

The White Ravens 2007



A Selection of International Children's and Youth Literature

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Impressum

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*The »White Ravens« catalogue has become a solid tradition over the years. Throughout each year, the language specialists (Lektoren) at the Internationale Jugendbibliothek (International Youth Library / IYL) select **recently published books** that they consider especially noteworthy. This »premium label« is given to books of international interest that deserve a wider reception on account of their universal theme and/or their exceptional and often innovative artistic and literary style and design. This year's collection contains **250 titles in 30 languages from 45 countries**.*

*The titles are drawn from the books we received in 2006. The selection makes no claim to being exhaustive. Because the collections of the International Youth Library consist exclusively of books we receive from publishers, institutions, organisations, and other friends of the IYL around the world, only **review and donation copies** qualify for the selection of the »White Ravens«. To offer a broad range of publications, we attempt to present titles from as many different publishing houses as possible. Unfortunately, not all publishing houses that consistently and generously supply the IYL with their books can be featured here every year. **We cordially thank each and every one of them for their shipments of books!***

*The »White Ravens« catalogue appears each year just prior to the **Bologna Children's Book Fair** and is presented at that international gathering of subject specialists along with the books themselves. The response of many »bookpeople« has been showing us that the **»White Ravens« are used in many countries in many different ways**: as recommendation list, as impulse for translations, as purchase list for public libraries and school libraries, as order form for book stores with foreign-language books, or as general indicator for the children's and youth literature production of a country.*

*In 1996, the »White Ravens« catalogue made its first appearance on the **Internet**. Today, with the presentation of the 2007 edition on the IYL homepage, you can find a pool of 3,000 »White Ravens« titles in more than 50 languages and from about 80 countries at **www.ijb.de** including complete bibliographical data and descriptive annotations. Thanks to the greatly appreciated support of the International Children's Digital Library (ICDL), an additional »White Ravens« database with all the information can be accessed at **www.icdlbooks.org**.*

*In this catalogue, some books are given additional labels. First of all, there are **»Special Mentions«** to which the library's Lektoren wish to draw particular attention. The **symbol** ♠ marks those*

books whose content is found to contribute to an **international understanding among cultures and people**. In this way we remind ourselves and our readers of the working maxim under which Jella Lepman founded the International Youth Library and which, in these times, is still of utmost concern. The **symbol** □ is assigned to books whose text is judged to be easily understandable, i.e. **easy-to-read texts**, and yet dealing with topics of interest to older readers. Hence these books are **well-suited to foreign-language readers** and for inclusion in foreign language collections of public and school libraries.

The International Youth Library is worldwide unique. Since its foundation in 1949, the collection of international children's and youth literature has grown to a number of **more than 560,000 books**. Our mission is to maintain this supply as a mirror of children's book production, but at the same time to promote children's and youth literature around the world.

We can assure our donors that their books will be catalogued, indexed by subject and included in our depository collection. In this way, they are permanently available for use by the international clientele of specialists who visit our study library, make use of our reference services from afar, or consult

our catalogues on the Internet. Over the years, many books also find their way into thematic travelling exhibitions, topical bibliographies and lists, activity programs for children, etc.

Last but not least, we renew our request to all publishers: **Please continue to send us your new titles!** We, for our part, will endeavour to fulfil the expectation that the International Youth Library in Munich is the home of the most comprehensive collection of international literature for children and young people in the world.

After 15 years as editor of the »White Ravens«, I would once more like to express my heartfelt thanks to all the publishers, institutions, organisations, and other friends of the International Youth Library who have supported our institution by sending books. It is only thanks to their generous support that we are able to complete our ambitious tasks. With this 2007 edition, I would like to say goodbye and pass the baton to Dr. Christiane Raabe, my successor as director of the IYL. I sincerely hope that you will support her and the library team just as enthusiastically as you have supported me and my colleagues in the past.

Dr. Barbara Scharioth
March 2007

Japan

(Romanization according to the international Hepburn norms)

1

Awa, Naoko (text)

Yamamoto, Takashi (illus.)

Yukimado

(The snow window)

Tōkyō : Kaiseisha, 2006. – 47 p.

ISBN 4-03-016410-2

Death – Grief – Memory – Longing

In the mountains, an old man sells hot meals from his kiosk on wheels. Even a badger is among his customers, and the animal soon becomes his sociable assistant. One night, a girl with an uncanny resemblance to his late daughter approaches the cart. Still grieving for his long-dead child, the man is so happy about this meeting that he braves the dangerous night and demons and trudges through darkness and snow across the pass to the girl's village to see her again. With her help, his meals sell particularly well, but afterwards the girl has disappeared for good. In Naoko Awa's literary fairy tales, death is one of the most common topics. The scenes depicted by Takashi Yamamoto in a folkloristic style vividly express the lonely father's pain and longing in the dark blue mountains and the cold white snow. (8+)

2

Hino, Kazunari (retell.)

Saitō, Takao (illus.)

Zuitor-san : Nihon no mukashibanashi

(Zuitor, a young novice)

Tōkyō : Fukuinkan Shoten, 2005. – 31 p.

(Kodomo no tomo kessakushū)

ISBN 4-8340-2151-3

Novice – Fox – Metamorphosis – Trick – Folk tale

»Zui-ton, Zui-ton!« Someone seems to call the novice who is praying in front of the Buddha statue. He starts searching for the strange voice but can't find anyone. When he finally discovers a clever fox creating a noise that sounds just like the novice's name, the animal escapes inside the temple and transforms itself into a second Buddha figure. To unmask the wrong Buddha, the novice plays a trick on the intruder. Takao Saitō interprets this entertaining folk tale in carefully composed, oversized pictures full of subtle effects.

The illustrations, painted with attention to small details, offer an authentic presentation of the ancient temple structure. At the same time, they make readers feel the atmosphere of early spring in the countryside and the deep quietness inside the temple. (3+)

3

Imamori, Mitsuhiro (text/photogr.)

Ojichan wa mizu no nioi ga shita

(The old man who could smell the water)

Tōkyō : Kaiseisha, 2006. – 62 p.

ISBN 4-03-016400-5

Japan – Lake – Fisher – Nature – Coexistence – Water – Ecosystem – Cultural history

In this volume, the award-winning photographer Mitsuhiro Imamori introduces the way of life of an old fisherman and his wife living in a small community at Lake Biwa, not far from Kyoto. For many months, the author accompanied the couple and recorded the sound relationship between nature and the village people. His pictures include an aerial shot of Japan's largest lake and views of the village surrounded by small rivers and wells, the fisherman's house, the path to his fishing grounds, and of the man himself at work. Imamori combines his beautiful and impressive photographs with texts that respectfully illustrate the great love and care with which the fisherman looks after his boat, his tools, and the lake, and celebrates his thanksgiving prayer at home. (6+) ◇

4

Itō, Hiroshi (text/illus.)

Neko no namae

(Naming a cat)

Tōkyō : Tokuma Shoten, 2006. – [34] p.

(BFC)

ISBN 4-19-862173-x

Name – Identity

In this book, Hiroshi Itō again proves how cunningly he can express emotions and abstract terms with his simplifying, slightly naïve style. A stray tomcat is always addressed as »stray«, »cat«, or »thief« by humans and therefore longs to have a proper name. Strolling around the park, he meets a girl who – like every human being – does have her own name: it's Satchan. When he asks her to help him and find a suitable name for him, the girl at first ignores the dirty skinny cat. Yet, once she realises how terrible it must be not to have a name, Satchan agrees to fulfil his

wish. The cat however is not easily satisfied with her suggestions, which leads to a humorous dialogue between the two, covering complex topics such as the question of identity. (5+)

5

Katayama, Reiko (text)

Sasameya, Yuki (illus.)

Buriki no onpu

(Tin note)

Tōkyō : Āton, 2006. – [32] p.

(Āton no bungei ehon)

ISBN 4-86193-063-4

Life – Senses – Emotion – Music

Poet Reiko Katayama's cosmos is full of feelings and emotions, memories and dreams. Everything around her, her whole everyday life, seems to her like music composed of moments past and present. In the first poem, for example, she describes a heart walking down a tin staircase of musical notes. Yuki Sasameya joins in this sensual world and, in his pictures, offers his own visual interpretation of the music. The melancholic double-page illustrations in dark colours dominate the large picture book with the 14 prose poems placed on the pages almost inconspicuously. This book, created by two very individual artists, provides readers with double the pleasure. (15+)

6

Kawana, Shizuka (text)

Yamaguchi, Mao (illus.)

Kamisama no iru mura : Shiramazu ōmatsu monogatari

(The village in which gods are present : the story of the great Shiramazu-festival)

Hamamatsu : Hikumano Shuppan, 2006. – 183 p.

ISBN 4-89317-355-3

Japan – Village – Gods – Festival – Preparation – Tradition – Shinto

Two boys are cheerfully fishing near the harbour of their small fishing village. They don't know yet that they will take over the most important roles at the great village festival. Before being allowed to play messengers of the gods Sun and Moon, they will have to fulfil ritual tasks for 50 days and show enormous self-discipline. The Shiramazu Festival, celebrated on the Bōsō peninsula in Eastern Japan, has been in existence for one thousand years. To organise the celebration, all village people need to work together.

It has always been an essential element of the festival that children take centre stage. Using the two fictitious protagonists, the author introduces this unusual topic to young readers and sheds light on the secret of the festival's continuing existence until today. (11+) ◇

7

Kutsuki, Shō (text)

Yamauchi, Fujie (illus.)

Kawatare : Sanzaigaike no kappaneko

(The break of dawn: the Kappa-cat from the Sanzai-Lakes)

Tōkyō : Fukuinkan Shoten, 2005. – 269 p.

(Fukuinkan sōsaku dōwa shirizu)

ISBN 4-8340-2148-3

Child – Loneliness – Helplessness – Pondering – Lack of confidence – Kappa <water sprite>

Humankind's interference with nature threatens the existence of the »kappa«, Japanese water sprites. Thus little Hassun, whose family is already missing, gets sent to the humans to gather experience and knowledge about them – not an easy task. Transformed into a cat, the young kappa finds shelter with Asa, who is suffering from self-doubt since her mother's death. The girl and her mother used to observe the world thoughtfully and thus discovered many precious moments and objects in their everyday life. Now Asa is left to ponder »appearance and reality« on her own and becomes more and more insecure. Still, thanks to her reflectiveness, she is able to recognise Hassun's true form. This novel intensely describes in a literary style the lonely and helpless protagonists, whose fate eventually changes for the best. (12+) ◇

8

Mizuno, Masao (illus.)

Happa

(Leaves)

Tōkyō : Shōgakukan, 2005. – [26] p.

(Shizen to asobou)

ISBN 4-09-727821-5

Nature – Leaf – Imagination

An owl family is sitting on branches in the forest; beetles, dragonflies, and other insects are gathering in the trees while numerous fish are being caught at the river. Masao Mizuno creates these outdoor scenes with all the animals fashioned from leaves and carefully placed in their natural surroundings. The author's great creativity also makes some comical forest spirits

and gnomes as well as various vehicles come to life on the pages. Two goblin-like dolls, modelled by the artist from twigs, accompany the readers on their journey from page to page. This imaginative photo-picture-book, which even includes step-by-step instructions about how to craft and play with objects from your immediate surroundings, keeps many a surprise in store for its readers. (3+)

9

Nasuda, Jun

Ichioku hyakuman kōnen saki ni sumu usagi
(The hare who lives 101 million light-years away)
Tōkyō : Rironsha, 2006. – 339 p.
(Rironsha no YA! shirizu)
ISBN 4-652-07787-4

Life – Love – Family – Friendship – Happiness – Adolescence

When Shōta's father loses his job, the family moves to another town to build up a new existence. In the new neighbourhood, the boy meets various people whose lives are deeply affected by love. A professor, for instance, whose granddaughter came to Japan from Germany to look for her father, still suffers from a long-standing, bitter family conflict involving his son's love-story. This multi-faceted teenage novel describes the daily routine of the adolescent boy who finally falls in love with a classmate. The author skillfully weaves a German legend, film music, and an imaginary hare into the fictional reality and thus creates a truly original book. (14+)

10

Oka, Shūzō (text)

Sasameya, Yuki (illus.)
Uso ga ippai
(All kinds of lies)
Tōkyō : Kumon Shuppan, 2006. – 111 p.
ISBN 4-7743-1147-2

Lie – Everyday life

At home, at school, or in one's spare time, there are endless situations when people lie for the sake of their own advantage or out of compassion for friends. Ryū figures out that he tells an average of three fibs per day. If he continued like this, he would have lied 1095 times by the end of one year. What a huge amount of untruths! Suddenly made aware of this fact, the eleven-year-old boy starts to analyse lie-prone situations and examine the reasons behind these

lies. It's amazing how complex lies can be. In this amusing quasi-philosophical book, young and older readers will learn how people try to come to terms with falsehoods and untruths in their everyday lives. The book also strives to make people think more thoroughly about the lies within their lives. (10+)

□ □ Special Mention

11

Satō, Satoru (text)

Murakami, Yutaka (illus.)
Tengu dōji : Nihon fushigibanashi
(The Tengu-Boy : a strange story from ancient Japan)
Tōkyō : Akane Shobō, 2006. – 311 p.
ISBN 4-251-09837-4

Tengu <mountain demon> – Boy – Adventure – Imaginary world

»Tengu« are mountain demons often dressed like ascetic mountain monks. They have magic fans that enable them to fly and are waited on by raven-like creatures called »Karasu-tengu«. One night, a tengu with his servant Kurōmaru turns up on the doorstep of old ranger Yōhei, who is well-known for his excellent flute playing. At the request of his master, Kurōmaru is to learn how to play the flute. Therefore, he assumes a human shape and spends the next few years with Yōhei, who grows very fond of him. Yet, from the moment that Yōhei burns the wings of his student's raven-coat to force him to remain human and stay with him, the relationship between the human beings and the tengu becomes turbulent. Set against the backdrop of the war-torn 16th century, the mysterious tale turns into a breathtaking adventure culminating in the discovery of Kurōmaru's family background: He was the son of a samurai kidnapped by the tengu as a child. This masterpiece of a novel takes its readers into the magic world of ancient Japan. (12+) ◇

12

Takeda, Tsuyoshi (text/photogr.)

Nankyoku no korekushon

(Collection South Pole)

Tōkyō : Froebel-kan, 2006. – 48 p.

(Fushigi korekushon; 5)

ISBN 4-577-03249-X

Antarctica – Expedition

Photographer Tsuyoshi Takeda accompanied the 45th Japanese expedition to Antarctica and stayed there for more than a year. He does not only show the terrific landscape, natural phenomena, and animals down there. He also describes research and current environmental problems facing the cold continent and portrays the working day of the crew at the research station and in inner Antarctica, where the temperature often drops below minus 60°C. The marvellous photographs arranged by topic and the child-friendly layout create a lively and diversified visual rhythm. Complemented by scientific comments, geophysical information, and accounts of Takeda's personal experience, the pictures give readers the impression that they themselves have joined the expedition. (7+)

13

Taniuchi, Kōta (text/illus.)

Tōi tōi oka

(A hill somewhere far away)

Tōkyō : Shikōsha, 2005. – [26] p.

(Bukku kurabu kokusaiban ehon)

ISBN 4-7834-0290-6

Shepherd's dog – Shepherd – Flock of sheep –

Daydream – Longing

After a long march, the shepherd and his flock reach a hill. While the sheep start grazing, the man and his dog relax. The endless sky stretches across the vast grassy plain. Suddenly, the sheep fly into the sunset and become indistinguishable from the little clouds in the sky. Not even when night falls, do they return. However, the following morning, with the first warm rays of sunshine, the sheep are back again. Where have they been? Was it only a dream? The picturesque, quiet illustrations, which perfectly express the vastness of the sky and the meadows in the respective shades of colour for each time of the day, will awake the readers' longing for faraway places. Kōta Taniuchi is a true poet of colours. (3+)

14

Tōkyō Kodomo Toshokan hen (ed.)

Ōkoso Reiko (illus.)

Ame nochi hare

(After the rain, the sun comes out)

Tōkyō : Tōkyō Kodomo Toshokan, 2005. – 174 p.

(Aizōban ohanashi no rōsoku; 7)

ISBN 4-88569-056-0

Fairy tale – Storytelling

Volume Seven of the »Candlelight Stories«, a series of bibliophile anthologies, presents – among other things – a Japanese version of Cinderella called »Nukafuku Komefuku« (The farmer's daughters Rice-Bran-Luck and Rice-Luck). Beautiful Rice-Bran-Luck achieves happiness not only thanks to her sock but also because she wins a poetry contest against her sister; this is an interesting contrast to the European variants of this tale. The fairy tales included in this book have been adapted by Kyōko Matsuoka, the head of the Tokyo Children's Library, and her colleagues. The team draw on their extensive experience in storytelling to make the tales more attractive to the audience. The whole series is a wonderful reading experience for children and other fairy tale lovers. (9+) ◻

15

Tsubota, Jōji (text)

Tsubota, Rikio [et al.] (ed.)

Ishikura, Kinji (illus.)

Mahō

(Magic)

Tōkyō : Komine Shoten, 2005. – 168 p.

ISBN 4-338-20401-x

Child – Everyday life – Short story – Folk tale

This volume is part of the four-volume edition of selected works written by the classic children's book author Jōji Tsubota (1890-1982). The story that this volume was named after tells of the argument between two brothers who are fascinated by magic. Tsubota's tales, which mirror both the author's own life and his times in general, vividly describe the everyday routine and the mindset of children without neglecting the hard life of adults. The other three volumes, comprised of both original works and retellings of Japanese folk tales, are illustrated by Mitsuo Shinozaki, Yuki Sasameya, and Yoshirō Matsunaga. The black-and-white pictures masterfully enable readers to relate to the ancient past as well as to the daily life at Tsubota's time. (11+) ◇

16

Yamamura, Kōji

Animēshon no sekai e yōkoso : Karāban

(Welcome to the world of animation)

Tōkyō : Iwanami Shoten, 2006. – IX, 158, 14 p.

(Iwanami junia shinsho; 538)

ISBN 4-00-500538-1

Animation – Film aesthetics

Kōji Yamamura is one of the representatives of artistic animated films in Japan. He writes the scripts, directs and animates his films himself, and takes part in many international film festivals. In this compact little paperback book with numerous colourful pictures, Yamamura explains the history of animated film, taking popular historical people as examples. In addition, he shows the production process of his own works that are characterised by a strong sense of individuality and a rich variety of techniques employed. When he was only 14, he discovered the fascination of animation and has consistently pursued his teenage dream ever since. That is why his plea for creativity and individuality is so convincing for young readers. (13+)

17

Yoshihashi, Michio (text)

Satō, Makiko (illus.)

Namakura

(The weakling)

Tōkyō : Kodansha, 2006. – 225 S.

(YA! Entertainment)

ISBN 4-06-269354-2

Kyoto/1850-1900 – Boy – Poverty –

Coping with life – Conscience

The seven short stories of this book are set in Kyoto during the second half of the 19th century. They focus on boys who are suffering from poverty or are at the mercy of political circumstances. While one of them is forced to work as rickshaw-driver, others slave away at the quarry, in factories, or at similar places. All of them have reached a critical point in their lives: They need to decide what their future shall be like because it is often tempting to resort to theft and deceit in order to escape poverty. The very concisely written stories immediately make readers identify with the protagonists. Despite the harsh reality described, readers will sense the great amount of trust and hope that the author has in his young heroes. (13+) (43rd Noma Award for Juvenile Literature; 2005)

People's Republic of China

(Romanization according to the international Pinyin norms)

18

Cao, Wen-xuan (text)

Zhu, Cheng-liang (illus.)

Tian-cheng-shu

(The sweet orange tree)

Nanjing : Jiangsu-Shaonian-Ertong-Chubanshe,

2004. – 68 p. + CD

(Wo-zai-zhe-er)

ISBN 7-5346-3009-6

Friend – Trick – Guilty conscience – Mental disability

Wan-qiao, a mentally challenged boy, falls asleep under a tree. After a while, four other children pass by. When they spot their friend sleeping on the ground, the mischievous four can't help but play a trick on him. They laugh so hard that Wan-qiao eventually wakes up. He is delighted to see his friends and tells them that he just had a wonderful dream about their friendship. Feeling embarrassed and guilty, the four friends quickly fall silent. Unanimously they decide to make up for their mischief. The simple, yet very touching story about friendship and humanity is told by one of the most popular contemporary Chinese children's book authors. Zhu Cheng-liang aptly illustrates this story, which is set in the countryside, with earthen-coloured pictures in naïve style. (8+)

19

Chen, Lei (text)

Shen, Yuan-yuan (illus.)

Lan-Pi-Tu-de-Gushi

(The story of the blue-haired hare)

Changdu : Sichuan-Shaonian-Ertong-Chubanshe,

2005. – 240 p. + CD

ISBN 7-5365-3325-x

Enmity – Peace – Coexistence –

Family – Friend – Love

Pigeng, a little blue-haired hare, lives in the Ying Huai Valley to which his ancestors had fled in order to hide from the jackals. Except for some wild plants with blue juice, the valley provides no food at all so that, gradually, the fur of all the hares has turned blue. After his parents' death, Pigeng decides to pursue his mother's dream and leave the valley. Together with his two best friends, the little hare sets off on his difficult

journey. This gripping and moving story proves that family and friends are the most precious things in life and that a peaceful world can only be achieved with love and everybody's goodwill. The numerous water-colour drawings perfectly mirror the protagonists' moods and thus underline the text's message. (9+)

Republic of Korea

(Romanization according to the
McCune-Reischauer norms)

□ □ Special Mention

20

Hwang, Sŏn-mi (text)

Kim, Yun-ju (illus.)

Na-onŭi sumŏinŭpang

(Na-on's secret room)

P'aju : Changbi, 2006. – 249 p.

(Changbi Adongmunko; 228)

ISBN 89-364-4228-7

Child – Parents – Illness – House – Secret – Peace

Little Na-on, who suffers from severe asthma attacks, is tired of her mother's exaggerated care and patronising attitude. Therefore she often hides at her mother's old birthplace where she explores the unkempt garden full of flowers and herbs. This is a place where she can finally breathe freely. One day, the girl overhears her parents talking. She learns that she and her twin brother were born in that very house, that her brother died there soon afterwards, and that her mother has refused to enter the house ever since. Finally, the girl begins to understand her mother's behaviour and pain. As nobody seems to take care of house or garden, Na-on's father secretly starts renovating it. When her mother learns about her daughter's secret activities and her husband's efforts, she eventually makes peace with the past and decides not to sell the house. Delicate illustrations in bright colours perfectly complement the text and underline the message of this powerful and imaginative story. (11+)

21

Kim, Jung-Sŏk (text/illus.)

Appaga Pogospipŏ

(Longing for my father)

P'aju City : Porim, 2005. – [32] p.

(Porim ch'angjak kŭrim ch'aek Mochŏn)

ISBN 89-433-0580-x

Daughter – Father – Longing – Letter –

Awkwardness – School – Everyday life – Help

While her father has to stay behind in Korea to work, little Ha-yun and her mother fly to their new family home in New Zealand. Ha-yun terribly misses her father and writes letters full of love and longing. She meticulously describes all the impressions and difficulties that she faces in her new home country and thus turns everyday events into something special. Friendly Mr. Carry, who teaches English to the girl and her mother, helps her to get accepted by her new classmates. Ha-yun sends her father a drawing of the new garden, the strange plants, and the lemon tree. She waits impatiently for the summer and her father to arrive so that she can greet him with home-made lemon juice. This quiet story is accompanied by colourful ink- and watercolour illustrations. (6+) ◇

22

Mun, Sŭng-yŏn (text)

Yi, Su-ji (illus.)

Uri nŭn pŏlgŏsungi hwaga

(We are naked painters)

P'aju : Tolbaegae Örini, 2005. – [34] p.

ISBN 89-90025-09-5

Siblings – Painting – Body – Fun

Hun and Jin, brother and sister, discover a box of body paints in their room. The children are absolutely delighted and start covering first their own and then each other's bodies with colourful paints. Their imagination roams freely, and in their multi-coloured daydreams, they travel through oceans, jungles, and into the moonlit night. Only when their mother repeatedly calls for them to come and get into the bath tub, do the siblings return from their imaginary journey. Witty and expressive, full-page drawings rendered in charcoal and pencil are completed with partly-coloured cut-out figures pasted onto the illustrations in collage technique. (3+)

Africa

South Africa

▣ ▣ Special Mention

23

Magona, Sindiwe (text)

Bouma, Paddy (illus.)

The best meal ever!

Cape Town : Tafelberg, 2006. – [32] p.

ISBN 0-624-04254-5

(parallel Xhosa ed.: Esona-sona sidlo!)

Sister – Siblings – Hunger – Imagination – Hope

Night is falling, and Sindiwe's four little siblings are terribly hungry. When Mama left to look after their ill grandfather in a distant village, she asked her eldest daughter to take care of her little monsters. But what is Sindiwe to do without so much as a morsel of food in the cupboards. Shall she send the young ones to bed disheartened and desperate? Putting on a bright smile, the girl quickly lights a fire, merrily stirs a big pot of water, and keeps her brothers and sisters so busy with laying the table, brushing their teeth, and changing into their pyjamas that they eventually drop off into the land of dreams with the filling smell of an imaginary »soup of hope« in their nostrils. This heart-warming tale about the power of hope narrated in an easy-flowing voice is translated into tender water-colour illustrations. They perfectly capture the story's changes of mood from frightened and grumpy to hopeful and satisfied. (5+) ◇

Asia and Oceania

Australia

24

Bauer, Michael Gerard

Don't call me Ishmael!

Malvern, SA : Omnibus Books, 2006. – 277 p.

ISBN 1-86291-666-7

Teenager – Insecurity – Bullying – Friendship

Ishmael's life is doomed. After all, what is there to do when you suffer from a mysterious condition called Ishmael Leseur's Syndrome that triggers

abnormal behaviour in otherwise completely ordinary people and leaves you a complete loser? The desperate first-person-narrator of this hilarious teenage novel describes in minute detail all the minor and major disasters hitting him over the head during one particularly trying school year. The accumulation of deadly embarrassing accidents in this light-hearted look at problems such as lack of self-confidence, bullying, and the search for a hole in the ground to disappear in, will have young readers giggling from beginning to end. (12+)

25

Caswell, Brian

Loop

St Lucia, Queensland : Univ. of Queensland Press, 2006. – 208 p.

ISBN: 978-0-7022-3589-4

Teenager – Everyday life – Unusual event

In this collection of short stories for teenagers, award-winning author Brian Caswell explores a kaleidoscope of different topics. The tales range from the challenges of everyday life, the pitfalls of teenage love, the disappointment and anger against divorced parents to various unusual encounters with forces from outer space, which are in turn moving, heart-breaking, witty, and hilarious. Often ending in a truly Dahl-like twist of events, the stories are all the more enjoyable because readers are taken completely by surprise. The smooth and engaging first-person narrations interspersed with plenty of dialogue make this collection a diverting read. (12+)

26

Dubosarsky, Ursula

The red shoe

Crows Nest, NSW : Allen & Unwin, 2006. – 183 p.

ISBN 978-1-74114-285-3

Australia/1954 – Post-war society – Daughter – Father – Sister – War trauma – Suicide attempt

In this quiet children's novel set in 1954, Ursula Dubosarsky describes the everyday life of little Matilda and her family. Matilda's mother struggles hard to maintain a kind of sane family routine despite the fact that the often-absent father can't seem to cope with his horrible wartime memories and older sister Elizabeth just suffered a nervous

breakdown. In an unpretentious, matter-of-fact style, the curious six-year-old protagonist relates the events around her. The renowned Australian author uses real newspaper clippings cunningly woven into the haunting narrative to paint an authentic picture of small and big events in post-war Sydney and, at the same time, creates a family story filled with a sense of mystery, adventure, tragedy, and wonder. (10+) (Queensland Premier's Literary Awards; 2006)

27

Marchetta, Melina

On the Jellicoe road

Camberwell, Victoria [et al.] : Viking, 2006. – 288 p.
ISBN 978-0-670-07029-9

Mother – Daughter – Search for identity – Orphan – Friendship – Boarding school – Love
As newly-elected house leader, 17-year-old Taylor Markham faces difficult negotiations in the secret territory wars between the boarders at Jellicoe School, the Townies, and the Cadets. Yet, her heart is actually set on something else. Every since her mother abandoned her six years ago, the troubled and angry girl has been trying to piece her life back together from snippets of fading memories and a weird dream that haunts her every night. Could the unfinished manuscript about five kids who lived in Jellicoe almost 20 years ago hold the missing clues? In her new teenage novel, Melina Marchetta carefully intertwines two mysterious and utterly moving stories about friendship, love, tragedy, and loss that will not release their grip on the readers until the last page. (14+)

28

Millard, Glenda (text)

Chapman, Gaye (illus.)

Kaito's cloth

Lindfield, NSW : Scholastic Press, 2006. – [36] p.
ISBN 1-86504-845-3

Girl – Butterfly – Flight – Wish – Imagination
This philosophical, fairytale-like picture book is Glenda Millard and Gaye Chapman's second collaboration after »Heart of the tiger« (2004). The fragile ink- and watercolour-illustrations whisk readers away into a magical land where the Lord of Flight creates stunningly beautiful butterflies to

fill the hearts of people with joy before the dreary winter settles in. When little Kaito (who bears some resemblance to a slightly Japanese Little Red Riding Hood) finally reaches the Mountain of Dreams after a strenuous journey, she is devastated to learn that the floating, fluttering creatures only live for one day. Nevertheless, with a lot of imagination, the girl eventually finds a way to preserve the miracle of flight until spring returns. (4+)

29

Ormerod, Jan (text/illus.)

Water witcher

Surry Hills, NSW : Little Hare Books, 2006. – [32] p.

ISBN 978-1-921049-51-4

Farm – Drought – Survival – Water – Divining rod
In this picture book, acclaimed illustrator Jan Ormerod recalls the difficult life on a drought-stricken farm in the Western Australian bush. The slightly nostalgic, evocative illustrations in bright blue and shades of brown, red, and orange bring the glimmering heat of a typical dry summer day alive, with land, people, and animals sweltering under layers of red dust. To survive, little Dougie and his father have to cart water to the farm every single day, from a well more than an hour down the track. When the boy learns that his grandfather was able to find water with the help of a divining rod, he ignores his sisters' teasing and his mother's scepticism and determinedly knuckles down to learn the mysterious art of water witching to save his family. (4+)

□ □ Special Mention

30

Tan, Shaun (illus.)

The arrival

Melbourne : Lothian Books, 2006. – [126] p.
ISBN 978-0-7344-0694-1

Journey – Immigrant – Loneliness – Homesickness – Assimilation

Award-winning artist Shaun Tan's latest offering for young and old readers is an extraordinary graphic novel relating the tale of a young man who ventures out into a strange, far-away country across a vast ocean to seek a better life. With

hardly any money and no knowledge of the language or the customs of his chosen land, all that the immigrant can rely on to find food, work, and a place to live are his inner strength and ingenuity plus help from sympathetic strangers. In a sequence of hundreds of sepia-coloured illustrations in varying sizes, this textless masterpiece invites readers to share the protagonist's homesickness, displacement, and confusion in an enigmatic world devoid of any recognisable, familiar patterns. The graphite pencil drawings, created with a meticulous attention to detail and brimming with fantastic elements, are reminiscent of an old-fashioned photo album that reveals a long-forgotten, secret adventure. (12+) ◇ ▢

31

Tonkin, Rachel (text/illus.)

Leaf litter : exploring the mysteries
of a hidden world

Pymble, Sydney, NSW : Angus & Robertson,
2006. – 29 p.

(Children's non-fiction)

ISBN 978-0-207-19844-1

Plant litter – Habitat – Life cycle – Seasons

This non-fiction picture book takes young readers on a trip into nature. In detailed, large-format illustrations teeming with wildlife, the author examines the world on a small patch beneath a tree during the course of one year. While leaves and plants grow, fall to the ground, and start rotting, small animals are born, fight for survival, leave the place, or die. Even small children will delight in naming animals and discovering fascinating scenes by lifting the flaps. The poetic and informative text adds a second level for older children who are interested in changes occurring in the habitat. The »Things to find« appendix invites readers to explore the pages more thoroughly and the glossary provides an abundance of additional information. (3+) ▢

32

Wild, Margaret (text)

Spudvilas, Anne (illus.)

Woolvs in the sitee

Camberwell, Victoria [et al.] : Viking, 2006. – [40] p.

ISBN 0-670-04167-x

City – Catastrophe – Panic – Loneliness –

Coping with fear – Courage

The city has turned sinister, strange creatures are lurking in the shadows, and to young Ben, life has become a fierce struggle for survival. Only when his sole friend, the elderly next door neighbour, disappears, does the boy, who has been hiding in the basement, summon enough courage to decide:

»I will no longer let the woolvs forse me to scrooch [sic].« In this unsettling picture book, readers are left in the dark as to what kind of catastrophe may have hit the city. The sketchy, bold charcoal illustrations set against alarming watercolour backgrounds underline the oppressing atmosphere of the narration, while the misspellings and twisted grammar draw particular attention to the poetic text. This outstanding work naturally lends itself to discussions about war, fear, environmental destruction, or psychosis. (10+)

India

33

Balsavar, Deepa (text/illus.)

Kaushal, Tara (Hindi transl.)

The seed = Bījā


Chennai : Tulika, 2005. – [20] p.

ISBN 81-8146-110-X

(Bilingual ed.: English and Hindi)

Seed – Plant – Imagination

This simple picture book for small children follows a young girl as she discovers a tiny seed on the ground, plants it in an old pot, and carefully looks after it, patiently waiting for something to happen. Once a thin stem sprouts, she excitedly hurries to all her loved ones to share the miracle. Each family member curiously asks her a short question about the minute plant and the girl's imagination immediately grows wings. The roundish, comic-book-like watercolour illustrations showing the child and her family on the

right-hand pages, framed by the sparse text in English and Hindi, are contrasted, on the left-hand pages, by more ornamental portraits depicting wondrous plants into which the small seedling might one day develop. (2+) 

Special Mention

34

Scott, Nathan Kumar (text)


Balaji, Theertham (illus.)

Mangoes & bananas

[Chennai, India] : Tara Publ., 2006. – [32] p.

ISBN 81-86211-06-3

Friendship – Hunger – Cooperation – Greed – Trick – Revenge – Folk tale

This retelling of a classic trickster tale features one of the most popular characters in Indonesian folklore, Kanchil the mouse deer. Fed up with the exhausting daily search for food, the clever deer and his best friend Monyet, the monkey, decide to plant their own garden and grow their favourite fruit: mangoes and bananas. Yet when, at harvest time, the greedy monkey quickly starts devouring all of the delicious fruit himself, quick-witted Kanchil resorts to a trick to get hold of his due share. This story told in a cheeky, energetic voice is translated into stunning illustrations in earthy shades. Created in the traditional Indian textile art form of Kalamkari (the process of which is explained in an appendix), the full-page pictures set against monochrome backgrounds follow the protagonists bouncing through their decoratively shaped surroundings. This book stands out both for its artwork and the engaging text. (4+) 

35

Singh, T. Bijoykumar [et al.] (text/retell.)

Suutari, Amanda [et al.] (illus.)


First sun stories : unusual folk tales from the North East

New Delhi : Katha, 2005. – 88 p.

ISBN 978-81-89020-33-0

North East India – Folk tale – Anthology

For this large-format anthology of 14 lesser-known folk tales from the north-eastern part of India, six writers and ten illustrators collaborated. Some of the stories are fairly amusing, such as the

creation story from the Ao Naga tribe, which explains why the land of Assam is mainly flat whereas the neighbouring state of Nagaland is rocky and mountainous; other tales are more serious, such as the Assam legend of beautiful Joymala who is abandoned by her unfaithful husband and becomes queen of the elephants. The enchanting tales introduce young readers to the rich storytelling traditions of the so-called Seven Sister States with several tales appearing in print for the first time. (6+) 

New Zealand

36

Aslund, Tatiana (text)

Hatam, Samer (illus.)


Moho the ugly pukeko

Auckland : Reed Children's Books,

2006. – [30] p.

ISBN 978-1-86948-104-9

Bird – Otherness – Outsider – Search for identity – Happiness

In this picture book, illustrated with soft water-colours, Hans Christian Andersen's popular fairy tale »The ugly duckling« is moved to a New Zealand setting. Living among the reeds on the edge of a swamp, a noisy pukeko family is utterly appalled when the last of their eggs finally cracks open and a short-legged, clumsy chick hatches. Moho (i.e. stupid), as they name him, is constantly teased and tortured by his elegant siblings. One day, the sad outsider sneaks off in search for his own place in life – which he finally finds with the takahe colony high up in the mountains. A glossary of Maori terms and a short note on the characteristics of the two species of native New Zealand birds round off this ever-topical tale about fitting in. (4+) 

37

Rainforth, Hannah (text)

Teo, Ali (illus.)

Barnaby Bennett <proper name>

Wellington : Huia Publ., 2006. – [32] p.

ISBN 1-86969-232-2

Favourite colour – Clothes – Family – Stubbornness

One morning, little Barnaby wakes up with an epiphany. He will wear nothing but red from now on! The boy digs up a weird array of family clothing and no matter how much the rest of his family moans and grumbles, he will not be parted from his new uniform, which naturally gets grubbier and smellier by the day. Yet when the terrible stink can no longer be tolerated, purple-haired nanny comes to the rescue. She sews up a wondrous creation complete with dinosaur hood and pockets galore that not even Barnaby can resist – although it is bright yellow. This amusing, rhymed tale of a stubborn little boy is translated into bold, chaotic, computer-generated collages with a cartoon-like touch that perfectly capture the crazy mood of the tale. (4+)

38

Taylor, William

Land of milk and honey

Auckland : HarperCollinsPubl., 2005. – 160 p.

(Fiction)

ISBN 1-86950-549-2

New Zealand/1947 – Postwar era – British teenager – War orphan – Farm work – Abuse – Escape

This gripping teenage novel relates the story of 14-year-old Jack who comes to New Zealand as a so-called »British war-orphan« in 1947. However, his new »home« is a far cry from the »land of milk and honey« that his father had promised him. The skinny boy gets sent to a dairy farm where he slaves away night and day for a meagre meal and no wages. On top of that, he finds himself abused, bullied, and even tortured by the violent and mean son of the equally cruel farm owners. One night, beaten half to death, he finally escapes this hell and is taken in by a generous old doctor. This captivating and relentless narrative makes the protagonist's shocking fate and the difficult times it is set in come alive for modern readers. (14+) ◇

Europe

Great Britain

39

Dodd, Emma (text/illus.)

What pet to get?

Dorking, Surrey : Templar Publ., 2006.

– [32] p.

ISBN 978-1-84011-517-8

Pet – Selection – Imagination

A pet is exactly what Jack needs, but which animal should he select as his favourite companion?

Although his mother is not opposed to the idea in general, she always finds some fault with her eager son's perfectly sensible suggestions of an elephant, a lion, or a Tyrannosaurus Rex. (»That would have been a great idea, dear [...] but unfortunately [it] has been extinct for sixty-five million years.«) In a witty way, the energetic, computer-generated double-page illustrations in bright colours visualise both the child's over-sized imaginative friends and the mother's pragmatically-induced objections. Parents should be careful: The jocular text and bold pictures just might inspire little would-be pet-owners in their own search for a perfect friend. (4+)

40

Kennen, Ally

Beast

London [et al.] : Marion Lloyd Books,

2006. – 247 p.

ISBN 978-0-439-95104-3

Teenager – Foster home – Criminal record – Crocodile – Secret – Murder

For years, Stephen has been living with various foster families and committing quite a few petty crimes ranging from theft to vandalism to arson. Yet his most desperate plan to date involves cruel murder. The victim of this horrible deed, however, is not disclosed to the readers right away; through small clues in the engaging first-person narration, readers slowly learn that the victim is a vicious crocodile that the boy has kept hidden in a storage lake for the past six years. The 17-year-old realises that it is high time that he got rid of the dangerous beast – but this is easier said than done.

Written in an authentic voice, this thrilling story focuses on the foster boy's painful memories and everyday problems, as well as his struggles to free himself of the beast and of his unhappy past. (14+)

41

MacRae, Tom (text)

Odrizola, Elena (illus.)

The opposite

London : Andersen Press, 2006. – [28] p.

ISBN 1-84270-482-6

(US ed. by Peachtree Publ., 2006)

Boy – Creature – Mischief

Under normal circumstances, Nate is a tidy little boy, good at pouring his milk at breakfast and painting neat pictures at school. But the day when »The Opposite« happens isn't a normal day at all – in fact, it's quite the opposite. Milk gets spilled and paint is splashed everywhere by the mischievous creature, and poor Nate gets all the blame; but only until the boy comes up with an ingenious idea to get rid of the troublemaker. Spanish illustrator Elena Odrizola's trademark illustrations are rendered in cheerful watercolours. The lanky figures, dressed in brightly patterned clothes and set against white or pastel-coloured backgrounds, make this hilariously quirky story come alive for young and old readers alike. (3+) □

42

Rayner, Catherine (text/illus.)

Augustus and his smile

London : Little Tiger Press, 2006.

– [28] p.

ISBN 1-84506-282-5

Tiger – Smile – Loss – Search – Happiness

Poor Augustus has lost his smile and no matter where the mighty tiger searches for it, whether he climbs to the tops of the highest trees or dives into the deep blue ocean, his smile is nowhere to be found. Yet then it starts raining – pitter, patter, drip, drop, plop! – and the joyful sound makes the stripy animal realise that happiness (and his smile) is everywhere around him if he just opens his eyes and heart to it. The succinct and poetical text of this tale merges almost inconspicuously with the vibrant mixed-media illustrations. Shown from varying perspectives reminiscent of film tech-

niques, the sprightly tiger bounces through wide-open coloured or white spaces inviting young readers to share his adventures. (Booktrust Early Years Awards, Best New Illustrator; 2006) (4+) □

□ □ Special Mention

43

Reeve, Philip (text)

Wyatt, David (illus.)

Larklight or the revenge of the white spiders! or to Saturn's rings and back! : a rousing tale of dauntless pluck in the farthest reaches of space
London : Bloomsbury Publ., 2006. – 399 p.

ISBN 978-0-7475-8240-3

Space – Spider – Attack – Siblings – Escape – Adventure

This historical science-fiction novel takes its readers on a breathtaking flight through space. When Larklight, a ramshackle old house floating along the orbit around the moon and the home of British siblings Art and Myrtle, is suddenly attacked by elephant-sized evil spiders, they see only one chance of survival. Their escape in a »Daedalus Lifeboat« marks the beginning of many misfortunes, which include crashing unto the surface of the moon, being stung and »canned« by huge moths as food for their voracious larvae, or being rescued by the infamous space pirate Jack Havock. Set in the Victorian era (with a few sci-fi twists) and told in a dryly humorous first-person narration, the book can be enjoyed on several levels. While young adults will savour the numerous allusions to and jokes about famous scientists and writers, children will be captivated by the gripping and utterly silly adventures. Detailed pen-and-ink drawings perfectly capture the fantastical mood of the story. (10+)

44

Webb, Beth

Star dancer : the book of air

London : Macmillan Children's Books, 2006. – 342 p.

ISBN 978-1-4050-9175-6

Village – Danger – Girl – Destiny – Druid – Rescue

The night that Tegen is born, stars are dancing across the sky to welcome her into the world, just as it was prophesied by the goddess. Yet though Witton, the chief druid, suspects that this girl (and not a boy) must be the promised «Star Dancer» who alone will be able to protect their people against evil, he closes his eyes against this unwelcome truth until it is almost too late. At the age of 16, Tegen slowly begins to realise her powers and is finally acknowledged by the old druid. The absorbing narrative of this fantasy novel, the first part of a quartet, whisks readers away into a world full of superstition, ancient spirits, intrigue, and mysterious powers in which a girl must struggle to fulfil her destiny against all odds. (12+)

Ireland

45

Parkinson, Siobhán

Kate <proper name>

Dublin : O'Brien Press, 2006. – 158 p.

ISBN 978-0-86278-993-0.

Dublin/1930 – Poverty – Dream – Irish dancing –

Life in Dublin in the 1930s is not easy, especially when you're poor. Twelve-year-old Kate and her three little sisters are not only sneered at and teased by their richer classmates, the nuns at their convent school are not particularly friendly either. Food is scarce and there is not a penny to be spared for dancing classes, let alone fancy dancing costumes. Still, after her first taste of Irish dancing, the young girl is hooked and absolutely determined not to let her talent go to waste. The authentic and moving story written in an easy-flowing style offers young readers an interesting glimpse into a time when women did not have many choices and everyday life was bitter struggle for survival for many poor people in the Irish capital. (10+)

North America

Canada

46

Bastedo, Jamie

On thin ice

Calgary, Alberta : Red Deer Press, 2006. – 348 p.

ISBN 978-0-88995-337-6

Arctic – Climate change – Cultural identity

Five months after her ragtag family moved to the Arctic village of Nanurtalik, 16-year-old Ashley, half French-Canadian and half Inuit, still feels like an outsider. When a blizzard hits the place, two of her classmates are killed in a mysterious accident, and terrifying dreams of a bear-man shaman start haunting her, the teenager becomes aware of her special connection with the legendary spirit bear, Nanurluk, and starts exploring an ancient spirit trail. In this gripping novel told in a fresh voice, Jamie Bastedo cleverly intertwines a realistic story about a teenager's everyday life in the Arctic with mystical elements and messages about the devastating effects of global warming. (14+) ◇

47

Ellis, Deborah

I am a taxi

Toronto : House of Anansi Press, 2006. – 205 p.

(The Cocarero novels) (Groundwood books)

ISBN 978-0-88899-735-7

South America – Parents – Prison – Son –

Coca trade – Illegal work – Exploitation

Deborah Ellis, author of the highly praised »Breadwinner«-trilogy, once again dishes up a heavy diet for her readers. Set in South America, this novel relates the situation of 12-year-old Diego, whose innocent parents serve a 17-year prison sentence. The boy shares his mother's prison cell, goes to school, and works as messenger for other prison inmates (providing the only source of income to pay for their food and »rent«). When he loses his job, he grows desperate enough to join his friend for a job in the coca trade but instead is exploited, abused, chased, and almost killed. Readers will quickly become immersed in the breathtaking events of Diego's realistically described life and eagerly await the book's sequel. (11+) ◇

48

Goobie, Beth

Hello, groin

Victoria, BC [et al.] : Orca Book Publ., 2006. – 271 p.
ISBN 978-1-55143-459-9

Sexual identity – Peer pressure – Fear – Courage – Homosexuality – Coming out

For a long time, 16-year-old Dylan has done everything in her power to annihilate her own suspicion that she might be a lesbian. Not only does she dread the wrathful reactions of the tyrannising »phone-patrol« girls and her other classmates if they found out; she simply doesn't dare acknowledge her own feelings to herself, let alone face the shock and disappointment of her family, her boyfriend Cam, and her best friend Jocelyn, with whom she is secretly in love. Told in a straightforward, authentic voice that slowly reveals the first-person narrator's inner fights and most intimate thoughts, the impressive coming-of-age novel sensitively portrays the girl's struggle to find her true identity and accept her sexual orientation. (14+)

□ □ Special Mention

49

Poe, Edgar Allan (text)

Price, Ryan (illus.)

The raven

Toronto, ON [et al.] : KCP Poetry, 2006. – [48] p.
(Visions in poetry)

ISBN 978-1-55337-473-2

Love – Loss – Despair – Mental illness

The fifth volume in the highly praised »Visions in poetry« series again brings a classic poem alive for modern day readers. »The raven« – a compelling poem about a man's suffering and slow descent into madness after his true love's death (and probably Edgar Allan Poe's best-known work) – was originally published in 1845 but has lost nothing of its appeal. Using a technique called drypoint printmaking, in which the artist crafts an image onto a copper plate with sharp-pointed tools (similar to etching), Ryan Price has created stunning illustrations that perfectly capture the sinister, chilling atmosphere of the timeless text. The slightly distorted pictures show the raven-like protagonist with his spindly arms and huge egg-

shaped head gloomily brooding inside his hut. The unusual perspectives underline the man's growing despair when it becomes clear that the threatening figure of the raven will disappear »nevermore«. (14+) □

50

Sawa, Maureen (text)

Slavin, Bill (illus.)

The library book : the story of libraries
from camels to computers

Toronto [et al.] : Tundra Books, 2006. – 72 p.

ISBN 0-88776-698-6

Library/3000 BC-2000 AD – Writing – Reading – Book

Over the centuries, books have come in all kinds of shapes and forms – and so have libraries. Whether they consist of clay tablets inscribed with cuneiform, hundreds of leather scrolls in a cave, thousands of books carried by 500 camels walking in alphabetical order, or even virtual documents in cyberspace, they all store and provide important knowledge. In an engaging text that reads almost like an adventure story, this non-fiction book traces the history and development of writing, reading, and libraries from the ancient beginnings in Mesopotamia in 3000 BC to the present day. Short factual paragraphs focusing on particular aspects and a bibliographic appendix offer an entertaining combination of background knowledge, trivia, and information for further reading. (10+) □

51

Scowen, Kate (text)

Szuc, Jeff (illus.)

My kind of sad : what it's like to be young
and depressed

Toronto [et al.] : Annick Press, 2006. – 168 p.

ISBN 978-1-55037-940-2

Depression – Eating disorder – Mental health

While depression is not at all a recent phenomenon, Kate Scowen points out that »adolescent depression has only been recognized as a medical diagnosis in the past 25 years.« In this non-fiction book, the author discusses this illness, its various manifestations in adolescents, the different problems accompanying it, the possible treatments, and some strategies for dealing with it. The clear text is cut into

short paragraphs by quirky black-and-white illustrations, lists of facts, headlines in bold type, and quotations from interviews with young people from 9 to 23. Despite the slightly repetitive style that allows readers to read chapters individually, the book offers a good introduction to affected teenagers, and their friends and families to this topical issue. (12+) □

52

Yolen, Jane (retell.)

Stemple, Heidi E. Y. (recipes)

Béha, Philippe (illus.)

Fairy tale feasts : a literary cookbook

Vancouver : Tradewind Books, 2006. – 197 p.

ISBN 978-1-896580-84-5

Fairy tale – Recipe – Cookbook

In this unusual fairy-tale-anthology-cum-cookbook, young readers are offered a delicious feast for their eyes, ears, and bellies. Divided into five sections (breakfasts, lunches, soups, dinners, and desserts), the square volume dishes up crisp, modern retellings of twenty popular mostly European folk tales with some worthwhile information about the tales, their origins, and different versions added in the margins. Each retelling is followed by a step-by-step recipe of a meal taken from the corresponding tale, such as »Runaway Pancakes« or »Snow White's Baked Apples«, including some suggestions for tasty variations and a number of facts about the dish. Vigorous, boldly coloured full-page illustrations and vignettes perfectly complement this family treat. (8+) □

USA

53

DiCamillo, Kate (text)

Ibatoulline, Bagram (illus.)

The miraculous journey of Edward Tulane

Cambridge, Mass. : Candlewick Press, 2006. – 198 p.

ISBN 978-0-7636-2589-4

Rabbit – China doll – Odyssey – Change of owner

Ever since he can remember, Edward has been living in the large house at Egypt Street with young Abilene who treated him with respect and loved him dearly. Yet when the vain and cold-hearted china rabbit in his fashionable attire goes overboard during the family's ocean crossing, his

comfortable life ends abruptly. Rescued from the bottom of the sea, Edward spends the following years on a dump, as a travelling companion for a hobo, with a terminally ill little girl, and has his head bashed in by a wrathful pub owner, until he happily returns, completely transformed, to the hands of his first owner's daughter. This quiet, fairytale-like story about the power of true love is told in spare yet lyrical prose and is accompanied by melancholic sepia-coloured drawings. (8+)

54

Jeffers, Oliver (text/illus.)

Lost and found

New York : Philomel Books, 2006. – [32] p.

ISBN 0-399-24503-0

(orig. publ. in Great Britain by HarperCollins, 2005)

Penguin – Sadness – Help – Loneliness – Friendship

When a sad and forlorn-looking penguin turns up on the doorstep of a small boy, the child eagerly tries to help the little animal. But neither the lost-and-found office nor his rubber duck are very forthcoming. So the boy fixes his rowing boat, and the two adventurers float through storms and mountainous waves until they reach the South Pole. Here, they have to say good-bye to each other – or do they? This charming story about loneliness and friendship is told in a quiet text and powerful, bright watercolour illustrations. The moon-faced, spindly-legged child and the smooth black-and-white blob of a penguin make a perfect pair of friends to brave the vast wide world together. (3+) (Nestlé Smarties Book Prize; 2005)

55

Na, An

Wait for me

New York : G.P. Putnam's Sons, 2006. – 169 p.

ISBN 0-399-24275-9

USA / Korean immigrant – Cultural identity – Mother – Daughter – Expectation – First love

From the outside, Mina's life looks perfect: The 17-year-old Korean-American allegedly is a straight-A student, diligently studies for her exams, and willingly helps out in her parents' dry-cleaning shop. Not even her hearing-impaired younger sister Suna suspects that Mina is trapped in a web of lies woven to satisfy their strict, overbearing mother's expecta-

tions. Yet, when she falls in love with Mexican worker Ysrael, Mina realises that she must face the truth and start living her own life. This riveting, carefully crafted story told in alternating chapters from Mina's and Suna's points of view draws readers into the world of a teenager who struggles with a dysfunctional family life and her own dreams. (14+) ◇

56

Newman, Jeff (text/illus.)

Hippo! No, Rhino!

New York : Little, Brown and Co., 2006. – [32] p.
ISBN 978-0-316-15573-1

Zoo – Rhinoceros – Sign – Mistake

Poor Rhino is dumbfounded: How can all the dim-witted zoo visitors actually believe that he is a hippo, even though it's perfectly clear that he is not! And all this because the mischievous zookeeper has (deliberately?) put up the wrong sign in front of his pen. Yet all the outraged pachyderm's desperate efforts to knock down the hateful sign (including using one of the tick birds on his back as a dart) are useless, until his peace of mind is finally restored by a sympathetic child. The uproarious story is conveyed in boldly coloured mixed-media illustrations with only a few words of text in »rhyme-o«. The graphic pictures, drawn in a style reminiscent of 1950s poster art, depict the animal's growing frustration and eventual relief. A visual treat for readers of all ages. (3+) □

57

Pennypacker, Sara (text)

Frazee, Marla (illus.)

Clementine <proper name>

New York : Hyperion Books for Children,
2006. – 133 p.

ISBN 978-0-7868-3882-0

Girl – School – Everyday life – Friendship – Helpfulness – Accident

Ingenious third-grader Clementine seems to suffer a particularly bad week at school. Yet, is it her fault that she is allergic to sitting still, that there are no gifts in the gifted class for math, or that Margaret has a serious hair problem and she helps her chop her mane off? Instead of lecturing and punishing her, adults should be glad that so many »spectacularful ideas are always sprouting up in

[her] brain«. This fresh story, written in first-person and interspersed with a lot of dialogue, describes all the trouble-prone girl's brainwaves and the ensuing catastrophes. While young readers will giggle at the quick succession of hair-raising events, adults will love the straightforward, dryly humorous style of the diverting narrative. (6+)

58

Prelutsky, Jack (text)

Berger, Carin (illus.)

Behold the bold umbrellaphant and other poems
New York : Greenwillow Books, 2006. – 31 p.

ISBN 978-0-06-054317-4

Imaginary animals – Portmanteau-word – Poetry

Have you ever heard of the wondrous clocktopus or encountered the panthermometer in its natural habitat? Have you wondered why the bizarre alarmadillos can't fall asleep or what makes the fearful zipperpotamuses weep? If so, the nonsensical texts in this whimsical collection of poems, introducing the most bizarre creatures imaginable and their strange characteristics, will certainly satisfy your curiosity. The exotic bunch of portmanteau-animals described in sparkling rhymes spring to life in powerful and quirky double-page collages. They confidently stride and leap across the pages buzzing with energy. Young and old readers will gleefully stroll through this eccentric zoo again and again. (4+) □

59

Schade, Susan (text)

Buller, Jon (illus.)

Travels of Thelonious

New York : Simon & Schuster Books for Young
Readers, 2006. – 214 p.

(Fog Mound; 1)

ISBN 0-689-87684-X

Getting lost – Search for home – Friendship

This book, the first part of a trilogy, is an unusual combination of illustrated prose story and graphic novel. It introduces young children to a world where humans have been wiped out by some catastrophe and anthropomorphised animals inhabit the earth. When a torrential rainstorm floods the home of Thelonious Chipmunk and washes him away to the legendary City of Ruins, the inquisi-

tive little animal soon befriends a porcupine living in a deserted human library, a technically well-versed bear, and a cunning lizard. Together, the four friends mount a helicopter and go on an adventurous quest for the idyllic community of Fog Mound. The easy-flowing narrative and the charming drawings in black-white-and-blue will draw in even the most reluctant readers. (8+)

60

Sturtevant, Katherine

A true and faithful narrative

New York : Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2006. – 250 p.
ISBN 978-0-374-37809-7

London/1681 – Girl – Bookshop – Education – Writing – Professional ambition – Love

Unlike most other girls her age, headstrong Meg isn't really interested in household chores or in quickly securing a suitable husband for herself. Rather, the well-educated 16-year-old daughter of a bookseller and publisher in Restoration London is fascinated by the power of words, and her greatest ambition is to become a writer like Aphra Behn, the first English professional female writer. Yet, for the time being, all that she can hope to achieve with her passionate scribbling is to collect enough money to free her best friend's brother, whose ship was attacked by pirates, from slavery in Algiers. In this sequel to »At the sign of the star« (2000), the author follows the fate of an unconventional girl and once again offers readers a believable glimpse into everyday life in 17th-century England. (12+)

□ □ Special Mention

61

Wiesner, David (illus.)

Flotsam

New York, NY : Clarion Books, 2006. – [40] p.
ISBN 978-0-618-19457-5

Beach – Camera – Mystery – Photograph

Award-winning author and illustrator David Wiesner's latest picture book is another true gem. In a quick succession of magical watercolour illustrations in various sizes, this outstanding textless work chronicles a young boy's adventurous day at the beach. Exploring the edge of the sea, the

inquisitive child happens upon an old-fashioned underwater camera washed ashore complete with film inside. He quickly has the pictures developed and gapes open-mouthed at the fantastic scenes opening up before him: an ancient octopus holding a story-telling session in an underwater parlour; or a giant blown-up puffer fish gliding balloon-like across the ocean. In the end, the boy takes his own snapshot (just like other chance owners of the camera seem to have done before) and returns the camera to the sea for the next child to share its miraculous treasures. This fascinating visual adventure won't release its grip on the readers until they have turned the last page. (5+) □ (Caldecott Medal; 2006)

62

Yang, Gene Luen (text/illus.)

Pien, Lark (col.)

American born Chinese

New York [et al.] : First Second, 2006. – 233 p.
ISBN 978-1-59643-152-2

USA / Chinese immigrant – Outsider – Loneliness – Cultural identity – Search for identity – Self-acceptance

This graphic novel cleverly links three seemingly independent plotlines relating the desperate struggles to fit in of Jin Wang, the son of Chinese immigrants; the tale about American teenager Danny whose loud-mouthed Chinese cousin's annual visit makes him cringe with embarrassment; and the story about the much-beloved Chinese folk hero Monkey King who is unsatisfied with his lowly status and longs to be hailed as a god. All three tales cunningly explore issues like race, cultural identity, assimilation, and self-acceptance. The clear, expressive line drawings, coloured in a cool palette and placed into linear panels in the centre of the pages, make the three stories unfold rapidly until they eventually come together in an unexpected post-modern twist. (12+) (Michael L. Printz Award; 2006)

Austria

63

Addai, Patrick K. (text)

Hübner, Robert (illus.)

Das Schnarchen der Ungeheuer : Sasabonsam;

afrikanische Drachengeschichte

(The monsters' snoring : Sasabonsam; an African tale about dragons)

Leonding : Verl. Adinkra, 2006. – 71 p.

ISBN 3-9501083-4-3

Africa – Village – Adolescent – Initiation – Tradition

Some time ago, the sons of an African king had promised their father to present him with precious burial gifts after his death as a token of their love; the youngest son even vowed to fetch a monster's head from faraway jungles. When the father dies unexpectedly, no one believes that the boy will be able to keep his promise. Yet try he must. With the help of magic charms and by summoning all of his inner strength, the boy fulfils his task. Both the pictures and the strong images of the text transport readers into a primordial world, determined by nature and in harmony with spiritual forces. The captivating narrative style bears witness to the Ghanaian author's success as a storyteller. Earthen-coloured full-page pictures provide an expressive interpretation of the text (6+)

64

Axster, Lilly (text)

Aebi, Christine (illus.)

Almhofer, Edith (ed.)

Jenny, sieben

(Jenny, seven)

Gumpoldskirchen [et al.] : De'A, 2006. – [44] p.

(Panoptikum)

ISBN 3-901867-25-2

Parents – Separation – Father – Daughter

Max and Jenny, father and daughter, want to celebrate Jenny's seventh birthday together. Since the parents' separation, the two don't know much about each other anymore and so they feel a bit nervous and insecure. At first, the situation is fairly uncomfortable but eventually a game saves the day. Both say exactly the opposite of what they really (don't) want to do. They start laughing and feel more relaxed so that the party with various guests can finally start. Based on the theatre play »Daughter's day«, this book seems to

translate directly from the acting onstage, with the pencil- and colour-pencil drawings setting the stage action in an abstract space. The text relates the dialogue between the protagonists while narrative passages serve as connecting »stage directions«. (7+)

65

Grossmann-Hensel, Katharina (text/illus.)

Wie Mama und Papa Verliebte wurden

(How Mum and Dad turned into lovers)

Wien [et al.] : Betz, 2006. – [28] p.

ISBN 3-219-11249-8

Parents – Falling in love – Marriage –

Childhood memory – Storytelling

As everybody knows, small children find it hard to imagine that there was a time when their parents did not yet know each other. Two individualists – the chaotic and imaginative mother and the extremely orderly father – are both longing for their perfect counterpart; and then they bump into each other. The collision could not have been any more extreme. On a metaphoric level, it resembles the love for colours meeting the love for black-white-and-grey. Nevertheless, counterbalancing each other's opposing qualities, the two partners reach a state of harmony and their life together offers an exciting story to their son. One question remains, however: Even if, in the end, it is clear how and when they met, the reason why they did still remains a mystery. The story is presented in convincingly detailed pictures and text. (6+) □

66

Kuhn, Nina (text)

Kuschel, Yvonne (illus.)

Lilli, machst du Quatsch?

(Lilli, are you up to something?)

St. Pölten [et al.] : Residenz-Verl., 2006. – [32] p.

ISBN 3-7017-2007-X

Girl – Curiosity – Mischief – Mother – Education

No obstacle, big or small, seems to prevent Lilli from inventing her own »games«, such as: cutting off the doll's braids, drawing on the bathroom tiles, emptying supermarket shelves, pinching some jam, flooding the flat, etc. Whenever the child is particularly quiet, her parents call out: »Lilli, are you up to something?« »No-o-o-o!«, comes Lilli's retort. That's all. Yet on the following textless page, the readers are confronted with the next dangerous situation, with yet another

catastrophe. Question and answer remain the same throughout the book. The small family, drawn as colourful stick figures, seems fairly happy despite all their organisational problems. The strength of this light-hearted tale lies in the fact that it invites the readers to come up with their own interpretation. (6+)

□ □ Special Mention

67

Sulzenbacher, Gudrun (text)

Surrey, Detlef (illus.)

Vom Büchermachen : wie Ötzi ins Buch kam
(Making books : how Ötzi the Iceman ended up in a book)

Wien : Folio Verl., 2006. – 64 p. + poster

ISBN 978-3-85256-321-3

Book – Production – Publisher – Publishing

This is a book that all readers, big or small, will love. It introduces the process of making (non-fiction) books in great detail, partly using the author's own, highly praised book »Die Gletschermumie« (The glacier mummy) as an example. Text and pictures explain how the book-to-be gets to the publisher (as idea or manuscript) and passes through various departments step by step until, with the help of modern technologies, it has turned into the finished product. Then it travels from the publisher or distributor to the bookstore into the hands of its readers. A particularly eye-catching feature is the number of printed »Post-it«-notes scattered throughout the book, which contain technical terms about publishing. With its clear structure, informative content, and beautiful layout and design, this non-fiction book leaves nothing to be desired. Interested readers will discover that professional book production is a delightful, though complex and time-consuming undertaking. (10+)

Germany

68

Abmeier, Armin (ed.)

Hör zu, es ist kein Tier so klein, das nicht von dir ein Bruder könnte sein : Gedichte und Bilder

(Listen, there is no animal so small that it could not be a brother of yours : poems and pictures)

Hamburg : Carlsen, 2006. – 143 p.

ISBN 978-3-551-51648-8

Nature – Animal – Poetry

»Animals love poems« states the preface of this opulently illustrated anthology, which was compiled not only for the entertainment of the audience but also for a good cause. 62 animal poems, created by classic and contemporary authors and newly illustrated by well-known artists, offer an impressive overview of the great variety of contemporary illustration art in German-speaking countries. The original pictures were auctioned off at the Frankfurt Book Fair 2006. The proceeds from the auction and the book sale are donated to the »Stiftung Illustration« (Illustration Foundation). Its first important project will be to publish an encyclopaedia of German illustrators. (8+)

69

Aulnoy, Marie Catherine LeJumel de Barneville d' (orig. text)

Unzner, Christa (retell./illus.)

Die weiße Katze

(The white cat)

Leipzig : LeiV, 2006. – 78 p.

ISBN 3-89603-277-1

King – Son – Change of power – Cat –

Metamorphosis – Fairy tale

Not yet willing to resign, a king demands that each of his sons complete three tasks. Every time, it is the youngest son who passes the test, thanks to the help of a weird and very beautiful white cat who thinks and speaks wisely. In return, the prince manages to have her transformed back into a human being. Together they inherit the kingdom and live happily ever after... The retelling of the French tale and the enchantingly fragile pictures are created by one artist. Human and animal figures, drawn in delicate colours, circle and permeate each other. The pictures illustrate how similar these creatures are and confirm that fairy tales always contain metaphors for real life. (8+)

70

Baltscheit, Martin (text)

Mett, Christoph (illus.)

Die Elefantenwahrheit

(The elephant's truth)

Bad Soden am Taunus : Kinderbuchverlag Wolff,

2006. – [36] p. + CD

ISBN 3-938766-08-5

Science – Blindness – Dogmatism – Elephant

After having finished work, five blind scientists relax in the warm sunshine. Suddenly, they sense a shadow falling. An elephant, escaped from the nearby circus, is standing before them. Depending on the specific part of the animal that they manage to grab, each scientist defines the shadow-casting object differently. When the upset circus director enquires after the animal, the five men unanimously state: »No! No elephant came this way.« In a casual and metaphorical style, underlined by emphatic pictures, this story proves that science can be mistaken. The plot of this original tale is based on traditional tales from Asia. Well-known all around the world in different versions, the parable teaches the unreliability of human judgement. (8+)

71

Baukhage, Manon

Der Tisch von Otto Hahn : faszinierende

Erfindungen, die unsere Welt veränderten

(Otto Hahn's desk : fascinating inventions that changed our world)

Ravensburg : Ravensburger Buchverl., 2006. – 192 p.

ISBN 3-473-55119-8

Invention – Discovery

The 25 chapters of this impressive, beautifully designed non-fiction book present a collection of outstanding inventions and discoveries from all over the world. The wide variety of works discussed ranges from Ptolemean times (150 AD) to the present as the book provides the most important biographical dates of famous people from the fields of science and technology. Assisted by an array of visual material, this book introduces everyday objects, such as a coffee filter, as well as events of a much broader scale, such as nuclear fission and the way to make atoms visible through nanotechnology. A time table, which offers an even more comprehensive overview of all human inventions, plus an index of persons and objects round off this informative and gripping read. (8+)

72

Boëtius, Henning

Geschichte der Elektrizität

(The history of electricity)

Weinheim [et al.] : Beltz & Gelberg, 2006. – 221 p.

ISBN 978-3-407-75326-7

Electricity/History

Henning Boëtius, an academic physicist and specialist in German philology, covers a wide field in this book, providing much more than important inventions and discoveries in the field of electricity. He also analyses cultural connections that accompany or prevent certain technological developments or make them possible in the first place. Moreover, the author examines technical terms or linguistic conventions that evolved in accordance with these developments and have partly remained the same until today. Thus, the exciting text and the large variety of visual material offer an unusual insight into natural science and technology, which shows that the subject matters of these sciences always depends to some extent on the people who engage in the research and on their personal interests. (14+)

73

Boie, Kirsten (text)

Scholz, Barbara (illus.)

Der kleine Ritter Trenk

(Trenk, the little knight)

Hamburg : Oetinger, 2006. – 275 p.

ISBN 978-3-7891-3163-9

Boy – Serf – Knight – Adventure – Humour

Is aristocracy something you inherit or something achieved through outstanding accomplishments – that's a question this book raises. In this witty, tongue-in-cheek novel, coincidence plays an important role. Little Trenk, a poor farmer's boy, sallies forth into town in quest for happiness and fortune. He is made a knight's squire and defeats all villains and braves all dangers with the help of young Thekla, a knight's daughter, and his own tricks and bravery. Finally, he can even affect freedom for his own family and the long-suffering serfs from various surrounding villages. Naturally, Trenk and Thekla fall in love, marry, and live happily ever after... Cheerful in style and content, yet always historically accurate, this book offers young children and adults a truly pleasant read. (8+)

74

Blüttner, Olaf

Schlaf, mein Junge, schlaf ein

(Sleep, my boy, fall asleep)

Düsseldorf : Sauerländer, 2006. – 158 p.

(aare)

ISBN 3-7941-7042-3

Single father – Choice of partner – Withdrawal of the child – Disturbed personality – Sexual abuse

Emily and Lena devise a plan: They want to find a girlfriend for Emily's widowed father Tom via Internet. However, events are soon spiralling out of control when a mentally disturbed young woman answers the advert and kidnaps Tom's two children in order to become their mother. With sympathy for everyone involved and a lot of details, the author describes this unusual domestic drama in a very convincing and captivating story, without employing any kind of tabloid language. Thus she offers an intimate view into events that are usually presented in such a distorted way in the news that they often seem to lack any kind of believable dimension for both teenagers and adults. (14+)

75

Bunge, Daniela (text/illus.)

Schneetreiben

(Snow flurries)

Kiel : MinEdition, 2006. – [34] p.

ISBN 3-86566-045-2

Grandson – Grandparents – Living apart – Reconciliation

Every weekend, a small boy visits his grandparents until, one day, Grandpa packs all his bags and moves into his own flat. The old couple's specious explanation to the boy is: Granny loves the colour blue, the sea, and cats while Grandpa loves red, mountains, and indoor plants. The grandparents now reorganise their daily life, each to one's own liking – yet they're not happy with it. Thanks to the grandson, who asks about their childhood memories and works a few other tricks, the couple eventually get back together. The plot is structured by pictures in the grandparents' favourite colours – red and blue – combined with shades of grey. The derailed family world is expressed in a distorted graphic perspective, which gets (almost) back to normal towards the end. This delicate story promotes family love and the well-being of children. (7+)

76

Ellermann, Heike (text)

Engel, Anton (illus.)

HELP!

(HELP! <song title>)

Oldenburg : Lappan, 2006. – [36] p.

ISBN 3-8303-1104-4

Boy – Grandfather – Tree house – Generations

Julian and his friend have discovered Grandpa's old tree house and start reviving it, but when the ladder tips over, the two friends are trapped. The cover of the old Beatles record »HELP!« serves as distress signal. They attach it to a rope, lower it to the ground, and are soon rescued. With a lot of humour, the author makes two completely different worlds meet in the conversation between the two generations – the old man's childhood memories and the boys' modern-day adventures. The »Pilzköpfe« (»Mushroomheads«), as the Beatles were called in Germany because of their hairstyle, are nothing revolutionary for the boy – he considers them »ultra conservative«. This story provides a tongue-in-cheek visit to the past, illustrated with pictures of former icons. (7+)

77

Flotwell, Polly (text)

Biermann, Franziska (illus.)

Wilma wünscht sich was

(Wilma has a wish)

Düsseldorf : Sauerländer, 2006. – [36] p.

ISBN 3-7941-5093-7

Girl – Wish – Daydream – Imagination

Her name is one of the first things little Wilma would like to change: Jeannette, Luna, or Barbarella would be nice... Apart from that, she longs for a »brother machine« to wipe out the faults of her own imperfect brother; a mountain of money, so that her parents could stay at home; a tree house with loads of friends (who might also make a great family); a forest; and a guinea pig, too. Do other people have similar wishes? On the last page, large imaginative pictures show that Wilma is sensible after all and decides that – if not all of her wishes can come true – the most important one is to get the little pet. Both the text and the pictures of this book take children's (secret) wishes seriously and therefore manage to place them in a real life context. (5+) □

78

Giordano, Mario

Emil Nolde für Kinder

(Emil Nolde for children)

Köln : DuMont, 2006. – 63 p.

ISBN 978-3-8321-7586-3

Emil Nolde – Biography – Art

»Artistic seizures«, »Atrocities«, or »Cannibal art« – these are just a few of the verbal attacks that Emil Nolde (1867-1956) and his artwork were faced with in contemporary press articles. From 1918 onwards, his work slowly gained a higher recognition until the German National Socialists termed his pictures »degenerate art«, confiscated his work, and forbid him to paint from 1941 to 1945. Today, Nolde is considered one of the most famous German expressionist painters. This fascinating non-fiction book stands out for its comprehensive and concise biography and presentation of Nolde's painting techniques with the help of selected examples from all eras of his work. (8+)

79

Grimm, Jacob / Grimm, Wilhelm (text)

Zwenger, Lisbeth (illus.)

Die Bremer Stadtmusikanten

(The Bremen town musicians)

Kiel : Minedition, 2006. – [32] p.

ISBN 978-3-86566-042-8

Ingratitude – Cruelty – Animals – Old age

In this edition of the well-known Grimm fairy tale, the illustrator's delicate style captures the tormented souls of donkey, dog, cat, and cock in a truly ingenious symphony of form and colour. Full-page panels relate the various situations and feelings of the four animals both in respect to their individual fates and to their shared adventures. Despite the cruelty of the plot, the pictures are devoid of any lurid details. In each of the four creatures, the reader sees an animal ungratefully deserted after long years of faithful service to its human master. Their fathomless sadness in the beginning as well as the contentment in their faces when all ends well are shown in a fascinating and aesthetically perfectly pleasing style. (4+)

80

Heidelberg, Nikolaus (text/illus.)

Königin Gisela

(Queen Gisela)

Weinheim [et al.] : Beltz & Gelberg, 2006. – [34] p.

ISBN 3-407-79906-3

Daughter – Father – Storytelling – Shipwreck – Island – Abuse of power

Father and daughter set off on a wonderful journey to the sea – that is the frame story. In the evenings, they tell each other tales about Gisela who is stranded on a little island and lets herself be proclaimed Queen of the place. Her subjects, a flock of meerkats, are always willing to help. Yet, Gisela really shouldn't have mistaken their good-naturedness for stupidity. When, for her crowning ceremony, the girl asks for a special garment – a meerkat coat, of all things – the animals spontaneously decide to get rid of this nettle once and for all. For father and daughter, the holiday has come to an end, too. Pictures and text clearly distinguish between the »real« protagonists of this book and the »fictional« characters of the stories told by them; nevertheless, the two levels constantly permeate each other in fresh and witty ways. (8+)

81

Hein, Sibylle (text/illus.)

Wenn Riesen niesen

(When giants sneeze)

Hamburg : Carlsen, 2006. – [24] p.

ISBN 3-551-51685-5

Giant – Sneeze – Shipwreck – Cause – Effect

Small matters can often have great consequences, and even fateful ones: When the water-rat family steals the giants' cold medicine, the giants start sneezing terribly, thus causing a storm that results in a ship's collision with a sea monster. Fire breaks out producing clouds of smoke, misinterpreted as smoke signs by a tribe of Indians. This misunderstanding saves a white man and his daughter from being burned at the stake, which in turn leads to the girl falling in love with her (accidental) saviour. So, the whole story ends with a wedding ceremony. Witty, apt verses and caricature-like, humorous sequences of pictures present this wondrous chain of events to the cheerful readers. (5+) □

82

Kugler, Lena (text)

Glazer-Naudé, Ludvik (illus.)

Bo im wilden Land

(Bo in the wild country)

Frankfurt am Main : Fischer, 2006. – 183 p.

(Fischer Schatzinsel)

ISBN 978-3-596-85200-0

Girl – Dragon – Magic – Courage – Trick – Quest

A long time ago, »curly-tailed thorn-hoppers«,

»shimmering pale-lings«, and lots of other dragon species used to inhabit Katania until they were allegedly driven away by the so-called Katanian »heroes«.

The true enemies of the legendary animals, however, are a gang of outsiders who destroy the self-hatching dragon eggs. Now, without the warm fire produced by these eggs, Katania is plunged into eternal winter.

Brave little Bo, a »hero's« daughter, heads off on a journey to the wild country to bring back the dragons and fight the killers. With courage, magic, and a few tricks, the adventure is successfully completed. This clever and gripping parable full of wit criticises the mindless destruction of nature and points out the great importance of living in harmony with it. (8+)

83

Lembcke, Marjaleena

Liebeslinien

(Love lines)

München [et al.] : Nagel & Kimche, 2006. – 173 p.

ISBN 978-3-312-00966-4

Teenager – First love – Search for identity

There are three sentences in Aulikki's diary: »I'm no good at anything. I know nothing. No one likes me.«

After her mother's death, the adolescent's life is out of joint. She leaves home and goes to Helsinki where she hides in some kind of safe anonymity. A stranger to herself, the girl closely observes her surroundings but is not able to judge her own reactions. After numerous chance encounters in the big city, Aulikki happens upon an old friend. Together with him, she eventually looks into the future with more hope. The narrative style of this book may seem stunted and the tone very unemotional, but this is exactly what makes readers feel the terrible insecurity and inner homelessness of a young, 17-year-old girl. (14+)

84

Meschenmoser, Sebastian (text/illus.)

Herr Eichhorn und der Mond

(Mr. Squirrel and the moon)

Esslingen : Esslinger, 2006. – [44] p.

ISBN 3-480-22231-5

Cheese – Moon – Mix-up

When the cheese van is caught in an accident, one cheese rolls from the alp down to the valley. It ends up stuck in the flat of Mr. Squirrel, who mistakes the round yellow thing for the moon. Since he is afraid of being charged with theft of the moon, he pushes it out. The forest inhabitants strive in vain to get rid of the thing, until eventually, the mice start nibbling it. Joining forces, the animals then catapult the crescent-shaped leftovers off the cliff (assumedly) back into the sky. Outstanding detailed pencil drawings – with delicate colours for the »real« events and dull grey for the atmosphere in the squirrel's imagined prison cell – lend this humorous story a quality that makes it stand out from the colourful majority of picture books. (6+)

85

Pin, Isabel (text/illus.)

Honke, Otto (transl.)

Als alle früher nach Hause kamen

(When they all came back home earlier)

Wuppertal : Hammer, 2006. – [28] p.

ISBN 3-7795-0064-7

Children's drawing – Interpretation –

Worry – Individuality – Creativity

One day at preschool, Tom is finally allowed to draw a picture of his own choice. He takes the thickest brush and, there he goes! Yet, the adults who look at his picture react very strangely. They seem worried, phone each other, frown, and send him home early (just as if it was his birthday – hurry!). A child doesn't paint »like a child should« and immediately the grown-ups assume he is ill or depressed. (What nonsense!) All along, the mysterious painting is kept secret from the reader. Only when Tom's friend Lily admiringly states: »It's really great, your black square, Tom!«, is the mystery solved. In these cheerful, light- and earthen-coloured surroundings, the tension is perfectly constructed, and the tongue-in-cheek humour really hits the mark. (6+)

□ □ Special Mention

86

Richter, Jutta (text)

Berner, Rotraut Susanne (illus.)

Die Katze oder Wie ich die Ewigkeit verloren habe
(The cat or How I lost eternity)

München : Hanser, 2006. – 64 p.

ISBN 978-3-446-20793-6

Way to school – Cat – Meaning of life – Egocentric

It's the white cat's fault that Christine is late for school every morning. The animal is clever, free, and does what it wants – in short: a true role model. Therefore, the wise feline, who can speak to Christine, is able (and eager) to explain the world much better than the teacher – or so it seems. The world is full of seemingly unsolvable mysteries such as the concept of eternity – which is perfectly clear to both cat and child, until the girl gets confused by her teachers at school. However, to base mathematical rules on the number of mice caught and swallowed doesn't prove a viable method for human beings. And what about the Christian belief in the original sin? Would God really be that strict with humans? In this respect, the opinions of the cat (as hedonist) and the girl (as philosopher) are incompatible, so they have to go separate ways. Expressed in short sentences, the story features a child with an alert mind and presents readers with various facets of a child's existence. (7+)

87

Roeder, Caroline (ed.)

Rau-Häring, Nelly (photogr.)

Berliner Kindheit im zwanzigsten Jahrhundert :
eine literarisch-fotografische Spurensuche.

(Berlin childhood in the 20th century : a literary and
photographic search for traces)

Berlin : Gutendruck, 2006. – 239 p.

Berlin/1945-2000 – Childhood memories

This volume assembles the texts of well-known writers, young and old, whose childhood or youth was tied to the city of Berlin. The editor uses Walter Benjamin's famous work »Berliner Kindheit um neunzehnhundert« (Berlin childhood around 1900) as a starting point for her book and collects material relating to the 20th century. Accompanied by an abundance of photographs, both the biographical texts and the non-fiction parts show the great variety

of ways in which a city can be experienced, depending on one's own standing in life and on many unpredictable events. East and West (Berlin) are united in this book – even though many of the personal memories still depict a divided city. Therefore, the book offers a moving and insightful picture of the history of Germany's former and once-again capital. (12+)

88

Rosenlöcher, Thomas (text)

Gleich, Jacky (illus.)

Das langgestreckte Wunder

(The stretched miracle)

Rostock : Hinstorff, 2006. – [30] p.

ISBN 3-356-01130-8

Human being – Growing – Boundary – Freedom

This picture book is not as simplistic as it may seem at first glance: It's a story about crossing borders – yet not without a dose of humour. One day, a man notices that his feet start growing past the boundary of his garden. They grow through the fence, across borders, through field and forest, moor and mountain. After stretching right around the globe and being divided into numerous »allotments« by security personnel, the cheeky feet are back home again. Eventually, even the owner's head lifts itself above the garden fence (i.e. beyond the rim of his own tea cup). The book's concertina-fold format enables readers to easily follow the journey. The caricaturing illustrations hint at a deeper level of socio-political meaning. (10+)

89

Schneider, Karla

Die Geschwister Apraksin : das Abenteuer
einer unfreiwilligen Reise

(The Apraksin-siblings : the adventure
of an involuntary trip)

München [et al.] : Hanser, 2006. – 586 p.

ISBN 978-3-446-20703-5

Russia/1900-1920 – Cultural conflict –

Social conflict – Violence – October Revolution

One year after the October Revolution of 1917, the five orphaned children of the Russian Apraksin family are in danger of being thrown out of their parents' house and separated. By secretly fleeing, they manage to evade this cruel fate. Their extraordinary adventures during a long and dangerous odyssey through most of Russia are presented in this book. On their

way, the children meet people from all social classes and grow up while suffering great personal deprivations. This novel provides a grippingly narrated picture of a chaotic historical era that, up to now, has been considered very rarely in Western European children's literature. (12+)

90

Schwab, Gustav (orig. text)

Guggenmos, Josef (retell.)

Harjes, Stefanie (illus.)

Die schönsten Sagen des klassischen Altertums

(The most beautiful legends of classical antiquity)

[Ravensburg] : Ravensburger Buchverl., 2006. – 306 p.

ISBN 978-3-473-35261-6

Greek – Legend – Anthology

Gustav Schwab's original 19th-century text might sometimes be hard to swallow, especially for small school children. Now this classic is presented in a new outfit featuring brand-new illustrations that could not be any more delightful. With their slightly ironic touch, yet still deadly serious, they perfectly complement this retelling by Josef Guggenmos, which was first published in 1960. The pictures provide the most famous heroes and adventures with a connection to contemporary life. Thus, the page that shows baby Hercules strangling two giant snakes is given the subtitle: »Good toys« while Oedipus (fitted out with a halo) takes the lift down into Hades after his expiation. This new edition can be seen as an attempt to reduce children's fear of classical literature. (10+)

91

Steinwede, Dietrich

Martin Luther : Leben und Wirken des Reformators

(Martin Luther : life and work of the reformer)

Düsseldorf : Patmos, 2006. – 140 p.

ISBN 3-491-79753-5

Luther, Martin

Set against the crisis of Catholicism caught up in the fetters of tradition, Martin Luther's life and work are an attempt to make Christian religion more accessible for believers. In his most famous treatise »On the freedom of a Christian«, which is still being republished and available to readers today, Luther rejected the strict obedience to authorities that was then demanded by church and government as un-Christian. Set against this background and accompanied by a rich

selection of visual material, this biography offers a differentiated and impressive analysis and appraisal of the great reformer's work and of the (religious) historical, cultural, and social circumstances of that time. (12+) ◇

92

Storm, Theodor (text)

Sauvant, Henriette (illus.)

Der kleine Häwelmann

(Little Hobbin)

Berlin : Aufbau-Verl., 2006. – 30 p.

ISBN 3-351-04072-5

Night – Dream – Disobedience – Imaginary journey

This classic of German children's literature, originally published in 1849, is now presented in a new (illustrational) outfit. It relates a child's dream of self-propelled flying and driving without boundaries, being supported by everyone on earth and in the whole wide universe. The pictures, some of them small vignettes but mostly full- and double-page size, present a mixture of real world and surreal dream world. The most impressive ones easily convince, even completely without text – such as when naughty and ungrateful little Häwelmann (Hobbin) drives right across the moon's nose with his wheelie bed. In other panels, the text is placed onto the mono-colour free spaces inside the illustration. The excitement of the adventurous dream can be shared by small readers. (5+)

93

Vohn, Maria (text/illus.)

Mein Hund ist rot

(My dog is red)

Wuppertal : Hammer, 2006. – [18] p.

ISBN 3-7795-0049-3

Dog – Looks – Outsider – Solving problems

»There is no such thing as a red dog!«, the little girl says. Although the little boy's dog actually *is* red, the female reasoning sounds so plausible that the boy almost believes her. What confusion! They paint the dog and the boy now claims his dog has never been red. At present, it is white – until the next rain shower. The children consider turning the dog out but that's not really an option. So, the girl has to bring her own dog – which is: green. Suddenly, people and pets are at peace and perfectly happy. On an implicit and abstract level, this board book introduces strategies for

solving problems – those that are realistic and socially possible as well as those that are not. The example given is completely convincing, rationally, emotionally, and in the way it is portrayed. (3+) □

94

Weidner, Stefan (text)

Schulze, Marc-Alexander (illus.)

Allah heißt Gott : eine Reise durch den Islam

(Allah means God : a journey through Islam)

Frankfurt am Main : Fischer-Taschenbuch-Verl.,
2006. – 239 p.

(Fischer-Schatzinsel)

ISBN 3-596-85212-9

Islam/570-2006 – Qur'ān – Muhammad

This extensive and informative non-fiction book, written in a comprehensible and gripping style, focuses on Islam, the youngest of the monotheistic world religions. The author provides his target audience with a clear picture of the main aspects of the Muslim belief. He always hints at connections with Christianity and points out shared concepts and values. The most striking aspect of this book is its unbiased presentation of facts and its empathy with the believers. Thus it manages to destroy the stereotype of Islam as an ever-present threat, which is created by mass media reports in Europe about suicide attacks and other catastrophes. As a consequence, the book not only offers an extremely interesting and insightful text, but it also fulfils an important socio-political function. (10+) ◇

95

Wildner, Martina

Michelles Fehler

(Michelle's mistakes)

Berlin : Bloomsbury, 2006. – 281 p.

ISBN 978-3-8270-5167-7

Girl – Guardian Angel – Mistake – Error

Michelle is a »thorough-thinker« and an »acute-observer« of the world around her. That's why she always finds it difficult to make up her mind when she is faced with various options in her everyday life. Unfortunately, she often makes the most unsuitable choice. How is she to know that this is mainly the fault of her personal guardian angel, who hates pubescent teenagers? In the course of a single day, the girl thus makes 85 »mistakes«. Michelle feels insecure, misses her father (the parents are divorced), is physi-

cally threatened by a violent classmate, and feels she cannot talk to anyone about it. In a fairly entertaining way, this book asks readers to be alert and watch for hidden problems in social interaction, especially among young people. (12+)

96

Wolff, Uwe (text)

Hohmuth, Jürgen (photogr.)

Alles über Labyrinth und Irrgärten : unterwegs

mit Zeppelin und Kamera (All about labyrinths

and mazes : travelling with a camera by zeppelin)

Stuttgart [u. a.] : Gabriel, 2006. – 94 p.

ISBN 978-3-522-30095-7

Architecture – Garden design – Labyrinth – History

Surely everyone has lost their way in a maze once or has enthusiastically followed the paths of an artificially created labyrinth. This book explains the difference between these two genres of architecture and garden design, which often get confused. In addition, the authors also present famous historical examples from all over the world. An array of myths and legends, scientific research and instructions for designing one's own construction turns this volume into a multi-purpose asset for interested readers. Magnificent photographs, taken from a bird's eye view, show a selection of the great variety of different types of labyrinths and mazes. (14+)

Switzerland

97

Bougueva, Sonja (text/illus.)

Barnie <proper name>

Zürich : Atlantis, 2006. – [28] p.

ISBN 3-7152-0515-6

Dog – Dog owner – Moodiness – Escape

If a bad-tempered man constantly bullies his amiable little dog and never shows any concern for the pet's needs (»Shame on you, Barnie!«, »Come here immediately!«, »Stop that noise!« etc.), then it is bound to happen one day: Together with one of his fellow dogs, Barnie escapes. True, the flight itself with the two dogs at the steering wheel of a delivery van is a bit far-fetched; still, Barnie seems truly relieved. The contrast between the evil dog owner and the dog, who is happy at last, is presented in such a convincing com-

bination of text and pictures that there is no need for any comment on the action other than the child's final question: »Dad, where is Barney?« The answer is evident: The dog has left. (4+) □

98

Kiefer, Gabriele (text)

Graupner, Sylvia (illus.)

Meine erste Hochzeit

(My first wedding)

Zürich : Bajazzo-Verl., 2006. – [28] p.

ISBN 3-907588-73-8

Girl – Wish – Wedding

»In the past, every little girl wanted to marry her father« – or so Dad says. »Well, that must have been a very long time ago«, answers the small, wedding-crazy protagonist of this cheeky picture book with its slightly caricature-like illustrations. All of the relatives she asks offer some good advice, but only her best friend (and the tiny Cupid-putto fluttering about) get to the heart of the matter: She needs to learn how to kiss. Little Robert, whom she never even noticed before, agrees to teach her (»But you were not allowed to dribble«). That settles it, and Robert is the one to marry! It may be some consolation to the parents that, after such a first wedding, a young girl may still live at home for a while. (5+)

99

Pin, Isabel (text/illus.)

Ein Regentag im Zoo

(A rainy day in the zoo)

Zürich : Bajazzo-Verl., 2006. – [24] p.

ISBN 3-907588-68-1

Zoo – Father – Daughter

Anna and her father go to the zoo. It's a rainy day and all the animals hide inside their »houses«. Father and daughter are eager to visit certain animals and are wondering where each one might be living. On every cardboard page, readers see a dwelling specially built for one of the animals. They are asked to find out which architecture was constructed for which inhabitant. The questions are easily answered by opening the flaps in the book. The illustrator presents these buildings as abstract form-clusters, against a background of idyllic and pastoral vegetation. Everything is drawn in quiet colours with clear-cut outlines to create an unpretentious novelty-picture-book with a lot of charm. (3+)

100

Wittkamp, Frantz (text)

Brosinski, Jenny (illus.)

Gute Nacht – oder : Der lange Weg ins Bett

(Good night – or : The long way to bed)

Zürich : Atlantis, 2006. – [28] p.

ISBN 3-7152-0516-4

Falling asleep – Storytelling

This outstanding bedtime story introduces a multitude of stops that you have to pass until you finally reach your bed. There is the blue house and the bronze horse with its rider – be careful not to get sidetracked by other things like the cat on the roof or the crying woman who seems to be looking for it – then you pass by the post office and »over there to the right, you see an old streetlight«. On each new page, readers discover a delicately drawn chaos of many different events through which they will only get by sticking exactly to the written directions. It is easy to imagine that all these adventures will make children so tired that they are happy to fall asleep at the end. The rhymed text offers a calming rhythm and inspires readers to repeat it together and learn it by heart. (5+) □

101

Zippert, Hans (text)

Hurzlmeier, Rudi (illus.)

Weihnachtsmänner frisst man nicht

(You mustn't gulp down Santa Claus)

Zürich : Kein & Aber, 2006. – 77 p.

ISBN 3-03-695235-7

Africa – Lion – Christmas – Santa Claus – Present

Heribert's father, the leader of the lion pack, simply loves hunting down »raw-meat-owners«. Since Heribert does not share this passion, Father Lion is (almost) convinced that he was accidentally swapped at birth: A lion who wears glasses, collects stamps, and eats vegetarian food sticks out from the pack. When Santa Claus swoops down on the savannah to practise for his annual delivery of presents, the old lion pushes him off the sledge and devours two of his reindeer. This leaves the lions with an organisational problem, and it is Heri-bert who has a field day solving it. The witty complications that the lions face when organising the delivery of gifts are presented in a hilarious voice. Full-page pictures in surrealistic colours accompany the entrancing text. (10+)

Africa

Benin (French)

102

Lalinon Gbado, Béatrice (text)

Diatta, Abdou Aimbandy (illus.)

Le dauphin de Gorée

(The dolphin of Gorée)

Cotonou, Benin : Ed. Ruisseaux

d' Afrique [et al.], 2005. – 31 p.

(Selbé)

ISBN 99919-53-26-4

Senegal – Gorée Island – Penfriend – Diving

This picture book is set on Gorée, a tiny Senegalese island situated only a few kilometres off the coast of Senegal's capital Dakar. René, a boy from Haiti, and his family spend their holidays in Senegal and seize the opportunity to visit René's penfriend Habib, who lives on Gorée, formerly one of the main trading points for slaves. Upon leaving the ferry, the family spots a group of boys who jump from a rock diving for coins. Their elegance and skill makes them look like acrobats of the sky and the sea, like »real dolphins«. René discovers that his friend Habib is among them, and the two boys set off to explore the island. Combined with a story about friendship, this picture book offers a very interesting and child-friendly insight into the peculiarities of Gorée Island. (5+)

Senegal (French)

103

Dia Diouf, Nafissatou (text)

Ngassu, Daniel S. (illus.)

Je decouvre ... l'ordinateur

(I discover ... the computer)

Dakar : Ed. Tamalys, 2005. – 38 p.

ISBN 2-9525152-0-4

Computer – Hardware – Program

Two friends, Bokar and Myriam, explain to young readers how computers work. They introduce the computer hardware as well as various software programs. »Attention!«-signs clearly point out possible problems while explanations of special terms and examples for practise are provided throughout the book in small boxes. An additional

glossary contains important definitions and the little questionnaire at the end serves as a short test of the knowledge gained. In a playful manner, this non-fiction title sparks the readers' interest in an object of everyday life that no one can avoid nowadays. The two protagonists' child-friendly approach makes it easy for readers to learn how this machine works and discover all the different possibilities it offers. (7+)

Asia

Lebanon (French)

104

Japy-Fahed, Marie-Noëlle (text)

Taan, Yasmine (illus.)

Deux plumes et un voyage : une histoire

(Two feathers and a journey : a story)

Jounieh : Ed. Kédemos, 2005. – 22 p.

(Collection Un poète raconte ...)

ISBN 9953-83-083-5

Journey – Happiness – Painting – Feather

This picture book about a young man's journey of initiation is dedicated »to all children who set off in search of their dreams«. The son of a carpet dealer leaves his parents' home to find happiness. He dreams of earning his money by painting the portraits of fancy queens. When he realises that his paint box is empty, he feels lost. Yet a bird comforts the boy and advises him that nature is full of colours if only he can find them. The bird hands the boy two feathers – one will enable him to fly away, the other one will provide him with whatever he most longs for. Thus, the young man continues his journey until he finds true happiness. The poetical story encourages readers not to give up too soon and keep their eyes open for their own share of happiness. (5+)

Europe

Belgium (French)

105

Dieuaide, Sophie (text)

Pagliaro, Alberto (illus.)

Préviens pas la police!

(Don't tell the police!)

Bruxelles, Paris : Casterman, 2006. – 107 p.

ISBN 2-203-12953-0

(Casterman Cade) (Les enquêtes de Chloé)

Friendship – Dog – Thief – Criminal case

In the first volume of this new series about two hobby detectives, Chloé and her friend Baptiste investigate a series of mysterious incidents because their neighbour, a journalist, is far too busy. Several dogs have disappeared from their neighbourhood. The investigations lead into the scene of beauty contests for dogs. Despite a few red herrings and dead ends, Chloé and Baptiste don't let the case rest. Apart from the protagonists, several other characters, who accompany the story in minor plots, are introduced in a detailed and partly caricature-like style. The text is complemented by newspaper clippings, letters, notes, and coded words, so that readers are drawn straight into the protagonists' investigations. (8+)

106

Hennuy, Martine / Buyse, Sophie (text)

Renardy, Lisbeth (illus.)

Alice au pays du cancer

(Alice in cancer-land)

Bruxelles : Alice Jeunesse, 2006. – [36] p.

(Histoires comme ça)

ISBN 2-87426-039-8

Daughter – Mother – Cancer – Fear – Confrontation

Alice lives in a peaceful children's world with her parents and her dog. One day, however, her father explains that the mother had to leave their home and travel to a mysterious country called Cancerland. To search for this land and learn to understand it, Alice, too, quits her wonderland. Both the text and the illustrations of this picture book introduce readers to the child's point of view, to her worries, questions, and to her imagination. The girl's painful experiences in this test of endurance

are pictured very carefully but without holding back concrete information about the disease; thus, the taboo status of cancer is removed. Moreover, the book shows how important the continuous contact between mother and daughter is for the girl during the illness. (4+)

France

107

Alemagna, Beatrice (text/illus.)

Un lion à Paris

(A lion in Paris)

Paris : Éd. Autrement, 2006. – [36] p.

(Jeunesse)

ISBN 2-7467-0816-7

Lion – Paris – City – Loneliness – Strangeness

When a lion feels utterly bored in the savannah, he sets off in search for work, love, and a better future. Once he arrives in the city of Paris, he is astonished that his roaring does not seem to frighten the people in the underground or the cafés. Strolling around, he sadly realises that not even an unusual creature like him attracts any attention. Luckily enough, the lion's perception is changed when a girl at the Louvre Museum looks at him caringly, and finally the city opens »all its windows« to him. Applying a variety of different techniques and materials in imaginative ways, such as photo-collages, the illustrator draws an affectionate and nostalgic portrait of the French capital, reminiscent of the charming atmosphere of old postcards and travel diaries. (5+)

108

Chérier, Sophie

Parle tout bas, si c'est d'amour

(Speak quietly when it's about love)

Paris : École des Loisirs, 2006. – 151 p.

(Médium)

ISBN 2-211-08358-7

Youth – Love – Sexuality – Sex education

Shy Olivier finally manages to win the heart of Caroline. Yet, what do 16-year-olds feel when adults start talking non-stop about love and sex education; when the biology teacher shows them how to use a condom; when an 87-year-old

woman offers detailed sexual advice; or when a mother takes her daughter to her first true love's funeral? Caroline and Olivier have to learn from their own experiences. They have to brave the fear that their love may not be strong enough but can draw strength from their hope in mutual trust and faithfulness. This novel sensitively deals with love and relationships and the experiences gained by and exchanged across different generations. (14+)

109

Cohen-Scali, Sarah K.

Disparus : roman

(Disappeared)

Paris : Grasset, 2006. – 313 p.

ISBN 2-246-69721-2

(Grasset-Jeunesse : Roman Grand Format)

Theft – Suitcase – Mortal danger – Search

Vincent specialises in stealing luggage from early morning commuter trains. On the very day, however, that he finally decides that this will be his last raid, that he will stop hanging around in train stations and accept a job as waiter in a pizzeria, he nicks the suitcase of a young woman who is obviously in mortal danger. The 20-year-old protagonist immediately feels the need to save this mysterious woman. With the help of his neighbour and an author of detective novels, he follows her trace and accidentally gets involved in the filming of a horror movie. Various misleading tracks and the blurred border between delusion and reality in this mixture between whodunit and fantasy novel keep the readers in growing suspense until the very end. (13+)

110

Combet, Claude / Levèvre, Thierry (text)

Le Huche, Magali (illus.)

Destination Paris

(Destination Paris)

Arles : Actes Sud Junior, 2006. – 105 p.

ISBN 2-7427-5922-0

Paris – City guide – History

This attractive city guide invites children on informative and entertaining walks through the city of Paris, divided into five differently coloured chapters. Starting with an overview of the historical development from the Roman city Lutetia to

the present, which explains the city's geographical snail-shape, the book goes on to answer questions about urban development and takes a closer look at children's everyday life in Paris, a multicultural metropolis inhabited by people from 150 nations. The last chapter focuses on Paris as a centre for artists and the arts. A quiz, a bibliography, and a map round off this handy introduction to the French capital. (8+)

111

Cuenca, Catherine

Frères de guerre

(Brothers-in-arms)

Paris : Castor Poche Flammarion, 2006. – 217 p.

(Castor poche; 1025: Voyage au temps de ...)

ISBN 2-08-163394-9

World War I – Friendship – Death – Daily routine

In August 1914, Germany declares war on France. Although Eugène and his friend Matthias are only 16, they want to fight at the front. Using forged papers, they manage to get drafted into the French army. Once at the battle scene, they are soon separated, and each boy experiences the horrors in the trenches on his own. The first-person-narrator does not only talk about the cruel war events but also about his personal experiences, his patriotic enthusiasm that is soon depleted by the bloody dealings on the front line, his fear of dying, and his grief for the dead comrades. The story is easily accessible for today's readers. Taking one young man as an example, the book shows the inner struggles that such dramatic experiences can trigger off. (12+) ◇

112

Dedieu, Thierry

Attatruc 1er

(Attathing 1st) <proper name / wordplay>

[Paris] : Seuil Jeunesse, 2006. – [34] p.

ISBN 2-02-088801-7

Dictator – Art – Artist – Freedom of opinion

Moronic king Attatruc terrorises his subjects. Despite his complete lack of talent, he dreams of becoming a great artist. He buys the most famous paintings and re-works them, for example, by adding the »missing« second ear to Van Gogh's self-portrait or by »correctly« placing the nose in

Picasso's painting between the two eyes. After a while, he becomes so irate about his own inability that he burns all the artwork and incarcerates the artists. Eventually, however, art triumphs, and the mad king plunges to his death. In this large-format picture book, the monarch is presented in a stylised way as a grotesque, small, fat, large-headed, ugly gnome draped in martial regalia. The bold black brush strokes aptly express the dictator's perversity and aggressiveness. (8+)

113

Douzou, Olivier (text/illus.)

Le nez

(The nose)

[Nantes] : Éd. MeMo, 2006. – [60] p.

ISBN 2-910391-91-4

Nose – Cold – Pronunciation

It all starts with a nose suffering from a cold:

»When your nose is rumming, you meeb to fimb a bib anky.« Therefore, the little nose hits the road. Several other noses join it, such as a prehistoric nose, a clown's nose, an elephant's trunk, and a pig's snout. The quest for the »big handkerchief« that will bring the blocked noses some relief turns into a confusing and surprising adventure for the weird nosy bunch. Accompanied by caricaturing black-and-red illustrations, the picture book's play with language and pronunciation provides readers with a humorous challenge. As sometimes the words are not recognisable until they are actually pronounced, the book naturally lends itself to reading aloud (with or without cold). (6+)

114

Dumortier, David (text)

Mellinette, Martine (illus.)

Mehdi met du rouge à lèvres

(Mehdi paints her lips red)

Chambon-sur-Lignon : Cheyne, 2006. – 43 p.

(Poèmes pour grandir)

ISBN 2-84116-110-2

Sexual identity – Otherness – Tolerance –

Search for identity – Self-confidence

Mehdi dresses like a girl, paints his lips red, and instead of being crazy about football, he adores a singer whose songs make people cry. Again and again, the boy is forced to justify his behaviour and fight against

intolerance and conformism around him, for example when his neighbour slates his dream job of selling candy as »unfit for a boy!«. Eventually, Mehdi gets sick of »hiding his ideas in a tube, a bottle, or a jewel box and re-vealing only tiny bits of them«. The imaginative illustrations and the unconventional layout of the book underline the author's plea to all people to be brave enough to express their otherness, which makes life a lot richer. (9+)

115

Fombelle, Timothée de (text)

Place, François (illus.)

La vie suspendue

(The suspended life)

[Paris] : Gallimard Jeunesse, 2006. – 311 p.

(Tobie Lolness; 1)

ISBN 2-07-057181-5

Oak tree – People – Nature – Threat – Adventure

»Tobie was only one-and-a-half millimetres in size, not exactly tall for his age.« The 13-year-old protagonist's people live in a huge oak tree and keep beetles as food. The more influential the families are, the higher up in the tree they live, with the lower social classes dwelling in the branches close to the ground. Ever since Tobie's father has refused to hand over one of his inventions for fear that it might threaten their lives in the tree once it gets into the wrong hands, Tobie is being pursued. When his parents are arrested and the boy believes them to be dead, he climbs down into the lower branches and escapes. This novel about the tree-creatures' fantastic world and the young boy's adventures is written in a humorous and gripping style with unusual depth. (12+)

116

Gendrin, Catherine (text)

Corvaisier, Laurent (illus.)

Voici comment sont nées les histoires

(That's how stories are born)

[Voisins-le-Bretonneux] : Rue du Monde,

2006. – [32] p.

ISBN 978-2-915569-58-2

Genesis – God – Love – Death

God wants to create life. He carries out experiments with clay and fills the earth with what he deems beautiful. He places the very dark human

couple on the African continent while the couple who has not been in the oven long enough is set down in Europe. When there is no space left on earth, he creates »concepts« such as »love«, which suddenly leads to the birth of too many creatures; followed by »death« as a counterbalance; and »stories« to help children fall asleep. In colourful pictures, this large-format book offers readers a fairytale-like, profound, and tongue-in-cheek version of the creation of the world and of the constant metamorphosis of immortal stories that are passed on from one generation to the next. (6+)

□ □ Special Mention

117

Guéraud, Guillaume

Je mourrai pas gibier

(I won't let myself be killed like game)

Rodez : Éd. du Rouergue, 2006. – 75 p.

(DoAdo Noir)

ISBN 2-84156-717-6

Teenager – Murderer – Wedding – Village – Enmity – Running amok – Violence

Five people are killed, two fatally wounded, and one slightly injured when teenager Martial fires 18 shots at his brother's wedding guests. This is the beginning of the young first-person narrator's story, which is told in retrospect after the blood-bath. Martial's home village Mortagne is divided into two opposing camps and ruled by social coldness and stupidity expressed through violence and cruelty. Martial tries to escape from this place, but it is difficult to leave the legacy of his birthplace behind. Unable to express his anger with words, he too resorts to violence. The precise, relentless, and down-to-earth style of this novel immediately sucks the readers into the oppressing atmosphere. The novel is easy to read, easy to understand, but difficult to digest. It is not so much the bloodshed that the story focuses on but rather the motives behind it. The way in which these motives are analysed and presented, show the author's great narrative skill. (14+)

118

Guilloppé, Antoine (text/illus.)

Akiko la rêveuse : petit conte zen

(Akiko the dreamer : a short Zen tale)

Arles : Picquier Jeunesse, 2006. – [28] p.

ISBN 2-87730-867-7

Girl – Dream – Grandmother –

Youth – Old age – Death

One night, Akiko dreams that she meets her grandmother at the lakefront. The following day, the curious girl sets off towards the lake to »meet« her dream again. Eventually, she finds her grandmother and speaks to her for the last time. This Zen tale about a dreamy little girl deals with important topics such as the circle of life, absence and loss, and life and death. The clear black ink drawings are complemented by the greens and blues of nature. By using Japanese paper as material for the butterflies and the characters' clothes, the illustrator easily captures the Japanese atmosphere. Although both text and pictures have a touch of lightness, they stand out for their impressive profundity that inspires readers to stop and think about it. (7+)

119

Joanniez, Sébastien

Treizième avenir

(The thirteenth future)

Paris : Éd. Sarbacane, 2006. – 103 p.

(Romans Sarbacane : Exprim')

ISBN 978-2-84865-139-2

Teenager – Suburb – Parents –

Identity – First love

What the first-person-narrator of this novel desperately needs is a change. He really wants to escape his life in the suburbs, his parents' conservative, racist conversations, his neighbours' small-mindedness, and his friends' paralysing boredom. Yet, where and how can he find a new home and a worthwhile future? In the end, all his reflections lead to Justine, his first love, with whom he has his first romantic and sexual experiences. This novel about a teenager's search for identity resembles a long poem without punctuation marks. Its quick and easily understandable language lures readers into reading it through in one sitting. The relentless, colloquial, quasi-spoken text follows in the tradition of slam poetry. (14+)

120

Lestrade, Agnès de (text)

Boillat, Joanna (illus.)

La marchande de vent

(The wind merchant)

Urville-Nacqueville : Møtus, 2006. – [28] p.

ISBN 978-2-9073-5471-4

Wind – Sea – Wish

Young Alizée is a saleswoman at the kite beach.

She sells wind in bags or cans. Each of her customers has a special request: Fisherman Oreste needs north wind for his work; Jean, the poet, prefers slow, warm south wind for his words of love to travel from one village to the next; Gertrude wishes for east wind that shakes the apples from the tree; and a little boy longs for the quick west wind that helps him win the kite competition. And what does Alizée dream about? A surprise the wind carries for her promising love and happiness. The fluttering hair and clothes of the protagonists and the lightness of the illustrations' pastel colours underline the effect of the poetical text. (5+)

121

Perroud, Benoît

Ombroglios

(Shadowjumble)

Le-Puy-en Velay : Atelier du Poisson Soluble, 2006. – [68] p.

ISBN 2-913741-39-8

Fox – Shadow – Malice – Chasing

A fox goes for a walk, when suddenly his own shadow comes alive and trips him up. And that's only the start. The shadow plays tricks on him and tries his best to drive the poor fox mad. Once, he taps him on his back and boxes his ears, another time, he chases him until the panic-stricken victim crashes headfirst into a wall. The mischievous shadow even takes the shape of a beautiful vixen and tries to seduce the fox only to vanish into thin air the next minute. Yet, he who laughs last, laughs longest. The arrangement of the pictures as well as the sketchy presentation of the fox in this humorous, textless tale are inspired by comic-strips and flip books. (4+)

122

Saint-Dizier, Marie (text)

Ishii, Atsuko (illus.)

Le rire : raconté aux petits curieux

(Laughter: explained to inquisitive little ones)

[Paris] : Syros, 2006. – [58] p.

(Les Albums documentaires)

ISBN 2-7485-0449-6

Laughter – Humour

Why do people laugh? Do we laugh in the same way today that people did a thousand years ago? What do the French, the Spanish, or the English laugh about? Using an abundance of examples as well as scientific and literary evidence, such as Charles Darwin's description of his son's development of laughter or Molière's theatre plays that parody people's behaviour and thus make the audience laugh, this non-fiction picture book provides a philosophical reflection on this everyday phenomenon. The book also tackles various types of laughter, for example the laughter with or at somebody, plus culturally and environmentally specific traits of laughter. The informative text is accompanied by delicately drawn illustrations. (9+)

123

Sara (illus.)

Éléphants

(Elephants)

[Paris] : Magnier, 2006. – [28] p.

ISBN 2-84420-449-X

Elephant calf – Threat – Fear – Rescue – Parents

A little elephant is wandering through the woods alone, when suddenly a pack of wolves emerges among the trees. Luckily enough, his parents immediately come to his rescue. In this simple story with few protagonists and a reduced setting, the text is completely replaced by the play with colours and perspectives, which unfolds in the pictures. Thus, the red colour of the wolves roaming through the blue-green forest creates a threatening atmosphere while the gleaming white elephants' tusks seem like the proper instruments of punishment. Sara uses torn-paper-technique to create her characteristic illustrations. The coarse-grained Chinese wrapping paper chosen for the elephants in this book perfectly mirrors the pachyderms' equanimity and calm. (3+)

124

Silloray, Olivier

La marmite du diable

(The devil's cauldron)

Paris : Bayard Jeunesse, 2006. – 179 p.

(Millé Zime)

ISBN 2-7470-1747-8

Son – Father – Speleology – Death – First love

It's not enough that Nicolas's father has just died of cancer; to make matters worse, there are now some calumnious rumours about an extraordinary prehistoric cave, the whereabouts of which his father refused to share until his death. Some even say that he created the cave paintings there himself. Driven by the urge to rehabilitate his father, the boy sets off in search of the cave. On the one hand, this gripping novel serves as an introduction to the secrets of speleology; on the other hand, it offers a stunning psychological portrait of a teenager whose research about his father helps him find his own identity and his first love. (13+)

Italy

125

Carioli, Janna (text)

Quarello, Maurizio A. C. (illus.)

Nato straniero

(Born a stranger)

Firenze : Fatastrac, 2006 – 111 p.

(I nuovi ottagoni : Ottagono junior)

ISBN 88-8222-136-9

Friendship – Living together – Illegal immigration

Dario, the son of an immigrant, helps his father sell roasted corn at a street corner after school. One day, after quarrelling with his father, who often feels nervous and dispirited, the boy runs away and meets Ingrid, a punk girl. She is the only person to help him. When they happen to witness a taxi driver being killed, they decide to flee from both the murderers and the police who do not believe their testimony. As they live together and try to survive through mutual support, the bond between the two protagonists grows stronger day by day and enables them to overcome racial and religious differences. Told without sentimentality but still ending happily, the narrative points out

how young people can dispel prejudice with friendship, justice, and respect towards other human beings. (10+)

126

D'Adamo, Francesco (text)

Johnny il seminatore

(Johnny, the sower)

Milano : Fabbri, 2006. – 148 p.

(I delfini; 314: Storie, da 12 anni)

ISBN 88-451-1943-2

War – Pacifism – Personal growth – Social prejudice

Johnny, the protagonist of this moving book, which is a passionate plea against war, is an amiable young man whom everybody likes. Even if he doesn't exactly volunteer to fight in the war, he considers it his duty as a good citizen and therefore reluctantly decides to join the armed forces. Nevertheless, once he arrives at the front, he soon realises that there is nothing heroic about war. On the contrary: His job is to »sow evil seeds«, i.e. deploy anti-personnel mines, which maim or kill many innocent people. This soon drives him crazy and completely changes his opinion about warfare. Eventually, he quits the service and returns back home despite the fact that he is confronted with a lot of hatred and wrath from people who do not accept his decision. (12+)

127

Deti, Ermanno (text)

Gilda : anni di piombo, anni d'amore

(Gilda : years of lead, years of love)

Napoli : Liguori, 2006. – 100 p.

(Bibliotecagiovani; 2)

ISBN 88-207-3896-1

Italy/1970-1990 – Politics – Students' movement – Terrorism – Love

This story about terrorism deals with complex issues concerning the political history and social life during a very difficult and fairly recent era in Italian history. The different ideas behind the political movement during the 1970s and 1980s, which was also supported by the students' movement, are presented in a clear and articulate style devoid of any phrase-mongering. The common ideal characterising all these movements was social justice, an ideal which can lead to different ideological answers. Yet, this novel does not only

discuss serious political events and complications, it also features a moving love story and touches upon all the responsibilities that are connected with such a relationship. (12+)

128

Marchesini, Matteo

Come nuvole di roccia : Andrea Mantegna

(Like rock clouds : Andrea Mantegna)

Milano : Motta Junior, 2006. – 85 p.

(L'occhiotattile; 2)

ISBN 978-88-8279-271-8

Italy/Renaissance – Art – Mantegna, Andrea

Andrea Mantegna (1431-1506), the famous Renaissance painter, is presented in this book as a tired old man who seems to look at the world without recognising it any more. His memories inspire him to go on a last pilgrimage to beautiful Padua, the town where he spent a happy youth. Wandering around the town, he thinks back to the painting courses at school, to the Basilica di Sant'Antonio da Padova, to his meeting with the painter Donatello, and last but not least, to the famous Capella Ovetari. This rich and intense narration is complemented by numerous illustrations that help young readers to get acquainted with artworks of the Renaissance created not only by Mantegna himself but also by Giovanni Bellini, Leonardo da Vinci, and Donatello. (12+)

129

Meo, Alba (adapt.)

Shakespeare, William (orig. text)

Guicciardini, Desideria (illus.)

La tempesta

(The tempest)

Roma : Ed. Lapis, 2006. – [28] p.

(I lapislazzuli)

ISBN 88-7874-021-7

Island – Love – Magic

This demanding adaptation of one of the most famous plays by Shakespeare proves that classic literature still holds a strong fascination for adult and young readers today. The story is about a wise king with magic powers who lives with his daughter on a beautiful island populated by crowds of spirits and sprites. »The tempest« touches all aspects of human nature, ranging from the desire for revenge to forgiveness, from an attempt to

employ evil powers to the impotence of man to change events determined by fate, and to a kind of supernatural justice that re-establishes order and values. All of these topics span generations. The book displays a perfect balance between the text and the dream-like illustrations. (7+)

□ □ Special Mention

130

Metalli, Alver

Lupo siberiano

(Siberian wolf)

Milano : Salani, 2006. – 86 p.

ISBN 88-8451-577-7

Animal protection – Mistreatment – Selfishness

A spoilt little girl asks her parents for a special »dog« as a birthday present: a Siberian wolf that she saw in a documentary. Thanks to the help of an importer, the »dog« is indeed shipped from Siberia to the girl's home in Brazil where temperatures often rise above 40°C and it is extremely humid. The animal feels constantly tired, longs for its homeland, and dreams of running through the snow. Nobody notices that the wolf is dying, not even its little »mistress«. This story, which could well be true, is about people's irresponsible treatment of nature and the destruction of its delicate balance, but most of all about the inability of parents to say »no« to their children. This results in young children believing they are almighty and can handle everything according to their own wishes. The story is both as powerful as a parable and as unemotional as a factual report. (9+)

131

Morpurgo, Marina (text)

Sdralevich, Teresa (illus.)

Sofonisba strizzacervelli

(Head-shrinker Sofonisba)

Milano : Feltrinelli, 2006. – 119 p.

(Il gatto nero; 109) (Feltrinelli kids)

ISBN 88-07-92109-X

Witch – Guardian angel – Common sense

Ruscufù, a spry witch, has decided to employ her magic usefully by enabling every child on earth to live in freedom and dignity. In this story, she pretends to be a psychoanalyst accompanied by Pina

Freud, a colleague of hers, and her faithful assistant Angus, a guardian angel too good-hearted to face the evils of the world alone. The funny bunch of weirdos, who solve problems through anything but psychology, take on all kinds of difficult tasks. Once, they make a woman who is obsessed with her daughter's figure suffer from an insatiable hunger; another time, they turn a spoilt child into a loving person by sending her to a sort of holiday camp. This amusing tale makes readers think about the importance of values such as simplicity and naturalness. (10+)

132

Nanetti, Angela

Gorgius <proper name>

San Dorligo della Valle : Ed. EL, 2006. – 189 p.
ISBN 88-477-1765-5

Evil – Friendship

One weird summer, when yellow snowflakes are falling to the ground, a gang of children find a fluorescent egg with a mushroom-shaped head. Gorgius is a creature who is as small as he is dangerous. In fact, he is responsible for a number of killings. During the course of their investigations of the crimes, the children instinctively sense that his evil force can be lethal. This thriller with an ironical touch once again confirms Angela Nanetti's great narrative talent. She creates an astonishingly broad scope of very different stories that all share the themes of searching and initiation. In this book, readers are asked to reflect on the nature of evil and how it suddenly intrudes on people's everyday life and irrevocably alters everything. (10+)

133

Novelli, Luca

Edison : come inventare di tutto e di più

(Edison : how to invent all sorts of things)

Trieste : Ed. Scienza, 2006. – 107 p.

(Lampi di genio)

ISBN 88-7307-309-3

Edison, Thomas Alva – Science – Inventions

In this fictional biography, first-person narrator Thomas Alva Edison describes his rich life as inventor and scientist. Tirelessly working on new inventions, he was granted as many as 1039 patents, some of which have literally changed the world. The witty comicbook-like illustrations in

the margins offer a humorous comment on the story and help readers grasp the meaning by creating a second level that is just as important as the written text. In addition, small notes scattered throughout the book carefully and very effectively relate events of this historical period. The cleverly arranged combination of illustrations and text makes readers identify with the protagonist of this entertaining and gripping read. (8+)

134

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

Stoppa, Alfredo (text)

Una bambina coraggiosa

(A brave girl)

[Padova] : Bohem Press Italia,

2006. – [28] p.

(Un libro Bohem)

ISBN 88-88148-73-6

Fear – Growing-up – Self-esteem

Little Anna is so scared of everything that she locks herself in at home and waits impatiently for her mother's return. Yet, when her mother doesn't come, the girl realises that she will have to leave the house and brave the world. To get outside, she has to pass by the closet in which she always imagined some kind of bogey to live. Next, she has to walk down the dark stairs of the building, face a kids' gang who make fun of her, and even hurry past a surly old woman. Step by step, she plucks up her courage. As soon as one task is completed, she decides that she can take on a bigger challenge. In the end, she celebrates her newly found independence and freedom, symbolically represented in the pictures by a pier and a wonderfully bright sea. (5+)

135

Sgardoli, Guido (text)

Mattioli, Francesco (illus.)

Il grande libro degli Sgnuk

(The big Sgnuk-book)

Milano : Giunti Junior, 2006. – 217 p

(Graffi)

ISBN 88-09-04188-7

Humour – Fantasy – Parallel world

Young Yndig and his extravagant grandfather S sammenspit share the same fate: They are op-

pressed by other people and not allowed to be themselves. In the grandfather's case, it is his grumpy and hypochondriac wife who always quashes his desire for more independence and ignores his longing to travel. As for Yndig, it is his parents and classmates who make his life miserable. They make fun of him because of his obesity, his ugly glasses, and his speech defect. Luckily enough, the misery of grandfather and grandson comes to an end one day, thanks to the Sgnuk. These terrifying, invisible little men secretly live in the grandfather's house. With the help of an ancient, mysterious book, Yndig is able to force the Sgnuk to help him and his grandfather fight for their rights. (10+)

136

Zoboli, Giovanna (text)

Mulazzani, Simona (illus.)

Anselmo va a scuola

(Anselmo goes to school)

Milano: Topipittori, 2006. – [28] p.

ISBN 88-89210-11-7

Friendship – Anxiety –

Starting school – Imagination

What will it be like to go to school, a real primary school? Of course this is something every young child worries about. Yet, the little creature who asks all these questions is not the boy himself who will actually have to venture out into the unknown world of school but his anxious toy rabbit, Anselmo. This touching picture book shows young readers what the child imagines to happen. With the help of his little stuffed friend, the boy manages to overcome his anxiety and fear of the unfamiliar, of not being at home, and of the new environment with which he is suddenly confronted. By supporting and comforting the tiny rabbit, the boy picks up his own courage and eventually feels ready to take this difficult step. (5+)

Luxembourg (French)

137

Neveu, Pauline (text)

Delautre, Antoine (illus.)

Le système sanguin

(Blood circulation)

Mertzig : Zoom Éd., 2006. – 40 p.

(Atomes crochus; 3)

ISBN 2-919934-42-2

Circulatory system – Blood transport – Heart – Blood type

The series »Les Atomes crochus« (The crooked atoms) explains scientific phenomena to inquisitive children. In this volume, the wise orang-utan Aristote (Aristotle) describes the complete circulatory system to naughty boys Zoé and Oscar. When Oscar hurts his hand in a tussle and starts bleeding, this injury prompts Aristote to relate how the heart functions, what red blood cells and platelets are, etc. In the first part of the book, the frame story and the monkey's explanations are presented in a comicbook-like style, whereas in the second part, the clearly written text and sketchy illustrations repeat and sum up the facts mentioned earlier. Further details, for example about the immune system and blood transfusion, are also explained thoroughly. (6+)

Portugal

138

Araújo, Jorge (text)

Pereira, Pedro Sousa (illus.)

Nem tudo começa com um beijo

(Not everything starts with a kiss)

Cruz Quebrada : Oficina do Livro, 2005. – 165 p.

(Ficção)

ISBN 989-555-108-8

Street kid – Social injustice – First love – Friendship

A group of homeless teenagers lives in the »cave« (cellar) of a big city – a tight, rat-infested, and hierarchically structured world of conflicts, friendships, pain, tragedies, and death. The »sotão« (attic) above them is close and yet seems far away. 14-year-old Fio Maravilha breaks through the barrier separating these two spheres when he gets »upstairs« and meets

Nuvem Maria. The unconditional love between the two teenagers is only given a chance thanks to a natural catastrophe. Despite a few inconsistencies, the book is well worth reading because of its unusual combination of realism and almost magical elements. The relentless description of the protagonists' lives serves as a sharp contrast to the language, which is rich in images, and to the parable-like quality of the story. (12+)

139

Duarte, Rita Taborda (text)

Henriques, Luís (illus.)

A família dos macacos

(The monkey family)

Lisboa : Caminho, 2006. – [28] p.

ISBN 972-21-1779-3

Child – Monkey – Behaviour –

Boisterousness – Zoo

This amusing picture book provides conclusive proof that we humans are close relatives of apes. With their effervescent, monkey-like vivacity, two (human) siblings turn the house upside down and drive their parents to despair. Therefore, the parents »donate« them to the zoo, where the children immediately feel at home. Other parents are impressed and dispose of their offspring in the same way. Before long, however, the »monkeys'« hullabaloo makes the exasperated zoo director send the children back to their parents – who are not particularly delighted. The colour drawings accompanying the rhymed story are vivid and cheeky, and perfectly translate the adorable little guys' carelessness and anarchic energy. (4+)

140

Gomes, Luísa Costa (text)

Nesbitt, Jorge (illus.)

Trava-línguas

(Tongue twisters)

Lisboa : Dom Quixote, 2006. – 33 p.

ISBN 972-20-3127-9

Tongue twister – Language game – Nonsense

Tongue twisters, common in many languages and cultures, are a popular way of playing unrestrainedly with sounds, syllables, words, and language. Usually they have but one purpose, which is to lead the people who are trying to

master them up the garden path and tie their tongues in knots. In this book, Louísa Costa Gomes offers witty new tongue twisters in prose and verse, including some fairly unusual adaptations of well-known traditional Portuguese tales. The texts are printed in a varied typography and are accompanied by sparsely coloured illustrations reminiscent of woodcuts. This splendid collection will delight children and adults alike. (5+)

Romania

141

Traian, Marin (text)

Nicolau, I. (illus.)

Aventurile iepuraşului Țup

(Little rabbit Tup's adventures)

Bucureşti : Corint Junior, 2005. – 36 p.

ISBN 973-7789-60-1

Friendship – Helpfulness – Winter

Because of his injured wing, the white stork is not able to fly south for the winter but his best friend Zup, the rabbit, doesn't desert him. He takes him into his little burrow and protects his feathery friend from all dangers. With a lot of cunning and by risking his own neck, he manages, for example, to keep the wolf from entering the warren and thus saves his friend's life. Together with the bear and a little bird, he also defeats the clever fox. In spring, the cured stork then helps his loyal friends to stand up to the wolf and the four can finally celebrate the victory of friendship against all perils. This beautifully told fable, accompanied by illustrations reminiscent of old photographs, points out the timelessness of important topics such as friendship and helpfulness. (5+)

✧ books whose content is found to contribute to an international understanding among cultures and peoples

□ books with easy-to-read texts but nonetheless complex and high-interest topics

Spain

142

Blanco, Riki (text/illus.)

Cuentos pulga

(Flea tales)

Barcelona : Thule Ed.,

2006. – [44] p.

(Tramantojo)

ISBN 84-96473-44-9

Circus

A circus-setting offers a lot of space for fantastic events. »Cuentos pulga« is a collection of 14 ultra-short stories, each one about one member of a very special group of circus performers such as trapeze artist Regina, who is not afraid of heights but rather of the floor, or snake woman Elena, who disappears forever into her own navel. With a lot of creative energy, the author has developed these witty and absurd tales from the characteristics of the various circus professions. The full-page illustrations are mainly rendered in shades of red and brown. Thanks to their depiction of strong gestures and distinct forms, they perfectly mirror the exaggeration of this weird world. The beautiful typography skilfully complements both content and pictures. (5+)

143

Carreras de Sosa, Lydia (text)

Zabala, Javier (illus.)

Las cosas perdidas

(The lost things)

Zaragoza : Edelvives,

2006. – 115 p.

(Ala delta : Serie verde; 58)

ISBN 978-84-263-6198-1

Kleptomania – Friendship – Embarrassment

Tami discovers that Uncle Daniel, a close family friend, is a compulsive thief who steals regularly. For the boy, this discovery is a huge shock. Torn between anger, embarrassment, and helplessness, Tami seeks help in order to cope with this situation. Kleptomania is a fairly unusual topic for a children's book. Therefore, it's all the more remarkable how sensitively and comprehensively the author points out that Kleptomania is a serious

illness. In a psychologically refined and meticulously observed way, she describes the reactions and emotions of all the people involved. Both children and adults are confused and disappointed, they remain silent about the problem or try to deny it, and they are worried about their friend. This deliberately unspectacular book is well worth reading. (7+)

144

García-Clairac, Santiago

El reino de los sueños

(The kingdom of dreams)

Madrid : Ed. SM, 2006. – 636 p.

(El ejército negro; 1)

ISBN 84-675-1153-2

The Middle Ages – Alchemy – Magic –

Immortality – Philosopher's stone –

Parallel world – Library – Archaeology

This voluminous first volume of a fantasy trilogy tells two parallel tales that focus on the search for the philosopher's stone and on people's longing for immortality. Both plots – one of which is set in the 10th century, the other one in the present – are connected by their main protagonists: the alchemist's assistant Arturo Adragón, who later becomes a knight, and a modern-day boy of the same name, whose father owns an archive of precious historical manuscripts. Step by step, the two narrative threads are woven into a refined, mysterious web that prepares the ground for further adventures in the book's sequels. This cleverly constructed, thrilling imaginative novel features numerous interesting characters, places, and plot strands. (12+)

145

Lalana, Fernando

La tuneladora

(The tunnel boring machine)

Barcelona : Ed. Bambú,

2006. – 209 p.

ISBN 84-8343-006-1

(Bambú : Exit)

Tunnel – Attempted murder – Detective

This detective novel perfectly illustrates that the border between teenage- and adult literature is becoming increasingly difficult to define. It is unusual how-

ever, that not a single young character appears in the whole story. The protagonist Fermín Escartín – a private detective and former university professor in Zaragoza – is hired to search for an engineer working in the construction of underground train tunnels who has disappeared without a trace. The detective's investigations lead the readers deep below the city. Fernando Lalana, a successful and award-winning author of teenage novels, has constructed a gripping plot. With a lot of wit and unusual ideas, he captures his readers right until the end. (14+)

146

Neruda, Pablo (text)

Ferrer, Isidro (illus.)

Libro de las preguntas : un poema

(The book of questions : a poem)

Valencia : Media Vaca, 2006. – [ca. 180] p.

(Libros para niños; 14)

ISBN 84-934038-7-3

Philosophy – Reflection – Question

Is it true that amber contains the tears of sirens?

Why do poor people forget what poverty is like as soon as they are no longer poor? In his book, originally published in 1974, the Chilean Nobel prize winner strings together innumerable questions, including simple, complex, political, philosophical, witty, and metaphorical ones, to create a text resembling a long poem. Just like a lyrical monologue, the text doesn't provide any answers but rather invites the readers to look for them themselves. Isidro Ferrer's black-and-white illustrations don't offer explanations either. Like on a stage, the artist produces a mysterious visual tale by putting together photographs, objects, and drawings. Doors, locks, stairs, and labyrinths hint at the unsolved mysteries of our world. (8+)

147

Nesquens, Daniel (text)

Arguilé, Elisa (illus.)

Mi familia

(My family)

Madrid : Anaya, 2006. – 197 p.

ISBN 84-667-4718-4

Family

With »Mi familia«, Daniel Nesquens and Elisa Arguilé, who have already worked together several

times, present their most original book to date. In Nesquens's stories, family – an inexhaustible topic – is a bizarre cabinet of curiosities of very peculiar, both ordinary and weird, characters. The author portrays the dear relatives with all their idiosyncrasies in a witty and ironical way. Nevertheless, the descriptions are never defamatory because they always point out people's humane side. Elisa Arguilé has translated the characters into brilliant illustrations. Her collage portraits in black-white-and-red show imperfect, deformed people who breathe individuality and self-confidence. (14+)

148

Roncagliolo, Santiago (text)

Wensell Ulises (illus.)

Matías y los imposibles

(Matías and the Impossibles)

Madrid : Ed. Siruela, 2006. – 111 p.

(Las tres edades; 136)

ISBN 84-7844-988-4

Grandfather – Grandson – Outsider –

Death – Storytelling – Imagination

Matías is constantly teased and bullied. The only person who loves and understands the orphan boy (and tells him wonderful stories) is his grandfather with whom he lives. When the old man dies, Matías tries to escape his grief and loneliness by hiding in the wardrobe. Quite unexpectedly, characters from his favourite stories start knocking at the wardrobe door and take the boy on an adventure in which the line between reality and the imagined world becomes blurred and eventually disappears completely. Matías's story, which offers child readers a lot of room for identification, is not only told in a gripping and amusing way; it also shows, in a sophisticated manner, the possibilities that people have for creating new worlds for themselves. (8+)

Spain (Catalan)

149

Canal, Eulàlia (text)

Ruano, Sara (illus.)

Un petó de mandarina

(A tangerine kiss)

Barcelona : Ed. Barcanova, 2006. – 126 p.

(Sopa de llibres; 131)

ISBN 84-489-1960-2

First love – Friendship – War refugee – Interculturality

Tavi, the first-person narrator of this narrative, falls in love with his new classmate Vanina. The girl had to leave her home in a distant country because of a war raging there. One day, when she is able to return home, she simply disappears from the boy's life. In between, a delicate friendship develops as they slowly get to know each other better. Both children learn what being in love feels like, but they also experience the negative emotions of insecurity, loss, and grief when saying goodbye. Imbedded in a school and friendship story that also touches upon intercultural topics, this book, written in an unobtrusive, poetical language, captures the children's feelings and the magic of love in a natural way. (Premi Barcanova de Literatura Infantil i Juvenil; 2006) (10+) ◇

150

Farré, Lluís (text)

Gusti (illus.)

»El nen gris«

(»The grey boy«)

Barcelona : La Galera [et al.], 2006. – [44] p.

ISBN 978-84-672-2204-3

Insensitivity – Outsider – Parents – Child

When Martí is born, he is neither prawn-pink like his father, nor grass-green like his mother, but simply grey – and not only on the outside. Imperturbable, as if under an impenetrable bell jar, the boy doesn't take part in but rather watches his own life from the outside, showing neither joy, nor fear, nor any other emotion. One day, however, his shell starts to crack and the long-subdued feelings suddenly break free. Magnificent pictures illustrate this profound, slightly mysterious story. Astonishingly enough, they are brimming with

power and energy. With an ingenious mixture of materials and techniques full of original ideas and forceful brush strokes, the illustrations serve as a tempestuous counterpoint to the initial monotony of the child's emotion-free life. (6+)

151

Sierra i Fabra, Jordi (text)

Solà, Raquel (trad.)

Trucant a les portes del cel

Barcelona : Edebé, 2006. – 286 p.

(Periscopi; 60)

ISBN 84-236-8149-1

(Spanish ed.: Llamando a las puertas del cielo)

India – Poverty – Wealth – Love

Against the will of her boyfriend and her parents, Silvia, a young medical student, travels to India to work in a hospital as volunteer during her holidays. Confronted with the social reality in a country so utterly foreign to her, the young woman soon becomes aware of the responsibility of every human being in a world that is growing closer and closer together. In a realistic style, the novel describes the personal tensions that Silvia experiences »between the two worlds«. At the same time, it offers a thorough insight into the work of non-governmental organisations and their cross-border commitment. In this book, the multi-award-winning author again proves his talent for tackling topical issues and creating a skilfully written literary text that is interesting for young readers. (14+) ◇

Spain (Galician)

152

Alfaya, An

A sombra descasca

(The bare-footed shadow)

Vigo : Xerais, 2006. – 133 p.

(Fóra de xogo; 92)

ISBN 84-9782-426-1

Spain/Civil War – Family – Secret

This novel deals with the dark sides of a family that suffers from one thing in particular: insurmountable speechlessness. Elsa, the 16-year-old protagonist, wants to know the reason for this secrecy and starts her own investigations leading her back to the Spanish Civil War and her great-aunt

Sagrario's distressing misfortune. She finds out that her grandfather actually is a despot and the women in the family his patient victims. The recognition that her own family is far from perfect is a bitter pill for Elsa, yet it also serves as an important step in the process of growing up and finding her own identity. An Alfaya has cleverly constructed this novel told in a quiet voice. New questions and secrets that appear at strategically important points in the plot create an interesting tension right up to the end. (14+) (Premio Lazarillo; 2005)

153

Carballeira, Paula (text)

Hénaff, Carole (illus.)

Smara <proper name>

Pontevedra : Kalandraka, 2006. – 59 p.

(Seteleguas)

ISBN 84-8464-549-5

Sahara – Tradition – Storytelling

The setting for this book is the city of Smara (aka Semara), which is situated in Western Sahara and formerly served as an oasis for caravans travelling through the desert. There, a Spanish boy who accompanies his father on a journey meets Avoa Ugaga (Grandmother Ugaga). The wise old woman tells him entrancing stories about ancient times. Thus Smara is not only a foreign and fascinating place for the boy; it is also a symbol for an endangered traditional culture that is rich in myths, tales, and images. The book resonates with a quiet, almost melancholic atmosphere that is also captured in the illustrations inspired by the desert landscape and the colours and shapes of local ceramics, fabrics, and spices. (9+) ◇

154

Patacrúa (text)

Solchaga, Javier (illus.)

A Princesa do Caurel

(The princess from the Caurel mountains)

Pontevedra : OQO Ed., 2006. – [32] p.

(Colección Q)

ISBN 84-96573-52-4

Chain tale – Ring – Theft

The type of fairy tale in which an object travels from one person to the next and eventually returns to its starting point exists in numerous dif-

ferent versions. The story, often written in verse, grows longer and longer with each new change of owner because all of the previous stations are repeated. In this original photo-picture-book, the object is a ring that comes into the possession of a princess, then a bird, a cat, a dog, a stick, and so on. The figures are crafted with a lot of imagination from finds such as boards, roots, screws, tiles, etc. At the start of each new episode, only a small part of the next protagonist is shown at first. Thus, these pictures arouse the readers' interest, invite them to guess, and also allow them to closely inspect the material used. (4+)

Switzerland (French)

155

Carrer, Chiara (text/illus.)

Le lutin des couleurs

(The colour pixie)

Genève : Joie de Lire, 2006. – [44] p.

ISBN 978-2-88258-345-1

Colour – Nature – Chromatics

A cute little pixie leads readers into the world of colours and introduces a detailed colour spectrum based on the colours found in nature. They range from earthen brown, the ochre of the desert snake, and the plums' purple to ocean blue, the dark green of juicy leaves, and the white of polar bears. Lively pencil sketches are coloured in the respective shades while the correct mixture ratio of basic colours is given in the top margins. As a »counterpart« to the friendly pixie, a devilish shadow creature can be spotted hiding on the pages, watching the pixie and trying to assist him somehow. This introduction to chromatics for young readers thus also offers a light-hearted and humorous exploration of the unknown. (3+)

Latin America

Argentina (Spanish)

156

Gandman, Alexiev (text/illus.)

Los planos de mi ciudad

(The maps of my city)

Buenos Aires : Ed. del Eclipse, 2005. – [40] p.

(Libros-álbum del eclipse)

ISBN 987-9011-67-8

City

The city in this imaginative picture book is a complex organism with innumerable cords connecting its sometimes very quaint parts in an ingenious way. Alexiev Gand-man's black-and-white illustrations present an urban habitat that seems magical and mysterious, sophisticatedly constructed, yet cheerfully playful. An unspecified first-person narrator explores the world in which he lives by drawing maps of the city, then of the surrounding area, and finally of outer space. Eventually, he ends up in his own room again, a place that he considers just as »wonderfully inexplicable« as the whole city. This scintillating book invites readers and observers to create their own individual spaces for living that are hitherto unseen. (5+)

157

Giampieri, Elena (text)

Farías, Carolina (illus.)

Papelote – Papelino

<proper name>

Córdoba : Comunic-arte, 2006. – [24] p.

(Los niños del Mercosur)

ISBN 987-602-018-8

(Bilingual ed.: Spanish and Portuguese)

Paper – Longing – Happiness – Flying

Papelote, a plain sheet of paper, longs to be a bird or a butterfly; or maybe a page in a book, because then he would be able to comfortably sit in a bookshop. Instead, he is forced to brave the world as a newspaper page. Although he still wishes he were something different, something better, something more beautiful, he slowly starts to enjoy life a little, as fragrant flowers are wrapped inside him, or as he is folded into a paper hat for a child. Eventually, after he has been crumpled up and thrown into the gutter, his great

dream of flying finally comes true. In a poetic way, the simple text describes Papelote's utterly human feelings, especially his desire to burst his (metaphorical) chains. The double-page mixed-media colour illustrations aptly express this longing. (4+)

Brazil (Portuguese)

158

Bojunga, Lygia

Sapato de salto

(Shoe with heel)

Rio de Janeiro : Casa Lygia Bojunga, 2006. – 274 p.

ISBN 85-89020-18-5

Abandon – Prejudice – Sexuality – Friendship

In her new book, »Sapato de salto«, Lygia Bojunga, the first writer in Latin America to win the IBBY Hans Christian Andersen Award (1982) and winner of the ALMA Award (2004), again confirms her unique talent to deal with controversial themes in a sensitive and delicate way. This intimate story reveals the dreams and sadness of an orphan girl whose greatest ambition is dancing. One day, a man takes her into his home as nanny. The girl longs to be part of his family but soon realises that this isn't possible for her. On the contrary, she is sexually abused by the man, an event which precociously starts her sexual life. In the course of the story, the main protagonist's life becomes interlaced with the lives of many other characters whose actions are determined either by their humanity or their prejudice towards the girl. (14+)

159

Karai, Luiz (text)

Abraham, Rodrigo (illus.)

Massacre indígena guarani = Jurua reve nhande kuery joguero'a ague

(Guarani Indian Massacre)

São Paulo : Difusão Cultural do Livro, 2006. – 23 p.

ISBN 85-368-0192-1

(Text Portuguese and Guarani)

Indigenous culture – Ethnic conflicts – Brazil/History

In the small village of Kavure, the religious leader elects his successor. The new »pajé«, Jekupe, at once points out the dangers of living in the imme-

diate vicinity of white men. When a premonition prompts him to propose that they move to a different area, part of the group doesn't respect his authority and decides to stay. This causes a cruel war between indigenous and non-indigenous people. The story is set in the 19th century and reflects the ethnic conflicts that have been smouldering in Latin America for the past 500 years, terminating many native communities. The bilingual text is accompanied by watercolour illustrations emphasising the characteristics of the indigenous people and portraying their environment in detail. (8+) ◇

160

Machado, Ana Maria (text)

Martins, Maria Inês (illus.)

O menino e o maestro

(The boy and the maestro)

São Paulo : Mercuryo Jovem, 2006. – 46 p.

ISBN 85-7272-220-3

Music – Talent – Mozart, Wolfgang Amadeus – Samba

Teleco is a talented young percussionist at a samba school. When his aptitude attracts the attention of an orchestra conductor, a wonderful friendship begins. One day, the conductor introduces him to the music of a symphonic orchestra and Mozart's work. The young boy and the great composer have one thing in common: Their outstanding talent is discovered when they are small children, so they work hard and do not have any time left to play. Mozart's music inspires Teleco to think about his own future and opens up new perspectives for him. The illustrations help to join two musical genres – popular and classical music. Hans-Christian-Andersen-Award-winner Ana Maria Machado crafts a touching story about the meeting between children and music in general, and between two different periods. (8+)

161

Riter, Caio

O rapaz que não era de Liverpool

(The boy who was not from Liverpool)

São Paulo : Ed. SM, 2006. – 127 p.

(Barco a vapor; 12 : Série vermelha)

ISBN 85-7675-118-6

Adoption – Rock music – Family – Identity

The »soundtrack« of Marcelo's life has always been full of Beatles songs. Through the influence of his father, the 15-year-old first got in touch with the music of the Liverpool boys and was soon convinced that his own family resembled a rock band. However, one day, the boy suddenly realises that his brown eyes just don't match with the blue eyes of his parents and his brothers. Marcelo assumes that he was adopted as a baby. He is tormented by inner conflicts and can't stop discussing and questioning everything around him. The non-linear narrative makes this story particularly attractive, especially because of the protagonist's flashbacks that serve as an attempt to get to the core of the unsettling revelations. (12+)

162

Salerno, Silvana (text)

Cárcamo (illus.)

Viagem pelo Brasil em 52 histórias

(Journey around Brazil in 52 stories)

São Paulo : Companhia das Letrinhas, 2006. – 160 p.

ISBN 85-7406-343-6

Brazil/History – Folklore – Tradition

This book unites some of the most famous tales, fables, and popular stories of Brazilian culture. Over the years, all of these narratives have been influenced by various cultures, mainly European, African, and indigenous Brazilian. These ancient stories, which share the typical characteristics of folklore, were not lost because they are recognised as an important part of Brazilian people's life, recording their habits and history. The carefully retold tales are grouped according to the geographic region of their origin. The texts are accompanied by expressive illustrations and by photos and notes that help to place each story into a wider context. This book was inspired by an anthology called »Volta ao mundo em 52 histórias«. (10+) ◇

163

Vilela, Fernando (text/illus.)

Lampião & Lancelote

<proper names>

São Paulo : CosacNaify, 2006. – 51 p.

ISBN 85-7503-526-6

Popular Culture – Middle Ages – Poetry – Fight

This book is written in the form of a »cordel« text, a verse narrative that constitutes an important genre of popular Brazilian culture. In it, the author crafts an unusual encounter between the medieval knight Lancelot and the legendary »cangaceiro« (bandit) Lampião. They compete in a verbal combat that evokes their different times, their habits, the imaginary of medieval literature, and the typical language and setting of northern Brazil. The result is a truly original story in each passage and every brushstroke. The very expressive illustrations in extra-large landscape format contain numerous allusions to the two different epochs and cultures: Whereas Lancelot's universe is depicted in silver, a colour that was also used in medieval book art, the woodcut-like illustrations in copper, reminiscent of the printing technique of »cordel« literature, represent Lampião's world. Both in the text and the pictures, the two different worlds are merged into a fascinating whole. (8+)

Colombia (Spanish)

164

Rodríguez, Lucho (text/illus.)

Baena, Valeria (text)

Animales en extinción : Colombia ;

Región del Caribe

(Endangered animals : Colombia ;

Caribbean region)

Bogotá [et al.] : Ed. B., 2006. – [28] p.

(Iguana)

ISBN 958-97773-9-2

Colombia – Animals

The five titles of this attractive non-fiction series introduce various examples of Colombia's rich fauna grouped according to geographical regions. Unfortunately, all these animals have one thing in common: They are in great danger of becoming extinct. The book »Caribbean Region«, for exam-

ple, offers worthwhile details about the »tití« (a monkey with the beautiful Latin name »sanguinus oedipus«) or the Colombian peacock. The factual information is clearly structured (What does the animal look like? How does it live? Why is it endangered? etc.) and followed by a double-page featuring a legend that approaches the respective animal from a different, i.e. a narrative, point of view. Appealing stylised illustrations of the animals round off this enchanting book. (10+)

Mexico (Spanish)

165

Barajas Mariscal, Libia E. (text)

García Bernal, Víctor (illus.)

Vida y fortuna de un muchacho inquieto

que se convirtió en científico

(The life and fate of a restless boy

who became a scientist)

México, D.F. [et al.] : Castillo, 2005. – 23 p.

(La otra escalera) (La máquina del tiempo)

ISBN 968-5920-61-3

Sigüenza y Góngora, Carlos de –

Mexico/1645-1700 – Astronomy – Science

At his time, Carlos de Sigüenza y Góngora was one of the most renowned scientists on the American continent. Observing nature in a methodologically exact and careful way, he argued in favour of a strict divide between astronomy and astrology, a field which was then still regarded as very important among scientists. This comprehensible, well structured non-fiction picture book gives an excellent overview of the versatile astronomer and geographer's life and work. Fairly unusual for a work of non-fiction are the double-page illustrations composed of details from old photographs, maps, documents, and books. Drawn figures move between these elements as if they were on a stage. Thus, the illustrations are not only informative, they also have a narrative quality. (9+)

166

Pellicer, Carlos (text)

Pellicer López, Carlos (select./illus.)

Colores con brisa : [poesía para mirar en voz alta]
(Colours with a breeze : [poetry to be looked at aloud])

México, D.F. : Fondo de Cultura Económica;
Anturios Ed., 2006. – [40] p.

(Los especiales de A la orilla del viento)

ISBN 968-16-7869-9

Poetry – Nature

It's the magnificently designed pictures that turn this book into something special. They consist mainly of shapes and colours. Huge, almost monochrome planes, squares, rectangles, waves, circles, and torn and cut paper form partly abstract compositions in bright colours that have a fascinating power to draw readers to them. In his pictures, the well-known illustrator Carlos Pellicer López (born 1948) opens up a new way of interpreting the literary work of his uncle, Carlos Pellicer (1897-1977). The texts are a selection of verses from the author's lyrical work written mainly between 1920 and 1950. The imaginative descriptions of nature provide an insight into the literary cosmos of this poet who belongs to the Mexican avant-garde movement. (6+)

Venezuela (Spanish)

167

Bergna, Mónica (adapt.)

Vanden Broeck, Fabricio (illus.)

La Cucaracha

(The cockroach) <song title>

Caracas : Camelia Ed., 2006. – [24] p.

ISBN 980-6450-38-8

Cockroach – Folk song

The song »La Cucaracha«, the origins of which can be traced back to 15th-century Spain, is well known around the world in various versions. It gained particular popularity during the Mexican revolution when it was sung as political mockery of an odious general. In this new adaptation with catchy nonsensical verses, the disagreeable cockroach is joined by crickets, mice, vultures, and other animals that are all clad in the garments of

»caballeros«, »señoras«, generals, priests, revolutionaries, and farm workers from the early 20th century. The figures, drawn with bold dynamic lines, are set against an empty brown background lending them a powerful presence. This burlesque picture book allows different readings according to the readers' age. (6+)

North America

Canada (French)

168

Adams, Steve (retell./illus.)

Le prince et l'hirondelle

(The prince and the swallow)

Saint-Lambert (Québec) : Dominique
et Compagnie, 2006. – [32] p.

ISBN 978-2-89512-523-5

*Statue – Prince – Swallow – Need –
Poverty – Assistance*

High above the city on a small pillar stands the golden statue of the Happy Prince. A swallow on her way south pauses beside the statue and suddenly feels something wet on its feathers. It is the metal prince who is crying because he sees how severely the poor people in this city suffer. This picture book is an adaptation of Oscar Wilde's famous fairy tale »The Happy Prince«, a touching tale against »looking away«. Alternating between dark colours and bright sections in gold and white, the illustrations painted on wood underline the discrepancy between rich and poor and confirm how essential it is to turn desolation into hope. In the end, as a successful compromise for young readers, the swallow seeks shelter with the little match girl. (6+)

169

Chartrand, Lili (text)

Oddoux, Marie-Pierre (illus.)

Rouge-Babine, vampire détective

(Rouge-Babine, the vampire detective)

Montréal (Québec) : Courte Échelle,

2006. – 131 p.

ISBN 2-89021-850-3

(Mon roman; 28: Fantastique)

Girl – Vampire – Detective – Murder – Investigation

Thirteen-year-old Rouge-Babine (Red-Babine) is small and thin with long black hair and dark-grey eyes. What's so special about that? She is a vampire! Since nothing exciting ever happens in her home town, she dives into the literary adventures of Sherlock Holmes. Yet one day in the forest, she discovers the letter »V« written in ash. It is a trace of the vampire hunter who has been roaming the region for years. Assisted by the witch Bella-donna, the three-headed monster Triplax, and her dog Plakett, the vampire girl determinedly starts her investigations. The first volume of the new »Rouge-Babine« series is characterised by its creative mixture of fantastic, gripping, and humorous elements. (9+)

170

Dorion, Hélène (text)

Nadeau, Janice (illus.)

La vie bercée

(Life rocked to sleep)

Montréal (Québec) : 400 Coups,

2006. – [48] p.

ISBN 2-89540-280-9

Life cycle – Birth – Growing up – Family

This picture book consists of a long poem about people's lives from birth to adulthood. It mentions highs and lows, happiness and sorrow, the moment they start learning to read and to write, or the time of adolescence when they struggle for independence from their parents. »You blow out your dream-candles one by one and thus each dream comes true.« The highly symbolic illustrations (presenting the »thread of life« that also sustains the connection with one's family; or the »anchored« parents' house) accompany the readers' thoughts with soft colours and fragile figures. The cover picture of the father sitting in a rock-

ing chair and rocking the child to sleep already hints at the changing nature of life with its ups and downs, visualised later as swaying houses and rifts within the pictures. (8+)

171

Major, Henriette (text)

Béha, Philippe (illus.)

Jongleries

(Juggling)

Montréal (Québec) : Hurtubise HMH,

2006. – [87] p.

ISBN 978-2-89428-865-8

Language – Saying – Meaning – Game

In every language, there are sayings that people use without analysing their true meaning. What happens if you take them literally? In this book, the author digs up the literal meaning behind numerous figures of speech from areas such as nature, emotions, and everyday objects and turns them into playful, »punny« poems complemented by equally playful, colourful illustrations. A young boy, for example, who visually accompanies a poem about time, tries with a red thread to prevent Time (whose leg protrudes from the collage picture) from running out. To enable readers to get to the bottom of the poems, a glossary explains all the sayings. The humorous and inventive way in which this last book by late Henriette Major questions the use of language in everyday life is completely convincing. (6+)

□ □ Special Mention

172

Turgeon, Éline

Ma vie ne sait pas nager

(My life can't swim)

Montréal (Québec) :

Québec Amérique Jeunesse, 2006. – 126 p.

(Titan jeunesse; 64)

ISBN 2-7644-0467-0

Twins – Suicide – Grief – Depression

For 15-year-old Lou-Anne, life will never be the same. »There is a before and an after«, a life before her twin sister drowned herself in the school swimming pool, and a life afterwards, with the family breaking apart. Maybe Geneviève

didn't really want to die. Maybe she only wanted to be free from the »quicksand«, free from the feeling of emptiness and meaninglessness. While the father tries to avoid his pain as far as possible, the mother buries herself in it to the brink of a breakdown. In their grief for the dead daughter, the parents seem to forget about the living one. Lou-Anne falls into a deep dark hole. She copes with her sorrow by writing about it and escapes her loneliness by talking to Simon. The author tells about depression and suicide in a relentless and authentic style close to the life of teenagers. With great sensibility and depth, the novel also offers hope and courage to all those who don't see a way out. (14+)

Denmark

173

Aakeson, Kim Fupz (text)

Brøgger, Lilian (illus.)

En historie om vokseværk

(A story about growing pains)

[København] : Gyldendal, 2006. – [26] p.

ISBN 87-02-03852-8

Father – Growing pains – Metamorphosis – Dragon

In his unique and very original style, Kim Fupz Aakeson describes a father who suddenly suffers from growing pains, just like a child. He grows taller and taller and eventually turns into a dragon. The book closes with the huge portrait of his final appearance on a double fold-out page. There is no happy end to the story: Mother and son flee, and although they are wondering whether he might shrink again one day, it is highly unlikely that an overpowering father gets back to normal size. It may seem that this book is imbued with a heavy moral. Yet, the story focuses not so much on an overpowering father figure as on the grotesque idea of a person bursting at the seams, an idea which Lilian Brøgger's ingeniously anarchic pictures make visible in a most beautiful way. (6+)

174

Asbjørnsen, Peter Christen /

Moe, Jørgen (text)

Nygren, Tord (select./illus.)

Rud, Anine (transl.)

Asbjørnsen og Moes bedste eventyr

(Asbjørnsen and Moe's best fairy tales)

[København] : Gyldendal, 2006. – [ca. 260] p.

ISBN 978-87-02-04832-2

Norway – Fairy tale

This edition, produced in cooperation with the Swedish publisher Opal, contains some of the most popular Norwegian fairy tales from the famous collection of Peter Christen Asbjørnsen and Jørgen Moe. In 1841, they both started to edit and publish tales that they had been collecting in various Norwegian villages. Although the stories were printed in Danish, which was the official literary language at the time, they were larded with Norwegian expressions. Swedish artist Tord Nygren's wonderful watercolour illustrations,

which radiate a rich atmosphere and perfectly characterise the various figures, turn this volume into a real gem. (8+) □

175

Denning, Ken (text)

Bartholin, Hanne (illus.)

Den blå dreng og andre fortællinger om natten
(The blue boy and other tales about the night)

København : Apostrof, 2005. – 93 p.

ISBN 87-591-0569-0

Bedtime story – Darkness – Fear

Young Berlin's father tells him bedtime stories. Bizarre as they are (a quality that the author is famous for), they will fascinate both children and adults because they deal with »practical« issues such as how to cope with the fear of darkness, who may have told the first bedtime story ever, or how much such a story may cost. The child's questions with their peculiar logic frequently lead the adult down the garden path. The father in turn tries to reduce his son's fears by (falsely) claiming that children were never afraid of the dark when he was small. A young child reading the tales will easily see through these fibs and enjoy them. (By the way: A bedtime story's price increases according to the weight of the words it contains; and the creepiest ones are the most expensive ones.) (8+)

176

Jørgensen, Lars Holmgaard

Nicklas og krigen

(Nicklas and the war)

København : Forum, 2006. – 92 p

ISBN 978-87-638-0450-9

Iraq / 2003 – War – Soldier

Since Nicklas adores his uncle Per, who has been sent to Iraq as a soldier, the boy has fairly romantic ideas about war. Yet, when his uncle comes home for a short holiday, Nicklas learns that it is quite different from what he imagined. His uncle is neither the brave soldier he saw on the photographs, nor a weapons enthusiast. On the contrary, he disapproves of the war games his nephew plays on the computer and is severely traumatised by his experiences. Very slowly, the boy realises that this war, and any war for that matter, is a terrible human catastrophe. The author describes

the events from the young boy's perspective and thus clearly points out the difference between the child's imagination and reality. (10+)

□ □ Special Mention

177

Mouritzen, Peter (text)

Themberg, Mads (illus.)

Det usynlige

(The invisible)

København : Høst, 2006. – 55 p.

ISBN 978-87-638-0446-2

*Goethe, Johann Wolfgang von / Der Erlkönig
(The Erlking) – Father – Son*

With this small book, the renowned author gave himself a special 60th birthday present. He uses Goethe's famous ballad (in the magnificent translation by V. Andersen, 1864-1953) and retells it in a modern setting: After watching a horror movie, a father and his son drive home at night. As the father feels guilty for taking his young son to see the film, he tries to ignore the child's feverish fantasies caused by it. In the end, rising fog makes him crash into a tree, and the soul of the dead child floats away with the fatherly figure of the Erlking. Impressive black-and-white drawings underline the story's uncanny atmosphere. The book offers a gripping new version but may also generate new interest in the original classic ballad. (10+)

178

Neergaard, Dorte de (text)

Cools, Els (illus.)

To knapper i hånden

(Two buttons in the hand)

København : People's Press, 2006. – 28 p.

ISBN 978-87-91812-36-1

Child – Visual defect – Glasses

Little Rie doesn't want to get up one morning because she believes that suddenly two buttons are sewn unto her hand. The world around her, which she isn't able to take in properly anymore, frightens her terribly. While the girl's mother, busy with her daily routine, fails to see what's wrong with her daughter, toy elephant Øjvind is the only one the girl can relate to until the mother finally realises that Rie needs glasses. With these on her

nose, the girl immediately returns to the real world. With the help of absurd situations, the author and illustrator of this story try to explain the confusion of a child who doesn't grasp what has happened to her eyes. The picturesque illustrations hover between a realistic representation and surreal distortions of reality. (8+)

179

Rasmussen, Bent

Klabauter

(Ship's kobold)

København : Høst, 2006. – 187 p.

ISBN 978-87-638-0387-8

School holidays – Grandparents – Child – Adult

In Scandinavian children's literature, the protagonists often spend their holidays on small islands or at similarly remote places where they are suddenly confronted with other people or develop a better understanding for the beauty of the landscape. In this novel, too, the Scandinavian solitary region isolates the inexperienced protagonist to a greater extent than similar settings in other countries would do.

The few other people whom young Aske meets while he is staying with his grandparents show special, unusual qualities. He learns about the wishes and dreams of his new play-fellow Kjartan whose older sister is the first »friendly« female Aske encounters. Overall, it's the insecure boy's grandparents who provide him with some inner stability. (10+)

180

Serup, Martin Glaz (text)

Nielsen, Lars Vegas (illus.)

Sebastians monster

(Sebastian's monster)

[Hillerød] : Alma, 2006. – [28] p.

978-87-7243-236-6

Child – Falling asleep – Monster

This book offers an original and jocular interpretation of an ever-popular topic: Tired parents try in vain to make their chirpy, wide-awake offspring fall asleep so that they can have a peaceful evening for once. The continuous nagging of the parents (who themselves are huge, monster-like creatures) is visualised by sketchily drawn, skewed figures surrounded by disgustingly pale blurbs of colour in brown and green. When the parents still

refuse to stop whinging, the child finally magically summons his own monster which promptly materialises from his imagination. The colours turn into comforting shades of eerie green and raw red. In the end, monster and boy cosily sit around together, shovel popcorn into their mouths, and watch a ghost film on TV. (4+)

Finland

181

Kunnas, Mauri (text/illus.)

Kunnas, Tarja (text)

Viikingit tulevat!

(The Vikings are coming!)

Helsingissä : Otava, 2006. – 51 p.

978-951-1-21211-9

Vikings/History

This introduction to the culture and history of the Vikings, loosely based on reports from old sagas, is presented in Mauri Kunnas's characteristic, witty style. Once again, the author chooses dogs as his main protagonists. This time, they pillage an English monastery, cut runes into stones, and discover Greenland and America. To illustrate the term »berserkergang« (incontrollable fury in battle) however, a pig serves as the »victim«. Unlike some other non-fictional comic book adaptations, Kunnas's books never pretend to offer comprehensive knowledge about a topic. On the contrary, just like the famous Finnish caricaturist's books about literary classics or historical topics, his new work again whets the readers' appetite to search for more information elsewhere. (10+)

182

Pispa, Kaija (text)

Warsta, Elina (illus.)

Kärpäslätkää

(Fly swatter)

Helsinki : Söderström, 2006. – 111 p.

ISBN 978-951-0-31709-9

Children's poetry

This collection of poems presents the world from an animal perspective. Imbued with a dose of bizarre humour and funny puns, the book tackles

mainly human problems with the help of various animals. A bug, for example, that is fed up with its country life, leaves its family and moves to the city, while a city bug that longs to dwell in the countryside, meets the family left behind by its cousin and lives with them happily ever after. A French cow who feels devastated because of her messy hairstyle is comforted when a Finnish bull simply puts a flower into her hair. The black-and-white illustrations surrounding the texts in a witty and graphically attractive way perfectly complement the poems' style. The brightly coloured book cover serves as a wonderful visual contrast. (10+)

183

Vuori, Suna (text)

Kirkkopelto, Katri (illus.)

Hirmuista koulupäivää, hirviö

(Have a terrible school day, monster!)

Helsinki : Söderström, 2006. – 55 p.

ISBN 978-951-0-32117-1

Monster – School – First day at school – Fear – Friendship

Little Monster needs to learn how to roar, bare his teeth, and bite. Yet he is terribly afraid of his first day at school because he fears he might get the worst mark in all subjects and not find any friends. In the end, however, it's no big deal. True, the local monster children are utterly surprised to see that one of their new classmates has neither claws nor horns, but they immediately stop teasing him when they realise he can breathe fire instead. Little Monster befriends this stranger and finally even turns vegetarian like him. The large format of the amusing picture book and the generous design allow the illustrator's fantastic creatures to spread out and confidently hover above the text. (6+)

Norway

□ □ Special Mention

184

Kaldestad, Roald (text)

Torseter, Øyvind (illus.)

Engleljell

(Angel mountain)

[Oslo] : Cappelen, 2006. – [32] p.

ISBN 82-02-25758-1

Child – Loneliness – Cat – Death

This picture book describes the loneliness of a Norwegian child who lives on a fjord in a tiny hamlet with only a few scattered houses. Her only playmate is a little cat, and when it dies, the child silently grieves in private. Although parents obviously exist, they never feature in the pictures. Instead, the girl is shown sitting in empty rooms, which further amplify the impression of her loneliness. With her illustrations, Øyvind Torseter returns to the style of the 1950s not only with the choice of chalky colours reminiscent of lithographic prints, but also with her evocation of wide spaces. What little there is of modernity, such as various electric appliances, is stripped of its metallic glimmer and thus blends into the overall picture. The focus of the book thus always remains on the protagonist herself, the little child. (6+) □

185

Kaldhol, Marit (text)

Nyka, Justyna (illus.)

Reisa til H.

(Journey to H.)

Oslo : Norske Samlaget, 2005. – [28] p.

ISBN 82-521-6618-0

Soft toy – Chick – Hatching

Selma's aunt in Hamburg has sent the girl a toy rabbit that she loves dearly. However, the girl is longing for a live pet and therefore takes an egg from the fridge and places it under the rabbit. Selma waits and waits. When she asks her parents whether her experiment is going to be successful, they try to evade the issue. Astonishingly enough (at least for the readers), the unexpected really happens: A little chick hatches from the egg! Now the family decides to travel to Hamburg and intro-

duce the new family member to Selma's aunt. This touching story about a child's trust is illustrated with graphically peculiar outline drawings. They resemble etchings and are probably coloured in by computer. The result is absolutely enchanting. (5+)

186

Lunde, Stein Erik

En far

(A father)

[Oslo] : Gyldendal, 2006. – 177 p.

ISBN 978-82-05-35396-1

Father – Suicide – Son – Memory

First-person narrator Eirik receives a message from his father via mobile phone that he is going to commit suicide. The twenty-year-old, so suddenly left behind, needs to come to terms with this terrible fact and the unexpected loss. How Eirik deals with these problems and what he feels like in the first days after his father's death, is told in a straight-forward yet beautifully expressed narrative. The readers directly witness the tormenting situation of the one who stays alive and slowly realises that another person simply doesn't exist anymore. Eirik's friend Kjetil, with whom he shares a flat, helps him cope with the shock. Step by step, isolated memories of the father add up to form a complete picture in the son's head. (14+)

187

Mekjan, Sindre (text)

Styve, Jens K. (vignettes)

Fille fra eventyrland

(Fille from Adventure Land)

[Oslo] : Damm, 2006. – 229 p.

ISBN 978-82-04-11890-5

Amusement park – Competition

Fille and her family live in an amusement park called »Adventure Land«. Her father, whose ship is one of the park's many attractions, entertains children as a pirate. Yet, the comfortable and relaxed life of Fille's family and the other employees is threatened when the park manager conceives a spectacular new attraction, an unbelievably tasteless and vulgar thing, to increase the flow of visitors again. Yet, a park employee secretly sets fire to this attraction and destroys it; luckily enough, the director is saved, and so are

the park and its inhabitants. The author tells an exciting adventure story full of chaotic events that doesn't need any fantastic fripperies. (10+)

188

Sæther, Wera

MammaRitaHuset

(Mama Rita's House)

[Oslo] : Cappelen, 2006. – 291 S.

ISBN 82-02-26053-1

India – Child – Everyday life – Poverty – Help – Cultural relations

Uma's mother is blind and earns her living by singing songs to people travelling in trains. Purely by chance, the girl and her mother meet Sebastian and his daughter Sara. Sebastian, a European photographer from Calcutta, decides to help them. The third book about Uma [the first two were called »Saras reise« (Sara's journey, 2001) and »Umas øyne« (Uma's eyes, 2004)] relates how Sebastian donates money for a little house to be built in their village for Uma and her mother Rita. He is also planning to visit the family soon. Meanwhile, the two girls get to know each other better and better and almost feel like sisters. The well-travelled author knows how to make the Indian lifestyle and way of thinking accessible for her readers without denying the difficulties of intercultural contacts. Therefore, this children's novel is a wonderful contribution to the exchange between different cultures. (10+) ◇

Sweden

189

Ahlström, Gabriella (text)

Arrhenius, Ingela P. (illus.)

Fanny ... och fallet med flickan i staden

(Fanny ... and the case of the girl in the city)

Stockholm : Tiden, 2006. – 107 p.

(Ett fall för Fanny / Gabriella Ahlström)

ISBN 978-91-85243-61-7

Cannes – Film festival – Detective

With this series, the publisher Tiden offers another detective series specifically for girls. In the first volume, the young detective Fanny travels to the film festival in Cannes with her mother and

solves a complicated case there. Even if the plot moves within the conventional frame of this genre, the fresh voice in which it is told makes this book quite unusual. Thus, the director at Fanny's school, who suggests a change of air to cure her restlessness, is boldly addressed by first name – a behaviour that is met with surprise by most foreign readers (who may also be utterly astonished to learn that »Vickan« and »Madde« refer to the Swedish princesses Victoria and Maddalena). Such a cheeky and disrespectful style turns this book into an entertaining read. (10+)

190

Althoff, Johan (text)

Sheppard, Sarah / Nyberg, Robert (illus.)

Nattpäron : en bok om att hitta på, tänka och berätta

(Nightpear: a book for exploring, thinking, and storytelling)

[Stockholm] : Bonnier Carlsen, 2006. – 128 p.
ISBN 91-638-4621-7

Everyday life – Imagination – Day – Night

This book was originally created to accompany an exhibition striving to stimulate children's imagination, but it can also be enjoyed independently. It shows the course of one night and one day up to the following evening in seemingly contradictory pictures. On collages presenting a rather bleak and narrow-minded everyday world, the artists have superimposed sketchy, caricature-like black-and-white drawings of apparently ordinary people doing everyday things but uttering absurdities. The book's aim is to teach children that they can enrich their dull everyday life by using their imagination. (7+)

191

Bečević, Zulmir

Resan som började med ett slut

(The journey that started with an end)

Stockholm : Alfabeta, 2006. – 223 p.

ISBN 978-91-501-0750-0

Sweden – Bosnian immigrant – Refugee – Integration

Just like the author, Nino, the first-person narrator of this novel, is a Bosnian refugee arriving in Sweden in 1992. Therefore it seems likely that

the story has strong autobiographical elements. For those readers who are not familiar with the problems of being a refugee, this book provides important and sometimes fairly amusing information. It relates, for example, the various difficulties that may arise in a class of pupils from more than eight different nations when learning Swedish. Unfortunately, there is a lot of violence involved and even the immigrant children are not free from prejudice against others. Problems with the female sex constitute another barrier to overcome on the way to becoming a »true Swede«, even if, in the end, it is a girl who gives Nino more self-confidence. (14+) ◇

192

Grähs, Gunna (text/illus.)

Tutu och Tant Kotla

(Tutu and Aunt Kotla)

[Stockholm] : Alfabeta, 2006. – [24] p.

(En hejhej bok)

ISBN 978-91-501-0579-7

Sweden – Immigrant – Foreigner – Integration – Multicultural society

With this series, the publisher offers a number of small picture books dealing with all kinds of integration. In this volume, the reader follows a black boy delivering newspapers on a snowy grey winter day. He trudges through one of the bleak Swedish suburbs of newly-erected houses so unlike the boy's familiar African home. Nevertheless, in one of the tall buildings a door suddenly opens and he is invited for coffee and cake by a lonely old woman simply because she likes his friendly face. He tells her about Africa, she tells him about her childhood. In the end, Tutu walks away with a smile. Such a sweet story might easily turn into a pedagogical lecture if it wasn't for this wonderful artist who combines a fresh, decorative, spacious style with original visual ideas. (5+) ◇ □

□ □ Special Mention

193

Herrström, Christina

Tusen gånger starkare

(A thousand times stronger)

[Stockholm] : Bonnier Carlsen,

2006. – 217 p.

ISBN 91-638-5250-0

School – Girl – Social differences – Inequality – Assertiveness – Gender role

What starts as an ordinary school story on the perennial topic of powerful bullies gathering their »subjects« around them and tyrannising the rest of the class soon acquires a different note. The new girl, an interesting foreigner aptly named Saga, acts with such confidence and superiority that she easily dethrones the old Number One – to the delight of (most of) the other girls. By dealing a complete defeat to a teacher who, intentionally or unintentionally, always favoured the boys, she turns herself into the speaker of the timid girls, who used to let the male classmates get their way. With her and because of her, the girls' badly battered confidence receives a boost. It doesn't even matter much that the school authorities win through in the end. The shy first-person-narrator, for one, is inspired by Saga's courage. With her exceptionally precise language, the author manages to get to the core of the problems and build up the suspense in each scene. Her cheeky tone turns this book into an entertaining and diverting read. (12+)

194

Holmberg, Bo R.

Skuggaren

(Stalker)

Stockholm : Rabén & Sjögren, 2006. – 155 p.

(Ett fall för Robert Parkman / Bo R. Holmberg)

ISBN 978-91-29-66420-1

Girl – Stalking – Pursuit – Private detective

With this first volume, the popular children's book author has started a new series of crime fiction for children because such stories have been mushrooming in the Scandinavian countries for years. A teenager who runs a small detective agency is approached by a girl who fears that she

is being followed – his first proper case. Instead of disarming the alleged stalker, however, he catches a violent burglar and hands him over to the police. Holmberg has a lot of experience in creating an exciting plot mainly from dialogues. He portrays his hero Robert's great self-confidence in a clearly ironical way to make him fail all the more effectively. Ultimately, this is a highly amusing, well-crafted story disguised as a detective novel. (12+)

195

Nilsson, Ulf (text)

Eriksson, Eva (illus.)

Alla döda små djur

(All the little dead animals)

Stockholm : Bonnier Carlsen,

2006. – 34 p.

ISBN 91-638-4668-3

Child – Animals – Death – Burial

This is a book about death, though not – as one might expect – a sad one. On the contrary, it proves that burying animals can sometimes be quite funny. When, on an utterly boring day, Esther finds a dead bumblebee, she is delighted. She builds a little cross, digs a grave, and scatters some flowers on it. Her brother is allowed to write an elegy. While he is good at poetry, he turns out to be a sissy who is afraid of dead animals. Esther even opens her own funeral parlour. Armed with a suitcase full of necessities, the children set out in search of dead animals. The anonymous dead are quickly christened before the funeral. After having treated several mice, a hedgehog, a hamster, and three fishes snatched from mother's freezer, their most exciting case turns out to be a roadkilled rabbit. The next day however, the children's morbid game gets pushed into the background by other fascinating matters. With Ulf Nilsson's witty style and Eva Eriksson's ingenious eye for characterisation, this book is a real treasure. (6+)

196

Stolpe, Marika (text)

Pehrson, Lars (photogr.)

Ida & elefanterna

(Ida and the elephants)

Stockholm : Ström, 2005. – [64] p.

ISBN 91-7126-000-5

Kenya – Elephant – Wildlife reserve

This photo documentary accompanies a Swedish girl on her visit to her friend John in a wildlife reserve in Kenya. The author makes Ida tell in first-person-, eyewitness style about how young elephants are brought up and looked after. Both children help with the feeding, play with the animals, and sleep close to them at night to give them a sense of security. The factual narrative is complemented by equally factual, lively photographs, which present an accurate picture of everyday life at the reserve and enable children to (almost) share the protagonists' experiences. The readers are offered a true introduction to African nature without getting dazzled by picture-perfect, glossy magazine photographs. (8+) ◇ □

Croatia

197

Petrlić Huseinović, Andrea (text/illus.)

Maleni

(The Little One)

Zagreb : Kašmir Promet, 2006. – [28] p.

ISBN 953-6613-90-5

Otherness – Outsider – Hatred

A witch casts a spell on the inhabitants of Nowhere, so that they turn into a hateful and grumpy lot. The Little One who lives on the outskirts of the town is the only one to escape the spell. Filled with evil thoughts, the Nowherians now notice that the Little One is different and drive him away. He leaves the country and braves many adventures and tests until he finally finds a new home in a lighthouse. With the help of its bright beam, he plans to light other people the way. This picture book against envy, hatred, and malice encourages children to develop an understanding towards others and shows them the dire consequences that may arise from excluding people who are different. The illustrations in various shades of crimson and purple intensify the story's melancholic mood. (4+) ◇

198

Pongračić, Zoran

Vidi majmuna!

(Look at that monkey!)

Zagreb : Autorska Kuća, 2005. – 161 p.

(Novi grafiti)

ISBN 953-7199-06-1

Biracial person – Racism – Prejudice

This novel, written in a witty style and peppered with colloquial expressions and teenage jargon, focuses on Zvonimir, the son of a Kenyan vet and a Croatian doctor. When he moves from Nairobi to Zagreb, he faces severe problems because of his skin colour and the Europeans' prejudice against Africans. By introducing his protagonist as first-person narrator, the author can freely deal with taboo topics associated with racial discrimination. Although Zvonimir handles his status as outsider in a laid-back manner, his classmates' stupid questions provoke him to dish up loads of tall tales. Afterwards, of course, he has to face the music. True, the novel does not end happily ever after but at least Zvonimir manages to regain his self-confidence. (12+) ◇

Czech Republic

199

Ježková, Alena (retell.)

Fučíková, Renáta (illus.)

Staré pověsti české a moravské

(Old legends from Bohemia and Moravia)

Praha : Albatros, 2005. – 140 p.

(Klub mladých čtenářů)

ISBN 80-00-01733-4

Bohemia – Moravia – Legend

This anthology gathers mainly legends about the settlement of the Bohemian countries by Bohemians and Moravians. The tales feature important leaders ranging from Čech, the original ancestor of the Czechs, and Libuše, who is said to have founded Prague, to the Moravian Duke Svatopluk, who played an important role in the Christianisation of the Slavic peoples. Comments and meta-texts put the legends into their historical context and thus provide readers with interesting facts about the origin of the Slavs, their mythology and religion, and about historical sites connected to the Slavic world of myths and legends. The water-colour-and-ink drawings rendered in earthy tones offer an additional glimpse into the material culture from the dawn of the Slavic peoples. (10+) ◇

200

Marková, Jiřina / Novotná, Anna (text)

Votruba, Jiří (illus.)

Opera nás baví : [první kniha o opeře pro děti i rodiče]

(Opera is fun : [the first book about opera for children and parents])

Praha : Práh, 2005. – 155 p. + CD

ISBN 80-7252-121-7

Opera

This attractive opera guide for children stands out for its innovative layout and design. On clearly structured pages with ornaments decorating the margin, readers will find pictures of each composer and of certain scenes that visualise the plot of his opera. Thanks to the book's varied and interesting structure, readers will naturally be tempted to look up one opera after the other. For every example included, the text provides information about the respective composer, the libretto

and its source, the main characters and their part, as well as the plot. In addition, it features anecdotes from the opera world, explanations of technical terms, and many other things. (7+)

201

Žáček, Jiří (text)

Brychtová, Lída (illus.)

Kočkování : knížka pro malé i velké přátele koček

(Catbantering <pun> : a book for little and big friends of cats)

Praha : Knižní Klub, 2005. – 65 p.

ISBN 80-242-1272-2

Cat – Poetry

This amusing picture book – a cooperation between London-based painter and illustrator Lída Brychtová and Jiří Žáček, the popular Czech poet and author of modern classics for children – contains poems about real and imaginary, realistic and anthropomorphic cats. The imaginative texts deal with dreams, picking fruit, flying kites, and a grand ball for cats; they feature the moon, a dancer, a piano player as well as Russian, French, Venetian cats, and many more. The illustrations depicting the respective environments in strong colours and clear outlines reveal a strong influence of Brychtová's adopted country. (4+)

Poland

202

Leszczyński, Grzegorz (ed.)

Ekier, Maria (illus.)

Lange, Grazyna (graphics)

Polskie baśnie i legendy

(Polish fairy tales and legends)

Warszawa : Nowa Era, 2006. – 294 p.

ISBN 83-7409-369-2

Poland – Fairy tale – Legend

In this substantial volume, the Polish children's literature specialist Grzegorz Leszczyński presents a particularly careful selection of Polish fairy tales and legends retold and adapted by well-known Polish authors such as Józef Ignacy Krasiński, Maria Konopnicka, Henryk Sienkiewicz, Arthur Oppman, Kornel Makuszyński, Gustaw Morcinek, and many others. The imaginative and mysterious

water-colour illustrations follow in the footsteps of important Polish illustrators such as Marian Murawski and Stasys Eidrigėvičius. Moreover, the book also stands out for its graphical and typographical design. (6+)

□ □ Special Mention

203

Olech, Joanna (text)

Lange, Grażka (illus.)

Czerwony Kapturel

(Little Red Riding Hood)

[Warszawa] : Santorski, [2005]. – [36] p.

ISBN 83-89763-45-1

(Niebaśnie)

Little Red Riding Hood – Self-confidence – Obedience – Subordination – Social role

This fairy tale, published in the series »Niebaśnie« (un-fairy tales) together with an adaptation of »Hansel and Gretel«, features a good little girl who is often teased by others and never fights back. True, when the wolf asks her where she is going, she does think »It's none of your business« but still answers very politely that she is on the way to visit her sick grandmother. She behaves just like an obedient child is supposed to behave towards adults. The text follows the classic versions by Charles Perrault and the Grimm brothers yet it puts particular emphasis on the child's subordination and insecurity. Eventually, the huntsman arrives but, in this version, he cannot save the grandmother or the girl. The text ends with the words: »Whenever they remembered the dead girl, they repeated what a good little girl she has been.« The bizarre mixed-media illustrations also underline the child's insecurity and her lack of self-confidence. (4+)

204

Ruszevska, Grażyna (text)

Fąfrowicz, Piotr (illus.)

Wielkie zmiany w dużym lesie

(Great changes in big forests)

Łódź : FRO9, 2005. – 63 p.

(Dziecko)

ISBN 83-920384-4-4

Meaning of life – Zest for life – Self-confidence

This picture book, produced by the small high quality publisher FRO9, contains three stories: one each about Mr. Ladybird, the rabbit, and the hedgehog. The tales deal with changes in the protagonists' lives and habits. In the first story, Mr. Ladybird is not content with his looks but eventually realises that only his original colours and shape make him truly happy. Tale number two relates how the rabbit saves an eagle chick, and how he experiences a wave of self-confidence and courage when he becomes friends with the young bird's dangerous mother. In the last story, the solemn, boring, and ostentatious hedgehog learns what zest for life is. The illustrations, which radiate cheerfulness and optimism, delight readers with their homeliness and warm colours. (5+)

Russia

205

Givargizov, Artur (text)

Aleksandrov, Ivan (illus.)

My tak pochoži

(That's typical for us)

Moskva : Izdat. Dom »Samokat«, 2006. – 79 p.

ISBN 5-90232-620-6

Animals – School – Daily routine – Nonsense poetry

In these witty nonsense poems about the life of four-legged animals, centipedes, and millipedes, as well as about generals, cosmonauts, and the daily life at school, the author plays with language in a highly artistic way. His multi-layered humour and colloquial phrases easily draw the readers in. The illustrations are rendered in collage-technique with cardboard objects. They reduce the things presented to the most characteristic features and thus perfectly capture the poems' respective moods. Ivan Aleksandrov uses a minimalist style to create pictures with many of different meanings. (5+)

206

Malov, Vladimir I. (text)

Vysockij, P. V. (illus.)

Tajny znamenitych korablej

(The secrets of important ships)

Moskva : Oniks, 2006. – 255 p.

(Biblioteka otkrytij)

ISBN 5-488-00273-1

Ship / History

In human history, ships have always played a major role as an important means for discovering foreign countries and continents. Certainly one of the most famous vessels is the Santa Maria, the ship with which Christopher Columbus crossed the Atlantic and landed in America in 1492. Yet, Vladimir Maslov's tales tell of events dating back even further in history. He starts with the early sailors in the Mediterranean, the Vikings and the Roman galleys on their journeys of discovery. Moreover, the informative and enthralling book includes stories about ships such as the Beagle, on which Charles Darwin embarked on his research voyage, the tea- and wool-clipper Cutty Shark, Norwegian explorer Fridtjof Nansen's ship Fram, and the Titanic and its sinking in 1912. (11+)

207

Nusinova, Natal'ja I. (text)

Vronskaja, Anna (illus.)

Priključenija Džerika : [avtobiografičeskaja] povest'

(Jerry's adventures : an [autobiographical] tale)

Moskva : Samokat, 2006. – 127 p

ISBN 5-90232-629-X

USSR/History – Childhood

With this autobiographical tale about the family, home, and country of her »Soviet childhood«, the author bridges the gap between modern Russia and the USSR. It is one of the first books to offer contemporary Russian children an insight into childhood in the Soviet Union from a modern point of view. To achieve this aim, Natal'ja Nusinova uses Jerry, the family dog, as her main protagonist. She gives an authentic and straightforward description of the life at that time through the eyes of a little girl who tries to understand everybody around her and to love them all. The humorous charcoal drawings and the atmospheric and informative photo-collages complement the

meaning of the text and at the same time convey the atmosphere of life during the days of the late Soviet Union. (7+)

208

Ulickaja, Ljudmila E. (text)

Filippova, Svetlana (illus.)

Istorija pro vorob'ja Antverpena, kota

Micheeva, stoletnika Vasju i sorokonožku

Mar'ju Semënovnu s sem'ëj

(The story of sparrow Antwerp, tomcat

Micheev, Aloe Vasja, and millipede

Mar'ja Semënova and her family)

Moskva : Ėksmo, 2005. – 70 p.

ISBN 5-699-10303-1

Animals – Plants – Anthropomorphism –

Friendship – Solidarity – Search for identity

Highly educated Aloe Vasja has been left behind in an empty house where he lives together with a millipede. Since there is plenty of space, the two friends also take in two other homeless creatures: Antwerp, the sparrow, and tomcat Micheev. When the millipede has babies, all the flatmates just squeeze closer together and everybody tries to give their best to raise the millipede children properly. Their solidarity makes them all ponder their own lives and discover new sides to themselves. The full-page wax-crayon illustrations, which are just as imaginative as the text of this cheerful story, radiate great calmness and are often reminiscent of still life paintings. (5+)

Slovakia

209

Hevier, Daniel (text/illus.)

Pät'ka z nudy

(Grade A in boredom)

Bratislava : Mladé Letá, 2005. – 167 p.

ISBN 80-10-00828-1

Child – Daily life

With this book, highly popular Slovakian author Daniel Hevier once again offers a dazzling display of wit and imagination. The short stories, poems, verse narrations, and fairy tales of this collection tackle issues that interest children, both from the real world around us and from the imaginary world. Hevier covers topics as diverse as comput-

ers, bacteria and viruses, animals in the city and in the wild, boxing gloves, ghosts and dragons, Bart Simpson, the German television Detective Chief Inspector Derrick, or black sheep. He warns his readers about horoscopes and violence, and even includes a list of swear words. The simple, yet witty and felicitous illustrations are also created by the author. (8+)

210

Regitko, Miroslav (illus.)

Poletíme za dúhou : poviedky pre deti a mládež ; 1. ročník

(Let us fly along the rainbow : stories for children and young adults ; 1st year)

Bratislava : Perfekt, 2005. – 130 p.

(Fifíkova knižnica; 3)

ISBN 80-8046-317-4

Story – Anthology

This anthology is the result of a project initiated by the publishing house Perfekt. Pupils from primary schools in Bratislava and Prešov selected 26 of the submitted tales for this book, some of them written by well-known authors, others by first timers. The thematic frame for the competition was established by an anti-drug-campaign, which also enabled the printing of this volume. The tales, whether they are amusing or serious, mainly deal with common problems of children such as mobbing, loneliness, the ability to spend one's spare time in a useful way, or the grief about a pet's death, but also with more specific issues such as the relationship between Slovaks and the minority group of Roma people. (7+)

211

Sliacky, Ondrej (text)

Kellenberger, Martin (illus.)

Slovenské obrázkové povesti

(Slovakian legends in pictures)

Martin : Vyd. Matice Slovenskej,

2005. – 79 p.

ISBN 80-89208-10-X

Slovakia – Legend

This volume includes both traditional legends and legends connected to actual historical events. It features a wide range of protagonists and events such as evil landlords, knights, fairies, water sprites, and the devil; the Slovaks' fights against

Eurasian Avars, Tatars, and Turks; and the Hungarian King Matthias Corvinus, who is highly popular and often praised. Each legend is told as a picture story on two pages with just a few words of text. Although the overall layout of the tales resembles that of a comic strip, the illustrations are coloured drawings of a more traditional style created by the renowned Slovakian painter and illustrator Martin Kellenberger. (8+)

Slovenia

212

Kokelj, Nina (text)

Junaković, Svjetlan (illus.)

Deček na belem oblaku

(The boy on the white cloud)

Ljubljana [et al.] : Mladinska Knjiga,

2006. – [28] p.

(Velike slikanice)

ISBN 86-11-17392-9

Child – Illness – Death – Life after death

Little Domen is ill, and his mother is extremely worried about him. One day, he insists on climbing up the church tower. Up there, he steps onto a cloud and flies away visiting children who are ill or in need. He meets other boys and girls sitting on clouds and doing good deeds; all of them are children who died before they had a chance to grow up. With a lot of empathy, the author talks about the various religious concepts of life after death and about the comforting thought that angels take care of human beings. The Croatian illustrator's gouache paintings, sometimes amusing, sometimes melancholic, and often drawn from a perspective high above the earth, complement the text in a very sensitive way. (5+)

Belgium (Dutch)

213

Clement, Dorine (text)

Clement, Sabien (illus.)

Het grote verlangen

(The great longing)

Tielt : Lannoo, 2006. – [40] p.

ISBN 978-90-209-6483-7

Friendship – Love – Desire

Elise and Cyprian are best friends. One day, the boy tries to tell Elise something important, but it seems that he simply doesn't know how to express his feelings. Therefore, he decides to go on a journey to discover the right words while Elise remains at home. During his absence, the girl literally longs for him: She gets longer and longer, until the day Cyprian returns carrying a box with two hearts. This poetic story is accompanied by surrealist illustrations in collage-technique created from old copperplates and new gouache paintings in sober colours. The characters are depicted with oddly proportioned limbs so that their whole body expresses their emotions. The concise text is written in a beautifully rhymed rhythm that strengthens the poetic character of the book. (5+)

214

Schuurmans, Hilde (text/illus.)

Plotter is jarig

(Plotter's birthday)

Hasselt [et al.] : Clavis, 2006. – [28] p.

ISBN 978-90-448-0606-9

Birthday party – Envy – Friendship – Jealousy

Little dog Plotter will soon be six years old and he looks forward to having a real birthday party. The first guest to arrive is Pollie, the little pig. Soon, she takes over the whole party organisation and it almost seems as if she were the birthday girl whereas Plotter is pushed into the background. After a while, he feels his anger rising. Later, as they sit in the sandpit together, Pollie admits that she was jealous and apologises to Plotter. This entertaining picture book offers plenty of possibilities for identification for little readers. The full-page illustrations, rendered in ink and water-colours, both follow the story faithfully and add new aspects to the text. The book naturally lends itself to discussing the topic of jealousy with young children. (4+)

215

Vandermeeren, Hilde (text)

De Vos, Rosemarie (illus.)

Mijn eerste sprookjesgroeiboek : ik lees het zelf!

(My first fairy tale book : I can read it on my own!)

Leuven : Davidsfonds/Infodok [et al.], 2006. – 166 p.

ISBN 90-77942-20-3

Fairy tale – Adaptation

This interesting fairy tale collection includes 24 (both well known and lesser known) tales from Perrault, the Grimm Brothers, Andersen, and Madame Le Prince de Beaumont, retold for first readers. At the beginning of the book, there are comicstrip-like retellings with monosyllabic words that can even be read by first graders almost immediately; the tales placed towards the back feature longer texts that budding readers from second or third grade will be able to work out. Even the extremely short versions perfectly manage to keep the essence of the original fairy tales alive. The accompanying illustrations, mostly rendered in dark acrylics, are fresh and vivid. (6+)

□ □ Special Mention

216

Verrept, Paul (text/illus.)

Mist

(Fog)

Wielsbeke : De Eenhoorn, 2006. – [28] p.

ISBN 978-90-5838-377-8

Father – Son – Distress

One day, the 16-year-old first-person narrator feels an inexplicable urge to venture outside into the fog. He walks past invisible houses to the playground in a park where he bumps into the slide. Suddenly, he is transported back to the moment when he was seven years old and his father recited a song about leaving. The next day, he disappeared. The boy's mother never talks about his father's abrupt departure nor does she answer her son's questions. In the fog, the son senses his father's presence and derives some comfort from the idea that he might have come to say that he loves him. Yet, when the fog lifts, the boy is alone again. This impressive, complex picture book combines a poetic text with enchanting illustrations. Despite the dreamy atmosphere, the story also confronts readers with the harsh reality because the question about why the father left remains unanswered. This book should be read by adults together with their children. (10+)

The Netherlands (Dutch)

217

Bekebrede, Noortje (text/illus.)

Een raar gevoel

(A peculiar feeling)

Nieuwegein : Vereniging »Ouders, Kinderen en Kanker« [VOKK], 2006. – [30] p.
without ISBN

Illness – Siblings – Sadness

Lot's little sister falls seriously ill and is taken to hospital, and the parents seem so preoccupied with her illness that they completely forget about Lot. At the hospital, the adults are too immersed in important conversations, and her little sister gets all the presents. And above all, playing alone is definitely no fun. Eventually, Lot is able to talk about her emotions with her favourite aunt and discovers that feeling sad and lost (and slightly jealous) is completely normal in this situation. The succinct text of this unusual picture book, which opens vertically (just like a wall calendar), is accompanied by slightly distorted mixed-media collages. Children will easily identify with the main character's feelings. (7+)

218

Bon, Annemarie

Oppassen

(Baby-sitting)

Houten : Van Holkema & Warendorf,
2006. – 143 p.

ISBN 90-269-1521-7

Truth – Lies – Reality – Munchausen Syndrome

To earn some pocket money, fifteen-year-old Mette often takes care of little children. One day, she babysits the child of a family she has never been to before. At first, everything seems perfectly alright, but the evening ends in a terrible nightmare. The mother returns and finds her baby dead in its bed. Naturally, Mette is suspected to be responsible and is questioned by the police. She asserts that she didn't do the baby any harm, but it takes a long time for all those involved to learn what really happened. This moving novel is told in short chapters from the perspective of both Mette and her boyfriend. With a lot of empathy for the vividly portrayed characters, the author unravels the mystery of the thrilling plot. (14+)

219

Dudok de Wit, Michael (text/illus.)

Vier bevertjes en een kastanje

(Four little beavers and a chestnut)

Amsterdam : Leopold, 2007. – [28] p.

ISBN 978-90-258-5030-2

Death – Grief

Four little beavers are sitting under a chestnut tree when suddenly a chestnut hits one of them on the head. The bump hurts terribly, and so the friends set off in search of Old Beaver to ask him how to stop the throbbing pain. Yet, when they finally find the ancient animal, he is lying on the grass unable to move his stiff joints. The beavers stay with him all night, and by the following morning, Old Beaver has died. They dig a beautiful grave for him and put the chestnut inside, hoping it will slowly grow into a huge chestnut tree. This picture book features colourful animation-film-like illustrations drawn from unusual perspectives. The story is simple, but the theme of death and afterlife is developed in a very convincing way. (5+)

□ □ Special Mention

220

Groothof, Frank (text)

Huiberts, Marjet (song texts)

Rogaar, Karst-Janke (illus.)

Gilgamesj <proper name>

Amsterdam : Nieuw Amsterdam Uitg.,

2006. – 79 p. + CD

ISBN 90-468-0071-7

Gilgamesh epos – Persia

This is a compelling contemporary adaptation of the famous epic about Gilgamesh, the Persian king of Uruk. Gilgamesh is forced to fight his enemy, the savage Enkidoe, but the combat ends in a draw and they become good friends. Together they perform all kinds of heroic deeds, such as killing the keeper of the cedar wood. As Enkidoe was initially sent to Gilgamesh by the gods so they would be able to keep a tight rein on Gilgamesh, the gods are infuriated by the friendship and seek revenge. This spellbinding retelling with numerous modern elements does credit to the original epic of Gilgamesh. An eloquent storyteller leads the readers through the book, which is adorned with highly detailed illustrations. On the accompanying CD, the story is told in an engaging voice and complemented with songs. This attractive and felici-

tous combination of book and Audio-CD invites the audience to sit back and relax, listen to the story, and enjoy the pictures. (9+)

221

Jonge, Harm de (text)

Tulp, Wouter (illus.)

Josja Puijs <proper name>

Houten: Van Goor, 2006. – 135 p.

ISBN 90-00-03748-4

The Netherlands/1956 – Boy – School – Twins – Brother – Death

One day in 1956, a new pupil arrives in the classroom: Josja Puijs, who claims to be the only surviving half of a Siamese twin. One of his new classmates, Homme Prins, also had a little brother once who died immediately after his birth. Whenever the boy asks his mother about his brother, she starts crying. With Josja's arrival, a lot changes at school but in the end, the boy vanishes as abruptly as he came, leaving Homme with a lot of unanswered questions. This powerful, complex novel, with three different levels, intertwines the search of Homme and his girlfriend for more information about Josja's past with that of Homme's own past. The author compellingly portrays the various characters and their friendship. (10+)

222

Posthuma, Sieb (text/illus.)

Mannetje jas

(Mr. Coat)

Amsterdam : Querido, 2006. – [26] p.

ISBN 90-451-0245-5

Friendship – Love

In this modern fairy tale, readers meet a little man who never gets warm, no matter how many coats he wears. Eventually, he comes across a woman who suffers from the same problem. They fall in love, and their mutual affection warms them both. This out-of-the-ordinary picture book is full of humour. Even though the text may not be easy for small children, the meaning of difficult words and complex sentences becomes evident through the context. The emotions of the characters are delightfully expressed in both words and pictures. The full-page mixed-media illustrations (pen-and-ink, water-colour and collage) are brimming with details, and every time readers go back to look at them again, they are bound to discover something new. (4+)

223

Rinck, Maranke (text)

Linden, Martijn van der (illus.)

Meisjes om te zoenen

(Absolutely delightful girls)

Rotterdam : Lemniscaat, 2006. – [28] p.

ISBN 978-90-5637-828-8

Prince – Love – Metamorphosis

A huge crowd of beautiful animal girls is queuing up in front of the frog prince's palace, eagerly waiting to kiss him. It's the poor prince's difficult task to choose the fairest of them all. While the beautiful hummingbird is the first one to approach him, the other animals have to wait their turn, chattering animatedly about the best way to impress His Royal Highness. When, in the final round, the chosen animals are invited to kiss the prince, a surprising metamorphosis takes place. This picture book features attractive and very realistic illustrations with shamanistic motives of North American Indians. The story is cleverly composed and thus keeps the readers in suspense until its unexpected ending. (5+)

224

Roovers, Eus (text)

Vriends van der Steijn, Ingeborg (illus.)

Reus en dwerg

(Giant and Dwarf)

Haarlem : Uitg. Holland, 2006. – 44 p.

ISBN 90-251-1002-9

Daily life – Friendship

This enchanting book for small children tells short stories about the numerous adventures of Giant and Dwarf, two unusual friends. The topics touched upon are going on holidays, getting lost and being unable to find the way back home, playing hide-and-seek, and discovering true friendship. Dwarf is the one who always takes the initiative in their various activities. Although the two friends are very different, they are both ingenious characters. Little children will recognise themselves easily in the protagonists' exciting experiences. The entertaining stories, in which difficult words are explained in a childlike way, are interspersed with a lot of dialogue. They are complemented by idiosyncratic illustrations with plenty of details. (3+)

225

Verroen, Dolf (text)

Nahmias, Veronica (illus.)

Slaaf kindje slaaf

(Slave, my little child, slave)

Rotterdam : Uitg. Ger Guijs, 2006. – 95 p.

ISBN 90-6734-451-6

(also published in German in 2005)

Surinam/18th century – Slavery

This touching story is told from the perspective of a twelve-year-old white girl on the threshold of maturity growing up in Surinam in the 18th century.

Maria's birthday present is a small black boy – her first personal slave. For the girl, slavery is completely natural, and she talks about it without a trace of guilt. Today's readers, however, are confronted with the cruel reality of adults treating slaves like property. The text is written in short and simple yet carefully constructed sentences. The pencil drawings faithfully depict all the different characters of the story, who look just as modest and austere as they are described in the text. (10+) (Deutscher Jugendliteraturpreis, 2006; Gustav-Heinemann-Friedenspreis, 2006) ◇ □

The Netherlands (Frisian)

226

Braaksma, Machiel (text/illus.)

Oeral binne bisten!

(There are animals everywhere!)

Ljouwert: Bommeer, 2006. – [82] p.

ISBN 978-90-5615-137-9

Animals – Images

This imaginative picture book discovers both familiar and exotic animals in the most common objects and events. On the left-hand pages of the book, readers are given short texts about everyday-life situations, such as a dialogue between two pilots which ends with someone screaming because of a mosquito bite. On the right-hand pages, the author introduces various animals related to the text. In between the two pages, transparent sheets add a mysterious touch to the illustrations; in some cases it seems almost like looking through a keyhole. In addition, young readers will find information about the materials that the artist used to create his animals. Thus, they can try to craft their own zoo of wonderful creatures. (6+)

Ireland (Irish)

□ □ Special Mention

227

Ó Raghallaigh, Colmán (text)

Reynolds, Barry (illus.)

The Cartoon Saloon (prod.)

Merigeau, Adrien (col.)

Burchartz, Roxanne (letter.)

An Táin

(The Táin)

Clár Chlaíne Mhuiris : Cló Mhaigh Eo,

2006. – [44] p.

ISBN 1-899922-28-8

Connaught – Ulster – Queen – Envy –

Bull – War – Death

»An Táin«, aka »Táin Bó Cúailnge« (The Cattle Raid of Cooley), is the central tale in the Ulster Cycle, one of the four great epic cycles that make up the surviving corpus of Irish mythology. By retelling this ancient story in graphic novel format, popular Irish author Colmán Ó Raghallaigh makes an important and exciting mythical tale come alive for young readers today. Accompanied by a sparse text full of dialogue, the energetic, angular watercolour-and-ink illustrations in subdued colours relate how Connaught Queen Méabh, jealous of her husband's wealth, starts a war against Ulster to steal the precious bull Donn Cuailnge and thus increase her own riches. Although the Ulster teenage hero Cú Chulainn summons up all his strength and cunning and slays half of the Queen's army, he cannot prevent her from temporarily obtaining the bull. Years later, Méabh takes revenge for the horrible bloodshed and ends Cú Chulainn's life by resorting to trickery. (12+) (Oireachtas na Gaeilge Irish Language Book of the Year award for Young People; 2006)

Hungary

228

Kertész, Ákos

A nap utcai fiúk

(The Sun Street boys)

[Budapest] : Ab Ovo K., 2006. – 155 p.

ISBN 963-9378-50-X

Hungary / Uprising <1956> – Youth

In 1956, a group of teenagers is drawn into the first revolutionary riots in the Hungarian capital, Budapest, without knowing, let alone understanding, what the demonstrations are all about. Full of youthful enthusiasm, romantic ideas, courage, and self-denial, they dive into the events that soon spiral out of control. Many people even pay with their lives. This novel is based on factual reports by survivors of the Hungarian uprising. Most of the book offers a fairly romantic description of the events, yet by drawing a detailed picture of the young people's meaningless death, the novel eventually turns into an accusation against those who sacrifice children and teenagers on the altar of politics. (14+) ◇

229

Kiss, Ottó (text)

Baranyai, András (illus.)

Szerintem mindenki maradjon otthon vasárnap délután

(If you ask me, everybody should stay at home on a Sunday afternoon)

Budapest : Csodaceruza K., 2006. – [36] p.

ISBN 963-06-0090-0

Family – Father – Excursion – Flying

Father Istvan, known to everybody in town as »Hello Istvan«, has a huge belly. Yet, this belly is not a beer belly, it is full of air. Thanks to it, Istvan can rise into the sky and fly across the whole town on the lookout for important events. Although his wife and son are anything but pleased about his airy escapades, Istvan still takes off every Sunday afternoon and leaves them alone until, one night, he returns home late and his dinner is nowhere in sight. Having learned from his mistakes, wise Istvan henceforth gives all the other fathers the good advice to stay home on Sundays. Puns and witty situations paired with a generous dose of nonsense plus reduced, spacious illustrations make this book a truly entertaining read. (5+)

□ □ Special Mention

230

Lázár, Zsófia / Lázár, Ervin (text)

Faltisz, Alexandra (illus.)

Bogármese

(Beetle tales)

Budapest : Sanoma K., 2006. – 79 p.

(Nök lapja műhely)

ISBN 963-86877-2-X

Father – Daughter – Friendship – Imaginary world

During a walk through the forest, in a mixture of dream and reality, a little girl discovers imaginary creatures from her father's tales. Father and daughter have created their own little realm inhabited by mysterious beetles and insects, which serves as a mirror for the real world. Friendship, care for others, and diligence as well as malice have the same meaning in this wondrous microcosm as they do in the human world. Thus, the imaginary events in the insects' world also affect the relationship between father and daughter. In the end, illness and pain are cured in both worlds through the magical flower of love and compassion, and the afternoon walk ends cheerfully for everyone. The water-colour illustrations, carefully adorned with plenty of details, turn this magical narration into a special treat for young readers. With this fairytale-like story, Lázár Zsófia has created a literary memorial for her late father, the author Lázár Ervin. (5+)

Greece

(Romanization according to German cataloguing norms)

231

Artzanidu, Elena (text)

Gribas, Basilēs (illus.)

Me lene promis

(My name is Promis)

Athēna : Psychogios, 2006. – 35 p.

(Batomuro; 23)

ISBN 960-453-061-5

Otherness – First day at school – Immigration – Cultural difference – Xenophobia – Integration

A little Nigerian girl tries to find her place at her new school in Greece. At first, not all of the pupils in her new class are particularly friendly, let alone willing to include her in their various activities. However, with

the help of her teacher and some of her more open-minded classmates, she finally finds new friends and starts feeling at home and happy without having to do anything special. This story is inspired by everyday reality, in which it is often very difficult for immigrants and their children to be accepted and to smoothly adapt to their new lives in a foreign country. (7+)

232

Bakalē-Syrogianopulu, Philomēla (text)

Syrogianopulos, Thodoros (illus.)

Pulia kai Augerinos

(Pleiades and the Morning Star)

Athēna : Patakēs, 2006. – 23 p., [6] p.

ISBN 960-16-1724-8

Friendship – Love – Self-confidence

Reminiscent of an ancient myth, this fairy tale tells the story of how the straw hearts of all scarecrows come to life and how, subsequently, fear vanishes from the birds' hearts. The modern tale about Pleiades and the Morning Star reminds us of a folk tale because of its animism and the way it approaches nature. The story is accompanied by full-page colour illustrations mainly in shades of green and blue. The vivid pictures perfectly animate the animals, plants, the sky and nature in its entirety. (6+)

233

Balasē, Zōe (text)

Zampeles, Petros (illus.)

To psēlotero mpalkoni tu kosmu

(The highest balcony in the world)

Athēna : Hellēnika Grammata, 2006. – 41 p.

ISBN 960-442-704-0

Cruelty – Megalomania – Isolation – Tyranny

A cruel, envious, and vain king, who couldn't care less about his subjects or their problems, decides to build the tallest palace that ever existed with walls so high that nobody and nothing will be able to enter it. When the huge building is finally finished, the isolation that the king experiences proves to be his worst punishment. However, the proud ruler doesn't have any idea that his greatest disappointment is yet to come: Soon, he discovers that, above the highest balcony of his castle, swallows have managed to build their nest, thus defying the purpose of the extravagant building. This modern literary fairy tale, following classic fairy-tale models, presents its parable-like message in a beautiful metaphorical language. (5+)

234

Barella, Angelikē (text)

Barbarusē, Lēda (illus.)

To piato tu Alexandru

(Alexander's plate)

Athēna : Portokali, 2006. – 27 p.

(Ta megala tōn mikrōn; 2)

ISBN 960-666-404-X

Hunger – Solidarity – Offer

In a very affectionate way, the author of this story sensitises child readers to the difficult issue of hunger. Well aware of the fact that children themselves naturally won't be able to solve the problem of hunger in the world, the author's aim is to make children aware of the problem, make them empathise with the people in need and maybe even inspire them to come up with various ways of showing their solidarity. The large-format colour illustrations visualise in an imaginative way how the protagonist of this story tackles the moving topic in his own child-like way. (6+)

235

Kliapha, Marula

Mythoi kai thryloi tēs Thessalias

(Fables and legends from Thessalia area)

Athēna : Kedros, 2006. – 261 p.

(Ephēbiko mythistorēma)

ISBN 960-04-3126-4

Local history – Legends – Folk traditions

The fables and legends from Thessalia (a region in central Greece) retold in this collection will deeply touch its readers. They introduce them to an abundance of traditions and make them get in touch with this region and its rich past that nowadays is often ignored or neglected. The book provides excellent material for teachers who are eager to prepare an exciting journey into local Greek history for their young pupils. However, the album will also fascinate older readers who can still remember a time when life was full of companionship, action, concern, and expectations; a time when people still believed that ordinary life has the ability to bring forth miracles every day. (8+)

236

Psychogyiu, Dēmētra (text/illus.)

Hē mygdalia kai to phengari : paramythi
aphierōmeno sto pio omorpho prōino tu kosmu
(The almond-tree and the moon)

Athēna : Ankyra, 2006. – [28] p.

ISBN 960-422-480-8

Unselfishness – Dedication – Love

One strange winter night, while »hanging around« on the sky as usual, the moon casts a look down on earth and spots an almond-tree. Feeling extremely charmed by the tree and drawn towards it, the moon decides to come down and whisper its secrets to it. The almond-tree listens to the confession with wide open branches and hugs the moon very tenderly, careful not to hurt it. In a poetical style, this fairy tale touches upon the theme of unselfishness, dedication, and love. The text is accompanied by atmospheric illustrations created in a technique that has its roots back in the Byzantine tradition. (4+)

237

Pulakēs, Petros (text)

Papatsaruchas, Basilēs (illus.)

Ho autos

(He)

Athēna : Kastōr, 2006. – 23 p.

ISBN 960-7906-66-7

Otherness – Mutual help – Autism

He, the little turtle, perceives the world in his own unique way. None of the other sea turtles understand his behaviour and so they finally reject him. Only when they manage to enter his shell, do they start to see how he thinks about the world and to appreciate the numerous things they can learn from him because of his peculiar way of experiencing reality. Using a symbolic, simple animal story, the text and pictures of this book take readers to the world of autistic children, a world that has not yet been thoroughly explored and is often misunderstood. True, it may seem frightening simply because it is unfamiliar and foreign to the readers, but it proves to be a world full of emotion and sensitivity. (7+)

238

Sarantitē, Helenē (text)

Mpacha, Maria (illus.)

Hē nychta me ton hēlio

(The night with the sun)

Athēna : Kastaniōtēs, 2006. – 28 p. + CD

ISBN 960-03-4297-0

Christmas – Love – Hope

Little Sarah lives in a small village near Bethlehem with her grandma. She has no parents: Her father was tortured to death by Roman soldiers and her mother abandoned her soon afterwards. Nevertheless, while playing with her little dog, the girl always dreams of finding her mother one day. One starlit night, Sarah sets off on a magic journey to meet her. She reaches a cave and is welcomed by a woman reminding her of her mother and by a few shepherds who are in the midst of preparing a luminous celebration that will change the girl's life. This original and tender Christmas story, written in a very poetic style, is accompanied by a CD with the story read by the author herself. (5+)

239

Stephanidē, Phōteinē (text/illus.)

Kati Paraxeno apopse symbainei

(Something strange is happening today)

Athēna : Libanē. – 87 p.

(Paidikē bibliothēkē)

ISBN 960-14-1330-8

Classic heroes – Imagination – Love for reading

One night, when everybody has fallen asleep, little Panos goes on a magnificent and unique journey. His wonderfully rich imagination and deep love for fairy tales serve as the vehicle for his imaginary travels. During his adventurous trip, he meets the beloved heroes of all the classic fairy tales and finds the opportunity to make witty and unexpected observations. This inspiring, original story is framed by dynamic mixed-media illustrations that often involve unusual perspectives. (5+)

240

Tasaku, Tzemē (text)

Griba, Ellē (illus.)

Ta xylina paputsia tēs Xanthēs

(Xanthe's wooden shoes)

Athēna : Papadopoulos, 2006. – 52 p.

(Pitēseis junior)

ISBN 960-412-564-8

Otherness – Simplicity – Emotion

Written in an inspired and cheerful style, this book tells the story of an unusual girl. Xanthe lives out of doors together with her tortoise Virginia, a she-wolf called Wolf (clear references to Virginia Wolf, Tzemē Tasaku's favourite writer) and twelve wooden shoes that her parents had left her. When a prince comes looking for a bride, the headstrong girl decides to present herself before him. She does not want to get married, however, and neither does she want to wear fancy glass shoes. Rather, she firmly believes that »otherness means knowledge« and therefore, wearing her wooden shoes, she swirls around with the prince in the best of all dances! This literary «anti-fairytale» is full of humour and imagination. (7+)

Turkey

241

Erdoğan, Fatih

Sihirli dizi

(The magic globe)

Istanbul : Mavibulut, 2006. – 184 p.

(Sihirli küre; 5)

ISBN 975-310-051-5

Grandmother – Grandson – Magic – Journey

This book, which belongs to a series of magical tales by Fatih Erdoğan, tells the story of the Turkish boy Ozan who misses his grandmother. Since she lives in New Zealand, the two haven't seen each other for a very long time. When the boy lets his finger travel across a globe, he suddenly experiences a strange sensation that feels as if he could actually fly. Soon afterwards, he wakes up in a forest on the other side of the world. He finds his grandmother and meets a girl with whom he chats about their different home countries. This imaginative book offers its readers many possibilities to identify with the protagonist and share his wishes and feelings. It easily lends itself to both reading aloud or on one's own. (7+)

Israel (Hebrew)

(Romanization according to

German cataloguing norms)

242

Har'el, Nirah (text)

Kerman, Dani (illus.)

Ma'aseh be-sharvit kesamim

(The tale about the magic wand)

Tel Aviv : 'Am 'Oved, 2006. – [32] p.

ISBN 965-13-1834-1

Grandmother – Grandson – Being alone –

Telephone – Storytelling – Imagination

Shauli is sick and home alone. Luckily enough, his grandmother calls and immediately sets forth to visit him. En route, she comforts him via mobile phone with the story about a good fairy. No wonder that Shauli feels better at once! This original picture book shows how the youthful and energetic grandmother gets inspired by people and things that she encounters on her way. Whereas the text clearly stays on the fairytale level, the pictures reveal how real things are transformed; for example, a busy street turns into a lush jungle, a taxi into a royal carriage, a policeman into a fire-breathing dragon, and a cash machine into a treasure chest inside a hollow tree. The imaginative way in which this book bridges the gap between the real world and the imagined fairytale world makes it a truly delightful read. (5+)

Lebanon (Arabic)

(Romanization according to

German cataloguing norms)

243

Muḥiddīl, Nabītha (text)

Zahr-ad-Dīn, Ḥassān (illus.)

Mādā yurīdu Yāsir an yaqūlu?

(What is Yasser trying to say?)

[Bairut] : Dār al-Ḥadā'ik, 2006. – [20] p.

ISBN 9953-464-00-6

Child – Emotions – Fury – Anger – Crying

Little Yasser is quite a cry-baby. Even minor things easily upset him, and tears are his only means to express his worries and fears, his wishes and anger. When his parents leave him at home alone or whenever he screws things up or breaks something, words

simply seem to fail him. Taking the boy's story as an example, this picture book encourages children to think about themselves and about how they deal with their own feelings. The lively colour illustrations accompanying the simple text emphasise the characters' gestures and facial expressions. Thus, the child's adventures and his emotional world are commented on in an amusing and ironical way. (5+)

244

Tūmā, Nadīn R. L. (text)

Maḥmūd, Arīḡ (illus.)

Hal haḍiḥi ṣūra šamsīya?

(Is this a passport photo?)

Bairūt : Dār Qunbuz, 2005. – [56] p. + CD

ISBN 9953-465-01-0

Perception – Curiosity – Question

This book asks a number of unusual questions, such as »Are leaves the trees' noses?« or »Why doesn't a ladder connect the earth and the sky?« At first glance, these questions may seem bizarre, yet they are actually just an invitation to explore the world with open eyes and a lot of curiosity. Readers will have to find the answers themselves, assisted by imaginative, vivid black-and-white drawings aesthetically reminiscent of comic strips and animated films. On many of the double pages, pictures are arranged next to each other similar to cartoon sequences. In addition to the questions and pictures, the book also includes an audio CD with atmospheric, mysterious electronic sounds underlining this picture book's playful nature. (8+)

Iran (Persian)

(Romanization according to

German cataloguing norms)

245

Alḥās, Hāmbāl

Garḍi-š dar bāḡ-i kūdakān : 106 tarḡ az kūdakān
(A walk in the children's garden : 106 children's drawings)

Tihrān : Našr-i Ādārbihīšt, 2003 (= 1382 h.š.). – 105 p.

ISBN 964-94456-9-2

Children's drawing – Poet

Drawings created by children between the ages of three and twelve inspired the poet Hanibal Alkhas to write this book. The poems – one for each of the 106 drawings – deal with a great variety of topics, both

ordinary events and fantastical adventures. While some are full of humour, others are more serious.

It is astonishing how skilfully the author captures moments and moods in his short, almost fragmentary poems. Thus, he accompanies the picture of an everyday scene at home drawn by seven-year-old Kisawarz with the simple verse: »On my beautiful table, I arrange a pot of fragrant flowers, a big apple, and a jug of fresh water, in case you might come.« (6+)

246

Diya'i, Muḥammad Rafī' (text/illus.)

Ādam-i īngūnī

(A person who is somehow different)

Tihrān : Kitāb-i Čarḡfalak, 2003 (= 1382 h.š.). – 48 p.

(Maḡmū'a-i dāstānhāi kūtāh-i tanz; 1)

ISBN 964-94973-0-7

Everyday life

Caricaturist Muhammad Rafi Diyai tells a young man's story from birth to adulthood inspired by his own adventures and experiences. The 54 ultra-short stories of these two volumes present miniature scenes from the first-person narrator's life. The texts stand out for their trenchant description of everyday events that often reveal curiously bizarre things; such as when the protagonist relates how a pot plant that he wanted to rid of lice eventually dies because of his love of animals (not of lice, mind you, but of lice-eating ladybirds). Diyai's caricature-like black-and-white drawings perfectly complement the sprightly, sketchy texts. (10+)

247

Ġuzdānī, 'Udrā (text)

Taḡwīlī, Nāzī (illus.)

Ism-i man Mānīyā ast

(Mein Name ist Maniya)

Tihrān : Hauḍi-Nuḡra, 2004 (= 1383 h.š.). – 47 p.

ISBN 964-7961-17-0

Girl – Everyday life – Imaginary world

Maniya travels between two worlds. Again and again, the young girl escapes from her real life into a care-free, comforting imaginary world. In her day-dreams, Maniya uses her imagination to fight against the restrictions that others impose on her. In the ten short stories of this small book, the line between reality and the imagined world is blurred. For example, when Maniya and her mother are sitting at the hairdresser's, where she is given a haircut against her will, the girl looks into the mirror and sees her hair quickly grow

again until it is even longer than before! The simple language of the easily comprehensible tales is aptly translated into sketchy line drawings that are sparsely coloured in delicate, mainly green water colours. (5+)

248

Kākāwand, Kāmbīz (text/illus.)

Rūbāh

(Fox)

Tihrān : Šabāwīz, 2006 (= 1385 h.š.). – 30 p.

ISBN 978-964-505-210-0

Fox – Tail – Loss – Trust – Love

A fox who plans to feed his stomach in the chicken coop loses his tail in a fight with the guard dog. Completely devastated, the animal withdraws from the world until, one day, a beautiful vixen persuades him to accompany her on another chicken hunt. The vixen's presence comforts him and rekindles his interest in life. Readers should allow for some extra time to study the double-page illustrations of this fable-like animal tale. The illustrator has composed two-dimensional pictures teeming with tiny figures and lots of details on backgrounds in mostly green shades. From above and from a great distance, readers will admire a world of almost abstract animals, plants, buildings, and landscape and discover a truly original play with shapes and colours. (6+)

249

Sipihri, Suhrāb (text)

Nūḡūmī, Nikzād (illus.)

Šidā-i pā-i āb

(The sound of the water's course)

Tihrān : Kānūn-i Parwariš-i Fikrī-i Kūdākān

wa Nūḡawānān, 2005 (= 1384 h.š.). – 23 p.

ISBN 964-391-043-1

Poetry – Nature – Love of nature

The long poem »Šidā-i pā-i āb« was originally published in the well-known Iranian poet's work entitled »8 kitāb« (Eight books). One feature typical for Sipihri's style is the simplicity and clarity of the linguistic images that he creates. At the same time, however, his texts are complex, and their true depth may not be immediately understandable to readers because of their philosophical ideas. That is also true for this poem, in which the author's love for nature is palpable. This edition for young readers contains symbolic pictures illustrated in warm watercolours that perfectly match the typography of the artistically designed verses. (12+)

250

Tūzandaḡānī, Ġa'far (text)

Šaḡī Hānī, Farhād (illus.)

Čirā daryā 'aṣabānī šud?

(Why is the sea furious?)

Tihrān : Kānūn-i Parwariš-i Fikrī-i Kūdākān

wa Nūḡawānān, 2006 (= 1385 h.š.). – 77 p.

ISBN 964-391-082-2

Sea – Pollution – Environmental protection – Death

The protagonist of this tale is a writer in a coastal town that has lately been suffering under the destructive forces of the sea. By talking to the town people, who offer a multitude of possible explanations, the writer slowly cottons on to the real reason behind the events. The mayor, for example, feels responsible because he had authorised and arranged the building of a theme park at the beach whereas an old fisherman is convinced that the sea is furious and will only be placated by repentance. In the end, it becomes evident that the ocean is indeed hurt and revengeful because it is polluted by chemical industrial plants. In this unusual book, the topic of environmental pollution is intertwined with a realistic story and accompanied by pictures with a sinister touch. (7+)

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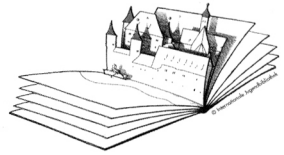
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