

THE ERIC CARLE MUSEUM OF PICTURE BOOK ART



The Eric Carle Museum of Picture Book Art Announces the 2026 Carle Honors Honorees

(AMHERST, MA – April 8, 2026) – The Eric Carle Museum of Picture Book Art announces the 2026 Carle Honors honorees—the individuals and organizations whose creative vision and long-term dedication have had a profound effect on picture books and the vital role they play in arts appreciation and early literacy. The 2026 Carle Honors honorees are Artist: **Bryan Collier**; Angel: **Ellen Michelson**; Bridge: **International Youth Library**; Mentor: **Claudia Bedrick, Publisher of Enchanted Lion Books**; and Inspiration: **Robert L. Forbes**. The honorees will be celebrated at the Museum’s annual gala and fundraiser at The New York Historical in New York City on Thursday, September 17, 2026.

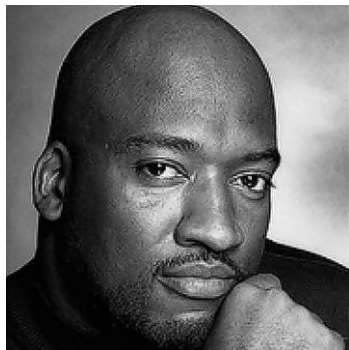
“It is a joy to recognize Bryan Collier, Ellen Michelson, the International Youth Library, Claudia Bedrick of Enchanted Lion Books, and Robert L. Forbes at this year’s Carle Honors,” said Executive Director Jennifer Schantz. “Through their extraordinary contributions as artists, editors, publishers, curators, and advocates, they have expanded the possibilities of the picture book and affirmed the power of art to foster imagination, empathy, and understanding.”

The Carle Honors honorees are selected each year by a committee chaired by children’s literature historian and critic Leonard S. Marcus. The committee recognizes four distinct awards: **Artist**, for lifelong innovation in the field; **Angel**, whose generous resources are crucial to making illustrated children’s book art exhibitions, education programs, and related projects a reality; **Bridge**, individuals or organizations who have found inspired ways to bring the art of the picture book to larger audiences through work in other fields; and **Mentor**, editors, designers, and educators who champion the

art form. In 2024, The Carle added the **Inspiration Award** to honor select individuals whose work in the arts helps us to look at the world in new ways.

“Each year the Carle Honors shines a light on the many varieties of talent and commitment that come together to bring the world's children the books they deserve,” said Marcus, Carle Honors Committee Chair and founder of the Carle Honors. “Our honorees' inspired efforts have never been more needed than they are today. It's both a privilege and a pleasure to have this chance to celebrate with them.”

About the 2026 Honorees



Artist: Bryan Collier

Bryan Collier (b. 1967) uses watercolor and collage to create masterful illustrations. A graduate of Pratt Institute, Collier was Program Director of the Harlem Horizon Art Studio at the Harlem Hospital Center for twelve years and continues to volunteer for the organization. He has received numerous awards for his writing and illustrations, including four Caldecott Honors and nine Coretta Scott King Awards (three honors and six winners). His book, *Barack Obama: Son of Promise, Child of Hope*, was the first picture book about the future President. *Black Boy, Rise*, written by Brynne Barnes and illustrated by Collier, was nominated for “Outstanding Literary Work – Children” at the 57th NAACP Image Awards in February 2026. He was the 2014 U.S. nominee for the Hans Christian Andersen Award, and he received the Ezra Jack Keats New Illustrator Award early in his career.



Angel: Ellen Michelson

Ellen Michelson (b. 1956) is president of E.A. Michelson Philanthropy, a foundation that is the leading private funder of Creative Aging – arts education for adults over the age of 55. The foundation’s advocacy and philanthropic support is divided between more than 25 American art museums, the National Assembly of State Arts Agencies, and the American Alliance of Museums. Michelson has been building a children’s book collection since 1993, with a focus on the education of children in Britain and America (17th century-20th century). A variety of books from her collection have been loaned to exhibitions at the Grolier Club (*100 Books Famous in Children’s Literature*, 2014); The University of Minnesota Kerlan Collection (*The ABC of It*, 2019); and The Eric Carle Museum of Picture Book Art (*CLICK! Photographers Make Picture Books*, 2026).



Bridge: International Youth Library

The International Youth Library (IYL) in Munich, Germany, is the world's largest library for international children's and youth literature. Founded in 1949 by Jella Lepman, it has grown to become an internationally recognized literature center. The work of the IYL is guided by the conviction that children's and young adult books are an essential part of the cultural life of a society and a country, and as such must be preserved, documented, and shared. To bring this mission to life, the IYL runs an annual program of exhibitions, author readings, workshops, panel discussions, and an international literature festival, and offers a fellowship program for foreign researchers that is unique worldwide.



Mentor: Claudia Bedrick, Publisher of Enchanted Lion Books

Claudia Zoe Bedrick (b. 1963) is publisher, editor, and art director of Enchanted Lion Books, an award-winning, independent press based in New York City. Enchanted Lion, which will turn twenty-five in 2027, has devoted itself to translating and creating picture books that inspire wonder and curiosity, while inviting readers of all ages into the mystery that is ours for being alive in a challenging, yet beautiful world. Enchanted Lion advocates for the picture book as a medium for both children's and YA/adult literature, towards which end it launched its Unruly imprint in 2020. Across years and books, Enchanted Lion has sought to explore, extend, and subtilize the unique space that is the picture book, while enlarging our collective sense of what is possible.



Inspiration: Robert L. Forbes

Robert L. Forbes (b. 1949) is a collector, photographer, award-winning writer, and longtime advocate of the arts, creativity, and education. His wit, intellect, and enthusiasm inspired him to publish three books of poetry, illustrated by Ronald Searle, and *Addison Mizner*, *Visionary Architect*, illustrated by Barbara McClintock. His engaging weekly storytimes have charmed thousands of children across South Florida for nearly twenty years. Dedicated to sharing inspiring art and books with children and adults, Forbes is a Trustee Emeritus and member of the Collections Committee at The Carle, and he serves as Chair of the Library Committee and Vice Chairman of the Society of the Four Arts in Palm Beach, FL.

Sponsorships and Donations

The Carle Honors is a key fundraiser for The Eric Carle Museum of Picture Book Art, and all proceeds support the Museum's mission to celebrate and elevate the art of the picture book, inspiring joy, hope, and understanding through this beloved medium. Corporate sponsorships, individual and corporate tickets, and donation opportunities abound. A portion of every ticket supports the attendance of select artists through our

Inspiration Fund. Additional details are forthcoming, but for immediate information, please contact Rebecca Miller Goggins, Director of Development, at 413-559-6308 or Rebeccag@carlemuseum.org.

About The Eric Carle Museum of Picture Book Art

Founded by Eric and Barbara Carle in 2002, [The Eric Carle Museum of Picture Book Art](#) is the international champion of picture book art. Situated on 7.5 acres in Amherst, Massachusetts, The Carle cares for more than 20,000 works of art from more than 300 picture book artists, including Eric Carle (*The Very Hungry Caterpillar*), and illuminates its collection through exhibitions, education, programming, and art-making—making it a critical resource for picture book artists and authors, and art-loving communities locally, nationally, and abroad. The Carle’s mission is to elevate picture book art and inspire a love of art and art creation. Since opening its doors more than 20 years ago, The Carle has welcomed more than one million visitors—plus more than four million additional museumgoers who have enjoyed its touring exhibitions around the world.

For further information, please contact: Amanda Domizio, Amanda Domizio Communications, 347-229-2877 / amanda@domiziopr.com

Image captions/credits:

Eric Carle, Illustration for *The Very Hungry Caterpillar*. Collection of Eric and Barbara Carle. © 1969, 1987 Penguin Random House LLC.

Ellen Michelson, photo by Lisa Pavlova.

Claudia Bedrick, photo by Molly Zacher.