

2014 | The White Ravens

A Selection of International Children's and Youth Literature



Internationale Jugendbibliothek

R. Michel

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IMPRESSUM

The White Ravens 2014

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und Jugend**

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**Landeshauptstadt
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PREFACE

This year marks the 50th birthday of the »White Ravens«. They first appeared in 1964, when the Internationale Jugendbibliothek (International Youth Library) held a special exhibition titled »Weiße Raben« (White Ravens) in conjunction with its annual book exhibition at the Bavarian State Library in Munich. This was the first occasion the term »White Ravens« was used to label especially notable, outstanding books that seemed well-suited for international translation, in the judgment of the Library's staff. Every year since, the Library has organised an annual exhibition that features a multi-national selection of highly recommendable books. The »White Ravens« have become a core component of the Library's international efforts to promote literature.

Since the first »White Ravens« half a century ago, several components have changed. In the beginning, the selection of books was even more comprehensive. The annual selection of books was soon put on display at the International Bologna Children's Book Fair. In 1984, the first »White Ravens« bibliography was published as a booklet, the predecessor to today's »White Ravens« catalogue, which first appeared in 1986 and includes English-language annotations for each of the selected titles. Over the past 30 years, the structure of the catalogue has been adjusted here and there, the selection criteria have

been revised, and in 1996, a simple online edition became available on the Library's website.

The 50th anniversary of the »White Ravens« provides a good opportunity to present them anew. Featuring a new graphic layout, the catalogue now contains a selection of 200 picture books, children's and young adult books from 50 countries published in more than 30 languages. All books are showcased with colour reprints of their covers and longer annotations. Starting with this edition, the catalogue cover will be designed by a different illustrator each year. This first time, the task fell to German illustrator Reinhard Michl, who designed the original white ravens that appeared on the cover of previous years' catalogues. In addition to featuring the titles in the catalogue, we invite all publishers to label their selected books with a »White Ravens« logo. A database containing all listings is in the works for 2015.

The catalogue is published prior to the Frankfurt Book Fair where it can also be consulted in digital form at our exhibition booth. At the Bologna Children's Book Fair, all 200 recommended books are on display in hard copy at the International Youth Library's booth. This decades' long tradition allows booth visitors to peruse the books at leisure, leafing through and exploring them.

The »White Ravens« catalogue is the most important annual publication of the International Youth Library. The Library receives a vast number of donation copies and review copies over the course of a year. It falls to our language and children's book specialists to pull out new publications that catch their attention and strike them as noteworthy, which they want to recommend to an international audience. Books are chosen for the list based on the universal relevance of the themes they address, their literary and pictorial qualities, or their innovative content or design.

Our Library's staff have long relied on various means to acquire a well-grounded overview of the topics, trends, and people involved in current international children's and young adult literature: They read new publications in their original languages, visit the most important international book fairs, scout and gather information, maintain contact with publishing houses, institutions, organisations, and other experts, and they also engage in conversation with the research fellows at the International Youth Library, foreign scholars who are very familiar with the literature of their home countries.

The Library's in-house staff members in Munich cover many literary regions, and freelance readers

and advisors are charged with monitoring and tending to further languages and countries. The »White Ravens« catalogue is thus unique in selecting 200 books that cover a highly diverse range of voices. Its international nature results from the efforts of approximately 20 children's and young adult book experts, who are tasked with sifting through the thousands of books received annually by the International Youth Library.

Sincere thanks are due first and foremost to the countless publishers who have been supporting the work of the International Youth Library for decades through their book donations. I also extend my gratitude to all those who have contributed to this catalogue both abroad and here in Munich.

I hope the »White Ravens« fall into the hands of many curious readers, and that these readers make many new discoveries. May the selected books, along with their authors and illustrators, receive the international attention they deserve. We hope that our work can contribute to this goal.

Dr. Christiane Raabe
Director of the International Youth Library
August 2014

1



al-Nağğār, Tağrīd (Najjar, Taghreed) (text)
Manāšira, Ḥassān (Manasrah, Hassan) (illus.)
Mā al-māni'
(Why not?)
Amān: Al-Salwā, 2013. – 29 p.
ISBN 978-9957-04-072-7

Gender role | Tradition | Emancipation |
Ramadan

A widowed man and his daughter Samia live in a small village in Palestine in the 1930s. For years now, the man has been responsible for playing his drums to wake the villagers during Ramadan, the month of fasting, so that they get up in time to eat their first meal before sunrise. When he suddenly falls ill and has to stay in bed, Samia proposes to step into the breach until he feels better. It's not an easy decision for the father, but he eventually agrees. The next night, the girl, accompanied by her dog Barq, sets off with a lantern. She crosses a dark forest and surprises the village people with her drumming. In »Mā al-māni«, the author questions the traditional female role. The story encourages readers to be open-minded and confident and believe in their own skills. The colourful double spread illustrations present an atmospheric image of the nocturnal setting. (Age: 7+)

2



Jiu er (Yang, Hong li) (text/illus.)
Mei mei de da nan gua
(Sister Rabbit's gigantic pumpkin)
Beijing: Lian huan hua chu ban she (Comic Books Publishing House), 2012. – [36] p.
(Series: Pu pu lan hui ben guan)
ISBN 978-7-5056-2371-2

Rabbit | Gardening | Rural life | Family |
Animal story

The rabbit siblings are holding a race to see whose pumpkin plant shall bear the largest fruit. Each rabbit sibling labels his or her own plant in the family garden. When little sister's plant starts to wither because she overwaters it, her two elder brothers switch the labels on the plants. Sister rabbit wins the race with a gigantic pumpkin that needs to be carried home by the whole family and their neighbours. The book's warmly-coloured, light-hearted illustrations convey the sweetness of pastoral family life. Yang Hong li, who publishes under the pseudonym Jiu er, grew up in the 1970s in North-East China and worked as a designer for many years before she began to illustrate picture books. Here she builds off of her childhood memories on the simple life in the country, as it was typical for so many Chinese of her generation. She nostalgically describes the life of a multi-generational family in a simple clay hut and the daily farming work. (Age: 4+)



3

Li, Dong hua (text)
Shao nian de rong yao
 (A boy's honour)

Taiyuan: Xi wang chu ban she (Hope Publishing House), 2014. – 277 p.
 ISBN 978-7-5379-4663-6

China / 1937 | War | Occupation | Peace |
 Coming-of-age novel | Historical fiction

Twelve-year-old Sha Liang is living a carefree life in a well-off family when Japanese soldiers invade his town. He is forced to flee to the countryside with his six-year-old cousin Sha Ji, whose mother was killed by Japanese soldiers and a Chinese accomplice serving in the Japanese military. The Sha brothers and their rural friends briefly enjoy peaceful times, but are soon in danger again. It seems that the children must prematurely outgrow their childhoods to survive. This book recounts an authentic story about peace and war, love and hatred, as well as those childhoods both lost and preserved during war. Li Dong hua (b. 1971) is an active researcher in children's and young adult literature and works for the Creativity Research Department of the Chinese Writers Association. Aside from authoring numerous poems and short stories for children and young adults, she has also published five teen novels that realistically portray the transition from childhood to adulthood. She regularly receives accolades for her work. (Age: 12+)



4

Liu, Bo le (text/illus.)
Wo kan jian yi zhi niao
 (I saw a bird)

Jinan: Ming tian chu ban she (Tomorrow Publishing House), 2014. – 33 p.
 ISBN 978-7-5332-7939-4

Bird | Nature | Ecology | Non-fiction

A little girl sees a strange bird while playing in the Dakeng Scenic Area in Taiwan. She sketches it to ask her mother what kind of bird it is. As they investigate the answer together, readers get to know a number of different birds living in the area. The birds are illustrated in watercolour with impressive delicacy and beauty, reminiscent of the elaborate style of traditional Chinese painting. The book won the first prize of the third Feng Zikai Children's Picture Books Award. This award is now counted as the most prestigious of its kind in the Chinese-speaking world. Liu Bo le, born in 1952 in Taiwan, worked as an editor for art and children's non-fiction books after studying painting. He writes and illustrates non-fiction books such as this one, which are camouflaged as picture books, is an environmental activist and a photographer of nature, notably of birds. These activities have earned him the nickname »Liu niao« (Liu bird). (Age: 6+)

5



Lu, Mei (text)

Ge zi de shi huang shu

(Gezi's book of time)

Nanning: Jie li chu ban she (Jieli Publishing House), 2013. – 199 p.

(Series: Bai tian e er tong wen xue shu xi)

ISBN 978-7-5448-3011-9

Time | Memory | Gender | Coming-of-age novel

Gezi realizes that her world contains a few mysteries. There is the false news that her cousin, a soldier, died in the war, the puzzling mental illness of her best friend's elder sister, and the abrupt disappearance of another close friend's mother. The twelve-year-old tomboy gradually figures out these mysteries as she becomes acquainted with the world of her elders, and she comes to embrace a more meaningful and emotionally connected life. The novel is alternately narrated by Gezi as a teen and Gezi as a grown-up. The latter looks back on her juvenile self, imbuing the story with a particular nostalgia. Well-known Shanghai author Lu Mei (b. 1971) writes mainly for and about teenage girls. She has received the most prestigious Chinese youth literature awards, including the National Award for Outstanding Children's Literature, the Bing Xin Children's Literature Award and the Chen Bo Chui Children's Literature Award. (Age: 12+)

6



Tang mu niu (Zhen, Guo liu, Chen, Kuo Liu) (text/illus.)

Zui ke pa de yi tian

(The most terrible day)

Beijing: Bei jing Lian he chu ban gong si (Beijing United Publishing Limited), 2013. – [36] p.

(Series: Qi fa jing xuan hua yu yuan chuang you xiu hui ben)

ISBN 978-7-5502-2035-5

Shyness | Stage fright | Imagination

Tomorrow is going to be the most terrible day, Liu Fangling thinks. Surely there will be an earthquake, volcano eruption, or catastrophic flood. The girl imagines the worst because she is nervous about giving a speech in front of her classmates the next day. Liu never outgrows her shyness – thirty years later, she is asked to speak in public as the youngest winner of a global construction award. But despite her stage fright, that is not as terrible because the occasion is so wonderful. With the help of his personalised illustrations, Tang mu niu creates a vivid portrait of a timid child's inner world, which he hopes the audience will come to better understand. Author and illustrator Tang mu niu was born in 1966 in Taipei and studied sculpture. His picture books have received numerous awards, including the most important Taiwanese picture book prize, the Hsin-yi Young Children's Literature Award of the Hsin-Yi Foundation. This book earned him his second prestigious Hong Kong Feng Zikai Chinese Children's Picture Book Award. (Age: 3+)



7

Sun, Xinyu (Joyce Sun) (text/illus.)

Beijing you

(Tour of Beijing)

Taipei: Xiao lu wen hua (Tien-Wei Publishing Company), 2013. – [40] p.

(Series: Xiao lu chuang zuo hui ben; 19)

ISBN 978-986-211-335-6

Beijing | Time travel | City building |
Textless book

The backdrop scenery in this textless picture book about a tour of Beijing is in black and white. Only the protagonists are colourful, and the only written narration comes from store signs, Communist slogans on house walls, and neon signs marketing global brands. They tell of the transformation of the city and the destruction of its historical architectural essence leading up to the 2008 Olympic Games. A little girl follows a cat from a traditional courtyard house into the new sky-scraper landscape. She slips through a time-warp tunnel in the antiquities market and experiences architectural landmarks from China's imperial era, witnessing urban life of a time gone by. Back at home, her house and its historical neighbourhood have been marked for demolition. After graduating from the Fine Arts Department of the National Taiwan Normal University, Sun Xinyu worked in the field of computer graphics. Her textless picture books, which she creates on her computer, have received numerous awards. (Age: 4+)



8

Balog, Zvonimir (text/illus.)

Ja konj

(I, Horse)

Zagreb: Alfa, 2013. – 87 p.

(Series: Knjiga za mladež)

ISBN 978-953-297-478-2

Horse / History / Mythology | Poetry

Everyone has seen horse-and-rider statues before, frequently also the riders depicted therein – but what about the horses? Croatia's star author Zvonimir Balog literally puts the horse before the cart in his newest picture book, which was awarded the Grigor Vitez Prize in 2013. He introduces historical riders from the perspective of their horses, on a children's poetry ride through various countries and periods. From Buffalo Bill to Alexander the Great, Joan of Arc to Saint George the dragon slayer, Balog parades famous riders and their mounts. And there's more: the volume also contains poems about the horse as a working animal, about Pegasus, the mythological father of all horses, and the use of horses in today's police forces, among other topics. The poems do not become one dry history lesson, though, but remain exciting and humorous anecdotes – thanks to Balog's typical polished, at times galloping rhymes as well as the deliberately awkward, childlike illustrations. (Age: 4+)

CHINESE
CROATIAN

Republic of China (Taiwan)
Croatia

9



Bašić, Zdenko (text/illus.)

Mjesečeve sjene. O vješticama i pričama noćnih sati sjeverozapadnog dijela Medvednice i Samoborskog kraja

(In the shadow of the moon. Witches and the night hours in the northwestern Medvednica and Samobor region)

Zagreb: Planetopija, 2013. – 112 p.
ISBN 978-953-257-253-7

Witch | Devil | Witchcraft | Non-fiction

Witches, magic, ghosts, fairy-like forest creatures, werewolves, devils... and more! Following the huge success of his »extrasensory« picture book »Stories of the Wind« (2011), Zdenko Bašić (b. 1980) has created a no less successful, award-winning horror compendium about the world of witches and mythical trickster-creatures. Starting with spine-chilling legends from the Samobor region of Croatia, the Croatian star of steam-punk-style illustration and animation leads readers on every double-page ever deeper into ancient folklore concerning witches and the diabolical, and explains where and when witches gather, why they possess healing as well as destructive powers, and so on. Using mixed-media photo montages that draw on wood, fabric and old book page textures, Bašić unfolds his spooky compendium of occult knowledge with just the right amount of fright, thus giving readers both chill and curiosity. (Age: 12+)

10



Buddeus, Ondřej (text)

Böhm, David (illus.)

Hlava v hlavě

(A head in the head)

Praha: Labyrint, 2013. – 119 p.

(Series: Raketa)

ISBN 978-80-86803-24-1

Head | Brain | Sense organs | Wordplay

An entire book about the head that shows how the parts – nose, eyes, ears, brain, neck, wrinkles – work and explains common Czech idioms and expressions they're featured in. This non-fiction book is the work of the great Czech children's book prize winners of 2013, author Ondřej Buddeus (b. 1984) and illustrator David Böhm (b. 1982). Here they create an informative, entertaining and slightly off-kilter panopticon of the head. Alongside funny explanations, for example how a computer-aided search sifts through facial features, there are Wild West-styled »Wanted!« posters – sometimes as whole-page illustrations, sometimes as comic strips. The book's overall design is also playful and inspires curiosity. There is a fold-out tourist map of the head with appropriate town names (»Earville«, »Mouth-town«) and further fun fold-out elements such as see-through pages with facial wrinkles that one can lay on top of images of young faces to simulate the aging process. (Age: 5+)



11

Papoušková, Eva (text)
Miklínová, Galina (illus.)
Kosprd a Telecí. Příběh ze školky
(Featherbutt and Veal. A preschool story)
Praha: Albatros, [2013]. – 52 p.
ISBN 978-80-00-03105-7

Preschool | Prank | Friendship | Parent / Child

A lot's going on at preschool: cry-baby Featherbutt and quick-witted Veal have banded together – no wonder, with those names! – into a chaotic team »with good intentions«. Their interventions to enliven the preschool day-to-day mostly give their teacher headaches – like when they wear their slippers and nylons on their heads. When the two sneak out and take to the streets of Prague and in the end have the police searching for them, it's the last straw: their parents separate them. That kind of friendship endures, though, and in the end Featherbutt and Veal are allowed to play together again. These short vignettes about the totally normal insanity that is a child's universe are wittily narrated by Eva Papoušková (b. 1969), a well-known screen-writer, and aptly illustrated by Galina Miklínová (b. 1970). In the Czech Republic, the 2012 manuscript and the 2013 book have both been recognised with diverse nominations and awards – rightly so! (Age: 5+)



12

Sechovcová, Kateřina (illus.)
Kouzelný polštář
(The magic pillow)
Praha: Argo, 2013. – [26] p.
ISBN 978-80-257-0914-6

Perception | Parallel world | Textless book

This book is built on a simple idea and is told using only coloured pencil and no text. A mother sits at her son's bed, telling him a bedtime story. The two protagonists don't notice the red cat slipping out of the picture on the boy's pillow sham and into the mother's skirt. From there, it slips onto the mother's bedspread and is chased by a monster that spawns from the bedspread's pattern. Luckily, the boy can't sleep that night and brings the cat pillow over to mama's bed. While the two sleep, the red cat safely gets back with its friends on the pillow sham, and together they chase away the texture monster. With this offering, Czech publishing house Argo continues its practice of supporting young, gripping illustrators: Kateřina Sechovcová's (b. 1983) poetic images reveal the magic of perception and the world of objects that live their own secret lives. (Age: 2+)

13



Valoušek, Chrudoš (text/illus.)

Chrudošův zvěřinec

(Chrudoš's menagerie)

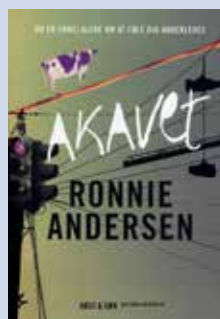
Praha: Baobab, [2013]. – [94] p. + 24 p.

ISBN 978-80-87060-84-1

Pop culture | Media | Television |
Topsy-turvy world | Anthropomorphism

Chrudoš Valoušek (b. 1960), Czech master of the linocut and creator of many »Most Beautiful Books of the Year«, follows his »Mix of Proverbs« (2010) with this off-kilter menagerie. This box set for the whole family is like a curio show inspired by the current media and pop culture. It contains a booklet with funny animal portrayals and rhymes for younger children, animal masks for a cat and mouse game à la Tom & Jerry. For older readers, there is a large-format volume that features an absurd television show where humans and animals switch roles. So, for instance, one sees linocut TV images of a carp gathering enjoying a traditional Christmas dish of poached human, or a trashy cat cabaret from the »Darling« station, or a soccer game between A.C. Mosquito and F.C. Bedbug. This »show« is both cryptic and crude, repellent and appealing – in the end one feels pegged a voyeuristic »TV watcher«, while still eager to zap a few more channels. (Age: 3+ and 13+)

14



Andersen, Ronnie (text)

Akavet

(Awkward)

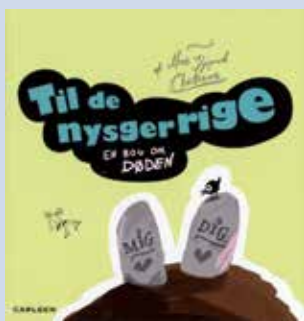
København: Høst & Søn, 2014. – 169 p.

ISBN 978-87-638-3302-8

Social anxiety | Society | Search for identity

Ronnie Andersen completed the Danish »Forfatter-skole for Børnelit-teatur« (Writing Academy for Children's Literature) and has received many awards for his novels. He is known for his experimental approach, and it is easy to see that »Akavet«, too, is unusual right off the bat, – its text is rotated 90 degrees. This creates a powerful effect and represents one of several destabilising elements in the book. First-person narrator Mikke suffers from social phobias and describes himself as a »person without filters«, as expressed in the jumpy and association-driven narrative style. For instance, every time Mikke thinks of a brand name, he follows it up with the ad slogan: »Snickers. Hungry? Grab a Snickers!« While the narrative is still not as disruptive as Georg Büchner's 1839 novella fragment »Lenz«, for example, it reveals what makes Mikke tick and how he perceives the world. (Age: 13+)

15

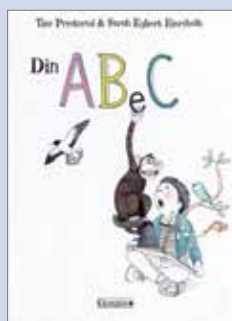


Christiansen, Marie Dysgaard (text/illus.)
Til de nysgerrige. En bog om døden
 (For those curious: A book about death)
 [København]: Carlsen, 2013. – [52] p.
 ISBN 978-87-113-8451-0

Death | Non-fiction

»For those curious« is a new non-fiction book series from Danish publisher Carlsen. Its first two instalments have covered the essentials: a »Book about the Body, Sex and Child-bearing« and this book about death. The books are similar in design and recall Swedish author Pernilla Stalfelt's non-fiction books. The felt-pen drawings are bright, intentionally awkward and childish-looking, tending towards the grotesque (cut-off heads, sliced-through bodies). Speech bubbles give the book a comics feel. The text is short and laconic, yet it represents a sober and straight-forward counterpart to the pictures. Its very brevity invites further questioning and discussion of individual points with one's co-readers. The book describes why one dies (illness, old age) and what happens after death, taking into consideration both the physical and the metaphysical. The focus is on Christian funeral rites, but other conceptions are introduced as well. (Age: 5+)

16



Presterud, Tine (text)
 Eiersholt, Sarah Egbert (illus.)
Din ABeC
 (Your ABeC)
 [Risskov]: Klematis, 2013. – [32] p.
 ISBN 978-87-641-0948-1

Animals | Alphabet | Poetry | ABC book

Children's poems are in high demand in Denmark. Usually they are satisfyingly off-kilter, often not exactly politically correct, but perhaps even because of this nearly always great. Add nonchalant illustrations to the mix, and the result is a book that's fun to grab off the shelf. »Your ABeC« succeeds with this recipe. Every letter of the alphabet gets a four-line stanza in trochaic or dactylic meters, usually rhymed in pairs. Even if not all of the poems are equally marvellous, protagonists such as the dust mite, the eel or the hippopotamus step in to provide comic relief, aided by the cleverly managed clash of literal and metaphoric meanings. The free-standing, black-outlined illustrations are coloured in delicate pastel shades. They are unusual in that they avoid the comic or grotesque elements and caricature that are so commonly used in Denmark. Still, they are not lacking in humour and deeper import. (Age: 4+)

17



Wung-Sung, Jesper (text)

Skolen

(School)

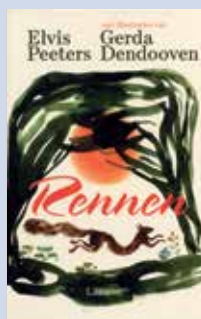
København: Høst & Søn, 2013. – 138 p.

ISBN 978-87-638-3162-8

Epidemic | Confinement | Decay | Survival |
Dystopia

Jesper Wung-Sung's »Skolen« places a statue of J. P. Jacobsen (1847-1885) in the story's fictional schoolyard, drawing one of a series of intertextual associations with Jacobsen's novel »Pesten i Bergamo« (The plague of Bergamo). William Golding's »Lord of the Flies« is also strongly intertextually referenced. Like Jacobsen, Wung-Sung describes a devastating plague and like Golding, he shows the brutality of the struggle for survival in an isolated, cramped space. The school is closed off from the outside world when a mysterious illness breaks out there. Those attempting to escape are shot. After the teachers all die, the surviving students quickly form two rival camps. The one camp embraces a leader cult, might makes right and brutal drives, while the other camp strives to uphold humane values despite the existential threat. Wung-Sung combines the story's parable element with a personal narrative voice to highlight the topic's timeliness. (Age: 12+)

18



Peeters, Elvis (text)

Dendooven, Gerda (illus.)

Rennen

(Running)

Tielt: Lannoo, 2013. – [36] p.

ISBN 978-94-014-0962-9

Animals | Speed

»Rennen« is a crossover picture book about a running horse that sets into motion an entire field and forest, including all of its animals. The book has a mighty climax, with the animals flying up into the sky, where they keep running. It compels the reader to start wondering: where are the animals going next? Elvis Peeters uses many repetitions to evoke the pace and restlessness of the animals, repeating the same words as if there were not enough time for more complex sentences. When reading the text aloud – which is highly recommended – one immediately takes on the animals' hasty breathing. Gerda Dendooven's artistic style is distanced, yet sublime: She has sketched out the animals exclusively in black; the background is minimal and contains minor, colourful details. The book's lack of a clear plot line means that the text and illustrations demand the reader's full attention – and they are worth it. (Age: 6+)



19

Sax, Aline (text)

De Bode, Ann (illus.)

Het meisje en de soldaat

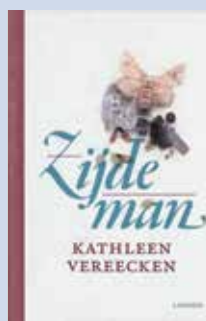
(The girl and the soldier)

Wielsbeke: De Eenhoorn, 2013. – 85 p.

ISBN 978-90-5838-842-1

World War I | Blind girl | Soldier |
Historical fiction

A blind girl and a black soldier meet at a bench behind the pub owned by the girl's parents. The trenches of World War I determine the life of the soldier: six days at the front and three days' rest. The soldier tells the girl about his homeland in Africa, but never mentions what's going on at the front. One day his place on the bench stays empty and the blind girl sets off to the front to look for him. Aline Sax describes in a beautiful, powerful language the very special connection between the girl and the soldier. They are both nameless outsiders who have met each other by coincidence. The girl is a good listener, also for the things the soldier doesn't mention. With their alternating narratives, the soldier and the girl offer different perspectives. When the girl is the narrator the pages are white, when the soldier tells his story the pages are black. The sober pictures sketch a portrait of life in wartime. An impressive story about friendship in wartime, with its horrors and mistrust. (Age: 13+)



20

Vereecken, Kathleen (text)

Verster, Alain (illus.)

Zijdeman

(The silk man)

Tielt: Lannoo, 2013. – 163 p.

ISBN 978-94-014-0199-9

French Revolution | Silk trade | Father |
Disappearance | Historical fiction |
Coming-of-age novel

»Zijdeman« is a historical novel, set in eighteenth-century Paris. Camille and Louis's father is a silk trader who did not return from China when he was supposed to. Brother and sister each deal with the uncertainty about their father in their own ways, and their narratives intertwine in an interesting way. Sixteen-year-old Camille takes action, helping her mother run their store and getting involved in the political upheavals of Louis XV's rule. Eleven-year-old Louis withdraws, fostering a nest of silkworms that he hopes will win his father's respect. The siblings' contrasting strategies to cope with insecurity and loss is the recurring theme of this delicate novel, told in a moderate, well-balanced style. Just as the silk worms in the story have to morph into butterflies, Camille and Louis must grow up. Vereecken daringly leaves the big questions of the novel unanswered, provoking her adolescent readers with the insecurity that life sometimes brings. (Age: 15+)

DUTCH

Belgium (Flanders)



21

Aerts, Jef (text)

Törnqvist, Marit (illus.)

Groter dan een droom

(Bigger than a dream)

Amsterdam: Querido, 2013. – [42] p.

ISBN 978-90-451-1401-9

Siblings | Death | Grief

In this moving picture book, a little boy hears the voice of his elder sister who died before he was born. At night, the two siblings set off together on a magical journey, cycling through the forest and the fields, rowing a boat and forming a special connection. The impressive composition and delicate colours of Marit Törnqvist's illustrations amplify the magic realist atmosphere of Jef Aerts's poetic text, from the bird's eye view of the siblings day-dreaming in the boat together to the moonlit night when the children fly through the air in a whirl of blue and purple hues. The night ends when the siblings visit the hospital where the sister lay ill and the graveyard where she lies buried. When the boy wakes up, he finds his bed empty and tells his mother about his special experience, which was »bigger than a dream.« »Groter dan een droom« is a delicate story that is comforting without being sentimental. It won the Flemish Boekenleeuw and has already been translated into several languages. (Age: 6+)



22

Kromhout, Rindert (text)

Haeringen, Annemarie van (illus.)

Die dag in augustus

(That day in August)

Amsterdam: Leopold, 2013. – 84 p.

ISBN 978-90-258-6188-9

Earthquake | Trauma | Art

The beautiful design of this book is striking, illustrating the healing power of art that is central to the story. It describes two days in the life of Enrico: the day before and a few days after an earthquake that destroys part of the Italian boy's village. Enrico likes drawing, especially drawing portraits of his stubborn grandfather, who has refused the love of a woman because she wouldn't let him joke about her belief in saints. Their conflict causes a split in a village that draws many foreign tourists coming to view the relics of a saint there. In the second part of the book, the villagers deal with the natural disaster that has struck them. The fine illustrations by Annemarie van Haeringen are presented as Enrico's, telling a more beautiful truth than any photograph could, as Enrico learned from his late grandmother. These pictures not only communicate what Enrico sees, but also how he feels when seeing it. Various illustrations are a beautiful tribute to life before the earthquake, and Enrico's way of dealing with trauma. (Age: 10+)



23

Molen, Janny van der (text)

Grote gedachten. Verhalen over filosofie

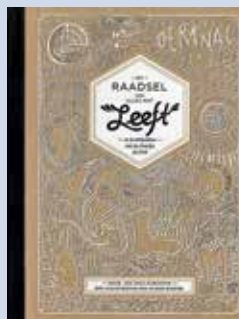
(Great thoughts. Stories about philosophy)

Amsterdam: Ploegsma, [2014]. – 233 p.

ISBN 978-90-216-7225-0

Philosophy

The six chapters of this book follow Mr. Swart as he introduces his class to philosophy. This is not a dry lesson in intellectual history, but a fluently written story about a teacher who tries to inspire his pupils to engage with the ideas of important thinkers, including Socrates, Plato, Nietzsche, and Hannah Arendt. It extensively treats questions in the foundations of knowledge, democracy, and morality. This discussion runs parallel to a narrative in which some pupils are brought to life as very credible characters, with all their pubescent traits and interpersonal relationships. The philosophical ideas discussed surface again in the pupils' own stories. They experience situations in which they have to make choices, choices that the historical philosophers also reflected upon. Janny van der Molen inspires her readers to think for themselves and to understand that philosophy is a fascinating and perennial pursuit, and that you do indeed learn more about yourself by engaging in it. (Age: 12+)



24

Schutten, Jan Paul (text)

Rieder, Floor (illus.)

Het raadsel van alles wat leeft en de stinksokken van Jos Grootjes uit Driel

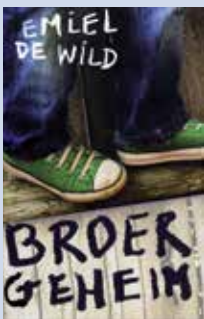
(The mystery of life – and stinky socks)

Haarlem: Gottmer, 2013. – 160 p.

ISBN 978-90-257-5346-7

Evolution | Non-fiction

Children are curious, and this book will keep even the nosiest readers busy for a while. It deals with the origin and development of the Earth and of life. Filled with information, the book explains complex matters such as evolution theory and DNA in a clear and witty style, starting with thought-provoking questions such as: »Where does that funny groove under your nose come from?« Jan Paul Schutten regularly refers to children's popular culture for his explanations. For example, Lego helps to clarify the difference between dead and living matter, and Justin Bieber is invoked to explain the origin of RNA. Floor Rieder's illustrations further help to clarify complex theories and help children get an image of prehistoric animals and fossils, often adding extra humour. The beautiful design of the book presents her work in the best possible way. Interestingly, Schutten leaves room for doubts and conflicting theories, inviting children to think and do research themselves. (Age: 10+)



25

Wild, Emiel de (text)

Broergeheim

(A brother's secret)

Amsterdam: Leopold, 2013. – 168 p.

ISBN 978-90-258-6204-6

Siblings | Disappearance | Secret | Searching | Epistolary novel | Thriller

In this epistolary novel for adolescents, a boy named Joeri is sent to his grandmother overnight without an explanation. When he is finally allowed to return home, the family has moved and his parents pretend that he is the only child, although he did have an elder brother, Stefan, before. Stefan has done something so terrible that it is unspeakable, yet Joeri is determined to find out what happened and where his brother is. He reconstructs his recent experiences with Stefan and his search for him in a series of gripping letters. »Broergeheim« is Emiel de Wild's breathtaking debut, fast-paced and bold. Although the starting point of the plot may seem outrageous, the parents' – and especially the mother's – psychology is authentically developed. The novel is a genuine page-turner, as the reader – like Joeri – becomes ever more anxious to find out what the brother did. The ending is shocking and leaves one with a lot to think about, and no easy answers. (Age: 11+)



26

Woltz, Anna (text)

Mijn bijzonder rare week met Tess

(My particularly odd week with Tess)

Amsterdam: Querido, 2013. – 167 p.

ISBN 978-90-451-1488-0

Father / Daughter | Family

Ten-year-old Samuel is spending a week with his family in a holiday house on the Dutch island Texel, where he meets a peculiar girl called Tess. She has a special plan: Her father does not know that he has a daughter, but Tess has managed to find out his name and address. Tess wants to meet her father and then decide if she wants to reveal her true identity to him. Samuel assists her with this plan, yet at the same time he is plagued by his own insecurity and existential questions. Anna Woltz has written a funny and entertaining story with deeper layers – in this way it has something to offer to both experienced and new readers. Woltz narrates an interesting development in her protagonists. With her extrovert character, Tess pushes Samuel to decide between continuing to be a spectator or taking his life into his own hands. Big life questions, as well as countless silly passages and slapstick moments are interwoven in a lively and highly original plot. (Age: 9+)



27

Boyd, Jillian (text)
Mordey, Tori-Jay (illus.)

Bakir and Bi

Broome: Magabala Books, 2013. – 63 p.
ISBN 978-1-921248-86-3

Island | Famine | Survival | Totem |
Creation myth

Set on a small fictional island in the Torres Strait in ancient times, this book, winner of the 2012 kuril dhagun Indigenous Writing Fellowship, was inspired by a picture drawn by a well known 20th century Torres Strait Island artist. In a mesmerising narration interspersed with local words and beliefs, the indigenous author presents the tale of a small family who enjoy their peaceful and happy life on the beautiful island of Egur until hard times arrive and people start fighting each other. When father Bakir and their pet pelican and family totem Bi disappear, just as a dream had warned, mother Mar and the two children embark on a dangerous journey in their little boat to seek a safe new home. The numerous comicbook-like pictures in the small-format book were created by the Torres-Strait author's eighteen-year-old niece. Executed in a limited palette of black, white, brown, and blue-green, they deftly portray the protagonists' emotions, the suspenseful journey, and the luscious landscape. (Age: 6+)



28

Brugman, Alyssa (text)

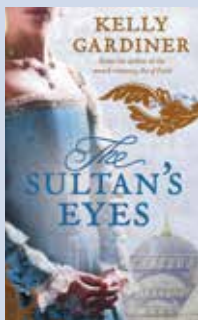
Alex as well

Melbourne: The Text Publishing Company,
2013. – 223 p.
ISBN 978-1-922079-23-7

Intersexuality | Identity | Family | Bullying |
Coming-of-age novel

Since the publication of her first young adult novel, »Finding Grace«, in 2001, Alyssa Brugman has delivered a number of thought-provoking books for children and teenagers. Her latest offering is no exception. In an engaging tale, told from two different points of view, it tackles the topics of intersexuality, bullying, and search for one's identity. The novel's main protagonist, fourteen-year-old Alex, has been raised as a boy but always felt that something wasn't right. When she suddenly announces to her parents that she is a girl, her egocentric mother suffers a nervous breakdown. Alex stops taking her hormone medication, enrolls in a new school, and secretly decides to have her gender legally reassigned; all the while her mother seeks help on a blog and desperately tries everything to steer life back to »normal«. The girl relates her side of the story in a witty, sarcastic voice that draws readers in and reveals that she is struggling with a lot of emotional pain. (Age: 14+)

29



Gardiner, Kelly (text)

The sultan's eyesSydney: Angus & Robertson / HarperCollins,
2013. – 336 p.

ISBN 978-0-7322-9480-9 – 978-0-7304-9984-8

Book | Education | Gender inequality |
Religion | Politics | Historical fiction

It's the year 1648 and Isabella Hawkins, who had just found a new home in Venice after being chased across half of Europe by the Spanish Inquisition, is uprooted again. The well-educated, headstrong English girl and her friends – the Venetian publisher Signora Contarini, the Dutch printer's assistant Willem, and the cartographer Al-Qasim – have to escape their old enemy Fra Clement. Since the arm of the inquisition is long, they decide to leave the Christian world behind and journey to Constantinople to seek refuge there. In her latest historical novel for teens, Kelly Gardiner continues the story begun in her award-winning book »Act of Faith« (2011). Through the eyes of the books' impulsive and curious heroine, in this sequel readers experience everyday life in the seventeenth century first in Venice, then in the capital of the Ottoman Empire. In addition to being an amusing and gripping adventure story, this ambitious novel also discusses questions of gender inequality, religion, philosophy, and politics. (Age: 14+)

30



Hunt, Julie (text)

Song for a Scarlet RunnerEast Melbourne: Allen and Unwin,
2013. – 315 p.

ISBN 978-1-74331-358-9

Survival | Bargain | Betrayal | Friendship |
Storytelling | Dystopia | Fantasy novel

When a mysterious illness ravages a village and the village chief blames nine-year-old Peat for it, the girl has to flee into the endless marshes. After she almost perishes in the dangerous third fog, she falls into the hands of an old marsh aunty called Eadie, who takes Peat on as her apprentice supposedly to teach her the art of storytelling. However, Eadie betrays the orphan girl to settle an old bill and Peat is left to fight the malevolent Siltman and escape from the land beyond the silver river with the help of her new found friends, a 900-year-old boy, and a cunning furry feral creature. Tasmanian children's book author Julie Hunt has written a number of enticing stories for younger children including »The Coat«, illustrated by Ron Brooks. In this magical tale, set in a fairytale-like realm, she sends her brave and resourceful protagonist on a challenging quest. The suspenseful story is peopled with unusual and endearing characters that make this book a truly enjoyable read. (Age: 8+)

31



Kostakis, Will (text)

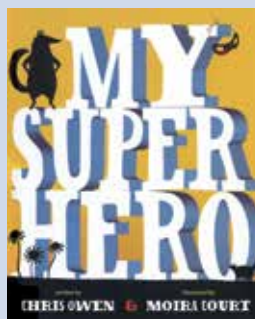
The first third

Melbourne: Penguin Books, 2013. – 247 p.
ISBN 978-0-14-356817-9

Children of immigrants | Cultural identity |
Grief | Coming-of-age novel

»I was fourteen when my grandmother taught me about love and the difference between moussaka and lasagne.« Seventeen-year-old Billy Tsiolkas has a problem or two. Not only has he fallen in love with an Australian »lasagne« girl (as opposed to a good Greek »moussaka« girl), but his grandmother has handed him her bucket list, demanding that he act as the glue to patch up his broken family. Whereas the first item – »Find your mummy husband« – if not exactly easy, might be at least manageable, fixing his two brothers' lives seems an insurmountable task for Billy, even with the ingenious help from his best friend Sticks. In turn hilarious and heartbreaking, this moving novel about a Greek-Australian family and their struggle with life and with their beloved matriarchal grandmother's sudden death is the second novel of young author Will Kostakis. The fast-paced, dialogue-driven narration immediately sucks readers into the story and doesn't release them until the very last page. (Age: 14+)

32



Owen, Chris (text)

Court, Moira (illus.)

My superhero

Fremantle: Fremantle Press, 2013. – [36] p.
ISBN 978-1-921888-97-7

Father | Superhero | Characteristics |
Animal story

As its title suggests, this entertaining picture book is not only about superheroes in general but also about one very particular superhero – a young (animal) child's father. Chris Owen's witty and evocative rhymes boast of the speed, strength, audacity, and gracefulness that seem to come with a superhero's job description. Each verse then culminates in the refrain in which the young narrator praises his or her hero's even more important powers – such as giving hugs, singing songs, providing comfort, and reading books. Moira Court's colourful double-spread illustrations, executed in acrylics, charcoal, pastel, and pencil, add an element of surprise to the text by portraying not human but animal superheroes that perfectly fit the description; thus a »muscly« brown bear with »handsome looks« – naturally wearing the obligatory superhero mask – is presented »catching crooks«, i.e. rascally foxes. A small glossary at the back provides additional superhero facts for each animal included. (Age: 4+)

33



Parker, Danny (text)
Ottley, Matt (illus.)

Parachute

Richmond: Little Hare, 2013. – [32] p.
ISBN 978-1-921894-20-6

Fear | Courage

Following »No Kind of Superman« and »Tree«, »Parachute« is Danny Parker's third picture book collaboration with multi-award-winning illustrator Matt Ottley. In this book, an anxious little boy only manages to brave the dangers of everyday life thanks to a bright yellowy-orange parachute that he wears wherever he ventures. The short text describing Toby's seemingly harmless undertakings – such as getting out of bed or climbing down from the breakfast stool – is given an adventurous twist through Ottley's imaginative visual interpretations that show the scared boy's point of view: In the digital oil and pastel illustrations in various sizes and formats, the zoo elephant suddenly looms threateningly over the boy, and his short bedside ladder shoots up above the clouds into an endless sky leaving him suspended in mid-air. However, after rescuing his cat from the tree house, Toby slowly but surely summons enough courage to face life without his parachute. (Age: 4+)

34



Various authors (text/illus.)

Donkeys can't fly on planes. Stories of survival from South Sudanese refugee children living in Australia

Abbotsford: Kids' Own Publishing, 2012. – 53 p.
ISBN 978-0-9874290-3-2

Africa | Refugee | Migration | War | Survival | Non-fiction

Kids' Own Publishing is a not-for-profit organisation which was originally founded in Ireland in 1997 and now exists both in Ireland and Australia. One of its main aims is to encourage children and their families from different cultures to write, illustrate, and publish their own books. In »Donkeys can't fly on planes«, twenty-two refugee children from South Sudan, who now live in Australia, share their personal survival stories. In short, honest texts that are accompanied by mixed-media collage illustrations, the children talk about life in Sudan, Ethiopia, Kenya, and other African countries. They share experiences of starvation and war, of family separation and death, but they also describe African customs and traditions, everyday life and happy memories. The twenty-five stories gathered in this volume were created in workshops conducted by professional artists and writers who helped the children find their own voices. (Age: 6+)

35



MacLean, Jill (text)

Nix minus one

Toronto: Pajama Press, 2013. – 287 p.

ISBN 978-1-927485-24-8

Siblings | Death | Grief | Self-confidence |
Verse novel

Jill Maclean is a versatile and prolific author of books for adults. Lately, she has added four books for a younger audience to her output. Her latest work is a moving, pain-filled verse novel starring fifteen-year-old Nixon Humboldt. Nix is a quiet, introvert young man who prefers reading and woodwork to interacting with people. He generally avoids trouble but thus also avoids fighting for what he believes in; until one day, when he falls in love with a mangy dog and decides to stand up to her abusive owner to save her life. Gradually, he opens up a little and finds new friends, but then his beloved older sister Roxy is killed in an accident and his parents are devastated and overwhelmed with grief. Peopled with believable characters and told in an authentic voice, the novel makes readers witness Nix's struggle with his conflicting emotions and his (unfounded) guilt about his sister's death. (Age: 14+)

36



Paleja, S. N. (text)

Sagastume, Dafne (illus.)

Loring, Kevin (introduction)

Native Americans. A visual exploration

Toronto [et al.]: Annick Press, 2013. – 48 p.

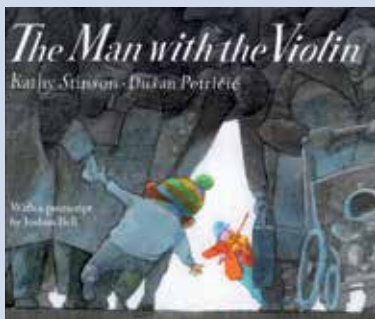
(Series: The big picture)

ISBN 978-1-55451-485-4

Native Americans | Non-fiction

As Canadian playwright Kevin Loring, a member of the Nlaka'Pamux First Nation, states in his introduction: »Native American people are as different as the land they come from.« That is why a non-fiction book about »all« Native Americans is bound to contain a number of generalisations. It can at best serve as a first introduction to the topic, inspiring young readers to dive deeper into the matter by doing their own extensive research. Nevertheless as a »snapshot«, as Loring calls it, this book is a success. It is divided into six different sections that strive to answer questions about different Native Americans' origins, their society, food (e.g. the bison as a »walking department store«), culture, contact with other people, and modern day developments. Instead of photographs, it uses colourful infographics, maps, charts, and statistics that offer a certain degree of abstraction and provide visually attractive insights into their lives from prehistoric times to the present. (Age: 10+)

37



Stinson, Kathy (text)
Petričić, Dušan (illus.)
Bell, Joshua (postscript)

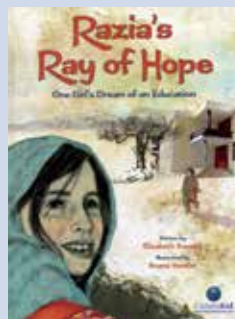
The man with the violin

Toronto [et al.]: Annick Press, 2014. – [36] p.
ISBN 978-1-55451-565-3

Music | Attention | Imagination | Mother / Son

In 2007, famous American violinist Joshua Bell took part in an experiment: Dressed like an ordinary street musician, he played at a busy subway station in Washington D.C., but sadly enough, hardly anyone stopped to listen for more than a minute – except children. When award-winning author Kathy Stinson learned of this experiment, she was inspired to create the story of a little boy who is so entranced when he hears »The Man with the Violin« play, that he keeps pestering his inattentive mother all day, until she finally halts and takes note of the wonderful music. Stinson's musical text is touching and thought-provoking in itself, yet the way that renowned illustrator Dušan Petričić transforms it into pictures is ingenious. In his illustrations, the world is shown in black and white with scratchy black zigzags representing the noise and hectic of city life. Music penetrates this monochrome universe as fluid, energetic full-colour streams, sweeping the enchanted child listener off his feet. (Age: 4+)

38



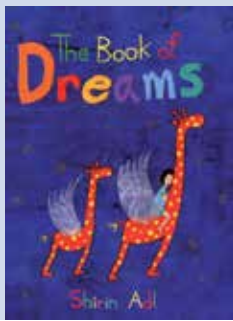
Suneby, Elizabeth (text)
Verelst, Suana (illus.)

Razia's ray of hope. One girl's dream of an education

Toronto [et al.]: Kids Can Press, 2013. – [32] p.
(Series: CitizenKid)
ISBN 978-1-55453-816-4

Afghanistan | Girl | Education | School

»Razia's Ray of Hope« is both the title of this moving picture book and the name of a foundation started by Afghan-American Razia Jan in 2007 to improve the lives of women and children in Afghanistan through education. In American writer Elizabeth Suneby's fictionalised story of the Zabuli Education Center for Girls near Kabul, a young girl called Razia dreams of becoming a teacher and thus is ecstatic when she learns that a girls' school is being built in her village. Although her grandfather and mother are on her side, it takes a lot of persuading until her father and older brother Aziz finally allow her to attend school. Suana Verelst's eclectic digital collages created from photographs, traditional fabric, and pencil illustrations, among other things, offer glimpses of village life in Afghanistan and of an intelligent girl determined to get an education. An appendix at the back provides a glossary of Dari words and some background information about the power of education. (Age: 5+)



39

Adl, Shirin (text/illus.)

The book of dreams

London: Frances Lincoln Children's Books, 2013. – [26] p.
ISBN 978-1-84780-383-2

[Dream](#) | [Imagination](#)

Dreams can be simple or confusing, comforting or scary, quiet or exciting. In dreams, anything is possible: We can be huge or tiny, we can talk to animals, we can even travel through time. Renowned illustrator and storyteller Shirin Adl was born in the UK, grew up in Iran, and then returned to England to study illustration. She loves experimenting with various materials to find the perfect medium for each of her works. In her latest picture book, she takes young readers on a joyful romp through dreams in their various forms and shapes. The short poetic text is transformed into colourful mixed-media collage illustrations that will inspire little children to explore their own creativity and let their imagination roam. This book encourages children to look forward to their dream adventures instead of being afraid of possible nightmares and invites them to share the dreams with their friends and family. (Age: 3+)



40

Brooks, Kevin (text)

The bunker diary

London: Penguin/Puffin, 2013. – 246 p.
ISBN 978-0-141-32612-2

[Kidnapping](#) | [Confinement](#) | [Group dynamics](#) | [Survival](#) | [Hope](#) | [Despair](#) | [Thriller](#)

Renowned and popular author Kevin Brooks is well known for his gripping and challenging books for young adults. And gripping this new novel, winner of the Carnegie Medal 2014, certainly is. Teenager Linus is abducted and kept in a windowless underground bunker with a lift as the only channel of contact. Within a few days of his arrival, he is joined by five other captives between the ages of nine and seventy-plus, from heroin addict to middle class business man. In a diary, Linus carefully observes what is happening and how group dynamics evolve during the next few weeks as it becomes clear that their invisible kidnapper above enjoys manipulating, tormenting, and punishing them for trying to break out. The ending is bleak and heartbreaking and will certainly stay in the readers' minds. However, the book stands out for its captivating description of unexpected friendships and alliances, of survival strategies, and of the human psyche in an extreme situation. (Age: 14+)

41



Dowd, Siobhan (text)

Smy, Pam (illus.)

The ransom of Dond

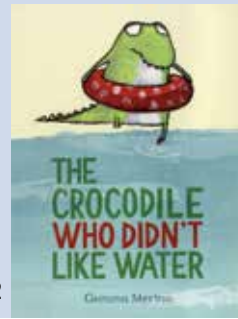
Oxford: David Fickling, 2013. – 83 p.

ISBN 978-0-857-56090-2

Island | Gods | Greed | Curse | Deceit | Love |
Literary fairy tale

Before her untimely death in 2007, Irish author Siobhan Dowd published four award-winning novels for children. The last story she wrote is a haunting tale of greed, destiny, and the power of love. Ages ago, Dond, the dark god of the underworld, cursed the tiny island of Inniscaul. He threatened to destroy the whole island unless he was granted a ransom – every child who was the thirteenth child of a family had to be sacrificed at age thirteen. In exchange for this gift, he promised the island people thirteen years of wealth and good fortune. On the night before the ceremony, Darra, destined to die on her thirteenth birthday, meets her older twin brother Bawn and is visited by a mysterious black-bird who takes the children on a journey to reveal some hidden truth. Illustrator Pam Smy has created atmospheric two-colour drawings in black and blue that bring alive the awe-inspiring island landscape and the peculiar characters of the timeless story. (Age: 10+)

42



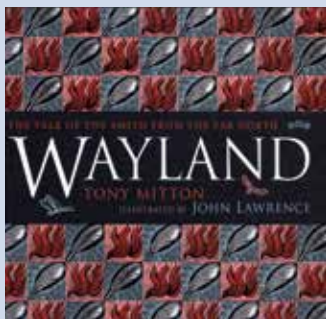
Merino, Gemma (text/illus.)

The crocodile who didn't like waterLondon [et al.]: Macmillan Children's Books,
2013. – [32] p.

ISBN 978-0-2307-6586-3

Siblings | Otherness | Loneliness | Talent |
Hydrophobia | Animal story

It's a well-known fact that crocodiles just LOVE water. They love jumping into it, swimming around in it, playing ball, diving deep down... Yet there is this one little crocodile brother who hates the mere thought of the wet element. He tries very hard, but even with a bright red rubber ring, water doesn't grow on him in the least. He finds it wet and cold and embarrassing. Then suddenly, with one big »Achooo«, he discovers why he feels differently from his brothers and sisters and can finally embrace his otherness. And what's best of all: His siblings accept him as he is and come to love his special talent. Originally from near Barcelona, Gemma Merino first studied architecture before she completed a degree in illustration at Cambridge School of Art. Her endearing debut picture book about a hydrophobic not-quite-crocodile, executed in monotype and mixed media, won her the Macmillan Prize for Illustration in 2011 and several other accolades. (Age: 3+)



43

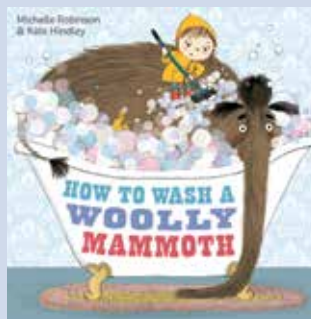
Mitton, Tony (text)
Lawrence, John (illus.)

Wayland

Oxford: David Fickling Books, 2013. – [60] p.
ISBN 978-0-8575-6014-8

Wayland the Smith | Metamorphosis | Love | Greed | Revenge | Mythology | Verse novel

Wayland, aka Weland or Völundra, is a master blacksmith depicted in Germanic and Norse mythology. In this beautiful square volume, award-winning poet Tony Mitton creates his own version of the ancient tale with a hopeful twist at the end. After Wayland's wife shapeshifts back into a swan and leaves him, the blacksmith finds solace in hard work and becomes famous for his exquisite creations. Greedy King Nidud imprisons him on an island where he has to labour day and night to increase the king's riches. Patiently and cleverly, Wayland plans his escape and takes cruel revenge on the king before he flies away to be reunited with his wife in the sky. Mitton's entrancing verse narrative, reminiscent of old ballads, is visually recreated in atmospheric (digitally enhanced) wood and vinyl engravings by renowned artist John Lawrence. The detailed pictures – from full page to vignettes – perfectly underscore both the dire aspects of the tale and the hopeful ending. (Age: 10+)



44

Robinson, Michelle (text)
Hindley, Kate (illus.)

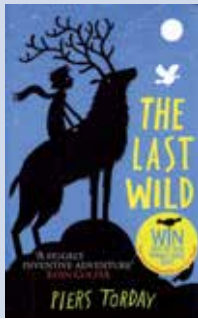
How to wash a woolly mammoth

London: Simon & Schuster, 2013. – [32] p.
ISBN 978-0-85707-579-6

Pet | Washing | Hydrophobia

This one-hundred percent serious, informational step-by-step guide will be of great help to all those children who are not quite sure how to approach the tricky business of cleaning up their hairy best friend: the woolly mammoth. Not surprisingly, the mammoth in this hilarious manual seems more than reluctant to get wet at first, but once inside the bath tub, it relents and lets itself be scrubbed and shampooed – at least until some soap gets in its eyes... From the various beauty products, such as »Tusk Whitener«, »Antibacterial Hoof Wash«, and »Aqua-phobic Dry Shampoo«, to the suggestions of how »To get a wet woolly mammoth down from a tree«, Michelle Robinson has gathered essential nonsensical information that will leave little readers (and their parents) giggling hysterically. Kate Hindley's expressive pen-and-ink and watercolour illustrations show the resourceful child's witty solutions to every single problem and skilfully portray the mammoth's feelings at being force-cleaned. (Age: 3+)

45



Torday, Piers (text)

The last wild

London: Quercus, 2013. – 325 p.
ISBN 978-1-78087-830-0

Imprisonment | Escape | Survival |
Animal extinction | Dystopia | Fantasy novel

Piers Torday began his career writing for theatre, comedy-shows, and television. In his debut novel for children, he describes the world as a bleak place. All animals (except for some insects) have ostensibly been killed by an epidemic called »the red eye«. The country is in quarantine, and life is controlled by the powerful Facto Company. Twelve-year-old Kester Janyes, who is virtually held prisoner in a home for troubled kids, hasn't spoken a word for years. Yet, when an army of cockroaches and a flock of pigeons help him escape, he discovers that he can communicate with animals. The last few animal survivors are hiding in the far north of the country and have summoned him to help them find a cure for the red eye. Thus a difficult, dangerous, and distressful journey starts for Kester and his new friends. Brimming with idiosyncratic human and animal characters, this novel for children is a fun and gripping read. (Age: 8+)

46



Srinivasan, Shalini (text)

Simon, Sebin (illus.)

Vanamala and the cephalopod

Chennai: Duckbill Books, 2014. – 182 p.
ISBN 978-93-83331-09-3

Siblings | Kidnapping | Mythical creature |
Underwater world | Good / Evil | Quest |
Fantasy novel

Duckbill is a small publishing house started in 2012 by popular author Anushka Ravishankar and experienced editor Sayoni Basu. Their aim is to provide thought-provoking, curious, and joyful books for children and teenagers from whimsical history-mysteries and wacky space adventures to thrillingly realistic teenage novels. Shalini Srinivasan's debut novel »Vanamala and the Cephalopod« is well-suited for this list. It is brimming with imaginative elements, quirky characters, and unexpected twists and is adorned with witty illustrations. The book features a young girl who feels guilty for offering her annoying younger sister for sale – who was she to know that a gigantic sea creature would actually snatch at this offer? She tries to get her sibling back from the underwater world with the help of the mythical Basavana. Woven into the main story are several pseudo fables providing conflicting explanations for the genealogy of the evil Cephalopod. A fun read for young and old alike. (Age: 8+)



47

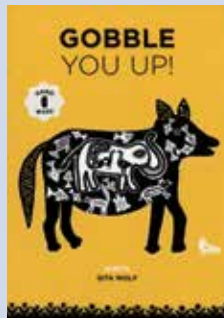
Subramaniam, Manasi (text)
Fox, Culpeo S. (illus.)

The fox and the crow

Chennai: Karadi Tales, 2014. – [28] p.
ISBN 978-81-8190-302-0

Greed | Flattery | Fable

Aesop's fable about the cunning fox who flatters the crow (or in some tales it's a raven) in order to steal his food, is well known the world over and available in many versions and different media. Manasi Subramaniam and artist Culpeo S. Fox explore the tale from an unusual angle. In this visually stunning retelling of the encounter between the two sly animals, the text is reduced to poetic allusions and comments: »Thief! / Bread is best eaten by twilight. / But a pair of eyes glitters dangerously from the dark edges of the woods. / [...] Their eyes meet, a challenge is spoken.« The words leave ample space for the expressive, dark mixed-media illustrations to move the story forward. The large-format pictures present various close-ups of the two protagonists, and skilfully capture the night-time atmosphere and the tension between fox and crow. Thanks to the absence of the usual moral, readers can find their own interpretation of the timeless story. (Age: 5+)



48

Wolf, Gita (text)
Sunita / Prabhāta (Prabhat) (retell.)
Sunita (illus.)
Varadarajan, Suseela (transl.)

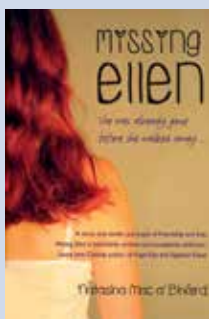
Gobble you up!

Chennai: Tara Books, 2013. – [40] p.
ISBN 978-81-923171-4-4

Greed | Punishment | Trickster | Folk tale

Lazy jackal is a conniving fellow: He tricks his best friend crane into providing him with a yummy meal of fish and when she complains, he just gobbles her up. To avoid being criticised or reprimanded, the greedy omnivore devours all the animals who step in his path, including peacock and elephant, until his fat tummy can't take any more and bursts open. Tara Books, renowned for producing beautiful handmade books, have created another gem. The witty trickster tale is based on an old Rajasthani folk tale transformed by Gita Wolf into a catchy text with cumulative rhymes. The stunning artwork was created by Meena artist Sunita in an ancient art form called Mandna. Traditionally rendered in white lime on brown mud walls and floors of village homes with soaked cloths by Meena women, the detailed illustrations with intricate designs for this book were painted in white acrylics on brown kraft paper, then photographed and printed by silkscreen in two colours. A feast for the eyes! (Age: 5+)

49



Mac a'Bháird, Natasha (text)

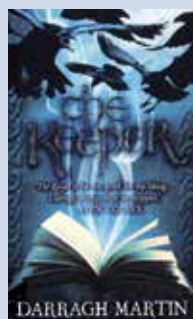
Missing Ellen

Dublin: The O'Brien Press, 2013. – 173 p.
ISBN 978-1-84717-353-9

Friend | Fatal accident | Grief | Counselling |
Coming-of-age novel

Natasha Mac a'Bháird first ventured into the field of children's literature with »Olanna's Big Day«, the story of a little Nigerian girl's first St Patrick's Day celebration. In her poignant coming-of-age novel, the freelance writer and editor now explores the topic of teenage friendship and loss. The story unfolds, step by step, through Maggie's memories of the past few months and through letters she writes to her missing friend. Since the day they met in kindergarten, shy Maggie and adventurous Ellen had been best friends. But suddenly Ellen started to seek thrills in partying and drinking with her older boyfriend; and now Maggie is left behind struggling with grief, guilt, and loneliness. Was it her fault that Ellen fell in with the »wrong crowd«? The authentic first-person narrative draws readers into the book and makes them witness Maggie's confusion, sadness, and anger as she slowly comes to terms with the events and manages to move on. (Age: 14+)

50



Martin, Darragh (text)

The Keeper

Dublin: Little Island, 2013. – 267 p.
ISBN 978-1-908195-84-5

Island | Magic | Kidnapping | Evil | Siblings |
Mythology | Fantasy novel

A book of magic, a flock of ravens with green eyes, Granny's Celtic tale about the shape-shifting queen Morrigan – and suddenly Oisín and his siblings are whisked away (by public transport!) to the island of the fairy people. What seems like a wonderful adventure at first, quickly turns into a dangerous quest when little Sorcha is kidnapped by the evil queen. To rescue his younger sister, and learn more about his role as Keeper of the book, Oisín stows away on the magical ship Eachtra. Together with new friends, he braves the dangers of the Pool of Sadness, the Forest of Shadows, and the Fire-Fields in the north. For his first fantasy novel for children, Irish playwright Darragh Martin throws a captivating mixture of elements from Irish mythology, modern magical ingredients, and fascinating (partly hilarious) characters into his cauldron and cooks up an enchanting read full of suspense. (Age: 9+)



51

Quek Sue Yian (text)
Khairul Azmir Shoib (illus.)

Kailash

<proper name>

Kuala Lumpur: Oyez! / Integra Majujaya,
2012. – [48] p.
ISBN 978-967-5250-82-8

[Dictator](#) | [War](#) | [Refugee](#) | [Racism](#) | [Friendship](#) |
[Family](#) | [Animal story](#)

A long time ago, okapis and zebras lived together peacefully in the savannah. When food and space become limited and a new leader rises among the okapi, zebras are suddenly declared illegal and war breaks out. Kailash, a little orphan zebra, has to flee the country. He tries to find a new home among a herd of performing foals, yet they and their owner are less than friendly at first. In this moving, fable-like story, told from the little zebra's point of view, author Quek Sue Yian addresses the arbitrariness of war as well as the prejudice and harsh treatment that refugees often face. The energetic mixed-media illustrations by Khairul Azmir Shoib add a gothic touch to the book by portraying the scenes and characters in dark colours and distorted shapes. They skilfully capture the young refugee's fears and feeling of isolation. With an introduction by UNHCR Malaysia and notes for parents and teachers at the back, this book is an attractive incentive to talk about war and refugees. (Age: 5+)



52

Knox, Elizabeth (text)

Mortal fire

Wellington: Gecko Press, 2013. – 434 p.
ISBN 978-1-877579-53-0

[Island](#) | [Magic](#) | [Search for identity](#) | [Love](#) |
[Stepbrother](#) | [Fantasy novel](#)

Renowned New Zealand author Elizabeth Knox writes both adult and teenage fiction. Her latest work for young readers is set in the same parallel world as her two popular »Dreamhunter« books, namely a Pacific island called Southland, albeit half a century later, in 1959. Canny, a mathematically gifted but socially awkward sixteen-year-old, is forced to spend her school holidays in a remote Southland valley, helping her older stepbrother and his girlfriend with their university research. She soon notices that the Zarene family members, the valley's only inhabitants, do not only use a form of magic alphabet to perform spells but they also have some sinister secret to hide. Against all kinds of (magically enforced) resistance, Canny gains entrance to a hidden house and discovers a connection to her own mysterious past. In this gripping fantasy novel, the author weaves a cast of complex characters and various, seemingly unrelated events into a satisfying whole. (Age: 14+)

53



Unka, Vasanti (text/illus.)

The boring bookAuckland: Puffin, 2013. – [32] p.
ISBN 978-0-143-50575-4

Language | Book | Creativity | Freedom

Vasanti Unka used to work in the book industry mostly as graphic designer and illustrator; recently however, she has also published a few works of her own. Her latest creation is a celebration of the power of words. It opens with a small book »that no one ever read« on account of its utter dreariness. When the words in that publication get fed up with having to remain still, they suddenly rebel – first within the pages of their book, then outside, causing a lot of joy but also mayhem and irritation among the people who encounter them. The pastel-coloured washed-out pages in the first half of this carefully designed work create the feel of an old neglected library book. They serve as the frame for the book-within-a-book, which materialises in the form of small glued-on pages on which the unruly and boisterous letters play around. Once the letters manage to shake off their shackles, the whole book comes alive with bright colours and exuberant words inviting readers to dive in and join the linguistic fun. (Age: 5+)

54

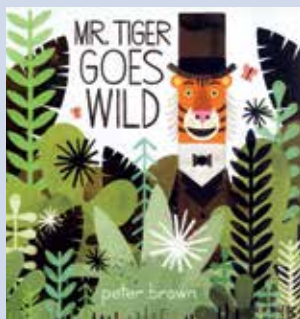


Molope, Kagiso Lesego (text)

This book betrays my brotherCape Town: Oxford University Press Southern Africa, 2012. – 189 p.
(Series: Oxford literature for southern Africa)
ISBN 978-0-19-905922-5Siblings | Loyalty | Rape | Guilty conscience |
Coming-of-age novel

»My mother and aunts tell me that my loyalty should only be to family.« No problem for thirteen-year-old Naledi, who adores her older brother Basimane. Popular and well respected, Basi fights for justice and plans to become a lawyer. She would have vouched for him any time. Yet, one day, she secretly witnesses as he rapes his girlfriend, and in these few minutes, Naledi's whole world collapses. All of her family and his friends insist she be loyal to him, but isn't it her duty as a girl to support the poor victim? Rape, loyalty, guilt, and betrayal – these are some of the topics that Kagiso Molope's third young adult novel addresses. Subtly and with great sensitivity, she describes her main protagonist's emotions and fears and the severe impact this »small event« has on her life. In addition, this book also gives insights into a black girl's everyday life in South Africa in the 1990s, as do both of Molope's earlier novels. (Age: 13+)

55



Brown, Peter (text/illus.)

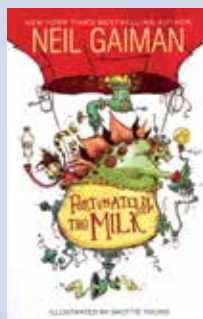
Mr. Tiger goes wild

New York [et al.]: Little, Brown & Co., 2013. – [44] p.
ISBN 978-0-316-20063-9

[City](#) | [Wilderness](#) | [Individuality](#) | [Animal story](#)

Mr. Tiger is fed up with life in the city and with »always being so proper«. He is longing for fun and excitement. So, one day, he does something outrageous: He starts walking around on all fours! When he goes »a little too far« and sheds all his clothes, including the top hat, most of his friends and neighbours are not amused. They send him to the wilderness to act out his whim. While at first Mr. Tiger is overjoyed, he soon starts to feel lonely and decides to return home, where – what a surprise! – things are slowly looking up. At the book's beginning, the monotonous city life is expressed in subdued shades of grey, brown, and cream with all animals clad in formal attire and living in uniform houses. In this environment, the bright orange of the tiger's fur clearly stands out and signals change. Peter Brown's latest masterpiece – executed in India ink, water-colour, gouache, and pencil, and digitally composited and coloured – celebrates individuality and the wild element in all of us. (Age: 4+)

56



Gaiman, Neil (text)

Young, Skottie (illus.)

Fortunately, the milk

New York: Harper, 2013. – 101 p.

ISBN 978-0-06-222407-1

(UK ed.: London: Bloomsbury, 2013.)

Illus. by Chris Riddell)

[Father / Children](#) | [Being late](#) | [Excuse](#) |
[Tall tale](#) | [Time travel](#)

Neil Gaiman is well known for his comic books and adult novels, as well as various picture books and short novels for children. »Fortunately, the Milk« is a perfect example for Gaiman's trademark mix of humour and eerie fantasy elements. The whole book is one very elaborate, extravagant excuse of a father for being late. While his children are waiting for him to get some milk from the corner shop, he was supposedly abducted by a flying saucer, floated around in a time-machine balloon with a stegosaurus professor, narrowly escaped being captured by Vumpires, and prevented the world from being taken over by evil aliens. Fortunately enough, he never loses the milk in all of his hair-raising adventures. Both the American and the British edition feature an abundance of amusing black-and-white illustrations. American artist Skottie Young and award-winning British illustrator Chris Riddell are equally adept at capturing the crazy tone of Gaiman's hilarious tall tale. (Age: 6+)

57



Gansworth, Eric (text/illus.)

If I ever get out of here. A novel with paintings

New York: Scholastic, 2013. – 359 p.

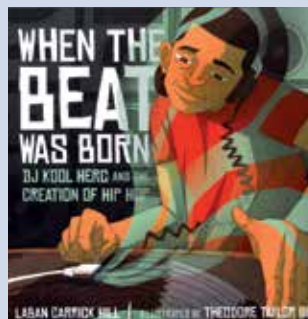
(Arthur A. Levine books)

ISBN 978-0-545-41730-3

[Native Americans](#) | [School](#) | [Outsider](#) |
[Bullying](#) | [Prejudice](#) | [Friendship](#) | [Poverty](#) |
[Music](#) | [Coming-of-age novel](#)

Eric Gansworth, a member of the Onondaga Nation, born and raised on the Tuscarora Reservation, is a visual artist and writer. His first young adult novel is a moving book about a young Tuscarora Indian boy's life in upstate New York in 1975. Lewis Blake lives on the »rez« and is the only Native American at the »brainiacs« group in his class at the white junior high school. When a new student, Air Force kid George, arrives at the beginning of seventh grade, Lewis lunges at the opportunity to finally make a friend. Although they come from vastly different backgrounds, the two boys quickly bond over their craze for the Beatles' music (which features prominently in the book and whose records covers inspire the illustrations), yet trust isn't gained easily. The author combines engaging dialogue, an amiable cast of authentic, partly quirky characters, and a believable narrative voice with plenty of humour to deliver honest descriptions of life in dire poverty, prejudice, shocking incidents of racist bullying, and a strong friendship against all odds. (Age: 12+)

58



Hill, Laban Carrick (text)

Taylor, Theodore III (illus.)

When the Beat was born. DJ Kool Herc and the creation of hip hop

New York: Roaring Brook Press, 2013. – [32] p.

ISBN 978-1-59643-540-7

[Kool DJ Herc](#) | [Hip hop music](#) | [Biography](#) |
[Non-fiction](#)

Clive Campbell, better known as DJ Kool Herc, was crazy about music and dreamed of becoming a DJ ever since he was a little boy in Jamaica. After his family moved to New York, he started going to neighbourhood house parties and organised his first dance party in 1973. At his parties, he prolonged the instrumental breaks between song lyrics, chanted and toasted over the music like his Jamaican idols, and invited some friends to rap when he DJed, thus creating a new style of music, later called hip hop, that united even rivalling youth gangs. In this picture book biography, award-winning author Laban Carrick Hill pays homage to a very influential figure and explains the »ingredients« that made him and his music so popular. The comic-book style illustrations in muted tones of mostly brown, green, and red by young illustrator Theodore Taylor III perfectly capture the tone of the story and the atmosphere of the 1970s hip hop scene. (Age: 8+)



59

Powell, Patricia Hruby (text)
Robinson, Christian (illus.)

Josephine. The dazzling life of Josephine Baker

San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 2014. – [104] p.
ISBN 978-1-4521-0314-3

[Baker, Josephine](#) | [Dancing](#) | [Racism](#) | [Civil Rights Movement](#) | [Biography](#) | [Non-fiction](#)

Performing on stage was Josephine Baker's life. Born into a poor family in St. Louis, she always felt the urge to dance, leap, and soar, and at thirteen grabbed the first opportunity to join a vaudeville troupe. She performed from New Orleans to Philadelphia to New York. However, segregation in the US made her seek a new home in Paris where her vivacity, comic talent, and determination ensured her huge success. Yet, the flamboyant exotic dancer had another side, too: She was also mother of her »rainbow tribe«, a fighter for social justice, and a war spy. The book is divided into six »acts«, i.e. phases of her life, each opening with a double spread of a stage with raised curtain. Written in catching free verse by ex-dancer Patricia Hruby Powell, with various Baker quotations sprinkled throughout the book, this biography sparkles with the spirit and pizzazz of the »Black Venus«. The lively acrylic illustrations in matted shades visualise Josephine's life during the first half of the twentieth century. (Age: 10+)



60

Rosenthal, Amy Krouse (text)
Lichtenheld, Tom (illus.)

Exclamation mark

New York: Scholastic Press, 2014. – [48] p.
ISBN 978-0-545-43679-3

[Outsider](#) | [Loneliness](#) | [Search for identity](#) | [Self-confidence](#)

Amy Krouse Rosenthal and Tom Lichtenheld have worked together on picture books, such as the award-winning »Duck! Rabbit!«, but also published independently. Their latest collaboration tackles a common topic: the outsider's fear of not fitting in. However, they discuss this problem in a fairly unusual way. True, their protagonist is a somewhat shy, lonely creature who struggles with being different. However, this being is not a small child or a cute animal, as one might expect, but rather a feature of punctuation. Feeling too conspicuous in a group of full stops, the exclamation mark tries its best to fit in and longs to find its place in the world – which it does eventually, thanks to the help of the boisterous question mark. Rendered in a reduced graphic style of mostly black-and-white print on a creamy lined background, the quest for its true self culminates in a colourful double-page spread featuring exclamations such as »Go!«, »Cool!«, and »Home run!«. (Age: 4+)

61



Scieszka, Jon / Barnett, Mac (text)
Myers, Matthew (illus.)

Battle Bunny

New York [et al.]: Simon & Schuster Books
for Young Readers, 2013. – [32] p.
ISBN 978-1-4424-4673-1

[Birthday](#) | [Super powers](#) | [Villain](#) | [Creativity](#) |
[Imagination](#) | [Metafiction](#)

Birthday Bunny – so the »original« title – is a sweet little picture book that young Alex receives from his grandmother. The boy is obviously enraged about such a boring, babyish present and quickly grabs a black pencil to improve the story. With a few additions to the illustrations and some changes to the text, cute little Birthday Bunny is turned into powerful Battle Bunny who hatches an evil plan and cannot be stopped by his enemies – until Alex himself steps in and saves the world. In this highly metafictional, complex work, popular authors Jon Scieszka and Mac Barnett have teamed up with illustrator Matthew Myers (and fictional Alex, of course). The harmless, syrupy tale about a rabbit who feels neglected by his friends morphs into an action-filled battle-heavy superhero adventure. Together they create a two-layered story – with both levels visible at the same time – that invites little readers to let their own creativity loose and resume power over their story. (Age: 6+)

62



Yang, Gene Luen (text/illus.)
Pien, Lark (colouring)

Boxers & Saints

New York: First Second, 2013. – 2 vols.,
328 p. + 170 p.
ISBN 978-1-59643-359-5, 978-1-59643-689-3

[China / 1900](#) | [Colonialism](#) | [Imperialism](#) |
[Boxer Rebellion](#) | [Identity](#) | [Religion](#) |
[Historical fiction](#) | [Graphic novel](#)

Yihetuan yundong, an anti-colonial movement in Northern China, was termed »Boxer Rebellion« due to the martial arts training of its followers. The subsequent punitive expedition by allied Western troops in 1900 resulted in its defeat. Until today this historical conflict continues to shape Chinese foreign relations and concepts of a »Chinese identity«. It provides the setting for this graphic novel narrated in two volumes from the perspectives of two opponents: Bao, the Boxer, hero, and essentially a terrorist, and Four-Girl, the Saint, a neglected girl who converts to Christianity and moves on to become a traitor and martyr. The story is framed by their two brief encounters: In the beginning, Bao falls in love with Four-Girl, and in the end, he kills her due to his convictions. This work, winner of the 34th annual Los Angeles Times Book Prize for Young Adult Literature, raises issues of cultural, spiritual, and nationalist identities, of fundamentalist beliefs, and of the justification of self-defense, violence, and killing. (Age: 12+)



63

Saar, Anti (text)
Jaakson, Alvar (illus.)

Kuidas meil asjad käivad

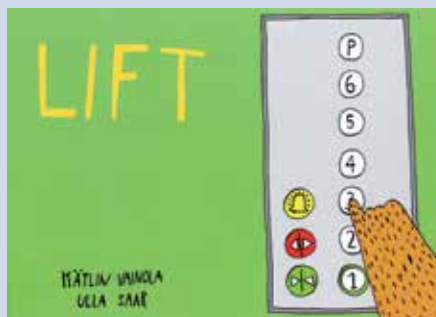
(How things work in our family)

Tallinn: Tänapäev, 2013. – 134 p.

ISBN 978-9949-27-352-2

Family | Everyday life

Anti Saar (b. 1980), translator of French texts and author of adult fiction, made his debut in the field of children's literature in 2013 – and a very successful debut it was, too! According to the Estonian Children's Literature Centre, his story about a little boy named Vassel ranks among the top three of Estonian children's books published that year. The book was recognised as the »Raisin of the Year«, the Estonian prize given to the most surprising children's title of the year. In fifteen chapters, readers get to know the world of Vassel, which shows how crazy »ordinary« family life nowadays can be, if you look at it from the perspective of a little boy. Fresh, funny and very entertaining, Vassel leads readers through unconventional conversations (also with and amongst adults) and his curious observations of so-called daily life. With Alvar Jaakson's funny, cartoon-style illustrations, this book celebrates the discovery of and astonishment over how things apparently work in the world. (Age: 8+)



64

Vainola, Kätlin (text)

Saar, Ulla (illus.)

Lift

(Elevator)

Tallinn: Kirjastus Pegasus, 2013. – [32] p.

ISBN 978-9949-531-05-9

Apartment building | Individuality | Neighbour |
Housing community | Animal story

Here comes »the« Estonian picture book of 2013. It is a simple story about a house with six floors and the inhabitants of each floor, plus an elevator. The elevator connects everybody with everyone in the house without each necessarily knowing or seeing the other. But we are lucky: taking the elevator the reader gets to know a hedonistic octopus on the first floor who loves her pool and gazing at herself, a sophisticated and Apple-media addicted journalist, a hedgehog on the fifth, and a madly-in-love pigeon couple in the penthouse on the sixth. In very short episodes and simple sentences, poet, songwriter, and children's book author Kätlin Vainola (b. 1978) depicts animals as human characters, while fantastic illustrator and music enthusiast Ulla Saar adds fun and quirkiness to these characters, as in Lady Octopus's fancy wardrobe, for example – of course all of her clothes have eight arms or legs. (Age: 3+)

65



Björk, Marja (text)

Poika

(Boy)

Helsinki: Like, 2013. – 215 p.

ISBN 978-952-01-0898-4

Transsexuality | Search for identity | Family

What does it feel like to be born in the wrong body? As far back as Marion can remember, she has wished for nothing more fervently than to be a boy. Her relationship with her mother is problematic for this reason, though it improves over the course of the novel. The story gains credibility as it is narrated from Marion's perspective in a youthful slang tone. Readers learn of Marion's life and her troubled path – from her earliest childhood to the point when, as an adult, she physically becomes a »real« man through a sex change operation. Despite the conviction that she could have made it further in life had she been born in the right body, Marion ends up gaining something valuable in the struggle: she emerges victorious in her story. The novel teaches readers to be brave and stand by their identities. Personal experiences with her transsexual son inspired Marja Björk to write this book, and it was met with great interest in Finland, including a nomination for the Finlandia Junior Prize in 2013. (Age: 14+)

66



Onkeli, Kreetta (text)

Poika joka menetti muistinsa

(The boy who lost his memory)

[Helsinki]: Otava, 2013. – 110 p.

ISBN 978-951-1-27022-5

Friendship | Search for identity | Family

On a hot summer day in the park, twelve-year-old Arto has a laugh attack. After that he no longer knows who he is – all of his memories seem to have been erased. Shortly thereafter, he meets Kimo, who takes him to his home. After a week full of adventures, where Arto meets all kinds of people, he finally finds his parents again. He learns that he has regularly been losing his memory. He frequently flees into the world of his imagination, since he feels lonely and bored at home. Kreetta Onkeli traces Arto's feelings and thoughts in a sensitive and authentic way, without sacrificing suspense and humour. Winner of the 2013 Finlandia Junior Prize, this novel speaks directly to readers and inspires reflection. The book witnesses an overprotected, somewhat timid boy develop into a hero who gains mastery over his life. (Age: 9+)



67

Balpe, Anne-Gaëlle (text)
Élice (illus.)

Mauvaise pioche

(Bad luck)

Bruxelles: Alice, 2013. – 84 p.

(Series: Primo – Je suis un autre; 3)

ISBN 978-2-87426-187-9

Identity | Otherness | Metamorphosis |
Perspective

Bath time is one of the absolute highlights of shy nine-year-old Hadrien's day, until its magic is suddenly transformed into something nightmarish. Now, every time Hadrien pulls the tub plug, he is apt to undergo a transformation. Drawn by a strong force, he disappears down the drain, to pop up in another bathtub somewhere else – inhabiting another body and another person's life, no less! After the turbulence of being changed into a pro swimmer and then into a girl, Hadrien faces his greatest challenge yet. In this third and best instalment of French author Anne-Gaëlle Balpe's »Je suis un autre« (I am another) series, Hadrien lands in the body of his arch nemesis, Kilian the class bully, who spreads fear and fright everywhere. Élice's cryptically humorous drawings accompany Balpe's text about identity, being different, empathy, and forced changes of perspective. (Age: 8+)



68

Bournier, Isabelle (text)
Silloray, Florent (illus.)

Les droits de l'homme, un combat d'aujourd'hui

(Human rights. The contemporary debate)

[Bruxelles]: Casterman, 2013. – 80 p.

ISBN 978-2-203-06481-2.

Human rights | Non-fiction

How is the international discussion surrounding human rights developing? How close are human rights to being realised? Are the different generations of human rights increasingly incompatible (such as in the debate over universality and indivisibility), or can they be seen as cohesive and mutually supportive? What roles do the right to a clean environment, the right to communication and the right to a fair stake in natural and cultural resources play overall? How effectively can international institutions like the UN globally protect human rights today? What new agencies are joining that effort? This excellent book from Isabelle Bournier, program director of the Mémorial de Caen museum (France), knowledgeably treats these and further questions on the topic of human rights using current examples from various countries and continents, including France. A good introduction to controversial discussions! (Age: 12+)

69



Kavian, Eva (text)

La conséquence de mes actes. Roman

(The consequences of my actions. A novel)

Namur: Mijade, 2013. – 187 p.

(Series: Zone J)

ISBN 978-2-87423-072-1

Divorce | Father / Son | Vacation |
Coming-of-age novel

Homère is having the most horrible summer vacation. His newly divorced parents are both acting irresponsibly. His mother is caught up in self-discovery and now lives with a woman. In love, but still just as self-absorbed, Homère's father unloads his son on his new flame's parents. Homère despises his forced vacation spot, and it's one catastrophe after another, enhanced by Homère's dramatic flair for exaggeration. It's these very experiences, however, that bring the boy to finally compose an essay about »The consequences of my actions«, which will allow him to progress to the next grade after a totally derailed school year. Eva Kavian has created a wonderfully laconic novel, that authentically considers the many angles of adolescence, while also taking up a teenager's critical perspective on the behavioural contradictions of adults in periods of conflict and change. (Age: 12+)

70



Boulerice, Simon (text)

Jeanne Moreau a le sourire à l'envers. Roman

(Jeanne Moreau smiles upside down. A novel)

Montréal: Leméac, 2013. – 195 p.

(Series: Jeunesse)

ISBN 978-2-7609-4217-2

Love | Pen pals | Brother | Anorexia |
Coming-of-age novel

Leon, shy, fifteen years old and a bit of an oddball, has stumbled upon a pen pal. With her loveable eccentricity and passion for making up stories, Leonie seems to be his opposite. Her visit with Leon's very normal family becomes an event. Wild Leonie both unsettles and fascinates Leon, and they briefly become entangled in a love triangle à la »Jules et Jim« with Leon's friend Carl. Leonie also has an unerring sense for family secrets and taboos. She tells Leon in no uncertain terms that his older brother Antoine, a dutiful and timid film student, is anorexic and that Leon must step in to help him. In this praiseworthy coming-of-age novel, young author and playwright Simon Boulerice shows a young man excitedly discovering who he himself might be, with some help from old »off line« forms of social interaction such as letter-writing. (Age: 15+)



71

Hémon, Louis (text)
Tremblay, Jennifer (adapt.)
Rovira, Francesc (illus.)

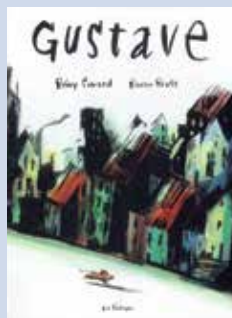
Maria Chapdelaine

<proper name>

Montréal: Éd. de la Bagnole [et al.], 2013. – 164 p.
ISBN 978-2-923342-93-1

Quebec / 19th century | Settler | Wife |
Marriage | Historical fiction

This critical adaptation makes the great classic of French Canadian literature about the fate of a young nineteenth-century woman in the remote region of Peribonka accessible for today's young readers. Maria, the beautiful and energetic daughter of a settler family, must choose between three suitors for marriage. Her secret favourite, François, tragically dies in a snow storm. Out of a mixture of duty and resignation, Maria chooses a life of austerity as a settler's wife. Jennifer Tremblay presents a condensed version of Louis Hémon's masterpiece, which for a long time was misclassified narrowly as »rural literature«. Tremblay's adaptation, co-published by de la Bagnole and Soulières presses, brings out the original's essence: its poetry, its local colour and its social critique, as well as the documentarian and allegorical elements. (Age: 10+)



72

Simard, Rémy (text)
Pratt, Pierre (illus.)

Gustave

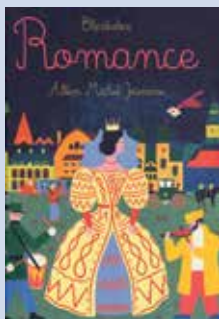
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Montréal: Éd. de La Pastèque, 2013. – [56] p.
(Series: Collection Pamplemousse)
ISBN 978-2-923841-27-4

Stuffed animal | Loss | Loneliness |
Imaginary world

Where is Gustave, the little mouse's playmate who is always up for pulling pranks? It was Gustave's quick action that helped his friend escape the cat and so perhaps saved his life. How will the little mouse tell his mother of the loss? At the end of a long day, haggard and utterly unsettled, the little mouse ventures home. His mother comforts him and hands him a new stuffed animal. This makes it clear that Gustave was (only) a stuffed animal. Illustrator Pierre Pratt takes the questions, fears, and also the make-believe of the (mouse)child seriously. Dark, expressionistic pictures capture the experiences of loneliness, desperation, isolation, anxiety, and hopelessness. Pratt's illustrations imbue Rémy Simard's text on the experience of an early loss with a special dramatic energy. (Age: 3+)

73



Blexbolex (text/illus.)

Romance

(Ballad)

Paris: A. Michel Jeunesse, 2013. – [240] p.

ISBN 978-2-226-24234-1

Storytelling | Imagination | Fairy tale

This book offers up an amazing kaleidoscope of magic and wit. French illustrator Blexbolex employs 200 expressive and colourful silk screen prints to tell a fairytale-like »ballad«. It modestly begins with »The Route Home From School«, but with every chapter leads further and further into the fantastical and the mysterious. Each of the seven magical sequences of this picture book branches out into an ever more intricate forest of images, associations, and fun-filled capers. Blexbolex has designed the picture book like a visual primer so that every page shows a keyword with a picture. The keywords call on readers' imaginations, as they must continually guess, complete, and invent the story. Blexbolex delivers a unique and witty answer to the question of how storytelling can »function« in today's picture book. The book won the 2013 OVNI prize at the Salon du livre in Montreuil. (Age: 3+)

74



Brunet, Marion (text)

Frangine

(Sis)

Paris: Éd. Sarbacane, 2013. – 262 p.

(Series: Roman Sarbacane: Exprim')

ISBN 978-2-84865-597-0

Parents / Children | Homosexuality |
Discrimination | Sexism | Homophobia |
Coming-of-age novel

Joachim is having a great year – seventeen years old and a senior in high school, his love life, his studies, and everything else couldn't be better. By contrast, it's one hard knock after another for his fifteen-year-old sister Pauline, who is in her first year of college. A group of boys is bullying her with verbal attacks and sadistic games. In contrast to her brother, Pauline finds it hard to consciously stand by the fact that her parents are two women. Since there's no initial help coming from family or school, she becomes more and more reclusive. Just when it's almost too late, Pauline finds support. A teacher even steps in, yet Pauline wants to stand up to her aggressors on her own. Marion Maret's successful first novel authentically portrays the crises as well as the mundane aspects of family life in a two-mom household. Considered from the perspective of older brother Joachim, topics such as the sexuality, solidarity and self-discovery of young adults are convincingly discussed. (Age: 15+)

75



Dedieu (text/illus.)

14-18. Une minute de silence à nos arrière-grands-pères courageux

(14-18. A minute of silence for our brave great-grandfathers)

Paris: Seuil Jeunesse, 2014. – [40] p.

ISBN 979-10-235-0154-4 14-18

[World War I](#) | [Soldier](#) | [Violence](#) | [Death](#) | [Killing](#)

Soldier Gustave Blanchard writes to his wife from the WW I front: »I can't find any more words for what I am experiencing«. Between this quote and Adèle's worried written reply, Thierry Dedieu places a textless sequence of images. The bleak sepia-tone illustrations portray the horrors, devastation, and sacrifices of the war in an incredibly powerful way. Their representations are realistic to the point of extreme, and are somewhat reminiscent of the work of painter and graphic artist Otto Dix. Multi-faceted illustrator Dedieu confronts the reader with many questions: What can violence lead to? For whom must a simple soldier like Gustave be willing to sacrifice everything? What wounds are created by war on both sides? Are there winners in war or only losers? One needs no more than the »minute of silence« ironically invoked in the book's title to physically leaf through the book. But one needs much more time to look at it with complete focus and to find answers to many questions. (Age: 9+)

76



Félix, Lucie (text/illus.)

Après l'été

(After summer)

Paris: Éd. Les Grandes personnes, 2013. – [56] p.

ISBN 978-2-36193-251-0

[Geometry](#) | [Basic form](#) | [Seasons](#)

This inspiring book by young illustrator Lucie Félix is a journey through the seasons and colours, but even more through the world of geometric shapes. It is an invitation to play, invent, name, combine and transform these basic aesthetic and optical categories. The book's sophisticated interplay of text and image allows to emerge many surprises concerning the circle, rectangle and triangle, as well as their variations, the oval and rhombus. Félix refines a technique used in her award-winning earlier book »2 yeux« (Two eyes): pages with punched-out parts create overlays with subsequent pages. In this way, little puzzles of shapes and figures are introduced and gradually resolved. This book flows along in one single playful movement; along the way we realised that »all we see« is built up from basic geometric forms. (Age: 3+)

77



La Fontaine, Jean de (text)
Morel, Olivier (illus.)
Les animaux malades de la peste
(The animals infected with the plague)
Paris: Éd. Courtes et longues, 2013. – [44] p.
(Series: Petit livre – grand texte)
ISBN 978-2-35290-109-9

Power | Nepotism | Guilt | Scapegoat | Fable

Who is to blame for the plague ravaging the land? The animals gather for a meeting chaired by their ruler the lion, hoping to find the animal responsible for the disaster. They hope that by sacrificing a scapegoat, fate will turn in their favour and end the plague. Since none of the powerful animals, from lion to wolf, are willing to call themselves guilty, a cynical coalition is soon formed against the weakest of the kingdom. The naïve and truth-seeking donkey becomes the condemned party when he accuses himself of a trifle. Olivier Morel's evocative illustrations bring to life the timeliness of this La Fontaine fable about power, privilege, and (in)justice, and hints at the modern forms of »plague« that still exist in today's society. Morel finds surprising overlaps with the classical text, and his montages quote wittily from art history and photography. (Age: 9+)

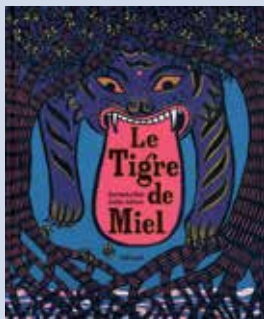
78



Marais, Frédéric (text/illus.)
Éphémère
(Ephemeral)
[Montreuil]: Éd. Les Fourmis rouges, 2013. – [28] p.
ISBN 978-2-36902-001-1

Dragonfly | Time | Ephemerality | Moment

A feast for the eyes from Fourmis Rouges press! A little dragonfly escapes her foes with elegance, dexterity, and cunning: the hungry birds, the lurking spider, the grasshopper ready to spring, the rather dumb frog she uses for transportation. No one and nothing can stop her. She is on her way to the water to mate, and she is only alive for this one day. French illustrator Frédéric Marais crafts the dragonfly's flight into a celebration. His remarkable, intensely fluorescent five-colour palette, unusual silhouettes, and zoom-ins force observers to look very carefully. The illustrations and rhyming text form a perfect ensemble that allows readers young and old to enter a world beyond mere nature observation. As the title already suggests, »Éphémère« follows the motto of »Carpe diem!«, inviting reflection on the brevity of life and the celebration of a single moment worth embracing because it will never return. (Age: 4+)



79

Nair, Karthika (text)
 Jolivet, Joëlle (illus.)
 Vitalyos, Dominique (transl.)

Le tigre de miel

(The honey tiger)

[Paris]: Hélim, 2013. – [52] p.

ISBN 978-2-330-02291-4

Honey | Theft | Taboo | Punishment |
 Metamorphosis | Fairy tale

This book represents a collaboration between French publisher Hélim and Indian publisher Zubaan. It narrates a fascinating fairy tale from the Sundarban region, which connects South India with Bangladesh and is home to the world's largest mangrove forests. In the story, a poor boy named Shonou, the son of a honey collector, is hungry, especially for honey. He steals carelessly from the wild bees during a time when they need the honey for their young, even destroying their hives. He breaks the laws of the forest, and thus draws the anger of the tiger demon and Bonbibi, the protector goddess, who punish him by transforming him into a hibiscus plant. French illustrator Joëlle Jolivet, finding inspiration in the Indian colour palette (fluorescent pink to dark violet), creates large-format paintings that complement this rhythmic, dramatic parable on the fragile balance of nature from great Indian poet Karthika Nair. (Age: 8+)



80

Panafieu, Jean-Baptiste de (text)
 Revenu, Julien (illus.)

Nucléaire, pour quoi faire?

(What is nuclear power good for?)

Saint-Herblain: Gulf stream ed., 2012. – 231 p.

(Series: Et toc!; 13)

ISBN 978-2-35488-175-7

Nuclear energy | Nuclear research |
 Non-fiction

With its nineteen nuclear power plants, France remains Europe's leading country in atomic power. For many decades, however, in social debate and youth literature alike, discussions of nuclear energy and technology have been seasoned with an irritating mixture of misinformation and risk downplaying. Finally, a balanced and up-to-date non-fiction book on the topic has been published for young people. Written by French science journalist Jean-Baptiste de Panafieu, the book features over fifty alphabetically organised entries to aid critical reflection on the topic from both national and global perspectives. Entries discuss nuclear energy, atomic politics and the link between its military and peaceful uses. De Panafieu also soberly considers the fall-out from the nuclear accidents in Chernobyl in 1986 and Fukushima in 2011. Flanked by the drawings of young illustrator Julien Revenu, the book's clear presentation of content gives young people coming to the topic with very different assumptions rich access to one of today's central political debates. (Age: 14+)

81



Prévot, Franck (text)
 Jarrie, Martin / Lejonc, Régis / Dutertre, Charles [et al.] (illus.)
 Yassine (graphic design)
Lumières. L' Encyclopédie revisitée, 1713-2013
 (Enlightenment. A new look at the Encyclopédie,
 1713-2013)
 Andernos-les-Bains: Éd. L'Édune, 2013. – 125 p.
 ISBN 978-2-35319-079-9

Enlightenment | Diderot, Denis / Encyclopédie |
 Knowledge

This extraordinary book appeared in conjunction with the 300th birthday of Denis Diderot. Just like that brilliant thinker (and his work), it cannot easily be classified into one genre: is it a non-fiction book, a picture book, an art book – or all of these together? Inspired by eleven historical copper plates from the original »Encyclopédie«, eleven topics are newly discussed and represented in illustration. Renowned illustrators Martin Jarrie, Régis Lejonc, Jean-Francois Martin, Tom Schamp, Rascal, Charles Dutertre, Julia Wauters, Clotilde Perrin, Albertine, Janik Coat, and Vincent Pianina took part in this project, and their illustrations – like Franck Prévot's texts written very much in the spirit of Diderot – are full of allusions, evocations, and cross-references. The volume is a deep, yet not irony-free bow to Diderot; his bold aspiration to capture the entire scientific and technical body of knowledge of his time is here at times irreverently pursued ad absurdum. (Age: 10+)

82

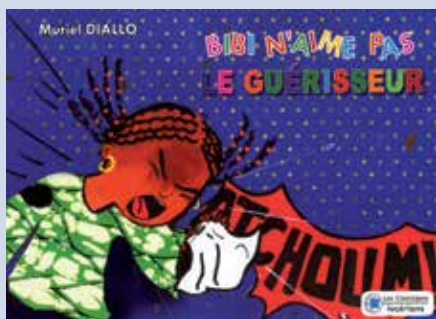


Zalberg, Carole (text)
Je suis un arbre
 (I am a tree)
 Arles: Actes Sud, 2013. – 85 p.
 (Series: D'une seule voix – Actes Sud junior)
 ISBN 978-2-330-01486-5

Friendship | Responsibility | Addiction |
 Mother / Daughter | Parentification |
 Coming-of-age novel

When Fleur arrives home, she usually does not know where or how her alcoholic mother will show up – with a bottle on the steps, at the police station, drunk on the street, or woozy on the couch. The girl shoulders this responsibility, though she is constantly overwhelmed by such an unwanted reversal of parent-child roles (so-called parentification). She manages day-to-day life for her mother and herself, but increasingly isolates herself from other people. Fleur's friend Louna is her foothold – Louna is undergoing a similar experience with her depressed father, who has turned cold and unresponsive since his divorce. In her best book yet, Carole Zalberg sheds light in a sophisticated and empathic way on ambivalent parent-child relationships that have lost their equilibrium. While the text creates no false hopes, it dwells with great intensity on those moments of closeness and love that even then still exist between parent and child. (Age: 12+)

83



Diallo, Muriel (text/illus.)

Bibi n'aime pas le guérisseur

(Bibi doesn't like the healer)

Abidjan: Les Classiques Ivoiriens, 2013. – 19 p.

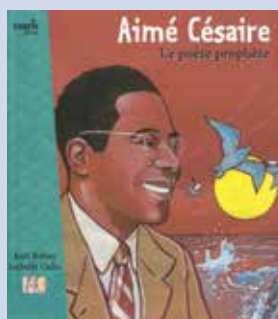
(Series: Bibi n'aime pas)

ISBN 979-10-90625-01-3

[Illness](#) | [Health](#) | [Healing](#) | [Plants](#)

Just yesterday, Bibi, a little African girl, was playing contentedly in the pouring rain. Today she is sick, her voice unrecognisably altered by a bad cold, and her sneezing attacks even chase away the dog. Her concerned grandmother wants to take the child to her naturopathic healer. Bibi resists, but in the end her grandmother's reasonable arguments prevail. After a few days of treatment with inhalation therapy and herbal teas, Bibi jumps out of her bed gleeful and healthy. This book features humorous collages of colourful paper and fabric that are accompanied by a brief but charming text. African illustrator and author Muriel Diallo was born on the Ivory Coast and now lives and works in France. She has created a whole series of books starring Bibi, for which she won the 2012 Prix Saint-Exupéry. (Age: 4+)

84



Bebey, Kidi (text)

Calin, Isabelle (illus.)

Aimé Césaire. Le poète prophète

(Aimé Césaire. The visionary poet)

Bamako: Cauris Livres, 2013. – 32 p.

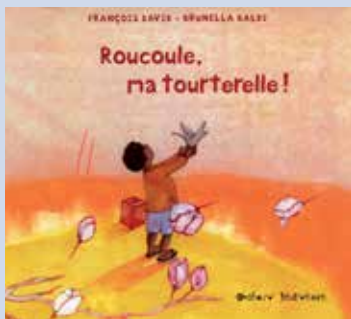
(Series: Collection Lucy)

ISBN 978-99952-60-11-8

[Césaire, Aimé](#) | [Négritude](#) | [Equality](#) | [Decolonisation](#) | [Biography](#)

On the occasion of the 100th birthday of poet Aimé Césaire (1913-2008), Franco-Cameroonian author Kidi Bebey offers a written portrait of this great Francophone author from the Caribbean. Employing a pictorial broadsheet with illustrations by Isabelle Calin, Bebey reveals the lines of connection between Césaire's youth in Martinique, his influential relationships with his Paris classmates L. Sédar Senghor and Léon Damas, both Africans, and his work as French parliamentarian and mayor of Fort-de-France. Bebey shows a young audience that the meaning of Césaire's literary work, his poems (like the well-known »Cahier d'un retour au pays natal«) and essays reach far beyond the scope of his successful political life. His writings are milestones for the global emancipation movement to help people of colour self-determine their lives and fight discrimination and racism. This book is one of the successful new publications from Cauris Livres, a committed Malian press. (Age: 9+)

85



David, François (text)
Baldi, Brunella (illus.)

Roucoule, ma tourterelle!

(Coo, my dove!)

Saint-André: Océan Éd., 2013. – [36] p.

(Series: Océan jeunesse)

ISBN 978-2-36247-060-8

Dove breeding | Competition | Siblings

Dove-cooing competitions are much loved in South West Asian countries, especially in Thailand. Being too poor, Soojin, a Thai boy, can't afford to raise doves, but he still dreams of it. One day, he finds an injured dove and calls her Mai Jong. He takes care of the animal and nurses it back to health. Then he practices daily with his dove for the next big competition, where a considerable amount of prize money is at stake. Will Mai Jong persevere with her voice over the other contestants? Will Soojin be able to heal his little sister Chutima with the award money? Inviting the reader to an unusual vertical read, this book artfully combines the delicate and minimalist text of French poet François David with the dream-like pictures of Italian illustrator Brunella Baldi. (Age: 5+)

86



Dayre, Valérie / Leterrier, Pierre (text)

Tant pis pour elle

(Her bad luck)

Genève: Joie de lire, 2014. – 251 p.

(Series: Encrage)

ISBN 978-2-88908-202-5

Small town | Murder | Clique |
Emotional neglect

Rebecca, a young journalist, returns to her placid backwater hometown of Montchalin to cover a run-of-the-mill story. She was mistaken, however, to believe her trip back to her childhood home, the place where her sister killed herself fifteen years prior, could be normal. Two murders occur, and suddenly Rebecca herself is one of the suspects. Since she cannot leave the area due to police ordinance, she begins her own investigation: Who from the clique of sadistic, bored teens was responsible for the unsolved suicide of her sister? This first collaboration between authors Dayre and Leterrier spins a tale both suspenseful and funny. It has psychological depth and adopts many very different perspectives – including the unsettling perspective of the murderer, whom Rebecca draws ever nearer to. A compelling novel on the social abyss of the French province. (Age: 14+)



87

Jonge, Harm de (text)
Linden, Martijn van der (illus.)
Weg, Jant van der (transl.)

Jonas en de fiskjes fan Kees Poan

(Jonas and the fishes of Kees Poan)

[Hoorn]: Hoogland & Van Klaveren, 2013. – 74 p.
ISBN 978-90-8967-149-3

(Simultaneous edition of Dutch original: Jonas en de visjes van Kees Poan)

Imagination | Fantasy tale

The world around Jonas is boring, but when he puts on his sunglasses the world looks entirely different. When he goes to get some fish at Kees Poan, the houses he passes all take on the shape of their resident shopkeepers. And what sense can one make of two walking chimneys and roof tiles with wings? Or a crocodile in the canal? Jonas also meets all kinds of extraordinary people. Harm de Jonge creates a fantasy world in this magic-realist story. The titles of the chapters create suspense and it's almost impossible to put the book down. In the poetic and melodic text we find many rhymes, remarkable alliterations, unique names and surprising neologisms. Inter-textual references and textual gaps require active, thoughtful reading. The playful Jonas is the epitome of a lively spirit and spokesman for an unbridled imagination. The magic of the story is enhanced by the illustrations with their fairytale atmosphere. (Age: 9+)



88

Pinto & Chinto (text/illus.)

Nicomedes o pelado

(Nicomedes the bald)

Pontevedra: Kalandraka, 2013. – [40] p.
ISBN 978-84-8464-697-6

Baldness | Hairstyle | Imaginateness

A book for men – or a book about a specifically male problem. Not even style-conscious Nicomedes can avoid gradual hair loss and baldness, watching as his curly red head of hair becomes nothing but a memory. Aggrieved by the barren state of his scalp, Nicomedes tries to give his head new lustre. But whatever solution he tries – a piece of turf, streamers, a ball of yarn, or spaghetti – his head faces misuse: as a football pitch, dance floor, knitting material, or dining room. Nicomedes's red tom cat provides the answer, proving himself to be the perfect substitute for his owner's magnificent lost locks. It is the simple, original, thoroughly developed idea that makes this picture book so appealing for even very young readers. Using few words and witty illustrations, the creative duo Pinto and Chinto present new surprises on every double-page, making this a page-turner and also a book one can't wait to leaf through again. (Age: 3+)

FRISIAN
GALICIAN

The Netherlands (Friesland)
Spain (Galicia)

89



Kirt'aze, Sop'o (= Kirtadze, Sophia) (text/illus.)

Zolemia

(Papa Zebra's missing stripes)

Tbilisi: Sulakauri, 2011. – [40] p.

ISBN 978-9941-15-404-1

Personality | Crisis of identity | Self-awareness |
Helpfulness | Animal story

Oh my! Papa Zebra loses his stripes, and no doctor can help him. What bothers Papa even more is that everyone is staring at him. So he tries in vain to hide his apparent flaw, by wrapping himself in strips of clothesline, for instance, or dreaming to get into jail so he can wear a striped uniform. Everything changes when Papa Zebra notices that other animals have identity issues, too – such as a giraffe afraid of heights who can't raise its head. He turns to helping others and realises that one can get along just fine without stripes. »Papa Zebra's missing stripes« is representative of a whole series of new picture books from Georgia. Sophia Kirtadze (b. 1988) is part of the Virgam illustrator collective, which is working to develop a contemporary Georgian picture book genre from scratch. This has brought fresh energy to the Georgian children's book market – thanks also to Sulakauri Press, which has published several Vigram volumes. (Age: 5+)

90



Trpak, Heidi (text)

Aufderhaar, Laura Momo (illus.)

Gerda Gelse. Allgemeine Weisheiten über Stechmücken

(Gerda Gelse. General truths about mosquitoes)

Wien: Wiener Dom-Verl., 2013. – [26] p.

+ 1 poster

ISBN 978-3-85351-247-0

Mosquito | Non-fiction

Mosquitoes are not exactly the most popular creatures. Nevertheless, kindergarten teacher Heidi Trpak from Vienna and graphic designer Laura Momo Aufderhaar from Berlin manage to make them seem almost likable – at least until readers hear that annoying buzz again. In this non-fiction book, the mosquito Gerda Gelse relates her life as a bloodsucking insect. This personalised biology lesson, directly addressed to the reader, is complemented by short informational texts explaining the illustrations. The pictures themselves also reflect the topic of »nature« because they were created as nature prints, using leaves and grasses. Thus »Gerda Gelse« has the feel of a carefully composed Gesamtkunstwerk (universal artwork). And for those who are puzzled by the name: »Gelse« is the Austrian word for »mosquito«. As some readers might not know what a mosquito is called in Hungarian, Czech, or Latvian, this book offers help, too: Just take a look at the endpapers! (Age: 5+)



91

Ani, Friedrich (text)

Die unterirdische Sonne

(The underground sun)

München: cbt, 2014. – 332 p.

ISBN 978-3-570-16261-3

Island | Confinement | Brutality | Despotism | Thriller

Disturbing, destructive, but also courageous and border-crossing: Hardly any other German title published in 2014 has polarised opinion as much as this 330-page chamber play. Some accuse the novel of finding voyeuristic pleasure in excessive violence, while others praise it for minutely modelling psychological processes. What is »Die unterirdische Sonne« about? It is about five children who are kept prisoners in a cellar and abused by their tormentors. Even if – or maybe because – the physical violence is not explicitly described and the children are forbidden to talk about it, the terrible ordeal that Leon, Conrad, Sophia, Maren, and Eike suffer becomes immediately apparent. Pictures of cramped dungeons and cruel psychopaths will inevitably appear in the readers' minds. True, the children develop different strategies to overcome the hopelessness and eventually manage to escape. Nevertheless, this still remains a challenging novel. (Age: 14+)



92

Antelmann, Corinna (text)

Der Rabe ist Acht

(The raven is eight)

München: Mixtvision, 2014. – 220 p.

ISBN 978-3-944572-05-5

School | Disappointment | Revenge | Search for identity | Thriller

This book is told in a radically subjective and unreliable voice: Every day, down in the school cellar, girlie swot Maja throws milk bottles against the wall, expressing her self-loathing and hate of the world. Who is she but a cockatoo repeating everything and getting good marks without using her brain? Maja's classmate Klebe on the other hand, narcissistic and top of the class with a liking for numerology, is convinced of his own brilliance, until he realises that his teachers make fun of him. He is outraged and starts feeling an inkling of self-doubt. When Maja and Klebe get together, they plot absurd and confused schemes of revenge. Eventually things turn out differently though. The book thrives on the two protagonists' monomaniac, self-reflective revolving around themselves and the juxtaposition of the two points of view. The contrast between perception of self and of others becomes just as apparent as the spiralling effect of speculations, for many things are only hinted at. (Age: 13+)



93

Bach, Tamara (text)

Marienbilder

(Pictures of the Virgin Mary)

Hamburg: Carlsen, 2014. – 133 p.

ISBN 978-3-551-58299-7

Mother / Daughter | Family | Search for identity |
Coming-of-age novel

Mareike's mother has run away. But why? Mareike mulls over this question and soon realises that she knows next to nothing about her mother. Who is or was she? What did she dream about when she was young? And what happened to her plans – why didn't they work out? What does all this mean for Mareike? Is the same thing going to happen to her now, after this party? Is she going to have a child she doesn't want? With its dense and unpretentious language, its unreliable narrative voice, its meta-fictional elements and experimental composition, Tamara Bach's latest novel does not only explore the tension between fatalism and self-determination; it also shows how you (re)construct life paths: How does memory work? What is true, what is imagined? The lines are blurred. Since her debut novel »Marsmädchen« (2003; »Girl from Mars«, 2008), Tamara Bach is one of the most promising German authors. In »Marienbilder«, she again proves that she is a virtuoso in creating young adult literature. (Age: 14+)



94

Helms, Antje (text)

Holleben, Jan von (illus.)

Kriegen das eigentlich alle? Die besten Antworten zum Erwachsenwerden

(Does everybody get this? The best answers about growing up)

Stuttgart [et al.]: Gabriel, 2013. – 156 p.

ISBN 978-3-522-30338-5

Puberty | Sexuality | Non-fiction

What was that again about the birds and the bees, the flowers and the trees? Jan von Holleben and Antje Helms are rather natural about it. Here moss and flowers serve, among other things, as beards or boobs. For this book, Holleben has taken pictures of more than a dozen kids and then edited these photographs, adding »natural growth« in the places bound to change during puberty. Surprisingly enough, this looks neither silly nor embarrassing but rather original and witty. One reason might be that readers can see how much fun everyone had with the taking and making of the pictures. Another one, that the texts are factual and informative without being dry or boring. Confusing changes that affect children's bodies and confusing feelings are explained and taken seriously. If the texts may seem a little short at times, they definitely avoid any kind of information overload. Unlike the sexual education bestseller »Make Love«, which addresses a teenage audience, this book is already suitable for pre-teens. (Age: 10+)



95

Hub, Ulrich (text)
Drewelow, Heike (illus.)

Füchse lügen nicht

(Foxes don't lie)

Hamburg: Carlsen, 2014. – 144 p.

ISBN 978-3-551-55649-3

Airport | Lie | Animal story

Following Ulrich Hub's bestselling »An der Arche um Acht« (2007; »Meet at the Ark at Eight«, 2012) this book is another terrific children's novel with animal protagonists. The setting alone – the waiting area in an airport, more precisely the animal lounge – is unusual. It offers a platform for a wacky cast of characters and partly absurd happenings, especially when a fox suddenly walks in and stirs up the group. With sassy strokes, Heike Drewelow provides lively portraits of the illustrious herd of animals, while Ulrich Hub has an unfailing knack for comical language and situations as well as a wondrous talent for creating true characters. He plays with literary models, using the stock characters of a fable, for example, to undermine the readers' expectations: Do foxes really lie or don't they? Again and again, the text takes unexpected turns and elicits smiles and fits of laughter – all the more so when the book is read out loud. (Age: 8+)



96

Krones, Susanne / Hintze, Olaf (text)

Tonspur. Wie ich die Welt von gestern verließ

(Audiotrack. How I left yesterday's world)

München: Dt. Taschenbuch-Verl., 2014. – 360 p.

(Series: dtv; 65005: Reihe Hanser)

ISBN 978-3-423-65005-2

GDR / 1989 | Escape | Berlin Wall | Biography | Non-fiction

This very special combination of historical documentary and biography is one of the many books published on the 25th anniversary of the Fall of the Berlin Wall. It focuses on Olaf Hintze, who escaped from the German Democratic Republic to the West via Hungary in the summer of 1989. His life story stands for all those who grew up in the GDR and became increasingly exasperated with the government and their repressions. At the same time, »Tonspur« is also the very personal story of Hintze, which becomes particularly visible through songs that trace his coming-of-age. The book is structured chronologically, yet interspersed with many flashbacks that create a densely woven, detailed net, saturated with information. It both describes everyday events and hints at the socialist society with all its constraints and shortcomings. What becomes blatantly obvious is how paralysing and static life in Eastern Germany was for many people. (Age: 12+)

97



Merkel, Rainer (text)

Bo

<proper name>

Frankfurt am Main: Fischer, 2013. – 685 p.
ISBN 978-3-10-048444-4Liberia | Adventure | Search for identity |
Coming-of-age novel

A surprise is revealed at the end: That's when readers realise that the novel's narrated time merely spans three days, even if they might have felt that, after devouring almost 700 pages brimming with events, excursions, and memories, they spent at least three weeks with Benjamin, Brilliant, and Bo without ever getting bored. The three protagonists' experiences in the Liberian capital Monrovia and in the bush oscillate between »real-life« and »surreal-fantastic« happenings and thus keep readers guessing. The personal narration, which assigns a distinctive voice to each character, is masterfully executed. The perception of the world through the ears of blind Bo is particularly impressive. Rainer Merkel combines coming-of-age novel, family saga, social novel, and travelogue employing post-modern irony and traditions of African storytelling. It is apparent that the author has lived in Liberia for a few months instead of just leafing through a guide book. That is why his book steers clear of any exoticism and clichés. (Age: 12+)

98



Müller, Thomas (text/illus.)

Was braust so schnell vorbei?

(What zooms past so fast?)

Frankfurt am Main: Moritz, 2013. – [36] p.
ISBN 978-3-89565-267-7

Vehicle | Repetition | Board book

Serial repetition is a favourite device with children – especially with the smallest ones. Add animals and vehicles and you'll have a bestseller in your hands. Boys in particular will love this book. But wait! »Was braust so schnell vorbei?« is not as simple as that. In this board book, Thomas Müller does not merely bring the concept of repetition to perfection and add a certain tongue-in-cheek laconism to it; in addition, he gradually distorts the concept in such a skilful way that the final punch line surprises everyone. It is not just because someone finally does stop. It suddenly becomes evident why all the others zoomed by so fast. Despite or because of this punch line, which readers eagerly await with every reading, the book can be read and flipped through again and again with varying speed: Be it slow and careful or in a frenzied rush – anything goes. (Age: 2+)



99

Niemann, Christoph (text/illus.)

Der Kartoffelkönig

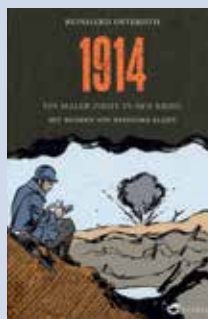
(The potato king)

Berlin: Jacoby & Stuart, 2013. – [28] p.

ISBN 978-3-941087-49-1

Prussia / 1774 | Potato | Non-fiction

What Christoph Niemann presents here is as logical as it is ingenious! A book about »Old Fritz«, the king of Prussia, and how he managed to literally make the potato palatable to his subjects in 1774 – illustrated with potato prints. The visual language, which plays with comic-book elements, is both simple and exaggerated. The choice of colours, for example, follows a symbolic code – with the king being red, of course. The pictures are more than mere decoration, they are necessary for the plot and narration because text and illustrations interlock. As a hybrid of picture book and non-fiction book, the work sports a tone that is reminiscent of anecdotes and fairy tales. The book itself suggests to readers that »this story may only be a legend«, but its purpose lies not in checking the validity of this legend. Rather it strives to show how history and stories evolve and how they remain influential throughout centuries as part of a collective knowledge. (Age: 5+)



100

Osteroth, Reinhard (text)

Kleist, Reinhard (illus.)

1914. Ein Maler zieht in den Krieg

(1914. A painter goes to war)

Hamburg: Aladin, 2014. – 98 + [12] p.

ISBN 978-3-8489-0078-7

Marc, Franz | World War I | Non-fiction

This title stands out among the non-fiction books about World War I. Reinhard Osteroth writes for the weekly newspaper »Die Zeit«, among others; his non-fiction book »Holz. Was unsere Welt zusammenhält« (Wood. Stuff that holds our world together) had favourable reviews from both readers and critics. Reinhard Kleist received various awards, including the German Youth Literature Award 2013 for his graphic novel »Der Boxer« (The boxer). Thus it is hardly surprising that a cooperation between these two should result in something good: A book that puts painter Franz Marc (1880-1916) in the spotlight and at the same time introduces readers to World War I. Factual information, combined with quotations from Marc's letters and diaries, portrays the gruelling life at the Front as well as the soldiers' growing resignation, horror, and fear. Fortunately enough, Kleist does not imitate Franz Marc's style but shows his own characteristic hand in the pictures, which are created using symbolically charged colours. (Age: 12+)

101

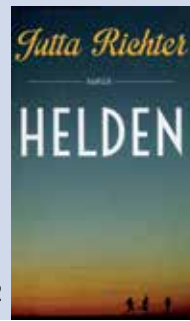


Rautenberg, Arne (text)
 Rassmus, Jens (illus.)
montag ist müzenfalschrumtag
 (monday is hat-back-to-front-day)
 Wuppertal: Peter Hammer, 2014. – 48 p.
 ISBN 978-3-7795-0497-9

Fish | Seasons | Nonsense | Poetry

Following »supermann im supermarket« (superman at the supermarket), multi-award-winning poet Arne Rautenberg has published another volume of poetry, this time illustrated by Jens Rassmus. Rautenberg's verses range from real tongue twisters and visual poetry to poems that raise philosophical questions or contain intertextual distortions. »gespräch unter fischen« (conversation among fish), for example, is a reference to Christian Morgenstern's »Fisches Nachtgesang« (Night song of a fish). True, Rautenberg's fish with their »blibb«, »blabb«, »blubb« are a great deal more eloquent, yet unfortunately they immediately start arguing. Quite a few fish swim through Rautenberg's universe, which doesn't come as a surprise. After all, the author enjoys pondering »Das Glück am Meer zu sein« (The joy of being at the sea). Jens Rassmus can certainly empathise with this. Like Rautenberg, he comes from the shores of the Baltic Sea. Thus his colour palette does not only contain earthen shades but also a clear blue. (Age: 4+)

102



Richter, Jutta (text)
Helden
 (Heroes)
 München: Hanser, 2013. – 92 p.
 ISBN 978-3-446-24308-8

School holidays | Boredom | Guilt

Books about heroes, or even superheroes, are currently ten a penny. Most of them are witty parodies that use slapstick-like humour to cast an ironic light on the ideal hero. Jutta Richter's new novel is different. It is about complicated emotions, misplaced praise, and secrets. What are you supposed to do when you are hailed as a hero but you are actually the one to blame for the disaster you managed to avert? The first-person narrator's guilty conscience, her fear of being found out, and her ambiguous relief when someone else is held responsible – Jutta Richter is a master in sculpting multi-layered, torn, perfectly authentic characters. At the same time, her brittle language always creates some distance. She doesn't resort to cheap emotional effects but has a great skill at creating a special atmosphere: You can feel the heat, smell the dust – a fact that draws readers right into the story. (Age: 10+)



103

Schmidt, Barbara (text)

Schmidt, Dirk (illus.)

Bitte blubb blubb rette mich!

(Save me, glub glub, please!)

München: Kunstmann, 2014. – [36] p.

ISBN 978-3-88897-944-6

Elephant | Mishap | Lake

When mother and son collaborate... – Barbara and Dirk Schmidt have concocted another adventure for the clumsy blue elephant. And isn't he a particularly unlucky fellow! After some mishap, he sits at the bottom of a lake and cannot move an inch. At least his trunk is long enough to reach the surface so that he can breathe. Nevertheless, the situation is altogether far from ideal. The lake's inhabitants are eager to help, but unfortunately, the elephant's body doesn't work like that of a fish, a frog, or an octopus. While fish and friends hurriedly wiggle away after their respective vain attempts to help, Elephant is still stuck. Thanks to the Knittelvers (old-fashioned Germanic verse metre), the laconically dry text about the elephantine misery reminds readers of well-known German humourist and poet Wilhelm Busch (1832-1908) and makes them smile; as do the illustrations with their comicbook-like strokes that put the miserable elephant in the limelight. (Age: 4+)



104

Steinhöfel, Dirk (text/illus.)

Die Kinder im Wind

(The children in the wind)

Stuttgart: Thienemann, 2013. – [224] p.

ISBN 978-3-522-20190-2

Childhood | Neglect | Memory | Graphic novel

Lavish and fragmentary, visually stunning and secretive, associative and intertextual: »Die Kinder im Wind« is not an easy, immediately accessible read. Instead it's a thick volume with hardly any text but full of surreal pictures, some of which seem fairly realistic. The atmosphere is dark, dismal, and scary and there are very few bright moments. The book is about children who were abandoned, emotionally neglected, and often physically abused. They are rescued by small wooden dolls and eventually brought to a blond woman who takes care of them. It isn't clear which events take place in the here and now and which occurred in the past. Time seems to blur. Dirk Steinhöfel weaves motives and stock characters from fairytale contexts into his book; at the same time, there are also references to real-life happenings outside of literature. Altogether this creates moments of confusion that resonate for a long time and make this book something out of the ordinary. (Age: 12+)

105



Wacker, Renate (text/illus.)

Mascha und der Bär

(Mascha and the bear)

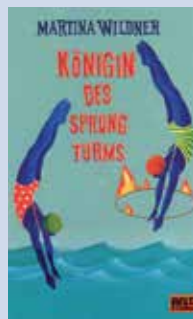
Mannheim: Kunstanstifter Verlag, 2013 – [44] p.

ISBN 978-3-942795-14-2

Fairy tale

The publishing house Kunstanstifter has attracted a good deal of attention in recent years with ambitious books that stand out from the mainstream. »Mascha und der Bär« is no exception. Originally a Russian folk tale, the story had, among other things, been turned into a successful animation series. However, Renate Wacker, who studies book art in Leipzig, now offers an illustrated retelling that is a far cry from the cute animated adaptation mentioned above. In her book, the hidden archaic structures of the fairy tale – lust, sex, power, and jealousy – are transformed into disturbing, expressive, vulgar, and crude pictures. Black outlines, scribbly lines, sloppily applied colours, such as a sulphuric yellow or a dirty green, create an atmosphere of discomfort and fear. Distorted references to pop culture and fine arts, such as faces resembling Donald Duck figures and Edvard Munch's famous painting »The Scream«, amplify this. (Age: 13+)

106



Wildner, Martina (text)

Schöffmann-Davidov, Eva (illus.)

Königin des Sprungturms

(Queen of the diving platform)

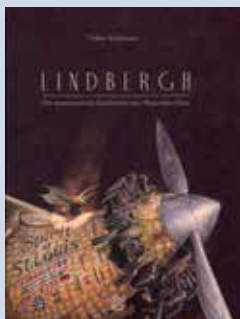
Weinheim [et al.]: Beltz & Gelberg, 2013. - 212 p.

ISBN 978-3-407-82027-3

Sports | High diving | Friendship | Rivalry |
Search for identity

»You need to pack your whole life into every single dive«. That's how aloof and ambitious Karla pursues her sport, high diving. She is the undisputed number one. Her friend Nadja, the book's narrator, admires Karla. To her, it is God's will that Karla is the best. She doesn't even mind that she herself is almost invisible next to her friend. Yet one day, Karla blunders and Nadja wins. »And I was happy; yes, I was getting happier every minute.« Slowly but surely, Nadja starts to peel away from Karla and to trust in herself. Bordering on a coming-of-age-novel, this book explores a shifting relationship between two girls with a perfect sense of dramatic composition, defining key moments without staging them as drama. Nadja's precise, objective, almost terse tone makes for a psychologically convincing portrayal. Martina Wildner is one of the most versatile talents in the German speaking world of young adult literature, as acknowledged by her nominations for the German Youth Literature Award. (Age: 11+)

107



Kuhlmann, Torben (text/illus.)

Lindbergh. Die abenteuerliche Geschichte einer fliegenden Maus

(Lindbergh. The adventures of a flying mouse)

Zürich: NordSüd-Verl., 2014. – [84] p.

ISBN 978-3-314-10210-3

Mouse | Flying | Crossing the Atlantic |
Animal story

Small but mighty! Even before »Micky Mouse« and »Tom and Jerry«, we knew that mice are clever. The little mouse in Torben Kuhlmann's debut picture book constructs a plane and, not quite voluntarily, leaves his now inhospitable home country to cross the Atlantic. Despite some hungry owls who are hard on his heels, the mouse manages to get all the way to New York. Torben Kuhlmann's pictures are rendered in a palette reminiscent of old sepia photographs. They stand out for the meticulous depiction of details, the choice of different perspectives, and the variety of sizes. The text occasionally feels a little complaisant and fairytale-ish, which, on the one hand, fits in with the legend-like tone. On the other hand, it cleverly disguises the parable within the story, because in this mouse's tale, there are both subtle and explicit allusions to real-life events (and maybe also to other texts, such as Art Spiegelman's famous graphic novel »Mouse«). (Age: 5+)

108



Michaēlidu-Kadē, Marina (Michailidou-Kadi, Marina) (text)

Stamatiadē, Ntaniela (Stamatiadi, Daniela) (illus.)

To kokkino phorema tēs Sabel

(Chavel's red dress)

Leukōsia (Nicosia): Parga, 2014. – 32 p.

ISBN 978-9963-714-19-3

Escape | Migration | Homeland

Chavel must flee to a foreign land. Everything the girl loves will be left behind. Her mother tells her she is allowed to take only one thing. Without a second thought, Chavel finds the red dress that Grandma gave her. Once settled in their new home, her mother tries in vain to persuade Chavel to put on something else. Every day the dress is washed, dried, and worn again. In her characteristic manner, Daniela Stamatiadi evokes her protagonists' emotions using carefully designed illustrations that inspire the reader's own emotional responses, as when a subdued black-and-white patterned background is used to foreground the dress. Painted in a vivid red, the dress symbolises warmth, intimacy, and its dominant role Chavel's life. This book by frequent award winners Marina Michailidou-Kadi and Daniela Stamatiadi received third prize in the first international literary competition hosted by the organisation »To Chamogelo tou Paidiou.« (Age: 7+)

GERMAN
GREEK

Switzerland
Cyprus

109



Mpsalam, Dēmētrēs (Baslam, Dimitris) (text)
 Markopulos, Kōstas (Markopoulos, Kostas) (illus.)
Ἐ θυμῶμενῆ μπετονιέρα
 (The angry concrete mixer)
 Thessalonikē: Epomenos Stathmos, 2013. – 105 p.
 ISBN 978-960-8259-25-6

Construction work | Environmental protection |
 Quality of life

In a region suffocated by overdevelopment, all construction work must suddenly cease. Construction machines and tools revolt, ripping everything down so that they can rebuild everything and never be out of work. But when they see the bright blue sky and green flowering meadows peeping out from behind the ruins and hear words like »rest« and »enjoyment«, their attitude changes. Even the imperious concrete mixer joins the others on their search for new jobs aimed at improving the quality of life. By introducing tempo changes and cleverly placed pauses, author and musician Dimitris Baslam gives his impulsive text a wonderful rhythm, which Kostas Markopoulos translates into explosive, colourful illustrations that draw on constructivist graphic elements. The book is made with high quality paper and carefully bound by thread-stitching. Combined with its reader-friendly format, these details make the book a collector's item. (Age: 4+)

110

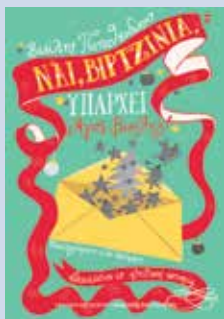


Mpulōtēs, Chrēstos (Boulotis, Christos) (text)
 Stephanidē, Phōteinē (Stephanidi, Photini) (illus.)
Ἡ ἐπαναστασῆ τῶν παλιῶν παιχνιδιῶν
 (The revolt of the old toys)
 Athēna: Kalentēs, 2013. – 48 p.
 ISBN 978-960-219-288-7

Toy | Communal spirit | Courage | Dignity

A wind-up monkey lands on the head of a writer and tells him eagerly of the revolt of the forgotten toys. These toys had to learn to fight against being forgotten, for the light and care they lack and even for the button eye that the cat stole. Their protest march is broken up by men in uniform and the old garbage disposal machine. More than half of the toys retreat back to the safety of the musty old toy box. Everything threatens to fall apart – what they need is a plan. Christos Boulotis's story champions the values of community spirit, courage, and human dignity. Inspired by the personal toy collection of the author soon to enrich the Myrina-Lemnos Museum, Photini Stefanidi brings the toys to life using a vibrant palette and her characteristic love for accented details, which invite readers to look at the pictures more carefully. (Age: 4+)

111



Papatheodōru, Basilēs (Papatheodorou, Vasilis) (text)
Kalogerē, Lila (Kalogeri, Lila) (illus.)

Nai, Birtzinia, yparchei Agios Basilēs!

(Yes, Virginia, Santa Claus is real!)

Athēna: Kastaniōtēs, 2013. – 105 p.

ISBN 978-960-03-5673-1

Imagination | Doubt | Self-confidence

This book's plot is inspired by a true story. The story begins in 1897, when eight-year-old Virginia O'Hanlon sends a letter to the New York paper »The Sun« inquiring about the existence of Santa Claus. Editor Francis Pharcellus Church answers her with an editorial that has become one of the most famous publications in US press history. Church defends the existence of Santa Claus vigorously and advises the girl to remain unswayed by sceptics. Virginia's letter and her life story are expertly narrated in his book by renowned author Vasilis Papatheodorou. The book offers proof of the transformative power and magic of a child's imagination, a capacity that creates hope and faith in one's dreams in difficult life situations not by denying the realities of war, poverty, racism, and loneliness, but by bravely standing to face them. (Age: 10+)

112



Papatheodulu, Antōnēs (Papatheodoulou, Antonis) (text)
Kapatsulia, Natalia (Kapatsoulia, Natalia) (illus.)

Ochi, kyria!

(No, Miss Teacher!)

Athēna: Papadopoulos, 2013. – 29 p.

(Series: Petaei, petaei)

ISBN 978-960-484-449-4

School | Creativity | Wordplay

»No, Miss Teacher!«, the school teacher hears loudly every time she explains new vocabulary words. This is because her young pupils believe that asters only come from asteroids, that sandwiches were created by the sand witch, and that France is a country where everyone is named Francis. Their teacher has no choice but to join them and give her own imagination free reign. Just then her students tease her by showing that they can see and interpret the world in a surprisingly factual way – if only they want to. Antonis Papatheodoulou highlights children's gift for discovering and understanding their environments through play and make-believe, and to communicate about what they see. Natalia Kapatsoulia's light and lively illustrations animate and enhance the book's intelligent text. (Age: 6+)



113

Zapheiriu, Kōstas (Zapheiriou, Kostas) / Tyrikos-Ergas, Giōrgos (Tyrikos-Ergas, Giorgos) (text)
Berutsu, Katerina (Veroutsou, Katerina) / Marda, Ellē (Marda, Elli) (illus.)

Thryloi kai xotika tou Aigaiu

(Aegean legends and kobolds)

Mytilēnē: Aiolida, 2013. – 86 p.

(Series: Aulētēs kai Pappulanthrōpos)

ISBN 978-960-9653-26-8

[Legend](#) | [Fairy tale](#)

This original collection freshly explores motifs of traditional folk legends and fairy tales. Its eight featured postmodern fairy tales evoke the symbolism and musicality of authentic North Aegean folk traditions. Values such as tolerance, love of nature, and solidarity are revived. Strange beings, including the southern wind, the angry plane tree, and the bald-headed cobblers who grow on trees, accompany readers of all ages on a journey through time, where familiar elements from the past and present come together and blend in an odd fashion. Kostas Zafeiriou and Giorgos Tyrikos-Ergas, both at home on the islands of Lemnos and Lesbos, masterfully introduce idiomatic language into the text to make it entertaining. As a reader, one is left wanting to become better acquainted with these stories and to explore the traditions behind them. The lively illustrations of Katerina Veroutsou and Elli Marda accompany the text. (Age: 7+)



114

El'azary, Yuval (text)

Amir, Lital (illus.)

Im ta'alu me'at

(Higher and higher)

Or Yehuda: Kinneret Zmorah-Bitan, 2013. – [40] p.

ISBN 978-965-552-714-8

[Perspective](#) | [Distance](#) | [Scale](#)

This book and its impressive illustrations invite us to reflect on how we would perceive our surroundings if we could fly and view them from ever greater distances. How would our houses and streets appear if we could rise above the rooftops, just as the little kite does that the story's child protagonist has drawn? Why do all the big houses look so small from up high? This book invites children on an excursion around the globe and through the universe, showing how perspectives can change, how maps and city plans are made and how we use them to find our way. Yuval Elazary has written numerous story books as well as non-fiction books for young readers. The illustrator recently completed her studies with distinction in graphic and design art and illustration in Haifa; this is her first publication. (Age: 5+)

115



Grossman, David (text)
Rovner, Michal (illus./design)

Hibuk

(Hug)

Tel Aviv: Am Oved, 2014. – [32] p.
ISBN 978-965-13-2191-7

Uniqueness | Loneliness | Love | Mother / Son

This little volume is designed like an artist's book and has something very intimate about it. It describes a walk that a mother takes with her young son and their dog through the fields. A dialogue develops about the relation of uniqueness and loneliness. When the mother states that her boy is the sweetest child and there is no one else like him on the planet, the child is filled with concern. He does not want to be unique, because that means he is all alone. The small drawings of the characters, sketchy and without facial features, wonderfully enhance the storytelling's reticent tone. The book takes on the topics of love and feeling alone with a remarkable simplicity and great warmth, and is equally appealing to adults and children. Internationally awarded author David Grossman has written many novels for adults and some books for children. Illustrator Michal Rovner is also active as a photographer and video artist, and her work is regularly exhibited. (Age: 5+)

116



Yuval-Yair, Shirley (text)
Farber, Tsahi (illus.)

Ha' Nets al ha'ets

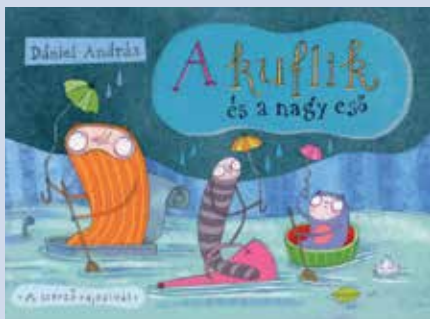
(Tree top dad)

Or Yehuda: Kinneret Zmorah-Bitan, 2013. – [38] p.
ISBN 978-965-552-665-3

Father / Son | Improvisation | Imagination

This picture book explores an everyday situation where a father and son spend some constructive and imaginative time together. Improvisation is needed when Uri's new remote-controlled airplane gets stuck in a tree. Thereupon ensues a chain of fatherly attempts to get the plane down. The father must continually improve his improvisatory skills, and Uri learns that one can enjoy the day in different ways, even when things go other than planned. This book can teach children and adults alike to appreciate being flexible and spontaneous: When one way doesn't work out, a new idea will come along and change everything. Narrated and illustrated with much humour and an eye for situational comedy, this story considers how fathers' roles have changed as they have become more active in child-rearing. This is the fourth children's book by Shirley Yuval-Yair, a psychologist who also writes children's plays. Illustrator and comic artist Tsahi Farber teaches at the Bezalel Academy of Arts and Design Jerusalem. (Age: 4+)

117



Dániel, András (text/illus.)

A kufflik és a nagy eső

(The Knuffels and the big rain)

Budapest: Pagony, 2013. – [50] p.

ISBN 978-615-5441-34-9

Family | Adventure | Fantasy tale

The Knuffels are neither squirrels, nor worms, beans, or stars. They hop like rubber balls but are not balls; they are colourful like lollipops but are not edible. There are little and big ones, round and slim ones. They come and go, but where from and where to no one knows. This book's protagonists are portrayed as lovable, familial creatures who master everyday challenges together. When a big rain floods all their dugouts on the abandoned meadow, they rescue themselves on boats. They meet new creatures on their journey, and even the rat is helpful by showing them where to find the plug to drain all the water back out. Dániel András's story has a nice arc of suspense, and his illustrations capture the feelings and moods of this original little fantasy world. (Age: 3+)

118



Dóka, Péter (text)

Lakatos, István (illus.)

A kék hajú lány

(The girl with the blue hair)

[Budapest]: Móra, 2013. – 79 p.

ISBN 978-963-11-9467-8

Hospital | Illness | Cancer | Friendship

Thirteen-year-old Oliver needs his stuffed toy rat with him to fall asleep, has no friends, and loves to climb trees. His luck runs out one day when he falls from the tree and must remain under observation at the hospital. In the children's wing, Oliver discovers a world full of secrets and suspense and also new friends, trying to help anyone who is ill or unhappy. He really likes Mira, the girl with the blue hair. Chemotherapy has made her hair fall out, so she wears a blue wig. Mira has retreated to a world of fantasy, but Oliver manages to bring her back to this world. Well-loved Hungarian picture book author Péter Dóka capably handles this sombre topic, telling the story from the perspective of a young adult who refuses to succumb to a life-threatening illness. The colourful drawings help the reader better imagine this world of fears and bad dreams. (Age: 10+)



119

Alemagna, Beatrice (text/illus.)

I cinque malfatti

(The five misfits)

Milano: Topipittori, 2014. – [36] p.

ISBN 978-88-98523-06-1

[Disability](#) | [Difference](#) | [Perfectionism](#) |
[Tolerance](#) | [Contentment](#)

The protagonists of this picture book are not perfect, in fact they have many flaws. One has holes, the next one wrinkles, the third is phlegmatic, the fourth sees the world upside down and the fifth has all imaginable defects. They live content with their oddities in a big crooked house. One day an unusual, beautiful and quite flawless fellow appears, wanting to turn their lives around and perfect their existences. But the misfits do not want to change, as being different is a resource for themselves and for their loved ones. The world is more colourful because of them, its stories are deeper, its feelings genuine. The book's mostly capitalised text is well-suited for new readers. Beatrice Alemagna studied at the Istituto Superiore Industrie Artistiche in Urbino. Since 1996, she has been awarded for her numerous picture books and illustrations, which have been translated into many languages. (Age: 4+)



120

Calì, Davide (text)

Lotti, Alice (illus.)

Quando un elefante si innamora

(When an elephant falls in love)

Padova: Kite Ed., 2014. – [28] p.

ISBN 978-88-67450-25-1

[Elephant](#) | [Love](#)

This book, whose protagonist is a friendly elephant, considers love in a nuanced and highly ironic way. It describes a love that encompasses both light and shadow, that interweaves joy and sadness. A love that inspires one to write letters, to go on diets, to turn red in the face. A love that makes one reflect and observe the clouds and dress elegantly. The picture book invites readers to experience these feelings vicariously and to be amazed and inspired by the events that life brings with it. The amorous pachyderm's story is conveyed through a perfect synthesis of the text, written by an internationally known author, and the pictures of a young illustrator, whose debut this is. This gentle, entertaining book takes on a universal topic and is appealing to readers young and old. (Age: 4+)

121



Camilleri, Andrea (text)
Orecchia, Giulia (illus.)

Magaria

(Magic spell)

Milano: Mondadori, 2013. – [96] p.

(Series: Contemporanea)

ISBN 978-88-04-63202-3

Sicily | Grandfather / Niece | Magic spell |
Disappearance

Andrea Camilleri's bitter fairy tale was written by request of an association of prisoners and former prisoners. It is a story about magic and reality, about misunderstandings that can lead to painful after-maths, about spells and disappearance. The text, first published in 2005, appears here in a newly illustrated edition for children. »Magaria« seems narrated by an old story-teller – perhaps it is the grandfather from the story – in the beautiful language for which Camilleri is famed. His narrative style combines expert writing, song, poetry, research, and amazement. The story offers multiple endings for various literary tastes. Why does Lullina disappear? Why is the grandfather accused of the terrible crime? And who is the little man in yellow who appears from nowhere? All of this can be discovered in the text and in Giulia Orecchia's colourful illustrations that evoke Sicily's magic. (Age: 6+)

122



Carioli, Janna (text)
Possentini, Sonia M. L. (illus.)

L' alfabeto dei sentimenti

(The alphabet of emotions)

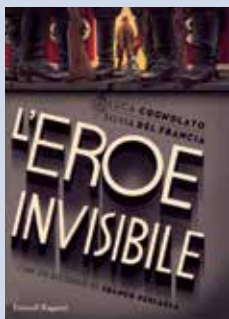
Casalecchio di Reno (Bo): Fatatrac, 2013. – [48] p.

ISBN 978-88-8222-318-2

Emotion | Poetry | ABC book

Janna Carioli and Sonia M. L. Possentini bring our sincerest emotions to life in this ABC book, using words and images that convey their very personal communicative style. In a fast-paced society that has difficulty with and often suppresses expressions of the inner life, it is not easy to give voice to the heart and mind. Here, the author and illustrator represent twenty-one letters by linking each to an emotion such as love and anger, curiosity and pain, loneliness and freedom. Each page offers new perspectives on childhood. They present top notch rhymes and aptly chosen words, whose sonority and rhythm make for smooth reading. The book's illustrations are carefully composed and atmospherically dense, painterly, and visionary, drawing on a selective use of colours. Large blank spaces on the page help the reader better sense the relationship between text and image. (Age: 7+)

123



Cognolato, Luca / Del Francia, Silvia (text)

L' eroe invisibile

(The invisible hero)

San Dorligo della Valle <Trieste>:

Einaudi Ragazzi, 2014. – 152 p.

(Series: Carta bianca)

ISBN 978-88-6656-140-8

[Perlasca, Giorgio](#) | [World War II](#) |
[Budapest / 1944-1945](#) | [Resistance](#) |
[Persecution of the Jews](#) | [Historical fiction](#)

This novel recounts a true story from the years of the Second World War, when the war had brought hunger, desperation and death to the occupied city of Budapest. The story is about an invisible hero who remained unnoticed for many years. It was in the late 1980s that the State of Israel honoured Giorgio Perlasca with the title »Righteous Among the Nations«. The reader follows Perlasca through the streets of Budapest all the way to the city's basements. The novel describes his attempts to live up to a task greater than himself by developing strategies and securing allies, to save as many Jews as possible from deportation to the extermination camps and certain death. The novel portrays such helpers as average, unremarkable people, whose often unrecognised resistance efforts helped change the course of history. (Age: 12+)

124



Lodi, Mario (text)

Rocchetti, Michele (illus.)

Il soldatino del pim pum pà.

Un racconto in versi

(The little pim pum pà soldier. A story of verses)

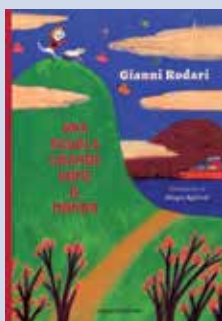
Roma: Orecchio acerbo, 2014. – [36] p.

ISBN 978-88-96806-84-5

[Peace](#) | [War](#) | [Humanity](#) | [Democracy](#)

The text of this book is a reprint of a rhyming story written by teacher and author Mario Lodi (1922-2014) and published in 1963. Lodi received many accolades for his work in the democratic school reform and for his defence of children's rights. Revolutionary for its time, this story has lost none of its urgency. This story denounces poverty, unemployment, and the pressure to emigrate. It describes a world in which the powerful hoard nearly all privilege and place all others on the outskirts of the system. The story declares war on injustices by showing how a little soldier's conscience helps convert the violent uses of weapons into peaceful ones. The book's illustrations are by young illustrator Michele Rochetti, who uses a reflected and precise symbolism that alludes to Cubism and Futurism in a very personal and original way. (Age: 6+)

125



Rodari, Gianni (text)
 Agliardi, Allegra (illus.)
Una scuola grande come il mondo
 (A school as big as the world)
 San Dorligo della Valle <Trieste>: Emme Ed.,
 2013. – [28] p.
 ISBN 978-88-6714-155-5

[Learning](#) | [World](#) | [Poetry](#)

This picture book uses few but powerful words and minimalist typography to make the text stand out. This short story in verse was initially written by the timeless Gianni Rodari for the »Libro degli errori« (Book of mistakes, 1964). This new edition is illustrated by Allegra Agliardi, a Milanese illustrator and graphic artist who has been part of the illustrator scene in Italy and abroad since 2001. Agliardi employs a colourful palette to illustrate Rodari's text. Her drawings animate an inquisitive child capable of observing the world and trying out new things. The magical captive balloon that floats in the air over a map without borders welcomes the child into a special school of life that makes new insights, experiences, emotions, and encounters possible. (Age: 5+)

126



Sanna, Alessandro (text/illus.)
Fiume lento. Un viaggio lungo il Po
 (Slow river. A journey along the Po)
 Milan: Rizzoli, 2013. – [116] p.
 ISBN 978-88-17-06673-0

[Po / 1930-1980](#) | [River](#) | [Seasons](#)

Rivers are life-giving for the places and people who live their stories along its banks. »Fiume lento« is a wonderful, nearly wordless book, created on the banks of the great Italian river Po. It is a touching homage to the river's tranquillity and its movement, and to its connected life-stories. The book, beginning with a succinct foreword by film director Ermanno Olmi, describes the river as it follows seasonal rhythms and is witness to various historical events. Stories from the 1930s to the 1980s are portrayed with delicate, poetic water colour illustrations, as if emerging from a fog to escape the water's destructive power. History, geography, poetry – this is an artist's book, akin to a unique film played out on paper. (Age: 6+)

127



Asanuma, Mikiko (text)

Kuroi, Ken (illus.)

Hanamizuki no michi

(The alley of white and pink blossoms)

Tōkyō: Kin no hoshisha, 2013. – [32] p.

ISBN 978-4-323-07258-6

Japan / 2011 | Tsunami | Mother / Son | Grief

With this book, Mikiko Asanuma expresses her deep grief for her lost son, who died in 2011 while working as a rescue worker in the tsunami disaster area in Northeast Japan. Like in a poem, his soul speaks to his mother about how he loved his family, friends, and the city. He recalls his childhood at the beach, the path he cycled to school, and the festivals in the country and by the sea. He ends by wishing for a place secured against tsunamis, which one arrives at by walking a path lined with Japanese dogwood, his favourite tree. Writing this book was surely no easy feat, trying to capture the catastrophe bearing in mind the people that survived it. Well-known picture book illustrator Ken Kuroi unobtrusively and subtly illustrates the son's life in the beautiful landscape so suddenly razed by the violent flood. He movingly places the rustling, delicate blossoms of the dogwood tree to soar above all, as a metaphor for the souls of the son and all other tsunami victims, as well as for comfort and hope for the future. (Age: 6+)

128



Itō, Miku (text)

Satō, Makiko (illus.)

Itoko no taijūkei

(Itoko's bathroom scale)

Tōkyō: Dōshinsha, 2013. – 255 p.

ISBN 978-4-494-01956-4

School | Friendship | Rivalry | Self-discipline | Obesity | Diet

Eleven-year-old Itoko can't help being seduced by the wonderful dishes offered at school and at home. As a result she is plump, though she feels good and eating helps her feel less depressed and cope with mundane stress. When she defends a corpulent classmate from the pranks of a girl clique at school, she decides to lose some weight herself. This is a real challenge for her. Will diet and exercise work? This book is composed of five chapters, in which students of both genders speak out about problems they face in their daily school and home lives. At the centre stands Itoko, whose naturalness, honesty, and compassion help others, even if she sometimes seems overly gruff and direct. Miku Itō's lively debut about self-discipline, rivalry, and friendship won the New Authors Prize of the 53rd Japanese Association of Writers for Children. (Age: 11+)

129



Itō, Yū (text)

Okamoto, Jun (illus.)

Komainu no Sasuke. Maigo no maki

(Sasuke, the guardian lion. The confused dog)
Tōkyō: Poplar-sha (Popurasha), 2013. – 186 p.
(Series: Noberuzu ekusupuresu; 19)
ISBN 978-4-591-13225-8

Shinto shrine | Effigy | Stonemason | Soul |
Compassion | Fantasy novel

In Japan, two lions made of stone sit in front of Shinto shrines to protect them from bad influences. In this suspenseful novel, awarded the 62nd Shōgakukan Award for Publications & Culture in 2013, two such guardian lions are the central characters. They are inhabited by the souls of their creators, a stone mason, who died 150 years ago, and his young apprentice. A trade apprentice often stops by the shrine looking for his dog, and complains to the lion inhabited by the soul of young apprentice Sasuke. Sasuke feels compassion for him and wants to help him in his way. If his attempt fails, however, his soul could wander eternally and never return. Yū Itō, who enjoys using historical material for her fantasy novels, has humorously captured the dialogue between the stubborn master and his good-natured apprentice. The book's simple illustrations help transport the reader to the shrine. (Age: 9+)

130



Kimishima, Hisako (text)

Gotō, Jin (illus.)

Inu ni natta ōji. Chibetto no minwa

(The prince who became a dog.
A Tibetan folk legend)
Tōkyō: Iwanami shoten, 2013. – [48] p.
ISBN 978-4-00-111242-9

Tibet | Barley | Origin myth

This is the story of a kingdom where the people initially nourished themselves on milk and meat alone. Their goodwilled prince embarks on a perilous journey to request barley seeds from a mountain god. That god does not possess the grain, though. The snake demon does, and he transforms the prince into a dog. On the journey home and with the love of a girl, the transformed prince succeeds in sowing seeds everywhere. Since that time, barley is a basic food of Tibetans. Jin Gotō, an artist of Japanese painting (Nihonga), illustrated this legend after a journey through Tibet and China. The story's characters act in colourful garb against an unobtrusive landscape. The protagonists, finely contoured and holding graceful postures, are painted in the manner of the Bijinga (pictures of beautiful women in Japanese art). The aesthetic and quite dramatic illustrations bring to life the folk story as narrated by Hisako Kimishima, a renowned expert on Chinese folk literature. (Age: 6+)

131



Kutsuki, Shō (text)

Hachigatsu no hikari

(Flash in August)

Tōkyō: Kaiseisha, 2012. – 145 p.

ISBN 978-4-03-744160-9

Japan / 1945 | Atomic bomb | War | Survival |
Short story | Historical fiction

The author of this book belongs to the second generation of those irradiated in Hiroshima. Here she reconstructs in three fictional short stories the moment the atomic bomb dropped and the time afterwards. In a literary and eloquent manner, she portrays the fates of those present, based on real people, survivors' statements, and documents. In the face of the bomb's innumerable innocent victims, survivors can come to blame themselves for their inability to save others. Compassion with the victims is only possible if their memory is kept alive. This also brings one closer to the survivors and allows one to understand their suffering. The devastating earthquake and tsunami catastrophe in northern Japan and the nuclear plant accident in Fukushima in 2011, which took the lives of many, made the author appreciate this insight once more. This book is a valued contribution to »atomic bomb literature«, a remarkable genre specific to Japan that concerns the atomic bomb drops over Japan and their consequences. (Age: 12+)

132



Kutsuki, Shō (text)

Hikari no utsushie.**Hiroshima HIROSHIMA Hiroshima**

(Soul-Lanterns. Hiroshima HIROSHIMA Hiroshima)

Tōkyō: Kōdansha, 2013. – 189 p.

ISBN 978-4-06-218373-4

Hiroshima | Atomic bomb | Survival |
Compassion | School

Ever since her 2005 debut, Shō Kutsuki is a sought-after author of young adult books. Her creative work ranges from fantasy stories to realistic novels about self-discovery and humanity. This carefully structured novel is her third contribution to Japanese atomic bomb literature, and it was awarded the 9th Fukuda Kiyoto Prize in 2014. The book is about the ongoing problems faced by survivors of the 1945 atomic bomb drop. Working on a creative project, three members of a middle school art club try to artistically capture the suffering of various people, including their club teacher and a mother. To do so, they draw on research and several short Tanka poems about the city of Hiroshima in the time before, during and after the explosion. The story suggests that grief, self-blame, and self-pity can be overcome when people actively engage with troubling matters. The author ends the book with a broad question concerning perpetrators, victims, and human ignorance. (Age: 13+)



133

Tanaka, Hiko (text)

Karendā

(Calendar)

Augmented new edition

Tōkyō: Fukuinkan Shoten, 2014. – 458 p.

ISBN 978-4-8340-8051-3

[Grandmother / Niece](#) | [Family](#) | [Trust](#)

The first edition of this multi-faceted novel about unusual family constellations, gender roles, the parent-child relationship, and feminism appeared in 1992. Its plot revolves around thirteen-year-old Tsubasa, who lost both of her parents and since lives with her divorced grandmother. Her grandfather moved into a senior's residence where he married a woman he met there. The story begins when a young couple, Kiwamu und Umi, find emergency short-term refuge in Tsubasa's grandmother's home. The inhabitants soon develop familial bonds. Hiko Tanada adds a chapter to this new edition that describes the relationship between Tsubasa, now an artist, and Umi's daughter. For Tanada, family, even without blood ties, is the ideal form of interpersonal, cross-generational relationship. All you need is love, trust, and the autonomy of individuals. (Age: 13+)



134

Tawara, Machi (text)

Satō, U. G. (illus.)

Fujisan utagoyomi

(Enjoy Mount Fuji)

Tōkyō: Fukuinkan Shoten, 2012. – 48 p.

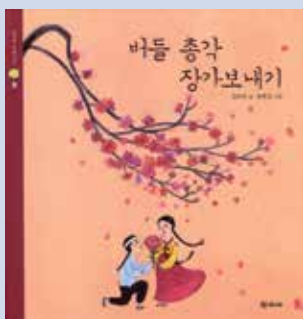
(Series: Nihon kessaku ehon shirīzu)

ISBN 978-4-8340-2760-0

[Everyday life](#) | [Seasons](#) | [Mount Fuji](#) | [Poetry](#)

This original picture book shows a new way to present poetry. Its bold concept unites the traditional culture of Japan with contemporary life. Tanka, a Japanese poetic form consisting of thirty-one syllables, has been practiced since the eighth century. Machi Tawara, known best for her successful volume of poetry »Sarada kinenbi« (Salad anniversary), here offers Tanka poems about everyday life using colloquial language – an outright revolution when contrasted with the highly literary language of classic Tanka poetry. These twenty-four examples were selected from Tawara's volumes of poetry and have to do with nature, emotion, love, and other topics. Every poem is dedicated to one of the twenty-four terms of the Chinese-Japanese solar calendar events in the Japanese annual cycle. The volume's colourful illustrations come from international award-winning graphic artist U. G. Satō, who insightfully translates the texts into images, performing a kind of parody of Hokusai's famed wood cut series »Fugaku 36 kei« (Thirty-six Views of Mount Fuji). (Age: 10+)

135



Gim, Eunui (Kim, Eun-Ui) (text)
 Song, Huijin (Song, Hee-Jin) (illus.)
Beodeul chong gak jang ga bo nae gi
 (Mr. Beodeul's wedding)
 Seoul: Hakgojae (Hakgojae Publishing Co.),
 2014. – [40] p.
 (Series: Hakgojae Daedaesonson; 6)
 ISBN 978-89-5625-259-9

Magic | Wedding | Family | Tradition

Mr. Beodeul, an old bachelor who grew up as a lonely orphan, comes upon an old magic feather. Thanks to this, he finally has a chance to marry beautiful Seoi, the third daughter of a government official in town. However, he discovers that there are many things to organise for the wedding. Worried and perplexed, Mr. Beodeul has a hard time preparing for the wedding because he is not sure what needs to be done, and he also is anxious that he might not be able to do it all. Will he surmount the difficult circumstances? Will he eventually succeed in marrying a girl as beautiful as Seoi? Kim Eun-Ui (b. 1965) studied Korean literature at Chonnam National University. Song Hee-Jin (b. 1982) studied painting and illustration at Hongik University in Seoul, at the École supérieure des arts décoratifs in Strasbourg and at the École des Beaux-Arts in Épinal. (Age: 4+)

136



Go, Seung hyeon (Ko, Seung Hyun) (text)
 Yun, Jeoung ju (Yoon, Jung-Joo) (illus.)
 Gim, Jeongin (advisor)
Yeonin e Seoul na deuri
 (Little Yeoni's journey to Seoul)
 Seoul: Chaeg il gneun gom (= Bearbooks),
 2014. – [44] p.
 (Series: Woori Munhwa Kŭrimch'aek; 18)
 ISBN 979-11-85564-04-3

Seoul / 1900 | Korea / Western culture

This book invites readers on a journey to the time and place where modern life in Korea began. In the early 1900s, when Western culture and new technologies were being introduced in Korea, Yeoni, Cheori, and Deogy live on the outskirts of the city and visit the historic downtown of Seoul. There are trams full of people, telephone poles, streetlights and Western-style brick buildings. Seoul is filled with many eye-opening new products, but the most exciting part for the three friends are Western people, who look very different from them. While adults keep their distance from the Western people because they are afraid of the harm that contact with Western culture may bring, the girls step across cultural boundaries. Ko Seung Hyun studied economics and finance before he began his writing career. Yoon Jung-Joo studied Western painting at Hongik University and received the Silver Prize at the second Shinhan Children's Comics Contest. (Age: 4+)

137



O, Chigeun / O, Eunbyeol (text/illus.)

Apa rang Eunbyeol i rang Seomjin gang geulim yeo haeng

(Pictures of Papa and Eunbyeol's journey along the river Seomjin)

Paju: Tomato hauseu (Tomato House), 2013. – [44] p
ISBN 978-89-97313-19-8-77810

River | Ecology | Journey | Father / Daughter

The Seomjin River is one of the most beautiful and historic rivers in Korea. A father (a painter) and his daughter (an elementary school student) went for a trip along the river together. They then made a storybook about their experiences. Readers can discover the riverfront's peaceful and beautiful scenery and learn about the times the father and daughter enjoyed together. The pictures are beautiful, done in an oriental style with fresh, bright colours. O Chigeun was born in Namwon in 1971 and studied painting at Chosun University. His illustrations are here juxtaposed with his daughter's drawings, which capture the shared excursion and the river's legends from a child's perspective. The journey and its report were inspired by poems that are woven into the text. The Korean Ministry for Culture, Sports and Tourism named this volume an Excellent Book in the area of Korean culture. (Age: 8+)

138



Yi, Nayeong (Lee, Na-young) (text)

Yun, Jeoung ju (Yoon, Jung-Joo) (illus.)

Sigan Gagae

(Time shop)

Seoul: Munhakdongnae, 2013. – 204 p.

(Series: Boreumdal mungo; 53)

ISBN 978-89-546-2026-0

Stress | Anxiety | Time pressure |
Performance pressure | Memories

Yoona feels a great deal of stress. She studies all day long to enter an elite school, and lives according to the schedule that her mom makes her follow. Then, one day, Yoona sees a store called Time Shop. The shop owner proposes a deal: He will give her ten minutes if she will give him one of her happy memories. Yoona decides to sell her memory without hesitation. Yoona studies hard during the time she has bought and finally gets close to achieving her goals. However, the more she sells her memories the emptier she feels. She decides to suggest a new deal to the time shop owner. This novel is a warning not to sacrifice the present for the sake of future happiness. That simple yet powerful message shines through this magical realist story. This is Lee Na-young's fourth publication. »Time shop« earned the Munhak Dongne Children's Book Award. (Age: 10+)



139

Jonevs, Jānis (text)

Jelgava 94

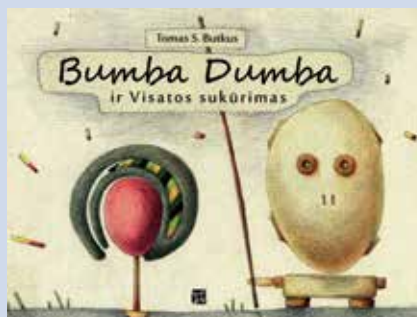
(Jelgava '94)

Rīga: Mansards, 2013. – 311 p.

ISBN 978-9984-872-88-9

Youth culture / 1990s | Black metal / Grunge |
Coming-of-age novel

»Jelgava 94« is Latvia's 2013 debut of the year, heralded as one of the best books out of Latvia in recent years and being bought, read and loved by many teens and adults alike. The plot begins on April 5th, 1994, the day the world learned of the suicide of Kurt Cobain, the grunge rock icon. For the teen protagonists growing up in uninteresting Jelgava, it is the day that divides their lives into a »before« and an »after«. Speaking for his generation, author Jānis Jonevs (b. 1980) describes what it was like to be part of the emergent alternative scene in Latvia in the 1990s, a country which had just reclaimed its independence – to be a rebel, to lose control, to allow stark individualism to become one's guiding value. »Jelgava 94« is a gripping and honest story about the grunge and black metal movements, but it also says something of the coming of age and the scars it can leave behind. (Age: 15+)



140

Butkus, Tomas S. (text/illus.)

Bumba Dumba ir Visatos sukūrimas

(Bumba Dumba and the creation of the universe)

[Klaipėda]: Vario Burnos, 2012. – 47 p.

ISBN 978-609-95464-0-7

Perception | World

What is it like when a child first sees a triangle, square, or circle on paper and then recognises it in the outer (real) world? In his first picture book for children, Tomas S. Butkus (b. 1975), perhaps Lithuania's most avant-garde architect, urban theorist (»City as an event«), and poet, explores the perception of basic shapes. We follow the story of a new-born egg-shaped creature who wanders through the world, seeing everything for the first time. The book was heralded in 2012 as an exceptional debut in the area of children's literature and received an award in the »Most beautiful books« competition in Lithuania. »Bumba Dumba« was published by Vario Burnos, an edgy small-scale publisher and think tank. The book employs a precisely sequenced series of pictorial elements in muted coloured pencil hues to guide us through a familiar, complex world made unfamiliar so that we can rediscover it. (Age: 6+)

LATVIAN
LITHUANIAN

Latvia
Lithuania

141



Kandrotienė, Danguolė (text)
Rancevienė, Jurgita (illus.)
Spintos istorijos
(Cupboard stories)
Kaunas: Terra publica, 2013. – 96 p.
ISBN 978-609-8090-11-6

Family | Past | Value priorities | Sustainability |
Memory

It's not so easy these days to find a cabinet full of old, forgotten objects tucked away in one's basement or attic, such as seven-year-old Emilija does in »Spintos istorijos«. What makes this award-winning Lithuanian book so readable, however, is that Danguolė Kandrotienė's fourth children's book is not only about finding forgotten things, but also about valuing them and reanimating them as treasures. In her native country, Kandrotienė is known for her travel descriptions and cultural-historical books about Lithuania. In the story, the found objects tell Emilija not only about her family's past, they also help her and the rest of the family cherish these old things. This creates an opportunity for fun and excitement in the family's day-to-day life: While Emilija's mother slips into that little black dress from years ago, her father goes to work with the old umbrella in hand. Danguolė Kandrotienė's dynamic writing style ensures that events proceed with an appropriate degree of chaos and comedy. (Age: 6+)

142



Johnson, Åshild Kanstad (text/illus.)
Kubbes album om alt
(Kubbe's album about everything)
[Oslo]: Gyldendal, 2013. – [36] p.
(Series: Barn & Ungdom)
ISBN 978-82-05-42582-8

Identity | Collecting

After »Kubbe lager museum« and »Kubbe lager spektakkel«, cuddly Kubbe is back in a new book – thanks to Åshild Kanstad Johnson, his inventor. This volume carries the encyclopaedic title »Kubbes album om alt« (Kubbe's album about everything). All three books in the series provide many hours of reading pleasure. The first volume is about collecting and categorising, and the second is about playing music. The third volume connects to the first, as collections of material objects take centre stage once more, though this time things also shift into the more abstract. The teeming pictures showcase those things most important to Kubbe, rather than a truly encyclopaedic »everything«, which in turn suggests the subjectivity and relativity of collecting and knowing. What Kubbe collects in his album builds and maintains his self-image and aids in his ability to fathom his cosmos: »This is me, Kubbe.« These picture books are real treats, multi-faceted and holding much in store for their young audience. (Age: 4+)

143



Kaldhol, Marit (text)

Det skulle vere sol, vi skulle reise til Łódź

(The sun was going to shine, we were going to Łódź)

Oslo: Samlaget, 2014. –175 p.

ISBN 978-82-521-8436-5

Loss | Trauma | Responsibility | Family | Nature

Marit Kaldhol writes poetry, children's plays, and prose that typically avoids the epic in favour of the compressed. Her associative, non-chronological narrative style creates space for contemplation. Kaldhol's work often takes up existential topics. »Farvel Rune« (1986) is as much an exemplar of this as is her newest novel. After the sudden death of her mother, Jenny, who narrates the story, must take care of her blind grandfather and her drug-addled sister. Her sister is becoming increasingly remote, but Jenny just can't stand to lose another person. Jenny pulls herself together, feeling she doesn't have the time or energy to grieve or to worry about herself. The reader might begin to feel overwhelmed by all this, but will find the precise descriptions of nature that stand in as metaphors for Jenny's inner states reassuring. Drawing on nature in symbolic ways is a method perfected by Norwegian authors such as Hamsun, Vesaas, Fosse and others. This book carries on the tradition. (Age: 16+)

144



Mathiasen, Sanne (text)

Bare en time til

(Only one more hour)

[Oslo]: Cappelen Damm, 2014. – 96 p.

ISBN 978-82-02-42061-1

Suicide | Grief | Mother / Daughter | Family | Winter

Eight footprints, dug up from the snow and preserved in the freezer – that's all that's left of her. The narrator's mother committed suicide, and these preserved footprints are her last physical connection to her. They are gradually vanishing as the girl keeps taking one out to feel close to her mother. She has no one else: Her father is depressive, her aunt is caught up in an unsentimental pragmatism, her sister is young and annoying, her therapist is strange, and Jonas, oh Jonas, he's also not the real thing. Outside, the northern Norwegian winter bears down on the land with its eternal darkness, snow, and icy winds. Along with its dialogue and character portraits, the very vivid and plausible setting of »Bare en time til« brings to mind Norwegian films such as »Eggs.«. Like that film, this novel skirts the grotesque as it alternates between tragedy and comedy. This is shown, for instance, in the image of the frozen foot prints, which have about them something at once poetic and also blackly humorous. (Age: 14+)

145



Øvreås, Håkon (text)
Torseter, Øyvind (illus.)

Brune

<proper name>

[Oslo]: Gyldendal, 2013. – 130 p.
ISBN 978-82-05-43636-7

Imagination | Revenge | Solidarity |
Conscience | Hero

»Nothing to worry about«, Rune replies every time his parents ask if everything's ok. In fact, nothing's ok. Grandpa died, Rune's parents are grieving, and he is being picked on by three older boys – until he comes up with an idea, that is: He grabs a bucket of brown paint and turns himself into Brune, a superhero fighting for justice. Svartle und Blåse, emblazoned with black and blue paint respectively, soon join him. Known during the day as Atle und Åse, they are also being teased by the trio of bullies. While there are many superhero stories that portray children's fantasies of omnipotence as compensating strategies for their mundane stressors, »Brune« is special. The third person limited point of view conveys how lost Rune feels, but also how resistant he is to being put down. Øyvind Torseter's pictures also make the book stand apart; they helped secure him a nomination for the Nordisk råds børne- og ungdoms literary prize in 2014. (Age: 8+)

146



Sævareid, Heidi (text)

Spranget

(The leap)

Oslo: Omnipax, 2013. – 206 p.
ISBN 978-82-530-3576-5

Fundamentalism | Power | Manipulation | Love |
Dance | Coming-of-age novel

Though primarily known through Swedish author P. O. Enqvist's novels, for instance, Christian fundamentalist groups are also a part of Norway's cultural landscape, interpreting the Bible literally and making heaven a reward only for those who avoid all vice. Janne and Anna are twins and belong to the »Zion« community. But while Anna finds Bible study groups and evangelical meetings fulfilling, Janne's faith increasingly falters. At first drawn to its close communal bonds, she senses that »Zion« is ultimately all about control and power. Sensible Janne's ambivalent feelings become clear as she tells the story from her perspective. Her doubts increase when she falls for »Zion's« rebel, who is also of two minds about the community but is unclear about his feelings for her. Heidi Sævareid's critical and credible first novel received the debut prize from the Norwegian Ministry of Culture. (Age: 14+)

147



Tronstad, Tyra Teodora / Sortland, Bjørn (text)

Det blir pinlig uansett

(It will be embarrassing in any event)

Oslo: Aschehoug, 2013. – 111 p.

ISBN 978-82-03-25582-3

[Email](#) | [Communication](#) | [Friendship](#) | [Love](#) |
[Coming-of-age novel](#) | [Epistolary novel](#)

How close can two people get if they've only ever communicated via email? Elias sees Susanne every day on the bus and notices her email address on her blue folder. When she doesn't show up for a time, he sends her an email. An intense, soul-baring virtual conversation quickly ensues. Susanne is cautious at first, having never consciously noticed Elias on the bus, but Elias is so candid and self-deprecating that she soon learns to trust him. Elias and Susanne are vulnerable and bruised souls, lonely and searching, who (only?) thrive under the cover of anonymity, as they are both fully aware of. Without prior planning, Tyra Teodora Tronstad and Bjørn Sortland, both top Norwegian authors, wrote this book in an email back-and-forth over the course of three days. The result is a contemporary version of the epistolary novel that is spontaneous and dynamic, and not at all superficial. (Age: 12+)

148



Vindenes, Eivor [et al.] (text)

Horvei, Øivin (illus.)

K. Mustermann

(Smith)

[Kolbotn]: Magikon forlag, 2013. – [32] p.

ISBN 978-82-92863-40-4

[Search](#) | [Chaos](#) | [Anthology](#)

The story begins with a doorbell panel with twelve labels that each state »Smith«. Well, which Smith is the rightful recipient of the letter from the inheritance lawyer from the United States that announces inherited wealth? The Smith who works nights and sleeps during the day? Or the Smith who loves to eat mustard? Twelve authors have thought up twelve prose miniatures and poems that create identities for the twelve Smiths, which frequently cross into the absurd. The vignettes are book-ended by two poems about the mailman, who does not know where to put the letter. The book's design recalls an old address book and the illustrations Cubist collages. It is an homage to the potential of everyday observation. The idea for this book project came to illustrator Øivin Horvei on one of his meanderings through Oslo, where he noted the last name »Mustermann« – a kind of equivalent of »Smith« – on many doorbells – no wonder, as this is the default label printed at the doorbell manufacturing facility... (Age: 8+)

149



Gulšīrī, Siyāmāk (Golshiri, Siamak) (text)

Ġangili abr. Rumān-i nauḡawān

(The fog forest. A young adult novel)

Tihrān: Našr-i Ufuq (Nashr Ofoq),

2013 (1392 h.š.). – 170 p.

(Series: Hūnāšām; 4) (Series: Rumān-i nauḡawān; 94)

ISBN 978-964-369-897-3

Vampire | Fantasy novel

Siamak Golshiri, winner of several national awards, has published many realistic novels and short stories for adults that focus on contemporary Iranian society, most of them set in the capital city of Teheran. With »cūnāšām« (Blood Suckers), he has now ventured into uncharted terrain: Even if stories and novels about vampires have long been popular internationally, this genre is still young and largely unexplored in Iranian children's and young adult literature. The protagonist of this five-volume series (2008-2014) is a writer. In volume four, called »ḡangil-i abr«, the protagonist sets off looking for a missing friend. On his way, he meets an old woman who seems to know everything about his search. She talks of terrible events that happened to her family years before and that keep haunting her to the present day. Golshiri tells an exciting, imaginative story that stands out for its detailed depiction of scenes. (Age: 14+)

150



Ḥal'atbarī, Farīda (Khalaatbari, Farideh) (text)

Hudāī, Žilā (Hodae, Zhila) (illus.)

Kāliska

(The carriage)

Tihrān: Šabāwīz (Shabaviz), 2014 (1393 h.š.).

– [32] p.

ISBN 978-964-505-374-9

Half-orphan | Happiness | Dream | Reality |
Mother / Daughter

This picture book tells the story of a half-orphan who tries to leave her daily life behind and escape into a fantasy world. Dream and reality intermingle, when the girl speaks to her dead mother and asks her, where she might be able to find the so-called wishing well. She had read about it in a fairy tale and now wants to wash her face in it and then wait for a prince in his carriage to come and pick her up. The mother comforts and reassures her that many princes are going to arrive once she is a little older. This is how she affectionately tries to convince her daughter that her home is in the real world and she has to try and find happiness there. Farideh Khalaatbari's (b. 1948) fairly short text is written in a clear language easy to understand for child readers. The straightforward style serves as an interesting contrast to Zhila Hodae's (b. 1954) dark, mysterious, symbolic illustrations, which fit in perfectly with the imagined dream world of the protagonist. (Age: 6+)

151



Mazāra'ī, Ilhām (Mazariee, Ilham) (text)
 Ṭāhiri, Lidā (Taheri, Lida) (illus.)
Māmān-i kalih dūdkišt
 (The mother who wore a chimney on her head)
 Tihrań: Kitabhā-i Fanduq, 2013 (1392 h.š.).
 – 24 p.
 ISBN 978-964-369-724-2

Mother / Daughter | Fame

»My mother is so boring«, a young girl thinks. »If only she were famous!« This wish comes true quite unexpectedly, when the mother's head suddenly sprouts a chimney that starts smoking whenever she gets upset. This happens, for example, when she witnesses a bank being robbed. It's hardly surprising that she – or rather the chimney – produces billows of smoke so dense that the thieves take to their heels. Yet the mother's sudden fame also has its downside: When environmentalists start campaigning against this weird polluter and the mother even faces punishment, the daughter shows compassion and does her utmost to change her mother back into her normal self. Ilham Mazariee (b. 1979) creates a humorous and lively story about the power of imagination to solve everyday problems. Lida Taheri's (b. 1967) colourful illustrations play with proportions and perspectives and emphasise the protagonists' gestures and facial expressions. They perfectly complement the crazy tale. (Age: 7+)

152



Pariruh, Zuhra (Pariroukh, Zohreh) (text)
 Mir Muḥammadi, Nilufar (Mirmohammadi, Niloufar) (art/photogr.)
Haft ḥwān wa haft razm
 (Seven fights and seven tasks)
 Tihrań: Kanūn-i Parwariš-i Fikrī-i Kūdakan wa Nauḡawānan (Kanoon), 2013 (1392 h.š.). – 39 p.
 (Series: Maḡmu'a-i nama-i nāmwar)
 ISBN 978-964-391-762-3

Courage | Fight | Shahnameh / Adaptation | Epic

»Schāhnāme« (»The Book of Kings«) by poet Hakim Abu 'l-Qasim Ferdowsi Tusi (940-1020 CE) is the Persian-speaking world's national epic. Consisting of 60,000 verses, it is considered the largest epic by a single poet in the world. Award-winning author Zohreh Pariroukh has chosen one episode from this monumental work and retold it for children. She has created a captivating narration that manages to preserve the spirit and the charm of the original work, despite the fact that she shortened and simplified the text and rewrote it in prose. The story describes the heroic deeds of the strong, brave, and clever hero Rostam. Assisted by his valiant and faithful horse Rakhsh, he has to complete seven tasks in order to free King Kavoos, who was captured and imprisoned by a magician. Elaborate metal artwork created and photographed by Nilufar Mir-Mohammadi accompanies the tale – an unusual but very fitting illustration of the text. (Age: 7+)

153



Yūsufī, Nāṣir (Yousefi, Naser) (text)
'Abd-Allāhī, Mitrā (Abdollahi, Mitra) (illus.)

Qīṣṣahā-i gunḡiškī

(Sparrow stories)

Tihrān: Naṣr-i Paidāyiš (Peydayesh),

2013 (1392 h.š.). – 60 p.

ISBN 978-964-349-999-0

Everyday life | Feeling | Sparrow | Short story |
Animal story

Naser Yousefi has received several national and international literature awards. His books for children and young adults, among them novellas, fables, and literary fairy tales, often focus on topics such as peace and friendship as well as solidarity between family members, within a school class, and in society in general. This volume contains seven short stories about the everyday life of sparrows, with which the author shares a special bond, as he explains in the foreword. He sees them as his friends or even relatives, as creatures with which he can speak openly and share secrets. Thus, the sparrows in this book possess something truly human. Yousefi writes about their fear of human beings and their daily struggle to survive. With a touch of melancholy, he relates how the little birds lead a cheerful and relaxed life despite multiple dangers. The texts are accompanied by simple, vignette-like black-and-white drawings by well-known illustrator Mitra Abdollahi. (Age: 6+)

154



Krygier, Michał (text)
Wasilka, Alicja (illus.)

Bałagan

(Mess)

Warszawa: Wydawnictwo ikropka, 2012. – [20] p.

ISBN 978-83-936162-0-6

House | Disorder | Habitualisation

»Bałagan« is the first offering coming out of iKropka Press and also the first picture book from publisher and artist couple Michał Krygier and Alicja Wasilka. Every page of this picture book is governed by disorder. No one knows where it comes from, but chaos has gradually seeped into the book and into the life of the family living therein. With the help of the story's child narrator and Alicja Wasilka's illustrations, we witness the disorder become a provisional member of the family with its own preferences (it likes the kitchen and the children's room). The highly stylised illustrations depict the messy home turf with an orange, turquoise, and silver colour scheme, which that forces readers to look closer to recognise household objects such as furniture, houseplants, and toys within the chaotic turmoil. One begins to agree with the narrator: Disorder may indeed produce something of aesthetic interest. (Age: 3+)

155



Łoziński, Mikołaj (text)
Ignerska, Marta (illus.)

Prawdziwa bajka

(A real fairy tale)

Warszawa: Kultura Gniewu, 2013. – [64] p.

(Series: Krótkie gatki)

ISBN 978-83-60915-83-7

Road trip | Spider | Care

A couple drives through summery French vacation landscapes in their Volvo. Along the way a spider attaches itself to their side-view mirror. The animal becomes their travel companion, and after a car accident, they frantically look for it – and find it. Before the couple nears home, the unusual companions part ways: Since Poland would be too cold for the spider, it alights on a side-view mirror of a truck headed south. This is a masterfully told story with a minimalist text and illustrations that unite concrete detail with metaphoric abstraction: the spider is a circle, the car a black square, the side-view mirror a framed rectangle; street crossings and spider webs are lines and beams. At times entire pages stay monochrome black, like the tunnel through which the protagonists are driving. With this wonderful book, two of the best Polish representatives of their crafts show how touching a language of clean and simple forms can be. (Age: 4+)

156



Szczygielski, Marcin (text) / Latour, Daniel de (illus.)

Arka czasu (czyli wielka ucieczka Rafała od kiedyś przez wtędy do teraz i wstecz)

(The time ark – or Rafał's great escape from the past to today and back again)

Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Piotra Marciszuka

Stentor, 2013. – 288 p.

(Series: Kora) ISBN 978-83-63462-15-4

Warsaw Ghetto / 1940-1944 | Time travel |
H.G. Wells / The Time Machine | Fantasy novel

»Arka czasu« is one of two 2013 children's books from Poland's perhaps most talented author for children and young adults today. While »The witch one floor down« is a comic children's story, the »The time ark« is about the Warsaw Ghetto. Nine-year-old Rafał lives there with his grandfather, who tries to hide the boy when life under the German occupation becomes more threatening. Rafał, a bookworm, tries to make sense of the strange situation by means of stories that he knows from books: For him the Nazis are the Morlocks from H. G. Wells' »The time machine« who threaten the Elois – the inhabitants of the ghettos. As in his other books, Szczygielski intermingles fact and fantasy. With the help of Wells' time machine, Rafał becomes a world and time traveller who can jump between the ghetto walls and the outside world, between fantasy and real worlds, as well as between historical past and the future of the year 2013. (Age: 9+)

157



Wechterowicz, Przemysław (text)
Dziubak, Emilia (illus.)

Proszę mnie przytulić

(Please give me a hug)

Warszawa: Agencja Edytorska Ezop, 2013. – [36] p.
ISBN 978-83-89133-82-3

Father / Son | Hug | Neighbourly love |
Animal story

Father and son bears roam the forest and hug everyone and everything they encounter – including themselves. They hug a beaver who is irritated by it, a carrot-munching rabbit, an old elk who's hard of hearing and even a hunter and Red Riding Hood's Big Bad Wolf. Only the constrictor snake would rather hug than be hugged. Why this love-fest? Because afterwards everyone is better off and in a better mood! Przemysław Wechterowicz, a much-loved picture book author in Poland, has worked with many leading Polish illustrators, including Marta Ignerska. For this vignette-based picture book, he collaborated with Emilia Dziubak (b. 1982), an illustrator who has been gaining renown since 2010. Her pictures appear sometimes cute, but nonetheless hit the mark and often draw on situational comedy. She illustrates this touching father-son story with a measure of wit and a dash of irony in the details. (Age: 3+)

158



Lacombe, Ana Luísa (text)
Vilela, Fernando (illus.)

A árvore de Tamoromu

(The Tamoromu tree)

Rio de Janeiro: Formato, 2013. – 22 p. + 1 CD
ISBN 978-85-7208-847-3

Tree of Life | Myth | Legend

In this book, Ana Luísa Lacombe recounts an Amazonian myth of the Wapichana people indigenous to Brazil: Two boys find an agouti (a South American rodent) and bring him to their tribe. The agouti starts sleeping in a hammock and becomes very lazy. One day, the agouti goes for a walk and finds Tamoromu, the tree of life, which yields all types of fruits, vegetables, grains, roots, and vegetables. Once the villagers notice that the agouti always returns from his walks with his tummy full, it doesn't take long before they discover his secret. The text – witty, lively, and musical – is charming, and its use of colloquial language, including onomatopoeia, gives readers the sense of being seated at the fire circle, tasting the smells and hearing the sounds of these sensorily rich stories. The graphic design of the cover and the pages, as well as the dynamic, attractive coloured pictures by award-winning illustrator Fernando Vilela lend great vividness to the text. (Age: 7+)



159

Moriconi, Renato (illus.)

Bárbaro

(Barbaric)

São Paulo: Companhia das Letrinhas, 2013. – [44] p.
ISBN 978-85-7406-574-8

Warrior horseman | Hero's trial | Courage |
Father / Son | Textless book

This textless picture book tells the story of a fearless warrior who faces the most terrifying challenges. Mounted on his black horse, he bravely fights monsters, arrows, and fire, overcoming all dangers ahead. The bold warrior horseman trembles before one being only: the same being that in the end destroys his conquest campaign. Each double page of the book adds to the fun of this narrative permeated by allusions to European legends. The book is designed in a narrow and tall format, which helps readers explore the different spaces the hero and his enemies occupy on each page. The book has an amazing and surprising ending – it turns out that our hero is in fact an imaginative child, »conquering« the world on his carousel horse. This metafictional twist comes after readers have accompanied the warrior protagonist on all his richly illustrated adventures. (Age: 3+)



160

Oliveira, Ieda de (text)

Borges, Rogério (illus.)

As cores da escravidão

(The colours of slavery)

São Paulo: FTD, 2013. – 93 p.
ISBN 978-85-322-8422-8

Slavery | Child labour | Imagination |
Storytelling

»As cores da escravidão« shows that slavery remains a timely and relevant topic in Brazil, despite its being abolished in 1888. Based on a document concerning Brazilian slavery, the author tells the story of Tonho, an enslaved boy who endures many losses and pains, but is nourished by the richness of his imagination, living the dream of a better life. Alternating reality and fantasy, the book provides insightful reflections on child labour, injustice, school, solidarity and the power of the imagination. Tonho, a survivor of children's exploitation, is strongly influenced by his grandmother's stories and believes in the fantasies his adoptive guardian Mrs. Zinha told him. Ieda de Oliveira, herself of Angolan ancestry, not only indicts unjust practices, but also alerts the readers to the need to nourish their imaginations as did the black and indigenous ancestors of today's multicultural Brazilian society, telling stories around the bonfires. This story is an evocative, moving read. (Age: 12+)

161



Riter, Caio (text)
Cardon, Laurent (illus.)

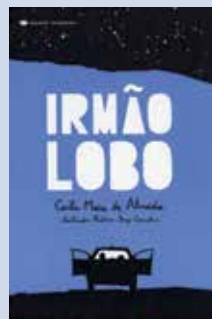
Sete patinhos na lagoa

(Seven ducklings in a pond)
São Paulo: Biruta, 2013. – [40] p.
ISBN 978-85-7848-117-9

Duck | Alligator | Counting

This book for young readers tells a story inspired by oral tradition that draws on the children's book trope of repetition. Seven ducklings in a pond are tormented by a terrible alligator named Barnabé, who seeks to devour them at any cost. Author Caio Riter does not sugar-coat the events, portraying the voracious alligator as quite a scary creature that swallows the ducklings one by one. All is set aright, however, in the surprise ending. Using verses with irregular stanzas and somewhat irregular rhymes, Riter creates a narrative that is both well-paced and playful, bringing the dynamic story to life. The humorous illustrations in yellow and green capture the action with a light-hearted tone that softens the story's more unsettling moments. (Age: 4+)

162



Almeida, Carla Maia de (text)
Gonçalves, António Jorge (illus.)

Irmão lobo

(Brother wolf)
Carcavelos: Planeta Tangerina, 2013. – 121 p.
ISBN 978-989-8145-53-6

Family | Crisis | Coming-of-age novel

»Irmão lobo« describes the rupture of a family in a crisis-torn country. The parents must move numerous times with their three children, the father loses his job, their economic situation becomes ever more precarious. The parents' marriage falls apart, memories of happier times fade away. Bolota, one of the three children, describes the events from two different time-points: from her view as an eight-year-old girl and, seven years later, from her view as a teenager on the cusp of adulthood. The book masterfully interweaves fantasy and fairy-tale elements with harsh reality in the protagonist's experience. Its design is also highly effective: The two different narratives appear on differently coloured pages, lending a distinct backdrop to the blue-black- and white illustrations. »Irmão lobo« appeared in the series »Dois passos e um salto«, which the publisher has newly expanded to include books of interest to young adult readers. (Age: 13+)



163

Ondjaki (text)
 Gonçalves, António Jorge (illus.)
Uma escuridão bonita.
Estórias sem luz elétrica
 (A beautiful darkness. Stories without electric light)
 Alfragide: Caminho, 2013. – 105 p. + [7] p.
 ISBN 978-972-21-2648-9
 (Brazilian edition: Rio de Janeiro: Pallas, 2013)

[Darkness](#) | [Storytelling](#) | [Love](#)

The text and drawings found in this book appear white on matte black pages – an appropriate choice given the book's title. »Uma escuridão bonita« (A beautiful darkness) describes a night in the Angolan capital of Luanda in the 1980s. The electricity has gone out; two teenagers are talking on a veranda, hushed and shy. He wants to kiss her, but hours drift by before that happens. Murmured thoughts fill the night air with beauty and poetry. This is the perfect setting to pause and dream, leaving space for the imagination and for that left unsaid. The story is beautifully written and also leaves room for reading between the lines. Author Ondjaki was born 1977 in Luanda and writes both for adults and teens. »Uma escuridão bonita« won best Portuguese-language young adult book of 2013 in Brazil by the FNLIJ. Its delicate, sketchy illustrations received the Prêmio Nacional de Ilustração (National Illustration Prize) in Portugal in 2013. (Age: 14+)



164

Sobral, Catarina (illus.)
Vazio
 (Void)
 Lisboa: Pato Lógico, 2014. – [34] p.
 (Series: Imagens que contam)
 ISBN 978-989-98470-3-3

[Void](#) | [Loneliness](#) | [Meaning of life](#) | [Zest for life](#) | [Textless book](#)

Catarina Sobral, winner of the Bologna Ragazzi Award 2014 with »O meu avô« (My grandfather; Orfeu Negro 2014), offers »Vazio« as further evidence of her magnificent talent as an illustrator. »Vazio« is one of several notable textless books published by Pato Lógico Press in the visual storytelling series »Imagens que contam«. It is a story about inner emptiness. The protagonist, a sad, clueless, lonely man with a hat, has frozen into his mundane existence and nothing excites him. He walks through a colourful world as a white silhouette, and his emptiness is physically visible as it sometimes nearly blends him entirely into his surroundings. When objects such as flowers or pictures touch his outline they quickly fade. Yet, the end of the story is hopeful, as he meets an equally »empty« woman and their hearts suddenly begin to beat. With clear contours, strong lines, and bold colour fields, Catarina Sobral has created a touching picture book. (Age: 5+)

165



Borodickaja, Marina (text)
Tumaškova, Natal'ja (illus.)
Телефонные сказки Маринды и Миранды
(Marinda's and Miranda's telephone fairy tales)
Moskva: Samokat, 2014. – 62 p.
ISBN 978-5-91759-084-4

Mother | Fairy tale | Anecdote | Storytelling

Marinda and Miranda are two very different mothers who still share much in common. Both have two children, are single parents, and manage to balance household, work and life in general. Both also love to chatter on the phone not just to talk about their stressful days, but also to tell each other stories. Marina Borodickaja, translator of the Russian edition of »The Gruffalo«, counts as one of the most important (children's) poets of her country. With this telephone fairy tale, she shows that she is also skilled at children's prose. Her protagonists humorously describe yowling cats that cause thieves to turn on their heels, because they can't »work« with such a racket; or a retired woman who talks to her household tools to keep them in order. Now and then a fairytale princess makes an appearance, but she is more of a rebel who would rather race off on her Harley than swoon over a prince. (Age: 5+)

166



Boteva, Marija (text)
Мороженое в вафельных стаканчиках.
Три повести
(Ice cream in waffle cones. Three stories)
Moskva: KompasGid, 2013. – 157 p.
ISBN 978-5-905876-54-7

Family | Self-discovery | Short story

This book is tricky! Stumbling over its phrasings and figures of speech, one can't help but wonder what it's really all about. In three very different stories, Marija Boteva (b. 1980) describes a) a foster family that sticks together, then breaks apart, b) self-discovery within the context of attending a new school, c) relations between boys and girls (and daughters and mothers). Boteva is a skilfull storyteller – for example, one learns of the family's crisis in an off-hand way: Father likes to »head off someplace«. Another example: We only recognise the narrator's emotional instability in the third story because of the discrepancy between her referring to her boyfriend as »just some person« and her repeating many phrases as if in displacement activity. There is a further layer, too, concerning the narrator's closeness to her mother and her gradually distanciation. Three typical teenage crises – three unusual linguistic feats. (Age: 12+)

167



Dryzlova, Ksenija (text)

Surova, Zina (illus.)

Nachodilki. Guljaem i igraem – poznaëm mir

(Little discoveries. Strolling and playing – and encountering the world)

Moskva: Izd. Mann, Ivanov i Ferber, 2014. – 24 p.

ISBN 978-5-91657-898-0

City | Nature | Season | Activities book |
Non-fiction

Quite unusual for the Russian market due to its layout, colour and overall design, this book is already moving from its first edition printing in 2013 to its second in 2014. The interactive character of »Little discoveries« is very appealing. Its creators, Ksenija Dryzlova and Zina Surova (b. 1982), animate their readers to search for objects, people, animals, plants, colours and shapes in their real-time, real-place surroundings. Divided according to season (summer and winter discoveries) or according to common environments (city, forest, sea, street), the book offers many suggestions for discovery. For instance, one is prompted to find eight cars in the street that are the same colour, or to figure out when the street lamps come on in the winter. Readers (or, more appropriately, users) of this book can then note and otherwise mark their findings in little boxes next to the tasks and pictures. (Age: 3+)

168



Soja, Anton (text) / Voroncov, Nikolaj (illus.)

Звёздочка. Skazka dlja prodvinutych detišek i ich roditelej;

[lošadka, kotoraja poët]

(Little Star. A story for clever children and their parents; [the pony that sings])

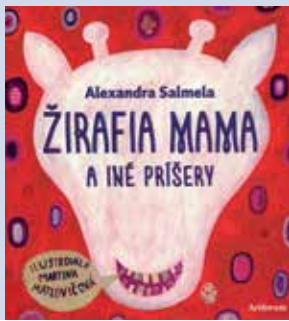
Sankt-Peterburg: Akvarel', 2013. – 276 p.

ISBN 978-5-4453-0427-2

Talking animals | New media |
Entertainment industry | Parody

A miniature pony named Little Star lives with other animals on the farm of ex-music mogul Beatloman. When a nearby lemonade factory, Chem-Cola, pours lemonade into the river the animals drink from, they all start to talk and finally make their wishes heard: Internet in the stable! Little Star soon discovers her singing talent and has a career in Moscow and on YouTube. The other characters in the story are just as sublime: the rapping monkey trio of Chim, Pan and Zee; the scruffy TV cat Miu Miu or Sju Sju, the fashion-victim poodle. Nikolaj Voroncov and Anton Soja – known in Russia as Rockpoet and author of the best-seller »EmoBoy« (2008), respectively – spin this hilarious yarn, commenting on it en passant. Adults will be entertained by countless allusions to media culture and societal life, and children will love the story of the miniature horse – as proven by the fact that children awarded »Zvězdočka« the Book of the Year Prize for 2013. (Age: 7+)

169



Salmela, Alexandra (text)
Matlovičová, Martina (illus.)
Žirafia mama a iné príšery
(Giraffe mama and other monsters)
Bratislava: Artforum, 2013. – 91 p.
ISBN 978-80-8150-026-8

Parent / Child | Role | Anecdote

A pirate girl plays checkers with a mermaid, a princess rejects the rosy world of castles and princes to become a monkey, parents let their boringly normal son get all pimped up in the children's repair shop. This collection of stories by Alexandra Salmela and Martina Matlovičová presents twenty-one similarly quirky, highly entertaining anecdotes. Almost all of them are about discarding a pre-set role or not embracing it in the first place. »Giraffe mama« appeared simultaneously in Slovakia and in Finland, where Bratislava-born Alexandra Salmela (b. 1980) has lived since 2006, and where she has already received praise for her debut novel. Both book editions feature Martina Matlovičová's illustrations and reveal her to be one of the most interesting contemporary Slovakian illustrators. Her delightfully eccentric illustration style perfectly suits Salmela's stories. (Age: 6+)

170



Flisar, Evald (text)
Kovačič, Pšena (illus.)
Alica v Poderuniji. [Roman v stripu]
(Alice in Poderunia. [A graphic novel])
Ljubljana: KUD Sodobnost International, 2013. – 153 p.
(Series: Karjola)
ISBN 978-961-6564-69-4

Alice in Wonderland / Spin-off | Social critique |
Environmental destruction | Resource scarcity |
Dystopia | Comic

Evald Flisar, one of Slovenia's best known authors, had great success in 2008 with his book for young adults titled »Alica v nori deželi« (Alice in Crazyland). The novel describes the crude island world of Poderunia, where Alice and her uncle are stranded. In collaboration with Flisar, illustrator Pšena Kovačič (b. 1981) has now produced a graphic novel version, which despite its humour does shed new light on the dystopian and socially critical aspects of the story. Natural resources on Poderunia are scarce, and its inhabitants have no choice but to create everything from a clay material called poti: cars, furniture, houses, and so on. In the process they are digging up their own foundation, though: the island earth and its ecosystem. Breaking up objects no longer in use to create building material is not working. Alice and her scientist uncle are called on for help, and soon the two are embroiled in a game for power, competing interests, and the question of individual responsibility within a society. (Age: 11+)

171



Golob, Tadej (text)
Fabjančič, Milanka (illus.)

Kam je izginila Brina?

(Where did Brina go?)

Dob pri Domžalah: Miš, 2013. – 202 p.
ISBN 978-961-272-131-2

Family | Writing | Detective story

Sure, Brina's younger brother Lovro can be annoying, but his fertile imagination comes in handy when his fourth-grade sister wants to write adventure stories. Yet when the neighbour's dog, Brina's namesake, goes missing, the children become real life detectives. Mysterious events unfold, and Brina finds inspiration for her stories in real life. Following on the heels of his award-winning mountain climbing thriller for teens »Zlati Zob« (2011), Tadej Golob (b. 1967) offers a very suspenseful story for children with a good dose of fun. The comic-like illustrations by Milanka Fabjančič (b. 1981) quicken the story's pace and enhance its humour. Many adults will also have fun with this read, recognising themselves in the many family moments that hover between solemn bond and silly little tiffs. (Age: 10+)

172



Blasco, Martín (text)
Gualicho (illus.)

Los extrañamientos

(The defamiliarizations)

Buenos Aires: Alfaguara, 2013. – 139 p.
(Series: Juvenil. Desde 12 años)
ISBN 978-987-04-2870-1

Squatting | Poverty | Mother / Son | Diversity | Self-discovery

When his parents' marriage falls apart and their financial situation becomes increasingly precarious, Martín and his mother – whom the boy describes as a punk and a hippie – move into a squatter's house. Readers join the first-person narrator on a journey through their new home, »la Casa«. On the one hand, it is a concrete representation of a social reality and the housing situation in Argentina, while on the other hand, it is also a metaphor for heterogeneous diversity. People live on every floor, in every apartment, in every room, everyone with his or her own story, own experiences and an individual view of life. These others help Martín learn to develop his own personality by considering new perspectives that change his point of view and are »defamiliarizing«. Art plays a role in this process as medium for approaching the world and changing it. In a realistic, credible, sensitive and humorous way, Martín Blasco draws the characters and the life into »la Casa«. (Age: 12+)

SLOVENIAN
SPANISH

Slovenia
Argentina

173



Rocha, Silvina (text)

Mey (illus.)

Por qué los elefantes prefieren jugar a la mancha

(Why elephants prefer playing tag)

Buenos Aires: Pequeño Ed., 2013. – [32] p.

(Series: Panzada de letras)

ISBN 978-987-1374-31-1

Hide-and-seek | Body size | Animal story

Hide-and-seek is understandably not elephant's favourite game, since he has an obvious disadvantage: he is very big and very (!) easy to spot. While his playmates bee, mouse, and cat effortlessly slip into any kind of suitable hiding spot – a flower, a matchbox, a cutlery drawer, or a cardboard roll, for instance – poor elephant is still thinking hard: in the cupboard, under the table, in the oven, behind the curtain? None of those will work. No wonder he prefers to play tag! In short, simple sentences, Silvina Rocha presents a very amusing story without a word too many. The text, which is largely composed of questions, invites readers to think along and share in the excitement. With her dynamic acrylic and marker pictures, Mey captures the pace of the story and the most exciting moments of the hide-and-seek game: the excitement in everyone's faces, having found an ingenious hiding spot, the fear of being found, the fun in outwitting one's friends. (Age: 4+)

174



Larra, Lola (text)

Reinamontes, Vicente (illus.)

Al sur de la Alameda. Diario de una toma

(South of the Alameda. Diary of an occupation)

Santiago de Chile: Ed. Ekaré Sur, 2014. – 285 p.

ISBN 978-956-8868-13-0

Chile / 2006 | Educational policy |
Student protest | School occupation |
Fictional diary

In 2006, thousands of students protested in Chile during the so-called Penguin Revolution for a better, more just educational system. »Al sur de la Alameda« tells the story of a (fictional) school occupation against the backdrop of these events. Fifteen-year-old Nicolás reports on the events in diary form from the perspective of a teen who initially is more interested in sports and girls than in politics and who sees the whole thing as a blending of everyday with exceptional circumstances. Striking, comic-like illustrations in black, white, red, and blue hues form the second narrative level. Recalling close-up shots taken by a camera, they show the same events with additional details from the view of an omniscient female narrator – an old lady from the neighbouring house, whose identity remains hidden until the end. This book is suspenseful both in content and in form and design, and it succeeds in both text and picture. This is Ediciones Ekaré's first overt offering for young adults. (Age: 13+)



175

Orobítz i Della, María José (text)
Ballesteros, Carles (illus.)

Mi abuela no es la de antes

(My grandmother is not who she was)

Santiago de Chile: Amanuta, 2013. – 31 p.

(Series: Colección Sin límites)

ISBN 978-956-8209-93-3

[Age](#) | [Dementia](#) | [Care](#) |
[Grandmother / Granddaughter](#)

In this picture book, a girl describes her relationship with her grandmother. The book begins with memories of the past: summer visits with the warm-hearted woman by the sea, shared experiences and the wonderful feeling of being cared for. The two subsequent sections form a contrast, portraying the first signs of her grandmother's cognitive changes, then her necessary move to live with the girl's family. The book takes on the topic of dementia in an accessible way, without mentioning the term a single time. The gradual cognitive decline associated with dementia, as countless families experience with their relatives, is not explained, but instead portrayed in a straightforward and undramatic way – with a great deal of deliberateness, love, gentle care, and respect for the grandmother. The book's double-page colour illustrations are comforting, showing that the old lady still is the same lovable person, even though she has changed. (Age: 4+)



176

Arciniegas, Triunfo (text)
Dipacho (illus.)

El niño gato

(The cat boy)

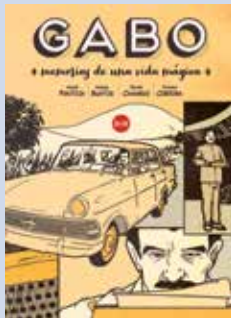
Bogotá: Ed. SM, 2013. – [48] p.

ISBN 978-958-705-784-3

[Outsider](#) | [Search for identity](#) | [Orphan](#)

His father did not return from the war, and his mother left the world out of grief. The cat boy is alone, and he feels lost because he thinks he belongs neither with cats nor with humans. He is a cat, but befriends mice; he is a boy, but he doesn't like football. »El niño gato« echoes the fate of countless children: orphans of war, refugees and migrants, who live unnoticed on the outskirts of society, as if knocked out of the world. The protagonist is also a symbol for all who are »different«, who are struggling with or searching for their identity. Triunfo Arciniegas' story, which ends on a hopeful note, possesses the timbre of a minor key. Some sentences read like rhythmically composed poetic verses. Dipacho draws wonderful pictures to accompany the text, which also permit of their own reading. In their »rawness« and powerful colouring, they form a clear contrast to the text, while still conveying the story's melancholy. (Age: 6+)

177



Pantoja, Óscar (text)
Bustos, Miguel / Córdoba, Tatiana /
Camargo, Felipe / Naranjo, Julián (illus.)
Gabo. Memorias de una vida mágica
(Gabo. Memories of a magical life)
Bogotá: Rey Naranjo Ed., 2013. – 163 p.
(Series: PNK libros singulares)
ISBN 978-958-57313-2-5

García Márquez, Gabriel | Biography |
Graphic novel

Numerous biographies have been published about Colombian writer Gabriel García Márquez (1927-2014), Nobel Prize in Literature. This book, which appeared one year prior to the world-famous author's passing, for the first time recounts the life of Gabo, as he was called in Latin America, in graphic novel form. It is an unusual, courageous publishing project in a country where García Márquez is a national icon and where comic art has never been very important as a literary genre – in contrast, for instance, with Argentina. The text and pictures of the four illustrators portray important milestones in Gabo's life – for instance, his childhood and adolescent years in Aracataca, his marriage and his winning the Nobel Prize. These events are not shown in typical chronological sequence, however. Furthermore, his life and work are interwoven, with characters from his novel »One Hundred Years of Solitude« figuring in the account. These twists differentiate this unusual biography from comparable titles. (Age: 12+)

178



Nájera, Rubén E. (text)
Singer, Irene (illus.)
Alas para Olga
(Wings for Olga)
Guatemala: Amanuense Ed., 2014. – [44] p.
ISBN 978-9929-633-05-6

Imagination | Creativity | Storytelling |
Needlework

Two experiences are etched into little Olga's memory: paper dragons flapping over a marketplace, and her grandmother's embroidery. Fascinated by these artfully worked textiles, Olga wants to express her ideas and imagination. She wants to tell a story, but she has to find one first! So she heads out – in her dream or in reality, who knows? – and meets a mysterious old lady. The latter weaves a piece of fabric and makes Olga a huipil from it (a traditional loose-fitting tunic worn by women in Central America), which contains countless stories. Rubén Nájera tells a poetic story about imagination and creativity, love of discovery and storytelling, while also weaving in interesting facts about traditional textile arts in Guatemala. The paper textures and the delicately applied, shining and diaphanous water colours of Irene Singer's illustrations are enchanting. They wonderfully recreate the story's dreamy, fairytale-like atmosphere. (Age: 4+)



179

Marín, Manuel (text/design)

Tortugas en el espacio de papel

(Turtles in paper space)

Zapopan, Jalisco: Petra Ed. [et al.], 2013. – 29 p.

+ 8 sheets of paper

ISBN 978-607-7646-42-6

(Coedition with CONACULTA –

ISBN 978-607-516-345-1)

Shape | Space | Geometry | Turtle | Paper art |
Non-fiction

Petra Ediciones works at the intersection of literature and the visual arts, of book and artwork. The award-winning publisher characteristically links text and image, typography and layout very carefully, so that every title carries a unique signature. Manuel Marín – painter, sculptor, art theorist – published two portfolios with paper animals at Petra Ediciones, and here offers yet another original work. For »Tortugas en el espacio de papel«, he created turtles out of paper, painted them and photographed them. They are not realistically constructed, emphasising shape, colour and line instead. Space and shape are the book's real topics, it's all about concave bodies, convex bodies, and surface structures, a fact that is revealed both in the paper turtle sculptures themselves as well as in the book's imaginative typography. Readers are invited to embark on a fascinating expedition, at whose conclusion they, too, can become turtle creators with the help of eight enclosed folding papers. (Age: 8+)



180

Ojeda, Ana Paula (text)

Palomino, Juan (illus.)

Ladrón del fuego

(Fire thief)

México, D.F.: Ed. Tecolote [et al.], 2013. – [32] p.

ISBN 978-607-7656-91-3

(Coedition with CONACULTA –

ISBN 978-607-516-312-3)

Fire | Corn | Time | Opossum | Trickster |
Creation myth

The history and diverse cultural traditions of Mexico are thematic foci for Ediciones Tecolote. A new find in the publisher's catalogue is this re-told myth about the tlacuache (opossum), who brought humans fire. On a mountain high above, it steals fire and corncobs from Señora Lumbre (Madame Glow), which it paints with the colours of day and night, and so brings time into the world. Why did the tlacuache do that? Because it was a trickster and wise, cunning, and bold enough to break the rules. Ana Paula Ojeda succeeds in replicating the tone of old myths with a simple, sonorous language, in which the rhythm of oral storytelling traditions resonates. The expressive illustrations from Juan Palomino draw on the full range of nature's palette. They are printed on dull paper, however, which fits the dusky mood of the beginning of the world. The use of stylised forms, ornamental elements, and quotations from the ancient Mexican iconography also suit the text very well. (Age: 6+)

181



Ramos Revillas, Antonio (text)
Esquivel, Isidro R. (illus.)
La guarida de las Lechuzas
(The Owls' den)

México, D.F.: Ed. El Naranjo, 2013. – 125 p.
(Series: Ecos de tinta)
ISBN 978-607-7661-66-5

Peer group | Bullying | Coming-of-age novel

»I am sitting on Luis's chest and am holding a stone in my hand.« The very first sentence of this book grips readers and pulls them into the world of thirteen-year-old David. This typically adolescent world revolves around family and school, friendships and enmities, insecurities, doubts, peer pressure, turbulent emotions, and hormones. David, the first-person-narrator, is fed up with Luis's harassment. He does not want to take it anymore, he does not want to be a victim anymore, he wants revenge and payback. It is for this reason that he joins the Lechuzas (Owls) gang. Antonio Ramos Revillas, awarded numerous prizes for his stories, lets readers take convincing part in the protagonist's life. In an authentic and lively way, he portrays the thoughts and the emotional world of the boy, his path to self-discovery and the difficult process of developing one's own position. The language is rhythmic, flows naturally, and lies close to the adolescent pulse. (Age: 13+)

182



Chirif, Micaela (text)
Alayza, Gabriel (illus.)

Desayuno
(Breakfast)
Lima: Polifonía, 2013. – [36] p.
ISBN 978-612-45901-8-4

Grandmother / Grandson | Imagination |
Zest for life | Role expectations

»Desayuno« marks the second collaboration between Micaela Chirif and Gabriel Alayza for Polifonía Press, which specialises in picture books. The book describes the morning chores of an older woman living in her house by the sea, and its charm lies in the contrast between the quick, seemingly straight-forward text and the illustrations, which show unheard of things – unexpected visitors who jump from the woman's imagination as she narrates, crowding her kitchen, such as a purple octopus, a diver, pirates, a mermaid, and a sea lion. The fun, music, and dancing these visitors cause enrich her otherwise somewhat monotone life. Unfortunately, the question »Don't I get breakfast?« from her grandson, who is shuffling about in the kitchen, cuts the magic off abruptly. »Desayuno« wittily plays with clichés and role expectations. Zest for life and imagination lie here with the grandmother, not with the sleepy and somewhat sluggish grandson. (Age: 4+)

183



Arboleda, Diego (text)
Sagospe, Raúl (illus.)
Prohibido leer a Lewis Carroll
(It is forbidden to read Lewis Carroll)
Madrid: Anaya, 2013. – 205 p.
ISBN 978-84-678-4012-4

[Alice in Wonderland](#) | [Nonsense literature](#)

A young Frenchwoman is hired as a private tutor by a New York family in 1932. She is given the task of curbing the wild enthusiasm that Alice, the daughter, has for Lewis Carroll's Alice, and to prevent the girl from finding out that the »real« Alice, the now eighty-year-old Alice Liddell, is visiting the city. The plan is duly derailed, not least because Made-moiselle Chignon turns out to be highly talented at turning her surroundings into a cheery chaos. Diego Arboleda's novel is about »Alice in Wonderland«, but it is also created very much in the spirit of the famous classic. The highly entertaining story is full of curious characters, crazy situations, and a healthy dose of nonsense. The language is elegant and playful. The narrative pace and well-timed tempo changes are compelling. The light stroke of Raúl Sagospe's numerous colourful illustrations and the cartoonish characters he depicts therein suit the text well. The text won the renowned Premio Lazarillo. (Age: 10+)

184



Barrenetxea, Iban (text/illus.)
El único y verdadero rey del bosque
(The true and only king of the forest)
[Barcelona]: A Buen Paso, 2013. – 71 p.
ISBN 978-84-941579-1-2

[Cunning](#) | [Fairy tale](#) | [Animal story](#)

Siblings Jaska, Kaspar, and Masia live in a big birch wood. Bossy Masia wants her brothers, who are neither bright nor brave, to procure her a fur stole to impress Pekka the miller and to make Frigga the washerwoman green with envy. The white fox is to bite the dust, but Jaska and Kaspar prove to be incompetent hunters, and the »true and only king of the forest« is much too clever for all of them. The increasingly tumultuous plot ends with these players on stage: a smug fox, a duped king, a newlywed shrew and two relieved brothers. Iban Barrenetxea, illustrator of several magnificent books prior to this one, reveals himself to be a gifted author, too. In this humorous, absurd, and sophisticated story, he plays gracefully and eloquently with tropes of European folk tales. The bright, elegant, minutely detailed illustrations lend the text much magic. This book will entertain younger and older readers alike. (Age: 8+)

185

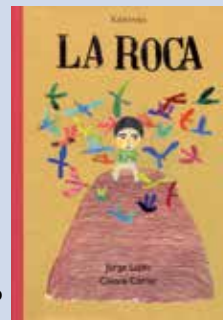


Carbonell, Paula (adapt.)
Giordano, Philip (illus.)
Gallito Pelón
(Pelón the rooster)
Pontevedra: OQO, 2013. – [36] p.
(Series: Colección O)
ISBN 978-84-9871-427-2

Greed | Good fortune | Folk tale

One focus of the picture book publishing program of high-profile, internationally oriented OQO Editora are adaptations of folk tales of diverse provenance. »Gallito Pelón« recounts the Valencian folk tale »Mig pollastre« (half rooster). A rooster on the search for good fortune seeks to lay hands on the gold treasure a king advertised, no matter the cost. He impatiently devours everything that comes into his way: ants, a fox, a wooden hut, a river. In the end, it is these »victims« that save him from the cooking pot. Paula Carbonell's text is sparse yet trenchant, the language contemporary while still incorporating traditional folktale elements, such as repetition. Philip Giordano's expressive illustrations also connect the traditional with the contemporary; simple, abstract forms and the colours black and red dominate. Giordano uses drawing, monotype, nicely textured vintage and homemade paper and collage, processing these media and arranging it all on his computer. (Age: 4+)

186



Luján, Jorge (text)
Carrer, Chiara (illus.)
La roca
(The rock)
[Madrid]: Kókinos, 2013. – [28] p.
ISBN 978-84-92750-95-5

Riddle | Imagination | Creativity

A rock that lies outside the city blocks the way for anyone who can't answer its permanent riddle: What was I, before I was a rock? Like fairy-tale heroes who must solve riddles, several children approach the rock and are able to pass by it because they give the most astonishing answers. Only one boy insists that a rock can only be a rock. For him, the path remains blocked. Following »Esteban y el escarabajo« (Esteban and the bug; FCE 2011), »La roca« is the second marvellous product from the collaboration between author Jorge Luján, known especially for his outstanding children's poetry, and internationally renowned Italian illustrator Chiara Carrer. Every word counts in the brief, secretive text; every sentence brings new questions and ideas to mind. The gentle, delicate, yet powerful illustrations are created by blending coloured pencil, chalk and collage. They preserve the text's mysteriousness and give the reader much room to give his or her imagination free reign. (Age: 5+)

187



Murguía, Verónica (text)

Loba

(She-wolf)

Madrid: Ed. SM, 2013. – 507 p.

(Series: Gran Angular)

ISBN 978-84-675-5193-8

[Magic](#) | [Love](#) | [Revenge](#) | [Fantasy novel](#)

This gripping fantasy novel is the work of Mexican author Verónica Murguía, who often draws on myths, legends, and medieval materials in her books. »Loba«, which won the »Premio Gran Angular«, is a tale of two very different realms: Moriana, the land of the brutal, revengeful king Lobo, and Alosna, the realm of the wizards. At the centre of the plot are Lobo's daughter Soledad and the young wizard's apprentice Cuervo. Murguía possesses confident mastery over the repertoire of classic fantasy novels – the supernatural, magic, battle, violence, hatred, loyalty, and of course love –, without overusing genre stereotypes. Her characters are lively, individual, and complex, as in the case of the two protagonists, who do not quite fit the usual image of princesses and wizards. The countries and the social and political structures that form the backdrop of the story are also described vividly and in detail. 500 pages of suspenseful reading. (Age: 13+)

188



Ranaldi, Giovanna (illus.)

Rodríguez Almodóvar, Antonio (afterword)

Pulgarcito

(Little Thumb)

[Valencia]: Milimbo, 2013. – [20] p., 1 poster

+ 1 figurine – ISBN 978-84-940219-1-6

(Retold in pictures after Charles Perrault)

(Spanish and French afterword)

[Poverty](#) | [Siblings](#) | [Ogre](#) | [Cunning](#) | [Fairy tale](#) | [Textless book](#)

Milimbo Press has published several exceptional picture books in a short amount of time. They represent exquisite book art, experimenting with different graphic designs, formats, and choices of printing paper. At the centre of the publishing program are well-known fairy tales by Charles Perrault and the Brothers Grimm. Except for the foreword and afterword, the stories are told exclusively in pictures, including this version of »Little Thumb«, laid out in a narrow horizontal format. Roman-born illustrator Giovanna Ranaldi captures the gloomy, violent mood of Perrault's tale well by keeping to a black, white, and grey palette and adding occasional expressive red accents. The drastically simplified and abstracted pictures do not recount the plot in a traditional way, but focus instead on symbolising key moments and motifs in a more figurative way. This is a fascinating picture book for all ages. (Age: 5+)

189



Márquez, Felipe (text)
Quintana, Jefferson (illus.)
La tía Berta
(Aunt Berta)
Caracas: Camelia Ed., 2014. – 35 p.
ISBN 978-980-6450-51-6

Optimism | Zest for life | Aunt / Nephew

This small-format picture book is not leafed through from right to left, but instead from bottom to top, which fits wonderfully to the elevator that stands at the centre of the story. Tía Berta is the aunt of the story's narrator, who reminisces about his childhood and the relative who emigrated from Europe to Venezuela after the Second World War. The book is an homage to this well-educated, book-loving woman, whose spirit remained unbroken through all blows of fate. Self-sufficient, confident, and positive, she works as an elevator attendant, even though such work does not get at her real talents. The elevator can be read as a symbol for life with all of its ups and downs, as Bert's gravestone engraving attests: »Down, but up«. With artful collages and an unusually set text, this book is a further jewel in the line coming out of small publisher Camelia Ediciones, which has been enchanting readers for years with its original, well-edited picture books. (Age: 6+)

190



Höglund, Anna (text/illus.)
Om detta talar man endast med kaniner
(Only talk to rabbits about that)
Stockholm: Lilla Piratförlaget, 2013. – [56] p.
ISBN 978-91-87027-49-9

Search of identity | Outsider | Parents / Child |
Animal story

»I entered the world / on a spring day thirteen years ago / I regretted it almost immediately.« These opening lines set up a perspective very different from the parental view. A family photo shows a little rabbit squeezed between a father facing toward it and a mother facing away from it. The more the rabbit grows up, the more torn it feels. It wants to belong, but it is also repelled by the way others behave. It finally finds solace in the fact that it is always somehow part of the bigger picture: »Today I realised that everything belongs together.« Using terse language and illustrations that quote from various pictorial traditions and artists, such as Biblical story-themed tableaux and the painter Edward Hopper, Anna Höglund recreates a child's experience of crisis in an accurate and unsettling way. (Age: 12+)



191

Karlsson, Ellen (text)

Lindström, Eva (illus.)

Snöret, fågeln och jag

(Little String, the bird and me)

Stockholm: Hippo Bokförlag, 2013. – 117 p.

ISBN 978-91-87033-09-4

Summer holiday | Friendship | Self-confidence | Grandparents

Debut author Ellen Karlsson here pairs up with Eva Lindström, a »grande dame« of Swedish illustration, to create a first-class children's novel. The story revolves around Selma and her nagging self-doubt. Some people have devils on their shoulders; Selma has a bird in her chest, who is always pecking away at her, always chiding her: »You have no best friend.« Then, during summer holidays, Selma meets self-confident, care free Snöret. Selma recounts in a coherent and believable way how her admiration for Snöret gradually developed into friendship on an equal plane. The story is accompanied by Eva Lindström's pictures, whose slightly awkward line emphasises the imperfect and inhibits the saccharine. Marvellous! The novel was published by newcomer Hippo Press, which promises to follow the lead of Selma and Snöret, whose story won the 2013 Augustpris. The sequel, »En fisk som heter Fabian« (A fish called Fabian), is already in book stores. (Age: 6+)



192

Lindenbaum, Pija (text/illus.)

Ska vi va?

(What should we do?)

Stockholm: Rabén & Sjögren, 2013. – [36] p.

ISBN 978-91-29-68719-4

Autonomy | Community | Friendship

Pija Lindenbaum's new picture book is about the desires for independence and autonomy on the one hand and for community and variety on the other. Energetic Berit is always on to go – usually over to Flisan's. Flisan is frazzled by Berit's hyperactivity, though, and wants to play alone. She manages to give Berit the slip several times. Berit is not easily deflated but at a certain point she stops coming over – and Flisan finds herself listening for Berit's knock on the door... Lindenbaum's pictures express her character's thoughts and feelings. For example, when four Berits are depicted dancing around Flisan, we know that Flisan is feeling overwhelmed. The protagonists' expressive gestures also reveal their moods. Lindenbaum's master ability to transcribe everyday events in children's lives into lively literary form has earned her multiple awards at home and abroad. (Age: 4+)

193



Nilsson, Elin (text)

Flyt som en fjäril, stick som ett bi

(Fly like a butterfly, sting like a bee)

Stockholm: Alfabeta, 2013. – 236 p.

ISBN 978-91-501-1552-9

Swimming | Search for identity | Family |
Friendship | Internet | Coming-of-age novel

Miranda loves the water. She really wants to compete in the Swedish junior championship, so she trains nine times a week, working hard on her speciality, the butterfly stroke. Outside the pool, things aren't great. Her brother – the amoeba, as Miranda calls him – is obsessed with World of Warcraft and has become remote. When she has a fight with her best friend and her competitor Rebecka switches into her swim league, Miranda has a crisis. Using sports as a metaphor to tease out the difficult path of growing up is a tried and true approach. Here Miranda has difficulties (at first) to identify conflicts outside the pool and to handle them; gradually her swimming helps her find her footing on land. Using ellipses, paratactic series, and anaphoric repetitions, Elin Nilsson gives her heroine a suggestive language that reflects the breathlessness as well as the meditative and satisfying exhaustion of swimming. (Age: 12+)

194



Nilsson, Frida (text)

Geffenblad, Lotta (illus.)

Jagger, Jagger

<proper name>

Stockholm: Natur & Kultur, 2013. – 151 p.

ISBN 978-91-27-13610-6

Dog | Friendship | Revenge | Animal story

A dead rat in the mailbox is a tried and true means for revenge, but it can also symbolize sadness, loneliness and powerlessness. Before Bengt meets a stray dog named Jagger Svensson, he is being bullied by the neighbourhood kids. When Bengt gets his revenge, though, it only first feels good for a little while. »Jagger, Jagger« is a complex psychological children's novel (also for adults), which examines the motivations behind human behaviour as well as the ties that underlie social and familial community. Parental actions are often defined by hypocrisy, egoism, opportunism, but also helplessness. Children adopt much from them, even though Bengt can instantly tell false from real laughter and intuitively knows that dead rats don't solve any problems. Once again, Frida Nilsson expertly avoids recounting a pessimistic, moralistic story, instead linking seriousness with humour. Her anthropomorphized animal characters create comic distance that in turn enables more genuine identification. (Age: 8+)

195



Persson, Klara (text/illus.)

Maximilian och Minimilian

(Maximilian and Minimilian)

Stockholm: Urax, 2013. – [28] p.

ISBN 978-91-87208-05-8

Contrast | Switch | Friendship

One is little, the other big, and yet they are the best of friends. Even though Minimilian only gets things in miniature form – like a small portion of ice cream –, Maximilian is the one who is tired of towering over everyone. He wants to reverse the relationship, but everything that Minimilian and Maximilian try doesn't quite work – until they come up with a trick... The story's surprising punchline capitalizes on perspectival shifts and disrupting perceptual illusion. Klara Persson draws on these to expose one's expectations and habits of perception. Her book's big-and-small theme will appeal to young readers. Persson (b. 1985) studied at the School of Design and Crafts in Gothenburg and is among the promising new generation of Swedish illustrators. Her book was nominated for the Augustpris in 2013. It was published by newcomer Urax Press, noted for its ambitious picture book program. (Age: 4+)

196



Ak, Behiç (text/illus.)

Benim bir karışım

(My first feeling of insecurity)

İstanbul: Günışığı Kitaplığı, 2013. – 67 p.

(Series: Tombiş kitaplar; 1) (İlk öykü; 20)

ISBN 978-9944-717-97-7

Body | Curiosity | Diversity | Otherness

When Memo meets a car mechanic and notices how small his own hands are in comparison to the adult's hands, he is really upset at first. Yet his curiosity gets the better of him: He decides to measure his hands against those of other people, for example his parents' or his friend Tombiş's hands. All the people he speaks to offer original, profound, and almost philosophical explanations trying to answer his question of why there is such a surprising variety of hand sizes. Along the way, Memo learns that insecurity and questions can often disclose new worlds. Behiç Ak (b. 1956) works as caricaturist for newspapers and as children's book author and illustrator. He is known for his humorous portrayal of everyday life from the perspective of his child protagonists. »Benim bir karışım« is the first volume of the »Tombiş«-series. (Age: 6+)

SWEDISH
TURKISHSweden
Turkey

197



Büke, Ahmet (text)

Mevzumuz derin

(Our topic is complex)

İstanbul: ON8, 2013. – 161 p.

(Series: ON8 roman; 21)

ISBN 978-605-4603-59-6

Father / Son | Search | Violence |
Coming-of-age novel

Bedo lives with his lugubrious mother and his grandfather. At school, people often ask him about his reputedly dead father. Yet, every time he tries to wheedle information about the past out of his mother, she becomes evasive and starts crying. When suddenly, on his eighteenth birthday, Bedo receives an odd letter from his father inviting him to go fishing, the two agree to meet. Yet the father dodges all his son's questions. The meeting turns really unpleasant when the father gets into an argument about a triviality with another car driver and draws a weapon. Horrified by his father's aggression and extensive violence, Bedo comes to a difficult but final decision: He wants to go on living his life without this stranger. Ahmet Büke (b. 1970) is a successful, award-winning young adult author. In his works, he tackles the everyday life and daily problems of Turkish adolescents in an open and convincing way. (Age: 14+)

198



Prochas'ko, Taras Bohdanovyč (text)

Prochas'ko, Mar'jana (illus.)

Chto zrobyt' snih

(Who makes the snow)

Lviv: Vydavnyctvo Staroho Leva, 2013. – 69 p.

ISBN 978-617-679-027-3

Mole | Family | Annual cycle | Seasons |
Animal story

This read-aloud book is the first children's book from well-known author and journalist Taras Prochas'ko (b. 1968). Co-authored with his wife, author and illustrator Mar'jana Prochas'ko (b. 1976), the story accompanies two little moles through their first year of life, a life that they share with their siblings, their papa, who is a journalist, and their mother, who is a famous jazz bassist. They ask typical children's questions, such as who makes the snow in winter? or where does a river go? The little ones explore their surroundings by going on excursions through the woods, and they experience the change of seasons for the first time. This book's charm comes from the funny, detailed coloured pencil drawings as well as the portrayal of the moles' personalities. Children will be able to recognise themselves in the sometimes impertinent, sometimes shy young animals, while adults will be very familiar with some of the dialogue: »I'd still like to get in a work-out, darling... can you put the kids to bed?« (Age: 4+)

199



Skyba, Roman (text)
Denysenko, Tetjana (illus.)
Iz žyttja chytrych sliv
(From the life of clever words)
Kyiv: Laurus, 2013. – 134 p.
ISBN 978-966-2449-22-8

Poetry | Homonyms | Word play | Nonsense

Roman Skyba (b. 1970) considers himself a poet for both adults and children and has received numerous awards for his work in the Ukraine. With this little volume of poetry, published by 2011 newcomer Laurus Press, Skyba speaks to his youngest readers and introduces them to wordplay. Using thirteen short, often wonderfully silly nonsense poems and verses, the Lviv author shows that words that sound the same can mean entirely different things. And he makes it clear in his writing that one doesn't always need logic or sensibility to have fun with poetry – lining up a good sequence of similar sounding words and phrases can work, too. Accompanied by linocuts by Tetjana Denysenko (b. 1987), as well as a foreword that introduces the book's main homonyms, this book is a charming discovery. (Age: 2+)

200



Ukrainka, Lesja (text)
Dorošenko, Polina (illus.)
Lisova pisnja. Dramafejerija v 3-ch dijach
(Forest song. A fairy-tale drama in three acts)
Kyiv: Osnovy, 2014. – 151 p.
ISBN 978-966-500-350-2

Love | Fate | Forest | Fairy tale | Mythology | Drama | Folklore

Lukaš, a human boy, and Mavka, a forest nymph, love each other yet can't be together. Lukaš's family and some forest beings scheme to destroy the delicate bond between the two. The result is that Mavka sacrifices herself and dies. This Romeo and Juliet story originated in 1911 and is one of the best known dramas in the Ukraine, written by Lesja Ukrainka (1871-1913), one of the country's most loved classical poets. »Forest Song« is interwoven with motifs from Ukrainian folk songs and fairy tales. Osnovy Press offers this new illustrated edition for children and adolescents. The expressive collage-based illustrations by Polina Dorošenko (b. 1989) invite new access to the classic text. They make the story's dramatic content and its fairytale aspects both visible and felt. (Age: 12+)

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