the same time, Wechterowicz's short accompanying phrases hint at the linguistic possibilities of shaping the ABC. (Age: 5+)

Russia (Russian)

(Romanisation according to RAK-WB

[German cataloguing rules])

203

Čechov, Anton (text)

Kormer, Tat'jana (illus.)

Kaštanka <proper name>

Moskva: Samokat, 2011. – 36 p.

ISBN 978-5-91759-007-3

Dog – Getting lost – Circus – Faithfulness

Čechov's touching story about the amiable red-haired bitch Kaštanka is familiar to everyone in Russia. Told from the alienated perspective of the dog, the story follows Kaštanka as she gets lost, is picked up on the streets, and is trained to perform at the circus. At her first performance, her former owner recognises her and takes Kaštanka back home. Multi-award-winning Tat'jana Kormer, member of the »Magic Saw«, the creative forge of Russian illustrators, makes ingenious use of the historical method of chromolithography to return to Čechov's times. She contrasts the dominant black-and-white of the pictures with the reddish brown dainty dabs of colour of the equally dainty dog. Thus she manages to visualise the seemingly insecure, delicate nature of the creature as well as her feelings. (Age: 6+)

204

Givargizov, Artur (text)

Jaskina, Natal'ja (illus.)

Kak-to ja letel s rjabiny

(Somehow I tumbled down the rowan tree)

Moskva: Izd. dom Meščerjakova, 2011. – [61] p.

(Series: Stich i štrich)

ISBN 978-5-91045-310-8

Rogue – Trick – Poetry

Typically Givargizov! Obstreperously, brashly, and meatily as usual, one of the most important Russian children's book authors talks about children's daily lives in anecdotic poems. Readers will laugh at little Sergej, who almost tumbled from a rowan tree and now greets passers-by while dangling upside-down from a branch with his shirt round his ears. Givargizov's well-known humorous dialogues are also prevalent here, e.g. in the prank call from a pupil who overslept, to the school's director. Young illustrator Natal'ja Jaskina (born 1985), who already illustrated some titles for the Russian-Austrian publishing house Meščerjakov, creates enchantingly lively settings for this poetry. The reduced palette of matt

colours and the black outlines of pictorial elements are reminiscent of illustrations from the 1960s. (Age: 7+)

205

Starobinec, Anna (text)

Silina, Ekaterina (illus.)

Kotlantida

(Catlantis <pun>)

Moskva: Mir Detstva Media 2011. – 118 p.

ISBN 978-5-9993-0084-3

Cat – Time travel – Quest

House cat Baguette has a special ability: he can time-travel. He uses this know-how to bring cats the life-giving flowers of the legendary island of Catlantis, the cradle of all cat species. Along the way, Baguette uncovers the secret of the miracle flowers and thereby breaks a medieval curse that was robbing cats of their nine lives. Journalist and fantasy author Anna Starobinec stocks her children's book with unexpected twists and turns as well as with other key ingredients for a suspenseful story:

There is, for example, a powerful cat opponent and the love of a beautiful lady cat. Humorous feline puns, such as »catastrophe« and »Catlantis« combine with the always skilful illustrations of Ekaterina Silina to round out this story. (Age: 8+)

206

Verkin, Éduard (text)

Sedova, Ja. (illus.)

Drug april'. Povest'

(My friend April. A story)

Moskva: Igra slov, 2011. – 318 p.

ISBN 978-5-9918-0048-8

Provincial area – Country life – Socialisation – Monotony – Despondency

Rural Russia often means no electricity, high unemployment, and desolation. That is where Aksén, his brothers, and his alcoholic mother live. The promising city of Moscow is far away, and the hopelessness of his everyday life makes the boy both aggressive and melancholic. Waiting for the month of April when Aksén's true love Uljana will be returning, becomes Aksén's only ray of hope. Yet through pithy narration on different time levels, Éduard Verkin shows that the boy hopes in vain for a reunion and a better life with Uljana. However, providing a last glimpse into Aksén's future, the award-winning novel releases its readers from the suppressing atmosphere: Eventually Aksén will manage to leave his messed-up existence behind. (Age: 14+)

207

Volkova, Ol'ga (text)

Gerasimova, Dar'ja (illus.)

V'etnamki v panamkach <pun>

(Vietnamese women in panama hats <pun>)

Moskva: Rozovyj žiraf 2011. – 47 p.

ISBN 978-5-903497-36-2

Pun – Homonym – Homograph – Homophone

Playing with language and linguistic phenomena can be a lot of fun. That's what the young publishing house Rozovyj žiraf (Pink Giraffe) thought, too; thus they bravely published a non-fiction book for children about homonyms, homophones, and co. »A word with two different meanings« (homonym) or »Two words that sound the same but are spelled differently« (homophone) – whereas such dry theoretical explanations tend to frighten people off, Ol'ga Volkova and young illustrator Dar'ja Gerasimova employ entertaining examples to shed light on the meaning behind them. In rhymes and visual comparisons, they describe things comprehensibly, realistically, and in a way appropriate for children. Thus, readers will discover quickly that, in Russian, flip-flops and Vietnamese women are closely related – on a purely linguistic level. (Age: 10+)

Slovakia (Slovak)

208

Hevier, Daniel (text/illus.)

Xaver s nohami do X

(X-legged Xaver)

Bratislava: Perfekt 2010. – 62 p.

ISBN 978-80-8046-491-2

Alphabet – School – X – Pun

This book is all about the letter X. Xaver is cross-legged, friends with Xenia, learns about xenophobia and hails from the BaKsá family, which houses a great affection for this letter. The reader follows Xaver to his new school, where the school song is a rap and other peculiarities come to light as well. Daniel Hevier, a wizard at wordplay, constructs texts and images full of special detail. For instance, X functions metaphorically as the crossover point for events in the plot, while knock knees and crossed pencils graphically dominate the illustrations. The book provides great pleasure in terms of its narrative stance, too: The storyteller Hevier communicates intensively with his readers and at the end of the

book presents the text's structure in a witty table of contents with summaries of each chapter, of which there are of course X. (Age: 8+)

209

Jobus, Branislav (text)

Derevenec, Igor (illus.)

Muflón Ancijáš a jeho spanilá jazda

(Mouflon Ancijáš and his gallant journey)

Bratislava: Slovart 2010. – 118 p.

ISBN 978-80-556-0177-9

Trucker – World tour – Adventure trip – Open-mindedness

So far, mouflons have been terribly neglected as animal protagonists in children's literature. Luckily enough, rock musician Branislav Jobus has noticed their great potential. His mouflon Ancijáš cuts a cool figure as a trucker who sets off on a road trip around the world. He and his sunglasses-wearing trucker colleague, a worm, deliver goods everywhere and thus experience foreign rites, customs, and curiosities. Playing with familiar clichés, Jobus has Ancijáš locked up as reputed criminal in New York's Bronx and affords him a lucky escape from South American cannibals, who are lusting after human beings rather than mouflons. Ancijáš's magnificent journey is visualised in Igor Derevenec's pictures that capture both the boldness of trucker life and the kindness of the mouflon. (Age: 8+)

Slovenia (Slovenian)

210

Golob, Tadej (text)

Horjak, Ciril (illus.)

Zlati Zob

(The Golden Tooth)

Ljubljana: Mladinska knjiga, 2011. – 314 p.

(Series: Knjižnica Sinjega galeba; 331)

ISBN 978-961-01-1566-3

Hiking – Treasure hunt – Adventure – Trust

Tadej Golob knows what he is writing about. At least he knows exactly what kind of thrill he and other mountaineers, along with many teenagers, are longing to read about: jagged rock walls, deep crevices, dark caves with hidden treasure, and sinister legends surrounding the mountain world. It's no wonder that the renowned author-cum-journalist's first teenage novel is bursting with tension and adrenalin and radiating the delightful

horror of the sublime. Yet Golob does not simply send his teenage protagonists Tomaž, Peter, and Tina on a treasure hunt for the »Zlati Zob« (Golden Tooth); instead, he tells an almost parable-like story of friendship, team spirit, trust in others, and judgement of character – indispensable skills for climbing in (and into) unknown terrain. (Age: 14+)

211

Pavček, Tone (text)

Bricelj, Suzi (illus.)

Po morju plava kit. Izmišljeno resnična pesnitev

(A whale swims in the sea. An imagined true poem)

Dob pri Domžalah: Miš, 2010. – [36] p.

ISBN 978-961-272-026-1

Whale – Faithfulness – Integrity – Self-esteem

The great Tone Pavček died in 2011. For this verse narrative, in which he displays all his talent one last time, he has created wonderfully vibrant verses that effortlessly vary in tone from humorous to serious. The tale about a whale in the bay of Piran is told in an anecdotal style but, at the same time, it also issues a warning. The whale is loved and courted by the people – not least because they hope to increase tourism. When the initial euphoria turns into disinterest, the whale disappears into other seas. Wistful but also full of dignity, he returns one last time, then leaves forever. This parable-like story, accompanied by Suzi Bricelj's tender pictures, was nominated as picture book of the year 2011 – and rightly so. (Age: 5+)

Ukraine (Ukrainian)

(Romanisation according to RAK-WB

[German cataloguing rules])

212

Savka, Mar'jana (text)

Štanko, Volodymyr (illus.)

Kazka pro Staroho Leva

(The fairy tale of the old lion)

L'viv: Vydavnytvo Staroho Leva, 2011. – [40] p.

ISBN 978-966-2909-75-3

Lviv – Hospitality – Lion – City life

The secret capital of the Ukrainian children's book is L'viv, the »City of lions,« where the Vydavnytvo Staroho Leva (»The Old Lion« publishing house) is located, which stands for high quality children's literature in

Ukraine. So of course the »Fairytale of the old lion« takes place in that very city. With stone ancestors and relatives in many cities of the world, a friendly representative of the large cat species has chosen to live in Lviv, with a view of City Hall from his window. He invites his best friends to the city: the pretentious giraffe, the big shot crocodile, and the awkward elephant. Mar'jana Savka tells of their curious adventures in delectable rhymed verse. Just as appealingly, the drawings of the young Volodymyr Štanko lend a slap-stick note to the animal capers while creating an affectionate portrait of the historically and culturally rich city. (Age: 4+)

213

Ščavurs'kyj, Borys (ed.)

Romanyšyn, Romana / Lesiv, Andrij (illus.)

Rukavyčka. Ukraïns'ka narodna kazka

(The Glove. A Ukrainian folk tale)

Ternopil': Navčal'na Knyha - Bohdan, 2011. – [24] p.

ISBN 978-966-10-2070-1

Living together – Community – Glove – Folk tale

Romana Romanyšyn and Andrij Lesiv are the latest discovery from Ukraine. Following various commissions, the two graphic designers of the studio Agraška have now ventured to create their own children's book and re-illustrated a folk tale. The tale about a lost glove, into which several animals move one by one, is a plain traditional story. The graphic illustrations created from collages and drawings – and completely atypical for Ukrainian books – provide a modern contrast to the text. They add witty twists to the plot, e.g. when each of the glove's current inhabitants appears in the text through its own icon. The grand finale is the view inside the glove-house: The mouse lives in the thumb-kitchen, the rabbit with its carrot in the little finger, and the plump bear in the palm-sized living room. Adorned with a glove-like plush cover and a colouring sheet, »Rukavyčka« is an exceptional book, that has received several awards and mentions (e.g. at the BIB 2011), and deservedly so. (Age: 3+)

★ Special Mention

Belgium (Dutch)

214

De Vlieger, Evelien

De bovenkamer van Jakob

(The bats in Jakob's belfry)

Tielt: Lannoo, 2011. – 199 p.

ISBN 978-90-209-9589-3

Mother – Son – Friendship – Mental disorder

Jakob is eleven years old and a naive dreamer with one foot in the real world and the other in the world of his imagination. Together with his mother, he moves onto the grounds of a psychiatric institute, of which she is the director. Jakob makes remarkable friends there, like the giant patient Mister Radboud and Mira, the manipulative daughter of a depressive mother. Slowly the voices in Jakob's mind get louder and louder, until he seems to be swallowed by them himself. By openly addressing mental disorders, this book discusses a daring subject. The relationship between Jakob and his mother (the concept of »attachment« is prominently present) is intriguing, as are Jakob's thoughts about the psychiatric patients. Even though the story remains a little abstract, the characters themselves are described very vividly. (Age: 12+)

215

Dewitte, Jan (text)

Vlerick, Freya (illus.)

Rare snuiters. Een prenten- en gedichtenboek

(Odd animals. A picture- and poetry book)

Gent : Poëziecentrum, 2011. – [36] p. + CD

ISBN 978-90-5655-104-9

Animals – Poetry

»Rare snuiters« is an extraordinary picture and verse book that is explicitly aimed at people with a visual handicap and children with dyslexia. The short, humorous poems are about animals, one for each letter of the alphabet, ranging from 'Aap' (monkey) to 'Zwaan' (swan). The top of each page contains a silhouette of the animal, set out in relief, and features the name of the animal in Braille. The poet even found a solution for tough letters (like X and Y), although this required some creativity; an example is the X-osaurogoat that lived long ago. The illustrations are large-planned and have an atmospheric, yet high-contrast colour scheme. This ensures that visually impaired people can view them as well. Moreover, all the images can be felt because set in relief. The photos of human eyes that have been incorporated into every

Other Languages

image literally add a special touch. The poems themselves are not offered in Braille, but can be listened to via the included CD. (Age: 8+) ★ Special Mention

216

Sax, Aline (text)

Strzelecki, Caryl (illus.)

De kleuren van het getto

(The colours of the ghetto)

Wielsbeke: De Eenhoorn, 2011. – 176 p.

ISBN 978-90-5838-736-3

World War II – Warsaw – Ghetto – Resistance

Warsaw, October 1940. The district where Misja lives is turned into a ghetto. Soon people can hardly leave the ghetto anymore, while more and more Jews are being brought in. Misja has to watch silently how his family loses their house, their money, and all their other valuables. This is only the beginning, though, because not much later the deportations begin. Misja does not want to surrender that easily, so he decides to join others and resist. This book describes how the Warsaw ghetto arose, how life was for a Jewish boy there, the misery and the tension, the cold, the hunger, the desperation, the repulsive attitude of the soldiers, and the secret resistance movement. The many illustrations in black and white and the extraordinary design of the text make the story very vivid. (Age: 9+)

217

Van Den Berg, Leen (text)

Vermeire, Kaatje (illus.)

De vraag van Olifant

(The question of the elephant)

Wielsbeke: De Eenhoorn, 2011. – [28] p.

ISBN 978-90-5838-723-3

Animals – Love – Philosophy

This story starts off with a big illustration of an elephant, sadly sitting with a chair on his head and a flower curled in his trunk. The elephant presents a tough question to a large committee: How do you know if someone loves you? The impatient ant, leading the meeting, gives the floor to Mouse, little Snow White, a stone, a tramp, an explorer, and many others. The meeting ends when they have found a satisfying answer together, so everybody can go home. Presenting many different but no definitive answers, the author gives young children a lot of material to philosophise about. The pictures combine graphic art and painting. The soft colour accents are truthful, as are the characters, who are portrayed rather more realistically than fantastically. (Age: 5+)

The Netherlands (Dutch)

218

Bos, Tamara (text)

Haeringen, Annemarie van (illus.)

Papa, hoor je me?

(Daddy, do you hear me?)

Amsterdam: Leopold, 2011. – 43 p.

ISBN 978-90-258-5827-8

Family – Death – Mourning –

Coping with grief – Father – Son

Polle talks to his father. He tells him that his mother has been crying a bit and that his brother Dajo has been sitting in his room alone. It is quiet at home now since his father has gone away, even though he is still lying in the bed brought home from the hospital. Polle describes how his father became sick. It seemed like a drawn-out game of Stratego. With the help of doctors and medicines, his father fought against the assailants attacking his body, determined not to lose. But one of the little soldiers lay waiting in ambush and Polle's father lost the battle. This beautiful and gripping story about illness, decrepitude, and death is told using language accessible to children. The author does not need complicated words to portray strong emotion. The magnificent yet simple illustrations in red and blue complete the book. (Age: 8+)

219

Dijkstra, Lida (text)

Thé, Tjong-Khing (illus.)

Verhalen voor de vossenbroertjes.

Het langverwachte vervolg op

Van den Vos Reynaerde

(Stories for the little fox brothers. The long-expected sequel to Reynard the Fox)

Amsterdam: Pimento, 2011. – 125 p.

ISBN 978-90-499-2468-3

Fox – Lie – Malice – Cunning

Lida Dijkstra has written a very original sequel to the famous medieval epos »Reynaert de Vos« (Reynard the Fox), imagining the whereabouts of the fox's family from the moment they are left without their father. Taking the perspective of the young foxes, Dijkstra describes in short, rhythmic lines how they form an image of their father living in exile. The well-known pranks are back, but Dijkstra manages to add some successful new ones. The story is not told in verse, but the words are nevertheless remarkably sonorous. The author plays with alliterations, new imagery, and sometimes a consciously chosen archaic

word or phrase. A good proportion of humour is also present. The illustrations fit the story seamlessly, while at times adding their own interpretation of events. (Age: 10+)

220

Hof, Marjolijn (text)

Josephus Jitta, Ceseli (illus.)

Zwaan laat het waaien

(Swan let it slide)

Amsterdam [et al.]: Querido, 2011. – [28] p.

ISBN 978-90-451-1281-7

Birth – Weather – Wind

Zwaan will become a mother soon and wants Leon, the father, to come home from his sea journey. Leon would love to, but there is no wind to bring him home. Zwaan tries her best to make the wind blow to her house on an island. The collages show various methods to create wind. Blowing causes wind, farting does too, but these ways are far from enough. That is why Zwaan decides to build a big wind-generating contraption, in which children can recognise things that all have something to do with moving air: a wind instrument, a bicycle pump, or a mixer, for example. Images and text are mutually enhancing in this great picture book in oblong shape. Readers will have no choice but to suspend their disbelief. Ceseli Josephus Jitta makes use of various techniques to create her beautiful collages. (Age: 5+)

221

Jonge, Harm de

Vuurbom. De geschiedenis van een vriendschap

(Fire bomb. The history of a friendship)

Houten: Van Goor, 2011. – 150 p.

ISBN 978-90-00-30329-8

Accident – Amnesia – Friendship

Thirteen-year-old Jimmy is in the hospital. He doesn't remember anything that happened, but he is sure that his friend Bram's death is his fault. After all, Jimmy was the one who threw the fire bomb. Jimmy tells a nurse named Agnes about his friendship with Bram, about his classmates and his teacher Miss Asnevoer. As the story progresses, it becomes more and more clear that Bram used Jimmy to test out his games and experiments. The compelling and exciting story slowly reveals what exactly happened before Jimmy ended up in the hospital. The short chapters, continuously switching between past and present, which are distinguished by different fonts, build up the suspense. (Age: 12+)

222

Lieshout, Ted van (text/illus.)

Driedelig paard. Blokgedichten, beeldsonnetten en tekeningen

(Horse in three parts. Block poems, picture sonnets, and drawings)

Amsterdam: Leopold, 2011. – 87 p.

ISBN 978-90-258-5780-6

Poetry

This volume contains many different kinds of poetry, verbal poems, visual poems, and block poems, which combine both: the text block as visual poetic form and the verbal content. The combination of poetical forms and media provides for an exciting reading experience. In the first part, a boy writes a letter to his grandmother, and she writes back to him in the last part. In between, there are lots of other texts, ranging from complaint letters to newsletters to scribbles. Together they form a humorous panoply that tweaks reality and fiction. Different characters are writing each time, yet slowly it becomes clear that all of them are contributing to the story about the boy and his family. This book is exquisitely designed, featuring different fonts, colour illustrations of objects and page-filling photos of strictly structured tomatoes, spoons, and radishes, for example. (Age: 12+)

223

Schmitz, Jowij

Ik heet Olivia en daar kan ik ook niets aan doen

(My name is Olivia and I can't change that)

Rotterdam: Lemniscaat, 2011. – 176 p.

ISBN 978-90-477-0349-5

Single-parent family – Mourning – Coping with grief

After Olivia's mother died, the ten-year-old girl moved with her father from Friesland to another part of the Netherlands. They now live in a boat in the garden of a barber shop where Olivia's father works. Olivia finds it hard to fit in with the rest of her classmates and has only one friend named Sasha. Her father cries a lot, but finds consolation with Sonja, who lives above the barber shop. However, Olivia does not accept Sonja. She misses her grandfather and grandmother, puberty has set in and she does not know how to cope with all these things. The book portrays in a touching way how the girl feels totally lost after her mother's death. The reader can sense the underlying emotions and tensions. Nevertheless, the author manages to write in a light-hearted fashion, even adding a little humour every now and then. (Age: 11+)

Other Languages

224

Timmers, Leo (illus.)

Boem

(Bang)

Amsterdam [et al.]: Querido, 2011. – [40] p.

ISBN 978-90-451-1292-3

Car accident

This wordless picture book tells the story of a moose that reads a book titled »Boem« (Bang) while driving. The moose causes a pile-up when he crashes into a trash can (filled with books that look suspiciously like the book the moose has been reading). The number of cars that crash into the pile-up keeps rising. Every vehicle carries some sort of special cargo and each of the drivers has a different reason to be distracted. The oblong picture book has beautiful illustrations, interspersed by pages that contain a balloon saying »Boem« while lots of items hurtle through the air. The book ends with four fold-out pages that portray the whole pile-up. The illustrations are extremely funny and detail-oriented and will challenge parents to join in the make-believe along with their children. (Age: 4+)

225

Visser, Derk

Prikkeldraad

(Barbed wire)

Haarlem: Gottmer, 2011. – 189 p.

ISBN 978-90-257-5002-2

Parents – Daughter – Siblings – Friendship

Chelsea, age fifteen, lives in the big city, in a neighbourhood like every other. Her father's pub went bankrupt after a national »no smoking rule« was applied to all pubs. Chelsea's parents argue all the time. She is jealous of her sister Jewel, who seems to be better at everything than Chelsea. The family of Chelsea's friend Jennifer also has a considerable number of problems. On top of all this hardship, a terrible accident occurs. Luckily for Chelsea there is Mickey, who recognises her potential to be a great singer. The story is written in a rough, but fair style. Fighting, cheating, and jealousy are common events, and the characters are all portrayed vividly; these elements together make the story feel real. After all the sadness, the book's ending offers a glimmer of hope in a tough world. (Age: 13+)

The Netherlands (Frisian)

226

Wadman, Thys (text) / Stenvert, Natascha (illus.)

De bistehoel fan Omke Roel

(The pigsty of Uncle Ralph)

Ljouwert [Leeuwarden]: Afûk, 2011. – [50] p. + CD

(Series: Aksjeboek foar bern; 25)

ISBN 978-90-6273-880-9

Animals – Music

This beautiful illustrated book contains a collection of new stories based on songs published in the 1980s and '90s. These songs, very popular then as now, are incorporated into an exciting story about Marthe and her brother Gauke. They discover a mysterious house outside their village where many animals live together with a man, Uncle Roel. One day he falls off the roof and Aunt Hinkel, a district nurse, comes to the rescue. She also loves the animals and takes care of them and of Uncle Roel, resulting in a happy ending with a wedding party. A CD with performances of the songs is included. (Age: 5+)

Ireland (Irish)

227

Nic Con Iomaire, Nuala (text)

O'Malley, Donough (illus.)

An coileach codlatach

(The sleepy rooster)

An Spidéal, Co. na Gaillimhe: Futa Fata, 2011. – [28] p.

ISBN 978-1-906907-28-0

Cock – Sleepiness – Farmer – Anger – Dog – Role reversal

Cáilín the rooster loves his busy farm. The amiable fowl enjoys babysitting the lambs, reading good-night stories to the chicks, or sharing a late-night cuppa and some gossip with the geese. If only he didn't find it almost impossible to get up in the mornings for his actual job: the wake-up call. Neither sleeping masks, nor ear muffs help – Cáilín stays awake half the night and oversleeps again and again. Without early riser Grágán, the guard dog, no one would wake up in time to get all the farm work done. The angry farmer is therefore resolved to get rid of his »lazy« rooster. The humorous and heart-warming story is accompanied by energetic colour-pencil illustrations. With a few vivid strokes, the illustrator perfectly captures the characters' moods and the tale's pivotal moment as well as the unusual solution at the end. (4+)

Hungary (Hungarian)

228

Dávid, Ádám (text)

Rubik, Anna (illus.)

A virág utcai focibajnokság.**Meseregény négy tételben**

(The football league on Flower Street.

A fairy-tale novel in four parts)

Budapest: Pagony, 2011. – 99 p.

ISBN 978-615-5023-46-0

Grandmother – Grandson – Old age – Death – Football

This humorous, snappy children's novel is about a normal family with three children and the life and death of their marvellous grandmother. She plays the prominent role in this open-minded story centred around football and competition. Once herself queen of goal-keeping, she now trains the Baby Tooth Tiger team. She referees the games from her balcony and distributes red and yellow cards at the breakfast table. The Baby Tooth Tigers win the match with the support of the grandmother, who is deathly ill yet appears on the field in her wheelchair, like a *deus ex machina*. But not everything can be so easily solved: In the end the grandmother dies, surrounded by her family, and the tears of her grandson show that this is an entirely natural event. The caricatured drawings greatly contribute to the book's success. (Age: 10+)

229

Finy, Petra (text)

Szegedi, Katalin (illus.)

Maja tizenkét babája

(Maja's twelve dolls)

Budapest: Pagony, 2011. – 61 p.

ISBN 978-615-5023-49-1

Grandmother – Granddaughter – Doll

In a villa on Lake Balaton, a girl who is perennially in a good mood meets twelve insulted, ill-humoured dolls. We gradually learn the story of the dolls and the reason for their bad mood, and also experience their moods improve. Two narrative lines initially run parallel and then are gradually interwoven. The dolls talk of their lives while Angela the sports-doll runs away and needs to be rescued. During the rescue operation, Grandma also tells her life story and explains why the dolls are unhappy. Maja and her grandmother bond and start a new, closer relationship. The noteworthy illustrations bring the fairy-tale-like situations and doll stories to life. (Age: 5+)

230

Komjáthy, István (text)

Dóka, Péter (adapt.)

Szántói, Krisztián (illus.)

Betyárvilág

(Prankster world)

Budapest: Móra, 2011. – 154 p.

ISBN 978-963-11-8913-1

Bandit – Prankster – Soldier

This volume brings together a collection of Hungarian bandit and prankster stories of the nineteenth century, edited by Péter Dóka and published for the first time. It contains both comic and tragic stories, bawdy fun and sad romances. The heroes of these stories are cunning, clever, and funny bandits or dumb, stolid soldiers with giant moustaches. How does Sobri Joska trick the police commissioner? Why does Savanyu Joska paint the pub owner's cow white as snow? What did Juhasz Andris hide in the buried container? We find out the answers in these entertaining stories, which have preserved their drollness over the centuries. The illustrations imitate the style of nineteenth-century folk painting and also transport readers to a time long past. (Age: 10+)

231

Rigó, Béla (text)

Perger, Zsófia (illus.)

Nálátok laknak-e állatok?

(Do animals live with you?)

Budapest: Ulpius-ház K., 2011. – 73 p.

ISBN 978-963-254-509-7

Family – Child – Animals – Poetry

This book contains playful, imaginative children's poems from the pen of renowned Hungarian children's book author Béla Rigó. The book's title, which calls to mind an old poetry collection set to music, reveals that the anthology's theme is transformation and metamorphosis. In the two central sections of the book – »Picture postcards for Grandma« and »Titi's poem for Grandpa« – the author portrays two families using irony and a masterful use of language, focusing especially on the experiential world of the children. The most beautiful poems are devoted to the topics of birth and death. The granddaughter says to her grandmother: »I will become earth and you will become a flower«. The lively illustrations – colourful pencil drawings reminiscent of children's drawings – lend much imagination to the text. (Age: 5+)

Other Languages

Cyprus (Greek)

(Romanisation according to RAK-WB
[German cataloguing rules])

232

Eleutheriadu, Nasia (= Eleftheriadou, Nasia) (text)
Papatsaruchas, Basilēs (= Papatsarouchas, Vasilis) (illus.)

Stu synnepphu tēn ankalē me chara kanō petali

(Up in the clouds I pedal happily)

Strobolos: Parga, 2011. – [40] p.

ISBN 978-9963-679-86-7

Experience of nature – Perception – Poetry

This refreshing collection of poetry can get children excited about the little joys of everyday life and experiences with nature, which are for them so important and wondrous. It will encourage them to approach nature with curiosity, playfulness, and amazement and to perceive it with all the senses. Silver moonbeams trace paths into dreaming, cool water melons invite diving into, and there is sailing on the wide sea. Sunrays inhibit sleeping too long, and going to the candy cane playground is the most fun. The expressive illustrations are in dialogue with the verses, interpreting them and allowing for multiple meanings. Anyone reading, listening, and looking can thus access the poems in a way that is entirely their own. (Age: 4+)

233

Paionidu, Ellē (= Peonidou, Elli) (text)
Eleutheriu, Santra (= Eleftheriou, Sandra) (illus.)

To synnephaki pu phobotane ton anemo

(The cloud that was afraid of the wind)

Leukōsia (= Nicosia): Epiphaniu, 2010. – 103 p.

ISBN 978-9963-685-84-4

Ecological equilibrium – Environmental awareness

A little cloud is afraid of the wind, a »garbage eater« wants to be fed by children, the worm's reputation is rehabilitated, and a ladybird works as a doctor. These ten refreshing stories, framed by loving illustrations, pay special attention to often overlooked creatures – be it because of their important roles in nature or because they are given »outsider« status. The protagonists act in contexts and situations familiar to young readers, whose attention will be piqued by exciting details. The book creates numerous occasions to talk about ecological and interpersonal behaviour. (Age: 6+)

Greece (Greek)

(Romanisation according to RAK-WB
[German cataloguing rules])

234

Ēliopulos, Bangelēs (= Iliopoulos, Vangelis) (text)
Kapatsulia, Natalia (= Kapatsoulia, Natalia) (illus.)

Delete stu ēlektroniko ekphobismo

(Delete cyberbullying)

Athēna: E.Ps.Y.P.E., 2011. – 71 p.

ISBN 978-960-99713-3-1

Cyberbullying – World Wide Web 2.0 – Online community

Konstantis is accused of having sent harassing messages to female classmates, even though he has never used his email to do such things. Maria leaves her school, after she with dread recognises herself in a video circulating on the Internet. Another girl is anonymously blackmailed and forced to commit acts that do damage to her self-image and respect. This book takes on the ever more pressing matter of cyberbullying by realistically contextualizing this special form of social cruelty. Readers experience the difficult daily lives of cyberbullying's victims up close, as they are defined by characteristic offenses. At the same time, methods are described to help prevent and avoid systematic aggressive behaviour in the social media. (Age: 11+)

235

Katsama, Elenē (= Katsama, Eleni)

Kosmodromio

(Cosmodrome)

Athēna: Patakēs, 2011. – 202 p.

(Series: Synchronē logotechnia gia neus)

ISBN 978-960-16-3767-9

Coming of age – Underprivilege – Child mistreatment – Child neglect – Violence

This book takes the reader on a trip into the everyday experiences of twenty-three young people, living across all of the continents, whose lives are foremost defined in terms of self-assertion and survival in a distorted world. They play in toxic landfills, live as child soldiers in the desert or as pirates in the Yemenese port city of Aden; they are victims of violence in schools or child labourers in Taiwan; they are given weapons that they even turn against their own parents. Nevertheless, amongst cardboard walls, sewage canals and strange friendships, they harbour their dreams of security, of hope, and of escape. In this collection of stories, Eleni Katsama allows her

protagonists to speak with their own voices. Their realities are portrayed in an unsoftened and at the same time sensitive manner. This poetic representation reminiscent of film combines with the short, poignant sentences of emphatic youth to sustain the suspense all the way to the end. (Age: 15+) ★ Special Mention ♦

236

Margaritēs, Kyriakos (= Margaritis, Kyriakos)

Ta trypia teichē (The porous walls)

Athēna: Psychogios, 2011. – 221 p.

(Series: Mikrē pyxida; Neanikē logotechnia)

ISBN 978-960-496-002-6

Outsider – Prejudice – Xenophobia – Interculturality

Walls should neither exclude nor entrap, but rather »embrace and maintain«, let go and take in again. This is what two close friends believe, adolescent outsiders who live in the Greek-Cyprus part of the city of Nicosia, but originally hail from the divided island of Cyprus. »Their« old city wall is a symbol for the fusion of different cultures. When xenophobia and close-mindedness threaten the multi-voiced and harmonious community, the two fight against this development and for the putting aside of borders. The novel describes their struggle and thereby gives the reader the opportunity to expose misanthropic thinking and to break up walls in his or her own head and thought. (Age: 12+) ♦

237

Panagiōtakēs, Giōrgos (= Panagiotakis, Giorgos)

Mikrokosmos (Microcosm)

Athēna: Kedros, 2011. – 177 p.

ISBN 978-960-04-4190-1

Authoritarian state – Human rights – Love – Values – Outsider – Tolerance

Transmitted through thousands of bodies coming into contact with one another, a peculiar message finally reaches Svelta, a lonely disabled girl. Filled with longing and an unwavering determination to find its original sender, she rebels against the inhumane structures that define her totalitarian city. In the end she breaks the surface, where courage, compassion but also self-doubt accompany her as she continues her search. The reader is transported into the fortress of an ant colony and empathically accompanies the protagonist, an ant, while she fights against a world not so unlike the human one. Exposing that world to her own life ideals, she gives it the opportunity for a change of heart. (Age: 13+)

238

Papatheodulu, Antōnēs (= Papatheodoulou, Antonis) (text)

Samartzē, Iris (= Samartzi, Iris) (illus.)

Oi kaloi kai oi kakoi peirates

(Good and bad pirates)

Athēna: Papadopoulos, 2011. – [36] p.

ISBN 978-960-484-282-7

Violence – Peaceableness – Zest for life

During a fierce attack, a rabble of blood-thirsty, roaring, rampaging pirates comes up against a curious opponent: a cheerful, good-natured pirate troupe, which stoically ignores every provocation and threat and counters these with invitations to dine together, share funny stories, or cosy up making arts and crafts. Utterly disarmed, bewildered, and totally in despair, the attackers decide to take part in a shared feast. Boisterous merry-making, roaring laughter, and music-making ensues. The illustrations underscore the message of this intelligent text in clever and lively ways. With a humorous touch, the book makes a case against violence by guiding the gaze from one-dimensional thinking and polarisation towards tolerance and humanity. (Age: 4+)

239

Sabbopulos, Dionysēs (= Savvopoulos, Dionysis) (text)

Stephanidē, Phōteinē (= Stefanidi, Fotini) (illus.)

Mythologia 1

(Mythology 1)

Moschato: Kathēmerinē (= I Kathimerini) [et al.],

[2011]. – 80 p. + CD

(Series: Mythologia; 1)

ISBN 978-960-475-169-3

(published in coop. with the Sui Generis publishing house)

Mythology/Greece

This volume on cosmogony, the War of the Titans, and the myth of Prometheus is the first in a series on Greek mythology. A song-writer for adults up until now, Dionysis Savvopoulos has a young audience in mind here and stays nicely sensitive to the child's point of view and sense of possibility. His lyrical narrative style transforms well-known Greek myths – from the creation of the world to the odyssey – into atmospheric, fairy-tale-like stories. Fotini Stephanidi's illustrations, which remind of sculptures and brittle antique vases, take on a meaningful and text-enhancing role. The book's introduction and explanatory texts come from Christos Boulotis, archaeologist and children's book author. Every volume comes with a CD, on which the author reads the stories, set to original incidental music. (Age: 8+)

240

Tsaldirē, Elenē (= Tsaldiri, Eleni) (text/illus.)

Dēmētrēs Mytaras kai ta chrōmatika zeugarakia

(Dimitris Mytaras and the colourful pairs)

Athēna: Libanēs, 2011. – 40 p. + [10] p.

(Series: Paidikē Bibliothēkē: To phantastiko theatro parusiazei)

ISBN 978-960-14-2371-5

Mytaras, Dimitris – Art – Painting – Colour – Music

In a fairytale-like story, orange, blue, green, red, and purple-coloured creatures enter into conversation with a painting by the painter Dimitris Mytaras. An angel, observing the strange companions, accompanies them to a concert that longs for colour, and helps them transform themselves to liven up the celebration. Full of fantasy and with child-appropriate facts, this book also offers creative ideas, inviting readers to construct a stage scenery from its pictures. The book broaches questions of hermeneutics, the function of colour, and the presence of music in art. It is one of three books by Eleni Tsaldiri in the series »The fantastic theatre«, which is dedicated to famous Greek artists, and it inspires the playful use of colours, forms, space, and dimensions. (Age: 6+)

241

Zarampuka, Sophia (= Zarambouka, Sofia) (text/illus.)

O Kyōn <proper name>

Athēna: Metaichmio, 2011. – 59 p.

(Series: Ta adespotā tēs Sophias Zarampuka; 2)

ISBN 978-960-501-029-4

Thessaloniki – Social criticism – Love of animals – Zest for life

Joining up with a leaderless ragtag pack of dogs, the reader sniffs the air of Thessaloniki along the sea promenade, in the alleys behind the Byzantine fort, and in front of Jugendstil villas. For one thing, in such an old, tradition-rich city, the air is bound to smell of food. A short excursion into the bear sanctuary of Arktoouros ensues. As in her first volume of canine adventures set in Athens, Sofia Zarambouka here too highlights historical and cultural features of the city alongside critique of social shortcomings and praise for values like friendship, tolerance, environmental protection, and love of animals. Set against a backdrop that abstractly portrays the features of the city, her cartoonish brush stroke lets her canine friends romp through life bravely and inquisitively. (Age: 6+)

Turkey (Turkish)

242

Ak, Sevim (text)

Ak, Behiç (illus.)

Toto'nun sınıfı

(Toto's grade)

İstanbul: Can Çocuk, 2011. – 99 p.

(Series: Çağdaş Türk Edebiyatı)

ISBN 978-975-07-1294-4

School – Friendship – Solidarity

Author Sevim Ak, nominated as the Turkish candidate for the Hans Christian Andersen Award 2012, here introduces a likeable character named Toto. Over the course of four chapters, this volume describes a school year in the homeroom of a teacher named Togo. Toto, one of his students, along with his friends Momo, Selo and Teo and the other children have a lot of fun together. But they also speak in hushed tones and have reflective moments regarding the matter of their new classmate Lumbo. He is quiet and reticent, seems to be sealed inside himself like a blossom that does not wish to open. Toto tries to enter into Lumbo's secretive world. The book portrays in a humorous way how the children together as a group solve problems by means of communication and social responsibility. (Age: 8+)

243

Neydim, Necdet (text)

Demirtaş, Sibel (illus.)

Saklambaç oynayan şehzade

(The playing and hiding prince)

İstanbul: Şimşek yayınları, 2011. – 96 p.

(Series: Masal dizisi; 9)

ISBN 978-9944-415-43-9

Peace – Non-violence – Fairy tale

In this volume, Necdet Neydim tells nine fairy tales. Several he wrote himself, while others are well-known fairy tales – such as »Open Sesame« from »Arabian Nights« – which have been lightly reworked by the author. All of the stories share the idiosyncratic, unmistakable style of the author, which can also be found in his other books. Neydim presents his readers with the reality and the truths of human life in a quiet, careful manner, free of violence and brutality. These nine fairy tales are bound together by this basic stance. The author stresses the significance of fairy tales. Children need them, for fairy tales build bridges towards a better understanding of life and their own selves. (Age: 8+)

244

Oral, Feridun (text/illus.)

Pirinç lapası ve küşük ejderha

(The rice porridge and the dragon)

İstanbul: Yapı Kredi Yayınları, 2011. – [40] p.

(Series: Yapı Kredi Yayınları; 3270 / Yapı Kredi Yayınları:

Doğan kardeş kitaplığı; 292: okul öncesi)

ISBN 978-975- 09-1936-0

Difference – Fear – Trust – Friendship

A family of dragons lives in a house at the foot of a mountain, surrounded by forest and a rice paddy. One day the little dragon sets off to discover new cuisine, since he is tired of eating rice porridge every day. The dragon brings home berries and other fruits from which a delicious cake is baked, which he shares on his birthday with the other animals. Of course there's also rice porridge. The shared meal proves a wonderful opportunity to form new friendships. Feridun Oral has created a sympathetic character that one can't help but love. This multiple award-winning book by author-illustrator Oral has been published in many countries. (Age: 4+)

Lebanon (Arabic)

(Romanisation according to RAK-WB

[German cataloguing rules])

245

Tūmā, Nāḍīn L. (= Touma, Nadine) (text)

Aswad Ḥūrī, Lārā (= Aswad Khoury, Lara) (illus.)

Tābattī

(My ball)

Bairūt (= Beirut): Dār-Qonboz (= Dar Onboz),

2010. – [64] p. + CD

ISBN 978-9953-465-21-0

Ball – Trip – Adventure

This artistic picture book is notable for its idea, design, and careful production. Using intriguing images and just a few words, it describes the adventure-filled journey of a red ball. The ball jumps off the table and rolls out the house, through the city, across the countryside, over mountains to the sea, and in the end comes back full circle to its starting point. On the way, it travels by bus, meets various animals, and dances on the waves. Lara Aswad Khoury creates pithy, eye-catching illustrations using a modest colour palette. She composes the characters, creatures, and objects by repeating a few basic shapes. The pictures are compelling in their simplicity, clarity, and expressiveness. The book's idiosyncratic

typography, developed especially for it, suits it perfectly. Add to this appealingly textured paper and an attractive paperback binding, and you have a book that is a complete success. It also includes a CD with an animated version of the story. (Age: 3+) ★ Special Mention

Palestine (Arabic)

(Romanisation according to RAK-WB

[German cataloguing rules])

246

'Umāy, Safā' (= Omer, Safa') (text)

'Abūl-'āg, Dīmā (= Abu al-Haji, Dima) (illus.)

'Umar wa Hāhā

(Omar and Haha)

Ramallāh: Mu'assasat Tāmir (= Tamer), 2010. – [28] p.

ISBN 978-9950-326-37-8

Friendship – Play

Omar is friends with Haha, a funny blue wooden doll who hops around on a spring. The two friends enjoy playing and swimming at the beach together. One day, Omar is visiting Haha and meets his family. The affair is a highly jovial and light-hearted one. Everyone's hopping all over the place, even at dinner. The day ends with playing in the park together. This picture book tells the story of two friends who are only outwardly very different and are bound together by their mutual openness. The double-page illustrations show a world that is unburdened, colourful, and defined by a child's imagination and vitality. (Age: 4+)

Iran (Persian [Farsi])

(Romanisation according to RAK-WB

[German cataloguing rules])

247

Akbarpūr, Aḥmad (= Akbarpur, Ahmed) (text)

Ḥairīya, Rāšīn (= Kheirieh, Rashin) (illus.)

Ḡūl wa dūčarha

(The monster and the bicycle)

Tīhrān: Wāhid-i Kūdāk; Mu'assara-i Našr-i

Ufuq (= Ofoq), 2010 (= 1389 [h.š.]). – 27 p.

ISBN 978-964-369-550-7

Robbery – Bicycle – Forest – Monster – Compassion

The daughter of the author and illustrator couple provided the idea for this story and encouraged her parents to put it on paper and between two book covers. It follows

the three of them as they save a young bicycle thief from imprisonment and then end up all together deep in the forest, in the house of a monster child. When the hungry little monster wants to eat one of them, each one tries to be the first so as to sacrifice him or herself for the others. Fortunately, the girl discovers the monster's passion for bicycles just in the nick of time. They get him one and thus save their lives. The black, white and beige illustrations set against a light green background and composed of simple, spare forms suit the imaginative story very well. (Age: 5+)

248

Hala'tbarī, Farīda (= Khalatbaree, Farideh) (text)
Ahawān', Bahar (illus.)

Taubah

(Regret)

Tih-rān: Šabāwīz (= Shabaviz), [2011]

(= 1390 [h.š.]). – 40 p.

ISBN 978-964-505-346-6

Peace – Trust – Jealousy – Fable

Created in the style of old animal fables, this modern fable tells of a jackal who wishes to abstain from eating animals and becomes a vegetarian. Only slowly does he win the trust of the other animals. When the lion learns of the jackal's wisdom, he appoints him his highest minister. Envious, the other lions try to oust the foreigner. They hide meat in his house that is discovered by the lion king. The jackal's innocence is soon re-established, but he leaves the lions nonetheless, his trust in the lions corrupted. The brown- and red-toned pictures play on traditional Iranian book illustration. Besides the main text, further text is handwritten into the animal figures, which reflects their respective thoughts. They lend the pictures a special, graphically interesting dimension. (Age: 7+)

249

Karīm-zāda, Mīnū

Qalbā-i nārīngī

(The orange-coloured hearts)

Tih-rān: Kānūn-i Parwariš-i Fikrī-i Kūdākān wa Nauḡa-wānān (= Kanoon), 2010 (= 1389 [h.š.]). – 243 p.

ISBN 978-964-391-526-1

School – Theatrical play – Family – Friendship – Trust – Coming of age

Sadeh and Alma meet one another in high school. While he is ashamed of his name, which means »Simple« in Persian, she is unhappy with hers, which in Turkish means »Apple«. A friendship develops between the two

adolescents, strengthened by their co-participation in the school theatre program. Together they solve their name problems as well as family-related difficulties. A new and serious problem surfaces when Alma's diary winds up in the hands of a classmate. Alma is at the mercy of her classmates, given that her thoughts and feelings are no longer her personal secret. But even these difficulties are surmounted over the course of rehearsing her own play. The author authentically portrays the life-context of those coming of age in this novel on friendship, trust, and family life, which proved very popular in Iran. (Age: 12+)

250

Yārmuḥammadī, Ānītā (text)

Akram, 'Alī Ridā (illus.)

Rūzī ka murḡhā rūya-i sarišān tštādand!

(The day the chickens stood on their heads)

Tih-rān: Kitābhā-i Banafsa; Amīr Kabīr, 2010

(= 1389 [h.š.]). – 23 p.

ISBN 978-964-300-496-5

Flying – Experience – Difference – Talent

Jiki the little chick describes a painful experience in this fable: Observing young sparrows being taught to fly by their mother, Jiki begins to dream of doing like them. He clambers dauntlessly onto the roof of the house, calls to everyone to watch him in his first flight attempt, and jumps with wide opened wings into the air. Landing badly, everything around him spins so much that the chickens seem to be standing on their heads. Despite the fall and a broken wing, Jiki enthusiastically continues to practice flying. The fable sheds light on different talents in a humorous way, but also teaches that one ought not be discouraged by failures. Imaginative, playful colour illustrations capture the mood of this pleasant story. (Age: 5+)

Name Index

A

Aakeson, Kim Fupz 50
 Abad, Arturo 41
 'Abūl-'āğ, Dīmā 69
 Abu al-Hajj, Dima 69
 Adbāge, Lisen 53
 Ahawān', Bahar 70
 Akbarpūr, Aḥmad 69
 Ak, Behiç 68
 Ak, Sevim 68
 Akram, 'Alī Ridā 70
 Alcolea, Ana 42
 Alonso, Ana 42
 Amini-Holmes, Liz 20
 Anand, S. 15
 Andersen, Hans Christian 19
 Andrada, Javier 43
 Andruetto, María Teresa 44
 Arai, Ryōjii 6, 8
 Arjona, Juan 42
 Armstrong Olea, Magdalena 47
 Asare, Meshak 13
 Ashman, Linda 21
 Aswad Ḥūrī, Lārā 69
 Aswad Khoury, Lara 69
 Autio, Maria 51
 Azimuth, Bernard 33

B

Baladan, Alicia 39
 Bansch, Helga 25
 Banuş, Tudor 41
 Barba, Andrés 42
 Barun, Niko 54
 Battello, Clara 39
 Beckett, Bernard 13
 Bennett, Veronica 19
 Bentley, Jonathan 15
 Berg, Sunniva Relling 52
 Berger, Joe 17
 Bergting, Peter 54
 Berner, Rotraut Susanne 29
 Beuchat, Cecilia 46
 Béziat, Julien 32
 Bisaillon, Josée 23

Blabey, Aaron 13
 Boisrobert, Anouck 36
 Boldt, Claudia 16
 Bondestam, Linda 51
 Bone, Betty 36
 Bonnke, Jens 25
 Bonwill, Ann 17
 Bos, Tamara 62
 Bottin, Isha 48
 Bramnes, Hanne 52
 Brassard, Pierre 48
 Bregnhøi, Rasmus 50
 Brenman, Ilan 45
 Bricelj, Suzi 60
 Broad, Sam 16
 Burke, J. C. 13

C

Calvert, Kristina 31
 Canela 44
 Carpenter, Biel 45
 Cărtărescu, Mircea 41
 Castanha, Marilda 45
 Castor, H. M. 17
 Čechov, Anton 58
 Cheng, Andrea 21
 Chmielewska, Iwona 57
 Clavelet, Magali 32
 Clay, Judith 15
 Collins, Ross 18
 Concejo, Joanna 41
 Corda, Tullio 38
 Cottrell Boyce, Frank 17
 Crew, Gary 14

D

Dalgaard, Ole 50
 D'Altan, Paolo 39
 Damm, Antje 25
 D'Angelo, Carolina 38
 Davenier, Christine 21
 Dávid, Ádám 65
 Dedieu, Thierry 34
 Deistler-Kaufmann, Petra 25
 Del Tufo, Chiara 38

Demirtaş, Sibel 68
 Derevenec, Igor 60
 Deutsch, Xavier 33
 De Vlieger, Evelien 61
 Dewitte, Jan 61
 Diallo, Muriel 34
 Dickmeiss, Otto 50
 Dijkstra, Lida 62
 Dipacho 46
 Dittmer, Sabine 31
 Dóka, Péter 65
 Dunklee, Annika 19
 Dürr, Julia 30

E

Eeg, Harald Rosenløw 52
 Eitmantytė-Valužienė, Lina 57
 Eleftheriadou, Nasia 66
 Eleftheriou, Sandra 66
 Eleutheriadu, Nasia 66
 Eleutheriu, Santra 66
 Ēliopulos, Bangelēs 66
 Else, Barbara 16
 Elzbieta 34
 Engle, Margarita 21
 Espinoza, Gerald 48

F

Finy, Petra 65
 Fischer, Susanne 26
 Forsythe, Matthew 19
 French, Jackie 14
 Fučíková, Renáta 55

G

Galeron, Henri 33
 Gantos, Jack 22
 Gay-Para, Praline 34
 Gerasimova, Dar'ja 59
 Gerelčimeg Heihe 10
 Gerileqimuge Heihe 10
 Gerstein, Mordicai 22
 Ginard, Pere 42
 Givargizov, Artur 58
 Göhlich, Susanne 27

Name Index

Golob, Tadej 60
 Gon, Adriano 38
 Göschl, Robert 24
 Gouchoux, René 35
 Green, Susan 14
 Grimm, Jacob 26
 Grimm, Wilhelm 26

H

Haderer, Gerhard 24
 Haeringen, Annemarie van 62
 Ĥairiya, Rāšin 35, 69
 Hala'tbari, Farida 706
 Hamada, Keiko 6
 Hammerl, Elfriede 24
 Harjes, Stefanie 26
 Hasegawa, Shūhei 6
 Hasegawa, Yoshifumi 9
 Hata, Kōshirō 9
 Heinrich, Finn-Ole 26
 Heugel, Louise 34
 Hevier, Daniel 59
 Hill, Aaron 14
 Hingan 7
 Hof, Marjolijn 63
 Hojas, Isabel 46
 Horjak, Ciril 60
 Huseinović, Kašmir 54
 Hwang, Sŏn-mi 11
 Hwang, Sook-kyung 11
 Hwang, Suk-kyŏng 11
 Hwang Sun-mi 11

I

Ignerska, Marta 58
 Ikkarin 55
 Iliopoulos, Vangelis 66
 Iwase, Joko 6, 7

J

Jancis, Kaspar 56
 Jaskina, Natal'ja 58
 Jensen, Louis 50
 Ježková, Alena 55
 Jobus, Branislav 60

Johnsen, Zenia 50
 Jonge, Harm de 63
 Jordan-Fenton, Christy 20
 Josephus Jitta, Ceseli 63

K

K., Oscar 50
 Kaldestad, Per Olav 52
 Kapatsoulia, Natalia 66
 Kapatsulia, Natalia 66
 Karīm-zāda, Mīmū 70
 Karrebæk, Dorte 50
 Katō, Yukiko 7
 Katsama, Elenē 66
 Katsama, Eleni 66
 Keighery, Chrissie 14
 Khalatbaree, Farideh 70
 Kheiriah, Rashin 35, 69
 Kim, Hae-wŏn 11
 Kim, Hye-jin 12
 Kim, Sŏng-hŭi 12
 Kim, Sook-Young 12
 Kim, Sug-yŏng 12
 Kim, Sung-hee 12
 Komjáthy, István 65
 Kono, Yara 41
 Koppe, Susanne 25
 Kormer, Tat'jana 58
 Kostantinov, Vitali 40
 Krolupperová, Daniela 55
 Krumbach, Anita 51
 Krygowska-Butlewska, Elżbieta 57
 Kuhl, Anke 28
 Kurusa 48
 Kyōan 7

L

Le Guen, Laurence 32
 Lee, Gyeong-hwa 12
 Legeay, Chloé 33
 Lembcke, Marjaleena 26
 Lennoz, Raphaële 32
 León Barreto, Martín 43
 Lesiv, Andrij 61
 Lesquelin, Charly 32

Li, Shanshan 10
 Liao, Chien-Hung 10
 Liao, Jianhong 10
 Lieshout, Ted van 63
 Lin, Cookie 10
 Lin, Xiusui 10
 Lindeberg, Minna 51
 Lindström, Eva 53
 Lluísot 42
 Luiz Antonio 45
 Ludwig, Sabine 27

M

McGinness, Suzanne 17
 McRae, Jacquie 16
 MacRae, Tom 18
 Maguire, Thomas Aquinas 19
 Maltez, Manu 45
 Maret, Pascale 35
 Margaritēs, Kyriakos 67
 Margaritis, Kyriakos 67
 Martínez Pedro, Javier 47
 Martins, Isabel Minhós 41
 Mateo, José Manuel 47
 Matsumura, Masako 7
 Mattheis, Philipp 27
 Meyer, Marissa 22
 Michalik, Daniel 55
 Miki, Taku 7
 Mildeberg, Jüri 56
 Millard, Glenda 15
 Mohl, Nils 27
 Moriconi, Renato 45
 Motonaga, Sadamasa 8
 Moursund, Gry 52
 Mühle, Jörg 28
 Müller, Birte 30
 Müller, Hildegard 28

N

Narumi, Fū 8
 Natarajan, Srividya 15
 Nava, Emanuela 38
 Nelson, Kadir 22
 Neuhaus, Julia 35

Neves, André 46
 Neydim, Necdet 68
 Nic Con Iomaire, Nuala 64
 Nikkarin 55
 Nilsson, Frida 54
 Norac, Carl 35

O

Ohlsson, Sara 54
 Ōki, Satoko 8
 O'Malley, Donough 64
 Omer, Safa' 69
 Oral, Feridun 69
 Ord, Mandy 15
 Orvieto, Laura 39
 Osada, Hiroshi 8

P

Paci, Marco 38
 Paille 44
 Paionidu, Ellē 66
 Palčinskaitė, Violeta 57
 Palumbo, Daniela 39
 Panagiōtakēs, Giōrgos 67
 Panagiotakis, Giorgos 67
 Pantermüller, Alice 27
 Papatheodulu, Antōnēs 67
 Papatheodoulou, Antonis 67
 Papatsarouchas, Vasilis 66
 Papatsaruchas, Basilēs 66
 Papuzińska, Joanna 57
 Pascal, Jani 49
 Pauli, Lorenz 31
 Pavček, Tone 60
 Payet, Jean-Michel 36
 Pelegrín, Javier 42
 Peonidou, Elli 66
 Pérez, Sonia 43
 Perger, Zsófia 65
 Pētersons, Reinis 56
 Petrlík Huseinović, Andrea 54
 Phillips, Wendy 20
 Piazza, Serena 39
 Pilátová, Markéta 55
 Pilić, Sanja 54

Pimentel, Marcelo 46
 Pin, Isabel 29
 Pitcher, Annabel 18
 Pokiak-Fenton, Margaret 20
 Poulin, Stéphane 35
 Pressler, Mirjam 28
 Proust, Marcel 36

Q

Quarello, Maurizio A. C. 40

R

Rán Flygenring 26
 Rasmus, Jens 24
 Rébéna, Frédéric 37
 Ren, Rongrong 10
 Rezková, Milada 55
 Ricart Leal, Raquel 43
 Riccioni, Alessandro 39
 Richter, Jutta 28
 Rickerty, Simon 17
 Rigaud, Louis 36
 Rigó, Béla 65
 Rivard, Sylvain 49
 Robert, Na'ima bint 18
 Rodari, Gianni 40
 Rogé 49
 Roger, Marie-Sabine 33
 Roher, Michael 24
 Roldán, Daniel 44
 Romanyšin, Romana 61
 Rubik, Anna 65
 Ruifernández, Leticia 48
 Rutten, Mélanie 36

S

Sabbopulos, Dionysēs 67
 Sætre, Inga H. 53
 Sáez Castán, Javier 47
 Sakai, Komako 7
 Sala i Vila, Carles 43
 Salas, Laura Purdie 23
 Samartzē, Iris 67
 Samartzi, Iris 67
 Sánchez, Diego Francisco 46

Savka, Mar'jana 60
 Savvopoulos, Dionysis 67
 Sax, Aline 62
 Ščavurs'kyj, Borys 61
 Schärer, Kathrin 31
 Schawerda, Elisabeth 25
 Schenker, Sybille 26
 Schmeißer, Frank 28
 Schmitz, Jowi 63
 Schmitz-Kuhl, Martin 28
 Schneider, Antonie 29
 Schubiger, Jürg 29
 Sedova, Ja. 59
 Sepetys, Ruta 23
 Serprix, Sylvie 33
 Sgardoli, Guido 40
 Shelton, Dave 18
 Shimada, Yōshichi 9
 Shin, Su-hyeon 12
 Sigg, Stephan 29
 Silei, Fabrizio 40
 Silina, Ekaterina 59
 Sin, Su-hyōn 12
 Škálová, Alžběta 56
 Slade, Christian 23
 Slocinska, Kamila 50
 Smith, Clete Barrett 23
 Solís, Víctor 48
 Sommerset, Mark 16
 Sommerset, Rowan 16
 Štanko, Volodymyr 60
 Starobinec, Anna 59
 Stemm, Antje von 29
 Stenvert Natascha 64
 Stephanidē, Phōteinē 67
 Stefanidi, Fotini 67
 Strady, Sophie 36
 Strzelecki, Caryl 62
 Stuhmann, Jochen 31
 Stürzer, Anja 30
 Svingen, Arne 53
 Szántói, Krisztián 65
 Szczygielski, Marcin 57
 Szegedi, Katalin 65

Name Index

T

Takayama, Kenta 8
Tang, Yaming 9
Thé, Tjong-Khing 62
Thuswaldner, Werner 26
Timmers, Leo 64
Tō, Amei 9
Touma, Nadine 69
Tsaldirē, Elenē 68
Tsaldiri, Eleni 68
Tūmā, Nādin L. 69

U

U, Taibu 9
Ueji, Naoko 6
'Umayr, Safā' 69
Urbach, Stefanie 25
Urbánek, Lukáš 55
Uschmann, Oliver 30

V

Vairo, Arianna 38
Valckx, Catharina 37
Van Den Berg, Leen 62
Vénuleth, Jacques 37
Verkin, Eduard 59
Vermeire, Kaatje 62
Veyser, Paille 44
Vidal, Séverine 37
Vieira, Alice 41
Vinci, Vanna 39
Visser, Derk 64
Viva, Frank 20
Vlerick, Freya 61
Volkova, Ol'ga 59
Vyam, Durgabai 15
Vyam, Subhash 15

W

Wadman, Thys 64
Wechterowicz, Przemysław 58
Weishar-Giuliani, Valérie 33
Wells, Benedict 31
Werner, Brigitte 30
Whatley, Bruce 14
Wiéner, Magali 37
Wilharm, Sabine 26
Wung-Sung, Jesper 51

Y

Yamashita, Haruo 9
Yārmuḥammadī, Ānītā 70
Yee, Paul 20
Yi, Kyōng-hwa 12
Young, Cybèle 21
Young, Moira 19
Yu, Dawu 9

Z

Zarambouka, Sofia 68
Zarampuka, Sophia 68
Zecchin, Gigliola 44
Zhang, Zhilu 11
Zuffi, Stefano 40
Zvirgzdinš, Juris 56

Subject Index

- A**
Abandonment 53
Abduction 19
Abenaki Indians 49
Abuse 20
Accident 13, 63, 64
Adoption 21, 43
Adventure trip 17, 56, 60
Africa 56
African Americans/History 22
African diaspora 37
Aggression 13
Alcoholism 18, 51
Alien 23
Alienation 20
Alliteration 48
Alphabet 48, 58, 59
America 48
Amnesia 63
Android 22
Anger 64
Animal care 7
Animal protection 36
Anthropomorphism 22
Appearance 16
Arranged marriage 21
Art 68
Art history 40
Artist 32
Astronomy 8
Atomic bomb 40
Audism 14
Augustine of Hippo 13
Auschwitz 39
Authenticity 40
Authoritarian state 67
Autonomy 41
- B**
Baker 35
Ball 69
Bandit 37, 65
Beauty 16
Behaviour modification 27
Berber 32
Bible 34
Bicycling 20, 69
Big city 34
Big/Small 8
Biography 8, 15, 17, 20
Bird 48, 54
Birth 63
Body 58
Body language 58
Book 23
Boredom 14
Brazil/Festivity 46
Brazil/History 45
Bullying 13, 20, 27, 33, 35, 52
Butterfly 7
- C**
Calendar 8
Cannibalism 26
Caribbean/1510 21
Cast system 15
Cat 59
Chancellor 9
Change of perspective 50
Chase 30
Childhood memories 9, 10, 36
Childlikeness 6
Child mistreatment 66
Child neglect 34, 66
Children's gang 26
Children's need 12
Children's rights 38
China/220-280 9
Chinatown 20
Chores 22
Cinderella 22
Circus 34, 48, 58
City life 60
Civil war 18
Clear-cutting 36
Cleverness 9
Climate change 32
Cock 64
Colour 8, 25, 68
Coming of age 20, 41, 52, 53, 54, 66, 70
Community 56, 61
Compassion 69
Concentration camp 39, 50
Conception of the enemy 35
Conquest 9
Control 42
Cooperation 44
Coping with grief 62, 63
Corruption 35, 54
Costume 33
Costume party 17
Country life 45, 57, 59
Courage 38, 40, 42, 56
Craft 44
Criminality 54
Cultural identity 45
Cunning 62
Curiosity 38
Cyberbullying 66
Cyborg 22
- D**
Daughter/Father 18, 48
Daughter/Mother 37, 41, 43, 51
Daughter/Parents 64
Deafness 14
Death 16, 18, 21, 22, 27, 29, 36, 40, 41, 48, 51, 62, 65
Decline 57
Dementia 37
Deportation 23
Depression 31
Despondency 59
Dictatorship 26, 35
Difference 38, 69, 70
Dinosaur 27
Disability 30, 35
Disagreement 17
Discrimination 9
Disease 22
Dislike 11
Disobedience 21

Subject Index

Diversity 11
Divorced parents 12
Dog 24, 28, 33, 50, 54,
58, 64
Doll 65
Down Syndrome 30, 44
Dragon 41
Dream 12, 15
Drugs 27, 30, 35
Dysfunctional family 53
Dystopia 19, 26, 30, 42

E

Earthquake 8, 20
Ecological equilibrium 66
Ecology 36
Edison, Thomas Alva 47
Elf 57
Emancipation 6, 26, 37, 41
Environmental awareness 13, 66
Environmental protection 36
Escape 28, 36
European Football Cup 33
Europe/Cultural history 55
Europe/History 55
Everyday object 22
Exclusion 35
Excursion 7
Expedition 56
Experience of nature 66
Experiment 14
Explosion 52

F

Fable 70
Fairy 12, 35
Fairy tale 19, 26, 32, 33,
34, 44, 49, 68
Faithfulness 58, 60
Falling in love 6
Farmer 64
Father/Child 12
Father/Daughter 12, 18, 48
Father/Son 31, 37, 38, 62
Fear 13, 16, 69

First love 23, 42
First Nations 49
Fishing 48
Flood 14
Florence/1900 39
Flying 70
Folk culture 10
Folk tale 10, 49, 61
Football 33, 65
Forced labour camp 23
Forest 26, 36, 69
Forgetting 35
Fox 62
Freedom 19, 40, 41
Free will 13
Friendship 7, 13, 14, 16,
17, 21, 23, 24, 27,
28, 30, 32, 33, 44,
51, 53, 56, 61, 63,
64, 68, 69, 70
Frog 7
Fun 15, 18
Funeral 36

G

Galosh 15
Gender role 45
Generational conflict 25, 30
Generosity 24
Genius 31
Getting lost 58
Ghetto 62
Ghost 13, 20
Globalisation 44
Glove 61
God 50
Granddaughter/Grandmother 41, 65
Granddaughter/Grandparents 16
Grandmother/Granddaughter 61, 65
Grandmother/Grandson
Grandparents/Granddaughter 16
Grandson/Grandmother 9, 19, 65
Gratefulness 7
Gravity 42
Greenland 40

Grief 16, 18, 21, 62, 63
Grieg, Edvard 57
Growing up 7
Guesthouse 23
Guilt 37, 51

H

Haiti 37, 49
Haiti/1743-1804 37
Happiness 41, 42, 43
Harmony 7
Hat 56
Hatred 9
Head covering 56
Helpfulness 42, 57
Henry <England, King, VIII.> 17
Herding dog 10
Hero 14, 28
Hiking 60
Holidays 22, 42, 55
Homecoming 26, 52
Homeland 33
Homograph 59
Homonym 59
Homophone 59
Homosexuality 51
Horse 7
Hospitality 60
Human rights 37, 67
Hunting 33

I

Identity 19
Imaginary trip 51
Imagination 6, 14, 15, 17, 18,
21, 24, 25, 26,
44, 45, 53, 57
Immigration 20, 25
Impartiality 38
Imprisonment 37
Informal sector 34
Information society 42
Insect 16
Integration 35
Integrity 60

Interculturality 25, 38, 55, 67
 Intrigue 28
 Inuit 20
 Inventing 47
 Inventiveness 25, 47
 Iran 35
 Island 21, 27
 Israel/Founding of the State 28
 Italy/1861-2011 38
 Italy/National anthem 39
 Ivory Coast 34

J

Japan/1756-1816 8
 Japan/1958-1970 9
 Japan/2011 8
 Japan/Oral tradition 9
 Jealousy 53, 70

K

Kahina 32
 Kidnapping 19
 King 33
 Kingdom 16, 22
 Korea/Division 11

L

Landscape 8
 Language 11, 46
 Language acquisition 8
 Language barrier 55
 Library 31
 Lie 62
 Lion 60
 Lithuania/1939-1945 23
 Loneliness 12, 13, 14, 16, 50, 52
 Loss 41
 Love 19, 21, 27, 46, 51,
 54, 62, 67
 Love of animals 7, 68
 Lviv 60

M

Machinations 16
 Magic 16, 19
 Magic car 17
 Malice 62
 Maritime traffic 56
 Memories 13, 36
 Memory 35, 41
 Meningitis 14
 Mental disorder 61
 Metamorphosis 18, 19
 Migration 20, 25, 47, 48
 Military base 7
 Mine 35
 Miniature boy 56
 Mirror 35
 Mistrust 43
 Modernity 10
 Money 27
 Monotony 59
 Monster 24, 69
 Moose 49
 Mother/Daughter 37, 41, 43, 51
 Mother/Son 21, 31, 61
 Mourning 36, 48, 62, 63
 Murder 9
 Music 21, 57, 64, 68
 Myanmar (Burma) 35
 Mystery 14, 22
 Mysticism 57
 Mytaras, Dimitris 68
 Mythology 49
 Mythology/Greece 67

N

Name 19
 Nature 7, 8, 48
 Neighbour 6
 Neighbourhood 30
 Nephew 45
 Nickname 19
 Night 45
 Nihilism 27
 Noah's Ark 34
 Non-conformism 27

Non-violence 68
 North Africa/Seventh century 32
 North-American Chinese 20
 Norway/World War II 42

O

Obesity 33
 Occupation 23
 Old age 51, 65
 Online community 66
 Open-mindedness 60
 Ornithology 54
 Orphan 27, 34
 Orphanage 57
 Ostracism 55
 Outsider 35, 67

P

Painting 40, 68
 Palestine 34
 Parents 54, 64
 Paris/1672 36
 Parks, Rosa 40
 Paternity search 31
 Peace 6, 68, 70
 Peaceableness 67
 Peace education 6
 Pedagogy 57
 Persecution of Jews 28, 39
 Perspective 43
 Philosophy 10, 31, 62
 Piano playing 21
 Pirate ship 21
 Poetry 20, 22, 23, 25, 28, 29,
 38, 39, 46, 49, 52,
 58, 61, 63, 65, 66
 Poverty 9, 14, 26
 Prankster 65
 Predestination 13
 Pregnancy 53
 Prejudice 9, 11, 13, 18, 38, 67
 Present 24
 Prison 30
 Prisoner of war 42
 Privacy 42

Subject Index

Proust, Marcel 36
Provincial area 59
Psychic powers 14
Psychological disorder 37
Puberty 6
Pun 56, 59
Punishment 22
Pyromania 54

Q

Queen 32
Quest 19, 50, 59

R

Rabbit 33
Race 31
Racial segregation 40
Racism 18
Rain 15
Rape 37
Reading 31
Rebellion 30
Reconciliation 16, 17, 18
Redemption 19
Reform 8
Remoteness 57
Rescue 14, 16, 22
Residential school 20
Resistance 35, 62
Respect 19, 48
Responsibility 23, 37
Rhinoceros 56
Rivalry 24, 35
River 7
Robbery 69
Rogue 58
Role as a father 12
Role model 40
Role reversal 33, 64
Rollerskating 21
Rootlessness 48
Runaway 21
Ruse 47

S

Sadness 16
Sailing ship 16
San Francisco/1906 20
Schadenfreude 28
Scheme 14
School 21, 27, 35, 54, 59,
68, 70
Science 47
Scientist 40
Sea 32, 48
Search for identity 27, 30, 31,
41, 43, 51, 52, 55
Secret 13, 16, 52
Security 41
Self-awareness 26
Self-confidence 12, 14, 57
Self-esteem 60
Self-image 16
Selflessness 42, 43
Self-mutilation 16, 51
Senses 6
Sensitivity 15
Sex 54
Sexual fantasy 6
Ship 29
Shipwreck 21, 40
Siblings 21, 24, 26, 29,
35, 39, 44, 48, 53,
54, 64
Single-parent family 31, 55, 63
Size 8
Sky 8, 45
Slavery 45
Sleepiness 64
Slug 16
Snake 11
Social behaviour 56
Social criticism 57, 68
Social discrimination 15
Socialisation 59
Social regulation 42
Social status 9
Solace 50
Soldier 65

Solidarity 47, 68
Son/Father 31, 37, 38, 62
Son/Mother 21, 31 61
Sperm donation 31
Spontaneity 6
Standing in line 46
Star 45
Storm 8
Storytelling 41, 43, 45
Strategy 9
Street craftsman 34
Summer 55
Superhero 55
Surprise 38
Survival 18, 23, 19
Swan 19

T

Tailor 34
Talent 70
Team spirit 33
Teddy bear 12
Teenage angst 20
Terezín concentration camp 28
Terrorism 18
Theatre 36, 41
Theatrical play 70
Thessaloniki 68
The Ten Commandments 29
Thought experiment 31
Threat 22
Time travel 30, 59
Tolerance 67
Tongue twister 33
Topsy-turvy world 50
Toussaint Louverture, François D. 37
Transparency 40
Treasure hunt 60
Tree 15
Trick 58
Troll 57
Trucker 60
Trust 60, 69, 70
Tsunami 8
Twins 19

Reading Age Index

U

Uncle 45
Underprivilege 66
Untouchables 15
Upbringing 37, 39
USA/1955 40

V

Values 6, 43, 67
Vegetables 29
Village 35
Violence 18, 66, 67
Visit 53
Visual perception 8
Void 42

W

Waiting 52
Walk 43
Walrus 32
Wanderlust 26
War 9, 18, 23, 28, 62
Warsaw/1940 62
Weather 63
Werewolf 45
Whale 32, 60
Wildness 10
Wind 63
Winter 51
Wish 24, 44
Witch 26
Word play 29, 48
World tour 60
World War II 23, 28, 62
World Wide Web 2.0 66
Writing 43

X

Xenophobia 67

Z

Zest for life 67, 68
Zimbabwe/1964-1976/2000 18
Zoo 56

Recommended reading age level

(Indexed by catalogue number)

2+ years: 1, 9, 35

4+ years: 2, 6, 7, 17, 22, 24, 29, 37, 41,
42, 43, 46, 47, 54, 57, 59, 60, 64,
70, 72, 73, 76, 81, 90, 93, 98, 99,
104, 108, 109, 120, 121, 143, 145,
146, 160, 166, 172, 180, 181, 184,
185, 188, 193, 194, 200, 212, 213,
224, 227, 238, 244, 245, 246

6+ years: 8, 15, 18, 26, 27, 32, 53, 67,
71, 74, 75, 79, 80, 87, 89, 91, 96,
97, 102, 103, 106, 107, 111, 114,
125, 128, 129, 132, 133, 137, 151,
152, 153, 154, 157, 161, 164, 165,
170, 171, 177, 202, 203, 211, 217,
220, 226, 229, 231, 232, 233, 240,
241, 247, 250

8+ years: 12, 19, 21, 48, 50, 69, 82, 85,
88, 110, 112, 113, 118, 119, 126,
127, 131, 140, 144, 149, 156, 158,
159, 163, 167, 168, 169, 186, 189,
195, 196, 198, 204, 205, 208, 209,
215, 218, 239, 242, 243, 248

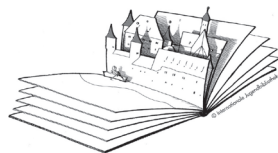
10+ years: 13, 14, 16, 20, 25, 31, 33, 39,
45, 52, 55, 61, 63, 66, 78, 94, 101,
122, 130, 135, 136, 139, 148, 150,
174, 183, 190, 191, 192, 197, 199,
207, 216, 219, 228, 230

12+ years: 3, 5, 10, 11, 38, 40, 44, 51, 62,
65, 77, 86, 92, 105, 115, 117, 147,
162, 173, 175, 201, 214, 221, 222,
223, 234, 236, 249

14+ years: 4, 23, 28, 34, 36, 49, 56, 58,
68, 83, 95, 116, 123, 124, 134,
138, 141, 178, 179, 182, 187,
206, 210, 225, 237

16+ years: 30, 84, 100, 142, 176, 235

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